

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING  
OF THE COMMON COUNCIL  
VALPARAISO, INDIANA  
September 14, 2020**

The Common Council of the City of Valparaiso, Indiana, met on Monday September 14, 2020 at 6:00 p.m. in City Hall. Mayor Murphy called the meeting to order. The Pledge of Allegiance was said. Present were Councilmembers Reed, Cotton, Schmidt, Pupillo, Anderson, Costas and Douglas.

**MINUTES**

Councilmember Douglas moved to approve minutes of the August 24, 2020 meeting. Councilmember Reed seconded the motion. Upon voice vote the motion to approve passed with a 7-0 vote.

**ORDINANCE NO. 16, 2020**

**VALPARAISO COMMUNITY SCHOOLS 2021 BUDGET**

Councilmember Douglas moved that Ordinance No. 16, 2020 be read a first time and considered on first reading. Councilmember Reed seconded the motion. Clerk-Treasurer Taylor read Ordinance No. 16, 2020.

Mayor Murphy addressed the Council. He thanked Dr. Berta for taking over leadership of the Valparaiso Community Schools for the second time. This has been a difficult year and he is glad Dr. Berta has been there.

Sharon Qualkenbush addressed the Council. She explained there are six funds included in the 2021 budget. She went through each and showed the source of revenue. The advertised tax rate is one cent less than the 2020 budget. The School Board has reviewed the budget and given the okay to present it to the City Council on September 14, 2020 for the Public Hearing and to request budget approval on September 28, 2020.

Councilmember Cotton asked with respect to the 14% that is transferred from the Education Fund, how consistent is that with prior years. Sharon Qualkenbush replied they are looking at the same amount.

Councilmember Douglas asked if Covid has impacted the 2021 budget. She replied at this time they do not know. The funding is based on a student count in February which will tell what impact there has been, if any.

Councilmember Cotton asked about pending adverse consequences on the State taking more tax revenue than they pay to the schools. Sharon Qualkenbush replied they have assurance on the budget as presented.

Mayor Murphy stated Ordinance No. 16, 2020 requires a Public Hearing. Attorney Patrick Lyp addressed the Council and stated the Clerk-Treasurer has properly advertised Notice of this hearing. As part of the Notice the public is asked if they have questions or comments, to please email or contact the City. At the present time he has received no emails or requests to appear this evening. Mayor Murphy opened the Public Hearing on the Valparaiso Community School 2021 budget. Having received no emails or requests to appear, he declared the Public Hearing closed.

Councilmember Douglas moved that Ordinance No. 16, 2020 be carried over to the September 28, 2020 meeting. Councilmember Reed seconded the motion.

Upon voice vote the motion to carry Ordinance No. 16, 2020 to the September 28, 2020 meeting passed with a 7-0 vote.

**ORDINANCE NO. 13, 2020**

**AN ORDINANCE AMENDING ARTICLE 17 AND APPENDIX B OF THE UNIFIED**

**DEVELOPMENT ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF VALPARAISO**

Councilmember Douglas moved that Ordinance No. 13, 2020 be read a second time by title and a third time in full and be considered for adoption and the opportunity be given for the offering of amendments. Councilmember Reed seconded the motion. Clerk-Treasurer Taylor read the Ordinance. Councilmember Douglas moved to adopt Ordinance No. 13, 2020. Councilmember Reed seconded the motion.

Beth Shrader addressed the Council. This Ordinance clarifies wording to give Enforcement Officials the ability to levy fines for violations. This Ordinance also updates the approved plant list.

Upon roll call vote the motion to adopt Ordinance No. 13, 2020 passed with a 7-0 vote.

**ORDINANCE NO. 14, 2020**

**CITY OF VALPARAISO 2021 SALARY ORDINANCE**

Councilmember Douglas moved that Ordinance No. 14, 2020 be read a first time and considered on first reading. Councilmember Reed seconded the motion. Clerk-Treasurer Taylor read Ordinance No. 14, 2020.

Mike Jessen addressed the Council. He thanked Sharon Swihart and the rest of the previous administration for leaving the City in such good financial shape. The bond rating is strong. The cash balance is strong. The Rainy-Day Fund is strong. The pandemic hit in March 2020. All possibilities were considered. The Administration took a cautious approach and has been holding the line on expenditures. The City has weathered the storm of the 2020 Covid pandemic. There is uncertainty ahead, but they have been cautiously and conservatively optimistic in preparing the 2021 budget.

In 2018 a wage study was done. The study showed Market, Mid and Max salaries. The City's goal was to get to the Mid range within 2-3 years. That goal has been accomplished. Going forward they want to get all employees as close as they can to the Max range.

Clerk-Treasurer Taylor explained the changes in the Salary Ordinance. There have been four position changes, two title changes, three part time changes from \$15 to \$20 per hour and a Board of Works citizen member who is compensated \$3,000 per year.

Councilmember Cotton asked about the changes and a vacancy at Public Works. Clerk-Treasurer Taylor explained the re-classifications that have been made. The Building Commissioner had not been classified as a department head. Making that adjustment resulted in a salary increase. The other three are in the Engineering Department. There were three positions that stayed in PAT classification and should have been EXE positions. These also resulted in a slight increase. The new positions are at the Park Department and were approved by the Board of Works on August 28<sup>th</sup>. The Park Department now has an Assistant Park Director and a Recreation Facilities Superintendent. Both have slight salary increases. In the Public Works there is an open position for department head. Right now it is working well to have an employee stand in and do that job. The money that is not spent on the Department Head salary just sits there.

Councilmember Douglas discussed the good job putting together the salary ordinance and what a help it was to have the wage study done.

Councilmember Douglas moved that Ordinance No. 14, 2020 be carried over to the September 28, 2020 meeting. Councilmember Reed seconded the motion.

Upon voice vote the motion to carry Ordinance No. 14, 2020 to the September 28, 2020 meeting passed with a 7-0 vote.

**ORDINANCE NO. 15, 2020**

**CITY OF VALPARAISO 2021  
BUDGET ORDINANCE**

Councilmember Douglas moved that Ordinance No. 15, 2020 be read a first time and considered on first reading. Councilmember Reed seconded the motion. Clerk-Treasurer Taylor read Ordinance No. 15, 2020.

Clerk-Treasurer Taylor addressed the Council. She went through each section of the Budget and compared 2020 figures to 2021 proposed figures. The total proposed 2021 Budget is \$37,738,926 which is a difference of \$1,047,484. There are a few reasons for the difference. She has been told the insurance premium will have a 6.1% increase in 2021. This increase will not be passed on to employees. In the past Local Road and Street, Parking Meter, Police Vehicle Equipment, and Local Police Education were appropriated funds after the first of the year. The 2021 Budget has those four Funds included. 2019-2020 Expenditure Comparison is down \$2,157,933.59. The total estimated Revenue for 2021 is \$37,070,440. The tax rate for 2021 is 1.6771 (per \$100 of taxable property). The 2020 tax rate was 1.6339. Overall expenditures increased by approximately 3%. The anticipated tax cap impact total is \$2,312,950.

Councilmember Reed thanked Clerk-Treasurer Taylor for the sheet showing the 2021 Budget Variances. This was helpful.

Councilmember Pupillo asked about the revenue going down. Clerk-Treasurer Taylor explained they really do not know what will happen. They can see some of the revenue going down but that can change. The City is

healthy though, especially with the estimated cash balances. Department Heads have worked with Administration to help keep expenditures down.

Councilmember Schmidt stated it is comforting to see where the City is. It takes teamwork. The health care increase is out of the City's hands. If that were not in the budget there would be little difference in the budget at all.

Councilmember Douglas discussed how important it is to keep the Rainy-Day Fund built up. You just don't know what is coming down the road. It is good to preserve it.

Councilmember Cotton asked Clerk-Treasurer Taylor to explain the amount of the tax cap impact and how it affects the budget. Clerk-Treasurer Taylor replied that amount has to be taken away from the budget because it is amounts over and above the percentages 1%, 2% and 3% collection the City may have. That is already considered with the \$37 Million.

Councilmember Cotton asked Mike Jessen if the City is working to increase the AV which will increase revenue. Clerk-Treasurer Taylor replied the growth is expected to be 4.2% for 2021. Mike Jessen replied they are working to make Valparaiso a place where people want to live and work. The strategy is to attract new business, quality development and people.

Councilmember Cotton asked if the consultant relationship will continue in 2021. Mike Jessen replied he believes Councilmember Cotton is referring to the contract with Bill Oeding. That contract was for a period of up to six months. The contract has expired. Mike expressed how valuable it was to have Bill Oeding present to help him get acclimated to the City.

Mayor Murphy stated Ordinance No. 15, 2020 requires a Public Hearing. Attorney Patrick Lyp addressed the Council and stated Clerk-Treasurer Taylor has properly advertised Notice of this hearing. As part of the Notice the public is asked if they have questions or comments, to please email or contact the City. At the present time he has received no emails or requests to appear this evening. Mayor Murphy opened the Public Hearing on the City of Valparaiso 2021 budget. Having received no emails or requests to appear, he declared the Public Hearing closed.

Councilmember Douglas moved that Ordinance No. 15, 2020 be carried over to the September 28, 2020 meeting. Councilmember Reed seconded the motion.

Upon voice vote the motion to carry Ordinance No. 15, 2020 to the September 28, 2020 meeting passed with a 7-0 vote.

The meeting adjourned at 7:03 p.m.

/s/ Holly Taylor, Clerk-Treasurer