

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE  
COMMON COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF JASPER, INDIANA  
January 22, 2025**

A regular meeting of the Common Council of the City of Jasper, Indiana, was held on Wednesday January 22, 2025, in the Council Chambers of City Hall located at 610 Main Street, Jasper, Indiana.

**Call to Order.** Presiding Officer Mayor Dean Vonderheide called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

**Roll Call.** Clerk Treasurer Kiersten Knies called the roll.

	<u>In Person</u>	<u>Video</u>	<u>Absent</u>
Mayor Dean Vonderheide	X		
Council members:			
John Schroeder	X		
Chad Lueken	X		
Vince Helming	X		
Paul Lorey	X		
Kevin Manley	X		
Nancy Eckerle	X		
Philip Mundy	X		
City Attorney Renee Kabrick	X		
Clerk-Treasurer Kiersten Knies	X		

Knies announced that in order to have a quorum for the meeting, a majority of the council members must be in attendance. All of the council members were in attendance at the beginning of the meeting, which is a majority; therefore, there was a quorum for the meeting.

**Moment of Personal Reflection.** Mayor Vonderheide asked that all present take a moment for personal reflection.

**Pledge of Allegiance.** Mayor Vonderheide invited all those present to join him in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Approval of the Minutes.** The minutes from the Regular Council Meeting held December 18, 2024, were distributed to, and examined by the Council. A motion was made by Council member Paul Lorey and seconded by Council member Kevin Manley to approve the minutes from December 18, 2024, without corrections. Motion carried 7-0.

**State of the City.** Mayor Dean Vonderheide presented the State of the City Address. Clerk Treasurer Kiersten Knies provided a look at the City’s fund balances as of December 31, 2024.

**Ordinance No. 2024-27  
An Ordinance Amending the Unified Development Ordinance for the City of Jasper,  
Indiana, and Its Jurisdictional Area**

A motion was made by Paul Lorey and seconded by Vince Helming to read Ordinance No. 2024-27 by title only on the second reading. Motion carried 7-0.

City Attorney Renee Kabrick so read Ordinance No. 2024-27 by title only.

Thereafter a motion was made by Nancy Eckerle and seconded by Phil Mundy to approve Ordinance No. 2024-27 on the second reading. Motion carried 7-0.

A motion was made by Vince Helming and seconded by John Schroeder to read Ordinance No. 2024-27 by title only on the third and final reading. Motion carried 7-0.

City Attorney Renee Kabrick so read Ordinance No. 2024-27 by title only.

Thereafter a motion was made by Kevin Manley and seconded by Paul Lorey to pass and adopt Ordinance No. 2024-27 on the third and final reading. Motion carried 7-0.

### **Ordinance No. 2025-1**

#### **An Ordinance Establishing Rules and Regulations for the Adoption, Amendment or Release of Ordinances and Resolutions**

A motion was made by Paul Lorey and seconded by Vince Helming to read Ordinance No. 2025-1 by title only. Motion carried 7-0.

City Attorney Renee Kabrick read Ordinance No. 2025-1 by title only.

A motion was made by Phil Mundy and seconded by Vince Helming to pass and adopt Ordinance No. 2025-1 on the first reading. Further discussion was held.

It was determined that in Section 4, Item C, to scratch the word “either” change “or” to “and”. A motion was then made by Chad Lueken and seconded by Vince Helming to add a two-thirds majority to be able to suspend the 10-day requirement in Section 4 item C. Motion carried 5-2, with Kevin Manley and John Schroeder voting nay on the amendments.

A motion was then made by Phil Mundy and seconded by Vince Helming to approve Ordinance No. 2025-1 on the first reading with the amendments. Motion carried 7-0.

### **Encumbrances for 2024 into 2025**

Clerk Treasurer Kiersten Knies presented the previously distributed list of encumbrances for 2024 to be carried over to 2025 including the amount and the description of each. These encumbrances represent funds that were committed in 2024 but not fully expended. The total amount to be encumbered is \$8,166,886.34.

A motion was made by John Schroeder and seconded by Kevin Manley to approve the encumbrances for 2024. Motion carried 7-0.

### **President Pro Tempore for 2025**

A motion was made by Nancy Eckerle and seconded by Paul Lorey to appoint Phil Mundy to service as Council President Pro Tempore for 2025. Motion carried 7-0.

### **Northridge TIF Request**

Rueger Kerstiens requested council affirmation of the Northridge TIF plan between the City of Jasper and Kerstiens Development, Inc. to include a conditional expenditure agreement of up to \$1.1 million as well as a utility watermain reimbursement agreement of up to \$459,000.00. Kerstiens had originally requested the conditional expenditure agreement in lieu of the utility watermain extension agreement. Kerstiens admitted due to his confusion on the matter and the rising cost of materials, both were needed to achieve the goal of providing housing at the price point the city was looking for. Additionally, the City of Jasper was awarded a low interest residential infrastructure loan through the Indiana Finance Authority on behalf of Kerstiens Development, Inc., for the Northridge Subdivision. The Utility Service Board voted to approve a utility watermain extension reimbursement agreement for Kerstiens Development, Inc. at their January 21, 2025, meeting. Steve Lukemeyer, a member of the Greater Jasper School Board addressed the council with constraints the TIF imposes on the local school corporation and requested that the board determine that a Residential TIF is not appropriate in this situation and if it is that it sunset at 10 years. Council member Nancy Eckerle requested that more research be done on how to pass through excess value to the school corporation. Eckerle was also in favor of revisiting the request to sunset the TIF after ten years as originally requested.

Thereafter a motion was made by John Schroeder and seconded by Kevin Manley to reaffirm the TIF agreement to allow Kerstiens Development, Inc. a conditional expenditure agreement of up to \$1.1 million and remove the “in lieu of” language to allow a utility watermain extension reimbursement to Kerstiens Development, Inc. of up to \$459,000.00. Motion carried 4-3 with Nancy Eckerle, Chad Lueken and Vince Helming voting nay.

### **Donation Acceptance**

Clerk Treasurer Kiersten Knies requested the council accept a restricted donation in the sum of \$162,529.66 from a donor for the purpose of constructing a fire tower at the Parklands. The Park Board is aware of and amenable to the conditions of the donation.

Thereafter a motion was made by Kevin Manley and seconded by Paul Lorey to accept a restricted donation in the sum of \$162,529.66 for the purposes of the construction of a fire tower at the Parklands. Motion carried 7-0.

### **Regional Wellness Center Update and Discussion**

Mayor Vonderheide gave an update on the Regional Wellness Center project and timeline.

### **Uniform Conflict of Interest Disclosure Statement**

A motion was made by Paul Lorey and seconded by Kevin Manley to approve a Uniform Conflict of Interest Disclosure Statement from Nancy Eckerle. Eckerle is a Council Member, a member of the Board of Public Works and is employed by the Jasper Chamber of Commerce. Additionally, her nephew, Matt Eckerle, is principal of Baker Tilly, the city's municipal advisor. Motion carried 6-0, with Nancy Eckerle abstaining.

A motion was made by Kevin Manley and seconded by Chad Lueken to approve a Uniform Conflict of Interest Disclosure Statement from Josh Gunselman. Gunselman is Director of Community Development and Planning and is a Realtor with Sell 4 Free/Welsh Realty. Council member Nancy Eckerle requested more information on this disclosure. Motion carried 7-0.

A motion was made by Kevin Manley and seconded by Phil Mundy to approve a Uniform Conflict of Interest Disclosure Statement from Vince Helming. Helming, a member of the Common Council, is the owner of Helming Bros., Inc. Motion carried 6-0, with Vince Helming abstaining.

A motion was made by Kevin Manley and seconded by Paul Lorey to approve a Uniform Conflict of Interest Disclosure Statement from Kenny Hochgesang. Hochgesang is Fire Chief/Code Enforcement Officer. His son is a rep for Dinges Fire Company. Motion carried 7-0.

A motion was made by Nancy Eckerle and seconded by Chad Lueken to approve a Uniform Conflict of Interest Disclosure Statement from Leighton Hochgesang. Hochgesang is a Lieutenant on the Fire Department and is a rep for Dinges Fire Company. Motion carried 7-0.

A motion was made by Kevin Manley and seconded by Phil Mundy to approve a Uniform Conflict of Interest Disclosure Statement from Cale Knies. Knies is Personnel/Safety/Loss Control Director and a member of GIE/Bliss McKnight advisory committee. Motion carried 7-0.

A motion was made by Kevin Manley and seconded by Paul Lorey to approve a Uniform Conflict of Interest Disclosure Statement from Kiersten Knies. Knies is Clerk Treasurer. Her husband is part-owner of Knies Constructions, Inc, Cave Quarries, Inc. and Calcar Paving, Inc. Motion carried 7-0.

A motion was made by Nancy Eckerle and seconded by Vince Heming to approve a Uniform Conflict of Interest Disclosure Statement from Paul Lorey. Lorey is a member of the Common Council and employed by Hopf Equipment Inc. Motion carried 6-0, with Paul Lorey abstaining.

A motion was made by Kevin Manley and seconded by Nancy Eckerle to approve a Uniform Conflict of Interest Disclosure Statement from Phil Mundy. Mundy is a member of the Common Council and owner of Mundy Outdoor Sports. Motion carried 6-0, with Phil Mundy abstaining.

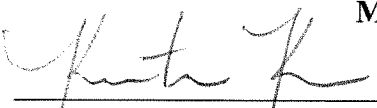
A motion was made by Nancy Eckerle and seconded by Vince Heming to approve a Uniform Conflict of Interest Disclosure Statement from Phil Schmidt. Schmidt is a member of the Utility Service Board and owner of Schmidt Contracting, Inc. Motion carried 7-0.

A motion was made by Pua Lorey and seconded by John Schroeder to approve a Uniform Conflict of Interest Disclosure Statement from Rob Young. Young is the General Manager of Utilities and a board member of IMPA. Motion carried 7-0.

**Adjournment.** There being no further business, a motion was made by Council member Kevin Manley and seconded by Council member Vince Helming to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried 7-0 and the meeting adjourned at 7:31 p.m.

The minutes were hereby approved \_\_\_\_ with X without corrections or clarification this 19<sup>th</sup> day of February 2025.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor Dean Vonderheide, Presiding Officer

Attest:   
\_\_\_\_\_  
Kiersten Knies, Clerk-Treasurer