

REGULAR SESSION, COMMON COUNCIL, JANUARY 25, 2021

Be it Remembered that the Common Council of the City of Plymouth, Indiana, met in regular session on January 25, 2021. The meeting was held in the Council Chambers, on the second floor of the City Building, 124 N. Michigan St., Plymouth, Indiana and was called to order at 6:30 p.m.

Mayor Senter led the Pledge of Allegiance and Councilman Ecker offered prayer.

Senter presided for Council members Greg Compton and Duane Culp. As allowed by

Governor Holcomb's Executive Orders, Council Members Don Ecker, Jeff Houin, Robert Listenberger, Randy Longanecker, Shiloh Carothers Milner attended the meeting electronically.

Clerk-Treasurer Xavier and City Attorney Surrisi were also present

Council Members Houin and Culp moved and seconded to approve the minutes of the last regular Common Council session and the executive session meetings on January 11, 2020, as presented. The motion carried.

Council Members Ecker and Listenberger along with Clerk Treasurer Xavier and City Attorney Surrisi are trying to get together and discuss the Aquatic Center. The hope was to have this brought up again at the next meeting.

City Attorney Surrisi brought forward the discussion on renewing COVID Leave. He explained that this leave expired at the start of 2021. This benefit gave employees paid leave to stay home due to the COVID crisis. There was also a partially paid leave that allowed for the employee to use their benefit time along with the leave in order to extend the time off due to the virus. This was a benefit that is no longer required by federal law and Surrisi suggested that the City extend a benefit similar to this benefit. He explained that the County had extended their leave recently.

Council Member Compton asked what happens if an employee is symptomatic. Surrisi stated that the employee is asked to stay home until they are cleared of the virus.

Clerk Treasurer Xavier referred the opinion that the Council received in their packet that they received from New Focus HR. The advice was that if the City were to have an employee who was on COVID sick time at the end of 2020 and the beginning of 2021, to allow that. But since the leave effectively ended on December 31, 2020, she advised that a new paid COVID leave case should not start in 2021. There were three employees who were off at the end of the year and carrying over into 2021 with COVID. One of the employees had over 390 hours of sick time banked, plus four weeks of vacation time. At minimum, all current city employees have one week of paid sick leave, one week of paid vacation time and three days of paid personal days that they can use anytime that they are sick. In 2020, the City of Plymouth paid over \$116,000 in paid COVID time off. She stated that given the first day the president was in office, he eliminated 70,000 jobs, she believes that our city

REGULAR SESSION, COMMON COUNCIL, JANUARY 25, 2021

employees should be thankful for having a job, having a health care plan that pays as well as it does and for the benefit time that was already afforded to them. As a city we have seen local restaurants and businesses suffer and / or close because they could not keep up financially. She asked the council to deny extending paid COVID time off unless further mandated by the federal government.

City Attorney Surrisi emphasized that he agreed with allowing for a COVID case to carry over to the New Year and not “pull the rug out from beneath them”. This benefit was not required by any legal requirement and would be purely a choice of the Council to give this benefit to the employees. Mayor Senter added that it has seemed that the number of cases were going down recently and he did not believe that we would see as many new cases this year.

Listenberger asked if the city had received the \$320,000 from the CARES Act. Xavier explained that these funds used for Police and Fire wages. This money was given to the city to reimburse for the emergency personnel wages.

Surrisi added that in order to get these funds the city used the previous wages for the emergency personnel. After this money was in the City account, he believes that these funds could be used for many purposes that are not just police and fire. Xavier clarified that the state requires that each grant funding has to have its own separate fund. Because we applied for the grant funds to use for police and fire wages, that’s all that could be paid from that fund, per state accounting requirements. In turn this fund no longer has a balance.

Compton asked if employees were able to carry over sick time forever or just for a limited number of hours. Xavier stated that employees are each able to accrue and carry up to 400 hours of sick time.

Compton added that in order to be fair to the employees who did not use the time last year he believes that the benefit should be extended in order to promote employees to stay home when sick.

Xaver asked how many hours and for how long this will be extended. Compton stated that he would like to extend the benefits from last year, but not renew the total number of COVID benefits available for individual employees. In turn the government mandated amounts that were not used in 2020 would be available for use by employees for COVID related use. This benefit would extend to the end of the 2021.

Council Members Compton and Houin moved and seconded to extend the COVID benefits though the end of 2021 with no additional hours being added for the New Year. The motion carried.

City Attorney Surrisi presented Resolution No 2021-937, A Resolution of the Common Council of the City of Plymouth to Approve the Application of Roger Holston from Koonitz Lake

REGULAR SESSION, COMMON COUNCIL, JANUARY 25, 2021

Brewing Company a Commercial Revitalization Rebate Program Grant. Roger Holston was present to explain the work being done and answer questions.

Holston explained that they were building around the current buildings and redoing the siding and putting in new windows. They would be doing all of the labor for the project. He would just be looking for an interest subsidy rebate of the material costs.

Houin asked what the total material cost for this project would be. Holston stated that it would be around \$42,000 to 48,000.

Council Member Listenberger asked if the program was to reimburse the applicant with 20% of the cost the total amount requested. The program reimburses for 20% of the actual cost (less taxes), not to exceed the request.

Listenberger then stated that this would be \$9,600 for the City to pay out.

Council Member Longanecker asked if there were enough funds set aside for a reimbursement of this amount. Xaver stated that this money comes out of the Community Improvement Fund, which is funded by the City Development Fund. The original plan for the City Development Fund was to spend the interest only from the old hospital grant fund. At this time this interest in this account has been overspent.

Council Member Houin asked what overspent meant in this case. Xaver stated that it means that the city had spent more money from this fund than what interest was built over the past 35 years of the existence of the fund.

After an appropriate motion and second, council members voted to table this discussion until the next meeting on February 8, 2021. The motion carried.

Clerk Treasurer Xaver presented an Application for Exemption from the Licensing Requirement of Ordinance No. 1309 for Plymouth Knights of Columbus to solicit donations for Tootsie Rolls at the intersection of Michigan and Jefferson Streets, and at Kroger and Wal-Mart on May 7 and 8 of 2021. There was no rain date scheduled at the time.

After an appropriate motion and second, the council members voted to approve the Application for Exemption. The motion carried.

City Attorney Surrisi gave an update on the Stellar Communities Project. At the previous meeting for Stellar it was announced that the Bremen project had a change in the project and was no longer eligible for INDOT funding. In turn a different project will be funded by the OCRA funds. This would leave a small amount of INDOT funds that will be discussed at the next Stellar Community meeting.

REGULAR SESSION, COMMON COUNCIL, JANUARY 25, 2021

Mayor Senter offered the privilege of the floor.

Members Compton and Culp moved and seconded to accept the following communications:

- Minutes of the Board of Public Works and Safety meeting of January 11, 2021
- 01.25.21 Check Register
- 01.12.21 TRC Meeting Notes

The motion carried.

There being no further business to come before the Council, Council Members Milner and

Compton moved and seconded to adjourn the meeting. The meeting adjourned at 7:12 p.m.

APPROVED

Jeannine M. Xaver

Jeannine M. Xaver, IAMC, CMC
Clerk-Treasurer

Mark Senter

Mark Senter, Mayor