

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF PUBLIC WORKS & SAFETY

VALPARAISO, INDIANA

March 28, 2025

The Board of Public Works and Safety of Valparaiso, Indiana met March 28, 2025, at 11:00 a.m. in City Hall. Present were Mayor Costas, Bill Oeding and Katrina Spence. Mayor Costas called the meeting to order and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

MOTION: Mayor Costas moved to approve the minutes of the February 14, February 28 meetings. Seconded by Bill Oeding and so approved with a 3-0 vote.

MOTION: Mayor Costas moved that the claims be approved for payment subject to appropriation balances. Seconded by Katrina Spence and so approved with a 3-0 vote.

City Hall Council Chamber Audio Upgrades

Paul Pryor addressed the Board and requested approval of the HQ Production Audio agreement to begin upgrading the audio system in the Council Chambers. The new system seeks to remove some of the complexity and the noise out of the existing system and provide an up to date digital audio system. The new upgrades have a quoted total cost of \$23,101.00.

MOTION: Mayor Costas moved to approve the HQ Production Audio Agreement. Seconded by Bill Oeding and so approved with a 3-0 vote.

Unsafe Building Violations – 2802 Calumet and 1303 Vale Park Rd

Vicki Thrasher addressed the Board. Proper Notice and requests have been made to the owners of the above property. There has been no response. One bid has been received for demolition from C. Lee in the amount of \$62,175.00. She has received the Order of Demolition. She is requesting approval to award the bid for demolition to C. Lee.

MOTION: Mayor Costas moved to award the bid of C. Lee for demolition of property at 2802 Calumet and 1303 Vale Park Road. Seconded by Katrina Spence and so approved with a 3-0 vote.

Property Maintenance Code/Rental Housing Code Violations

Vicki Thrasher reported status on the following properties:

1003 Surben Dr. – Refer to City Attorney for an Inspection Notice
808 Napoleon – Continue to the 5-23-2025 BOW meeting.
303 Indiana– Continue to the 5-23-2025 BOW meeting.
103 Morgan– Continue to the 5-23-2025 BOW meeting.
560 Factory - Dismiss

453 West Street – Continue to the 4-25-2025 BOW meeting.
604 Monroe– Continue to the 4-25-2025 BOW meeting.
505 Academy– Continue to the 5-23-2025 BOW meeting.
554 Campbell– Continue to the 4-25-2025 BOW meeting.
1106 Institute– Continue to the 5-23-2025 BOW meeting.
352 Locust– Continue to the 4-25-2025 BOW meeting.
1115 Institute– Continue to the 4-25-2025 BOW meeting.

Motion: Mayor Costas moved to carry five properties as noted above to the April 25, 2025 BOW meeting. Seconded by Bill Oeding and so approved with a 3-0 vote.

Motion: Mayor Costas moved to carry matters for the properties as noted above to the May 23, 2025 BOW meeting. Seconded by Bill Oeding and so approved with a 3-0 vote.

Motion: Mayor Costas moved to Dismiss 560 Factory Street as noted above. Seconded by Bill Oeding and so approved with a 3-0 vote.

Alert Media – Funding Request

Matt Zurbruggen addressed the Board. Alert media is the software vendor that Valparaiso City Services utilizes to provide important notification to residents/customers. Most importantly, VCS uses Alert Media for boil advisories, important trash updates, and other emergency notifications. Based on the account information, Alert Media can send notifications via phone, text, and email, ensuring that residents and/or customers get important information within minutes of sending.

The cost of this software for one year is \$30,634. He is requesting funds to stay with Alert Media for the next year to ensure VCS is able to send out important information when necessary.

Valparaiso City Utilities and the City have historically split this cost 50/50. Today, he is requesting \$15,317 for half of the funding needed for this important software. He will be requesting the same amount of funding from the VCU if approved. This is consistent with what they have been paying.

Motion: Mayor Costas moved to approve the one half payment to Alert Media. Seconded by Katrina Spence and so approved with a 3-0 vote.

Proposed Update - Downtown Outdoor Dining Standards and Conditions

Jessica Gage addressed the Board and presented a revised draft of the Downtown Outdoor Dining Standards and Conditions. The areas highlighted in yellow are changed since the 03/17/25 BOW meeting. These changes were based on a conversation between Bill Oeding and

Planning Director Bob Thompson. She has received comments questioning procedure for events such as Popcorn Fest.

Bill Oeding – In the past Festivals and Events are given control of the sidewalks for Popcorn Festival. The procedure in the past is that on Popcorn Fest Day the enclosures have to be removed. During parade time it is crowded with people. Substantial enclosures have been allowed to remain in place because they cannot be moved for a few hours.

Jessica Gage – They would like to increase the handicapped space from 32” to 36”. This is found under Unobstructed Pedestrian Way. They may be wanting to change the Enclosure Material Options by adding one.

Motion: Mayor Costas moved to approve the Downtown Outdoor Dining Standards and Conditions with the change to the Unobstructed Pedestrian Way from 32” to 36”. Seconded by Bill Oeding and so approved with a 3-0 vote.

Silhavy Pathway across CN Tracks - Contract Agreement

The City received engineering services proposals from multiple firms for the Silhavy Pathway across the CN Tracks project in accordance with INDOT procedures. This project entails connecting the pathway on the west side of Silhavy Rd across the railroad tracks in accordance with the City’s Pathway Master Plan. This project has been awarded about \$800,000 in federal funds for construction and construction engineering phases. Preliminary Engineering services are to be covered by local sources.

City staff scored proposals and solicited a contract agreement from DLZ, the highest ranked firm. Following review of their contract, staff recommends approval of the professional services contract agreement from DLZ Indiana, LLC in an amount not to exceed \$147,150.

Mayor Costas – He is amazed that it is nearly \$1 Million Dollars to put an overpass across a railroad track.

Bob Thompson – CN will require them to overhaul the entire signalization system. The last one that was done came in at approximately \$750,000 just for the signalization.

Motion: Mayor Costas moved to approve the Contract with DLZ for the Silhavy Pathway across CN tracks in an amount not to exceed \$147,150. Seconded by Katrina Spence and so approved with a 3-0 vote.

2025 Sidewalk Package 2 – Request to Advertise

The Engineering Department is requesting permission to seek bids for Package 2 of the annual sidewalk program. The intent of Package 2 is to address pathway and sidewalk connections. Bids will be due and opened on April 24, 2025.

Motion: Mayor Costas moved to approve the request to advertise for bids for 2025 Sidewalk Package 2. Seconded by Katrina Spence and so approved with a 3-0 vote.

Bill Oeding - He clarified that the work done in the Parks is paid for by the Parks.

Alley Closure Request – Larson Danielson

Bill Laird addressed the Board. Larson Danielson is requesting closure of the alley east of City Hall between City Hall and the Chamber of Commerce to complete repair projects on the west elevation of the Chamber of Commerce building. The proposed closure will in April for one week. The exact date of the closure is weather dependent and Larson Danielson will notify the Engineering Department prior to the closure.

Motion: Mayor Costas moved to approve the request of Larson Danielson to close the alley east of City Hall between City Hall and the Chamber of Commerce. Seconded by Bill Oeding and so approved with a 3-0 vote.

Street closures

- OC Brothers Masonry, 11 Lincolnway repair work – March 31 and April 1, 2025
- Valpo Events Chocolate Walk – May 3, 2025
- Del Vista Drive Block Party – August 2, 2025
- MAAC Foundation 1st Responders Appreciation & Demonstration – September 13, 2025

These have been reviewed and approved by all impacted departments.

MOTION: Mayor Costas moved to approve the requests for street closure as presented. Seconded by Bill Oeding and so approved with a 3-0 vote.

Conflict of Interest – Natalie Mahlmann

A Conflict of Interest for was presented for Natalie Mahlmann. Natalie is an Administrative Assistant at VPD. She has an interest in Ideas in Motion dba Great News Life.

MOTION: Mayor Costas moved to approve the Conflict of Interest. Seconded by Katrina Spence and so approved with a 3-0 vote.

Valplayso Bids

Kevin Nuppnau advised Parks Administration staff and Berglund Construction as Cma opened bids for the Valplayso Improvements project at the 3/18/2025 Park Board meeting. The project consists of six new pickleball courts and fencing, sidewalks/paths addition, and stormwater system construction. All six submissions were complete. The department recommends awarding the bid to the lowest bidder, Hasse Construction in the amount of \$443,000 and asks

the Board to execute the contract. They anticipate beginning construction on April 14th and completion by the end of July.

MOTION: Mayor Costas moved to award the bid for the Valplayso Improvements Project to Hasse in the amount of \$443,000. Seconded by Katrina Spence and so approved with a 3-0 vote.

Public Assembly Request

This request is made by Deb Mcleod. The group is assembling in support of 50501 March – Donations of Food. They are requesting to organize on the southwest and southeast corner of Courthouse Square on April 5, 2025 from 12:00pm – 2:00pm. They expect 500-700 participants. This has been confirmed with Valparaiso Police Department. The Group will not go into the street; will not block pedestrian traffic; and will not create any unsafe conditions. Any signs, banners, or displays must be carried and not placed on sidewalk or against traffic light pole. Given the close proximity of the public assembly to a busy intersection, no microphones/ other amplifying devices are allowed. Group will not encourage cars to honk their horns and will abide by the quiet zone policy. If number of participants changes to more than expected, Applicant will notify VPD.

Motion: Mayor Costas moved to approve the request for Public Assembly on April 25, 2025 subject to the County's approval. Seconded by Bill Oeding and so approved with a 3-0 vote.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

TO HEAR CITIZENS' FULL COMMENTS, PLEASE REFER TO THE WATCH CITY MEETINGS SECTION OF THE CITY OF VALPARAISO'S WEBSITE (WWW.CI.VALPARAISO.IN.US)

James Ferguson – 303 Indiana. He read his review of NOW and their treatment of him.

There was no further business, and the meeting adjourned.