CITY OF WEST LAFAYETTE
COMMON COUNCIL
MINUTES
JANUARY 9, 2014

The Common Council of the City of West Lafayette, Indiana, met in the Council Chambers at City Hall on January 9, 2014, at the hour of 6:30 p.m.

Mayor Dennis called the meeting to order and presided.

The Pledge of Allegiance was repeated.

Present: Bunder, Burch, Dietrich, Hunt, Thomas, and VanBogaert.

Absent: Keen

Also present were City Attorney Burns, Clerk-Treasurer Rhodes, Public Works Director Buck, Police Chief Dombkowski, Street Commissioner Downey, Human Resources Director Foster, Fire Chief Heath, WWTU Director Henderson, IT Director Newman, Parks Superintendent Payne, and Director of Development Poole.

Mayor Dennis asked to rearrange the agenda to accommodate our special guest, K-9 Kay, and the attendees here for his retirement. He asked that the Council advise that the Committee Standing Reports are on file.

Councilor Burch moved to rearrange the agenda. The motion was seconded by Councilor Hunt.

The motion passed by voice vote.

RETIREMENT RECOGNITION FOR K-9 KAY

Mayor Dennis explained that we have a ceremony tonight to show thanks to retiring K-9, Kay as well as her handler, Officer Jeff Dunscomb. He stated that Kay has been one of the tools we have used in fighting crime, and Officer Dunscomb has done an incredible job in dealing with a partner that needs maintenance 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and in utilizing that partner in a way that makes this community a much better place to live. Mayor Dennis noted that he has had interaction with police dogs, and stated that he might not be here today, on two separate occasions, if not for a K-9 unit. He is grateful for the well-trained K-9s used in greater Lafayette. He spoke of how K-9s were used in the past to generate fear and intimidate people, but thankfully those days have changed.

Police Chief Dombkowski stated that K-9 units are incredible and amazing, but because they are different from humans, this day is inevitable when they join our ranks. He stated that nationally, the work expectancy of a K-9 unit is seven to ten years. We have been fortunate to have Kay in the Department and on the streets of West Lafayette for eight years. Kay is 11 years old and has served us honorably and in an award-winning way. Chief Dombkowski noted that Officer Dunscomb started the K-9 program for West Lafayette more than a decade ago. He highlighted some of Kay's achievements, noting that Kay has been deployed over 305 times in addition to regular patrol duties and has assisted in the arrest of numerous criminal suspects.

Kay was on Olympic champion in 2006 and 2008. Kay once tracked a suspect from a convenience store to the suspect's front door. Chief Dombkowski stated that he is happy to say that Kay will remain with Office Dunscomb and his family.

Officer Dunscomb spoke of his partnership with Kay, noting that Kay is in the car with him all day when he works and with him at home. He stated that Kay has saved him a couple of times, and noted that the presence of the dog diffuses any type of situation before it escalates. He expressed his thanks and appreciation, and stated that Kay will go home and try to relax.

Mayor Dennis stated that the responsibility of being a handler for a K-9 is phenomenal. It is 24 hours a day. It is a full-time job that includes feeding foods that avoid stomach distress, making sure it can ride in the car well, and making sure it knows when to behave. The dog must also react well with the handler's family. Most importantly, the dog must understand how to do its job. Each time a K-9 is sent on a call, we broaden our scope of liability and if the dog does not perform as trained, it costs the City and the officer. It involves having a highly trained and highly skilled relationship that provides benefits to the community. Mayor Dennis noted that we market this place as one of safest communities in the State, and that is because of the sacrifices made by Police Officers, plus having the specialization of the K-9 handlers. He thanked Officer Dunscomb and Kay for what they have done for our City.

Officer Dunscomb, Chief Dombkowski, and Mayor Dennis answered questions from the Council regarding Kay and K-9s in general.

MINUTES

Councilor Burch moved for acceptance of the minutes of the November 25, 2013, Pre-Council Meeting, and the December 2, 2013, Common Council Meeting. Councilor Thomas seconded the motion, and the motion passed by voice vote.

COMMITTEE STANDING REPORTS

The reports are on file.

REPORT OF APC REPRESENTATIVE

There was no report.

PUBLIC RELATIONS

a. Mayoral Appointments:
    i. Historic Preservation Commission

Councilor Burch moved for the approval of the proposed Historic Preservation Commission list as distributed. Councilor Bunder seconded the motion.

Mayor Dennis noted that all of these people have expressed an interest in the Historic Preservation Commission and shown a willingness to serve. He read the names on the list, as follows: Kelly Busch, Susan Curtis, Philip Keller, Chris Kulesza, Linda Martin, Persis Newman, Jim Sondgeroth, Mary Whittaker, Council Representative Peter Bunder, Commission Consultant Kurt Wahl

In response to a question from Councilor Dietrich, Councilor Bunder stated that the next thing for the Commission is to have an organizational meeting. He stated that it has taken a while to get to this point, and they will need to discuss things such as the role of historic preservation in the State Street project.

The motion passed by voice vote.

ii. Area Plan Commission and Board of Zoning Appeals

Mayor Dennis stated that the appointee for the Board of Zoning Appeals is Larry Leverenz, and the appointees for the Area Plan Commission are Gerry Keen and Carl Griffin.

Councilor Burch moved to approve the Mayoral Appointments as listed for the Area Plan Commission and the Board of Zoning appeals. Councilor Hunt seconded the motion.

The motion passed by voice vote.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Ordinance No. 31-13 An Ordinance Requesting An Additional Appropriation For The Cumulative Firefighting Building And Equipment Fund (Prepared by the Clerk-Treasurer) PUBLIC HEARING

Mayor Dennis read Ordinance No. 31-13 by title only.

Councilor Burch moved for passage of Ordinance No. 31-13 on second and final reading, and that the vote be by roll call. The motion was seconded by Councilor Thomas.

City Attorney Burns stated we will need to republish for the public hearing, due to the cancellation of the Council meeting on Monday, January 6. It will be republished for the next meeting, and he asked that the item be postponed to that meeting.

Councilor Burch moved to postpone the second and final reading and the public hearing of Ordinance No. 31-13 until our next Council meeting. Councilor Hunt seconded the motion.

The motion passed by voice vote.

NEW BUSINESS:

Ordinance No. 01-14 An Ordinance To Approve Blanket Bond Coverage For 2014 (Prepared by the Clerk-Treasurer)

Mayor Dennis read Ordinance No. 01-14 by title only.

Councilor Burch moved for passage of Ordinance No. 01-14 on first reading, and that the vote be by roll call. The motion was seconded by Councilor Thomas.

Clerk-Treasurer Rhodes explained that this blanket coverage is a requirement in lieu of surety bonds for the Clerk-Treasurer, as well as a number of other officials of the City. She asked for two readings tonight so that it can be filed within ten days from the beginning of the year. She stated that we have used this approach for a number of years. It is cost-effective and allows us to increase our coverage.

There was no further discussion.

Clerk-Treasurer Rhodes called the roll call vote:

	AYE	NAY	ABSENT	ABSTAIN
Bunder	✔			
Burch	✔			
Dietrich	✔			
Hunt	✔			
Keen			✔	
Thomas	✔			
VanBogaert	✔			

Clerk-Treasurer Rhodes stated that the vote was 6 AYES and 0 NAYS.

Mayor Dennis announced that Ordinance No. 01-14 passed on first reading.

Councilor Burch moved to suspend the rules to consider Ordinance No. 01-14 for second and final reading. The motion was seconded by Councilor Dietrich.

The motion passed by voice vote.

Mayor Dennis read Ordinance No. 01-14 by title only.

Councilor Burch moved for passage of Ordinance No. 01-14 on second and final reading, and that the vote be by roll call. The motion was seconded by Councilor Thomas.

There was no discussion.

Clerk-Treasurer Rhodes called the roll call vote:

	AYE	NAY	ABSENT	ABSTAIN
Bunder	✔			
Burch	✔			
Dietrich	✔			
Hunt	✔			
Keen			✔	
Thomas	✔			
VanBogaert	✔			

Clerk-Treasurer Rhodes stated that the vote was 6 AYES and 0 NAYS.

Mayor Dennis announced that Ordinance No. 01-14 passed on first reading.

<u>Ordinance No. 02-14</u> An Ordinance To Name Depositories For The City Of West Lafayette (Prepared by the Clerk-Treasurer)

Mayor Dennis read Ordinance No. 02-14 by title only.

Councilor Burch moved for passage of Ordinance No. 02-14 on first reading, and that the vote be by roll call. The motion was seconded by Councilor Thomas.

Clerk-Treasurer Rhodes explained that this is an annual or biennial measure that is taken to permit us to use depositories for public funds and investment. She asked for two readings on this tonight.

There was no further discussion.

Clerk-Treasurer Rhodes called the roll call vote:

	AYE	NAY	ABSENT	ABSTAIN
Bunder	✔			
Burch	✔			
Dietrich	✔			
Hunt	✔			
Keen			✔	
Thomas	✔			
VanBogaert	✔			

Clerk-Treasurer Rhodes stated that the vote was 6 AYES and 0 NAYS.

Mayor Dennis announced that Ordinance No. 02-14 passed on second and final reading.

Councilor Burch moved to suspend the rules to consider Ordinance No. 02-14 for second and final reading. The motion was seconded by Councilor Thomas.

The motion passed by voice vote.

Mayor Dennis read Ordinance No. 02-14 by title only.

Councilor Burch moved for passage of Ordinance No. 02-14 on second and final reading, and that the vote be by roll call. The motion was seconded by Councilor Thomas.

There was no discussion.

Clerk-Treasurer Rhodes called the roll call vote:

	AYE	NAY	ABSENT	ABSTAIN
Bunder	✔			
Burch	✔			
Dietrich	✔			
Hunt	✔			
Keen			✔	
Thomas	✔			
VanBogaert	✔			

Clerk-Treasurer Rhodes stated that the vote was 6 AYES and 0 NAYS.

Mayor Dennis announced that Ordinance No. 02-14 passed on second and final reading.

<u>Ordinance No. 03-14</u> An Ordinance Providing For Temporary Loans And To Extend The Time For Repayment Of Temporary Loans Outstanding From 2013 (Prepared by the Clerk-Treasurer)

Mayor Dennis read Ordinance No. 03-14 by title only.

Councilor Burch moved for passage of Ordinance No. 03-14 on first reading, and that the vote be by roll call. The motion was seconded by Councilor Thomas.

Clerk-Treasurer Rhodes explained that this ordinance provides two items. One is to allow us to extend the time period to repay temporary loans in the vision and dental insurance payment fund past December 31. This is due to delays in receiving payments from our third-party COBRA vendor. She noted that this will be the last time we will need to do this as the new system will allow us to handle the accounting differently. The second part of the ordinance is to authorize temporary loan activity for 2014 from the WWTU to the General Fund, Parks and Recreation, and the three insurance payment funds. This is an estimate of what we need to start to year, but the funds will not be needed immediately. She explained that our tax draw comes in June and we frequently have to make loans from the Utility for cash flow purposes. She requested two readings tonight.

There was no further discussion.

Clerk-Treasurer Rhodes called the roll call vote:

	AYE	NAY	ABSENT	ABSTAIN
Bunder	✔			
Burch	✔			
Dietrich	✔			
Hunt	✔			
Keen			✔	
Thomas	✔			
VanBogaert	✔			

Clerk-Treasurer Rhodes stated that the vote was 6 AYES and 0 NAYS.

Mayor Dennis announced that Ordinance No. 03-14 passed on first reading.

Councilor Burch moved to suspend the rules to consider Ordinance No. 03-14 for second and final reading. The motion was seconded by Councilor Thomas.

The motion passed by voice vote.

Mayor Dennis read Ordinance No. 03-14 by title only.

Councilor Burch moved for passage of Ordinance No. 03-14 on second and final reading, and that the vote be by roll call. The motion was seconded by Councilor Thomas.

There was no discussion.

Clerk-Treasurer Rhodes called the roll call vote:

	AYE	NAY	ABSENT	ABSTAIN
Bunder	✔			
Burch	✔			
Dietrich	✔			
Hunt	✔			
Keen			✔	
Thomas	✔			
VanBogaert	✔			

Clerk-Treasurer Rhodes stated that the vote was 6 AYES and 0 NAYS.

Mayor Dennis announced that Ordinance No. 03-14 passed on second and final reading.

Ordinance No. 04-14 An Ordinance Requesting An Additional Appropriation And Reduction To The 2014 Budget (Prepared by the Clerk-Treasurer)

Mayor Dennis read Ordinance No. 04-14 by title only.

Councilor Burch moved for passage of Ordinance No. 04-14 on first reading, and that the vote be by roll call. The motion was seconded by Councilor Thomas.

Clerk-Treasurer Rhodes explained that this ordinance is a way to revise the budget for 2014 to allow us to implement a new chart of accounts which will be run in our old system and will be essential for going live with our new accounting system on April 1. The new chart of accounts more closely adheres to the State Board of Accounts configuration and provides more effective cost accounting. In order to accomplish this, there were three major changes made. One was to allocate employee benefits to the functions where those employees are located. Previously, the Clerk-Treasurer's budget served as the housekeeping budget for the City and contained all of the benefit costs for the property tax funds which encompass three-quarters of the City's employees. The second change will be a similar allocation for the property and liability insurance coverage of the City, which was again held primarily in the Clerk-Treasurer's budget and is now allocated functionally. The final change is, at the request of Mayor Dennis and Public Works Director Buck, to establish a Facilities Department in the General Fund and the dissolution of the old City Hall budget. She stated that in order to establish the Department, costs associated with building facility maintenance in the property tax funds—that would be the General Fund and the Parks Fund—were moved into the Facilities Department. In addition, the utility costs for other departments were moved into this Department. Clerk-Treasurer Rhodes emphasized that the total budget is the same. There are shifts within the General Fund among the Departments and between the General Fund and the Parks Department, largely driven by the items discussed. Four other funds had some adjustments. She stated that because we are in the process of having to rework the budget, we also took into account actual enrollments for benefits by employees, primarily health insurance. Those are usually estimated when doing the budget, but in this case we had both the actual premium costs and the enrollment, so it was possible to better allocate the funds based on what we expect the expenses to be. Clerk-Treasurer Rhodes explained that this ordinance is constructed in two parts. One is an additional appropriation that shows the increase of all of the line items that are increasing, and the second part is the budget reduction that reduces them. She stated that she believes this was a more clear way to present which items are going up and which are going down, although many of the changes are within the General Fund and could have been accomplished by a transfer resolution without an advertisement of a public hearing or the process of two readings. She requested the Council's support in taking this step in changing to a more modern accounting system and utilizing its capabilities with a new chart of accounts.

There was no further discussion.

Clerk-Treasurer Rhodes called the roll call vote:

	AYE	NAY	ABSENT	ABSTAIN
Bunder	✔			
Burch	✔			

Dietrich	✔			
Hunt	✔			
Keen			✔	
Thomas	✔			
VanBogaert	✔			

Clerk-Treasurer Rhodes stated that the vote was 6 AYES and 0 NAYS.

Mayor Dennis announced that Ordinance No. 04-14 passed on first reading.

Ordinance No. 05-14 An Ordinance To Amend Ordinance No. 23-13, To Fix The Salaries Of Appointed Officers, Employees, And Members Of The Police And Fire Departments Of The City Of West Lafayette, Indiana, For The Year 2014 (Submitted by Mayor John Dennis)

Mayor Dennis read Ordinance No. 05-14 by title only.

Councilor Burch moved for passage of Ordinance No. 05-14 on first reading, and that the vote be by roll call. The motion was seconded by Councilor Thomas.

Mayor Dennis stated that this ordinance is basically Part 2 of Ordinance No. 04-14 where a Facilities Director's position is established. A job description is provided. In response to questions from Councilor Burch, Mayor Dennis stated that we are looking to have the position filled in February. He explained that a goal for the position involves saving money on contracts by having a person on staff instead of contracting out for jobs. Another goal is to have a more comprehensive purchasing program for items that are used on a routine basis throughout the City for maintaining equipment and other items. He does not expect to have anyone work under the Facilities Director in the immediate future.

There was no further discussion.

Clerk-Treasurer Rhodes called the roll call vote:

	AYE	NAY	ABSENT	ABSTAIN
Bunder	✔			
Burch	✔			
Dietrich	✔			
Hunt	✔			
Keen			✔	
Thomas	✔			
VanBogaert	✔			

Clerk-Treasurer Rhodes stated that the vote was 6 AYES and 0 NAYS.

Mayor Dennis announced that Ordinance No. 05-14 passed on first reading.

Ordinance No. 06-14 An Ordinance To Establish The SAFER Grant Fund And Appropriate The SAFER Grant Award (Prepared by the Clerk-Treasurer)

Mayor Dennis read Ordinance No. 06-14 by title only.

Councilor Burch moved for passage of Ordinance No. 06-14 on first reading, and that the vote be by roll call. The motion was seconded by Councilor Thomas.

Fire Chief Heath explained that we have applied for and received the SAFER Grant, which is a federally funded grant from FEMA, in the amount of $1,155,000. The grant will pay for up to seven additional firefighters for two years. He requested approval of the ordinance so that we can accept those funds and set up the accounts to draw down the funds for payroll.

Mayor Dennis asked about the process that the Department went through to compete for and to be awarded the grant.

Chief Heath responded that it is an application process. As the City is growing, we are seeing a definite need for additional firefighters in our City. There are multiple calls at the same time more frequently than in the past. New buildings are getting bigger and taller. He stated that our staff is taxed when only eight or nine firefighters are searching a five-story building that houses 600 people. Receiving this grant will help us respond better and to multiple incidents. The Department will be more efficient, and our citizens will be safer.

Councilor Burch asked if this means we are currently short seven firefighters right now and if they would be hired immediately if the ordinance is approved.

Chief Heath responded yes.

Councilor Dietrich asked Chief Heath to compare us to the industry minimum standards.

Chief Heath responded that according to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) standards, which is basically the governing body that tells how to man a truck and respond to an incident, we are responding in a deficient manner the majority of the time.

Councilor Dietrich asked if that is by total members of the Department or if it is by deployment.

Chief Heath responded that it is by deployment of truck.

Councilor Dietrich asked how we rate with the standard for population per capita, per firefighter.

Chief Heath responded that the NFPA tells how to respond manpower per truck and how to respond to a working structure fire on a two-story residential home. To efficiently put out that fire in a safe manner that protects the firefighters and the citizens, the standard is to have an incident commander, a driver/operator of the truck, two crew members inside and two outside at all times, along with a search and rescue crew. The total to have is 14 people on a house fire. We do not meet that standard now; we rely on Purdue University, Wabash Township, or Lafayette Fire Departments. When we are relying on them, there is a time difference from the time we call them until they get to the scene. In the event that there is a natural disaster and those Departments need to cover their own territory and we cover ours, we could be deficient. He confirmed for Councilor Dietrich that these seven firefighters would bring us up to NFPA compliance and it would be two extra firefighters per shift.

Councilor Dietrich stated that he has concerns about the two-year timeframe. He read in the newspaper that there is an exit plan for some of our firefighters and it may even out, but he is concerned about the economy and the way things change. He noted that the grant itself is

subject to sequester funds, so there is a risk of another game in D.C. and the City would be responsible for these seven employees.

Chief Heath stated that he understands what Councilor Dietrich is saying and there is some truth to that. He stated that this will put at 15 firefighters per shift. There are some retirements coming. He does not anticipate that we would lose these individuals. He stated that he worked closely with Clerk-Treasurer Rhodes, and as we watch development to the west, he believes that we can keep the new employees. Chief Heath stated that has concerns because the City is getting bigger, not only in footprint wide, but we are also building up. These positions are needed not only for the safety of the citizens, but also for the safety of the firefighters.

Councilor Dietrich stated that he does not begrudge the Fire Department the personnel, but he is concerned that we are signing on for seven people with an unknown quantity, an unknown tax base, and there is no exit plan. It leaves us hanging in a lurch in two years hoping that we have the resources available.

Clerk-Treasurer Rhodes stated that this is not a matter of hoping. We have discussed plans for addressing the funding and looking at funding the fire service in its entirety. Some of these issues have been previously discussed by the Council. In building that plan for funding the fire service in the City, it is possible for us to support the fire protection that is clearly going to be necessary. It will be a matter of priorities and the Council will be asked to make those decisions. Whether we have the grant or not, the Council would be tasked with the same need to make these strategic decisions for the City fire protection. This grant just brings it to the fore.

Councilor Dietrich stated that it not only brings it to the fore, but it mandates or dictates our timetable. He understands that decisions will be made down the road, but we do not have an obligation of seven at a time; there would be other options available. He restated that he does not begrudge the personnel and he understands the reason behind it, but he feels that this would be biting off a hefty chunk at once.

Mayor Dennis stated that he understands what Councilor Dietrich is saying because he went through this process years ago with funding for police officers with the understanding that the municipality would absorb the officers. At that time there was more latitude on the part of what local government could do. He stated that as indicated by Clerk-Treasurer Rhodes, there are decisions that can be made by the Council from this point forward in regards to what our opportunities might be in order to help fund that. He stated that Chief Heath is correct about what we do currently. There is a level of codependency amongst the other agencies when it comes to a significant event in our community. We would not have the ISO rating that we have if we were putting our citizenry at risk, but opportunities to get a jump-start like this rarely exist. With the way things have gone, both up and down, in D.C., it is an opportunity that we are encouraging, but he does recognize that it does put us in a position of obligation. He stated that this is not a new concept for either the State or Federal Government. It is has been done many times in the past.

Councilor Dietrich stated that similar grants for police have been shied away from for the exact same reason that he is discussing. He stated that this program has been modified quite a bit because they had a difficult time getting communities to use it. He believes that it has been improved, but it is still an unknown at the end of it. He asked Chief Heath how long it takes to train a firefighter sufficiently.

Chief Heath responded that it takes approximately one year. It is a year of training and learning our policies and procedures on how we respond. Many applicants are already trained to Firefighter 1 and 2 at the State level and have medical certifications, but understanding how our City runs and our equipment takes a year. This will allow these firefighters to be trained as we begin providing services to the west.

Councilor Hunt stated that we have heard these numbers of people per truck before from former Fire Chief Drew, so that is not new information. She is pleased that we received the grant and the timing seems good. She stated that she is concerned about the long-term, including pensions, but she feels that Chief Heath has thought this out very well. She asked him to go into more detail about the larger more densely populated buildings as far as what it means when they are making the plans and when the Department has to start protecting them.

Chief Heath responded that he with the buildings in the community such as the 700 Northwestern Avenue building, Grant Street Station, Faith West, and some of the facilities that have been built in the last year, the Department is going weekly to walk the buildings, pre-planning them, understanding the construction materials, the fire suppression systems in them, how we will respond, where we will park our trucks, and how to deal with car fires in the underground parking garages. He explained that we have input on those buildings and how they are designed and how the systems work. At 700 Northwestern there are different types of hydrants that have storage connections that are quicker to use, so Indiana American Water is working with the Department to make those buildings safer. He stated that when walking a building of that size to find where an alarm came from, we need more firefighters to do so as well as have an outside command post. He noted that this week we have had several water line breaks in sprinkler systems at the same time, so the crews are being split and spread thin. He noted that when there is a sprinkler system break, they get a call that there is a water-flow alarm which means that water may be flowing to put out a fire, so they respond with the mentality that there is a fire. Purdue is also chasing water line breaks with the same mentality.

Councilor Bunder stated that, to echo Councilor Hunt, this is not a new problem and most of the people who live in West Lafayette think that all of our services are top-notch and all of Departments are fully staffed. They would probably be surprised to learn how understaffed we have been in the Fire Department. Now with the annexation and the increase of density in the near-campus neighborhoods, even if we did not get a grant we would have to hire these people. He asked if there is any way we can encourage the new hires to live in the City.

There was no further discussion.

Clerk-Treasurer Rhodes called the roll call vote:

	AYE	NAY	ABSENT	ABSTAIN
Bunder	✔			
Burch	✔			
Dietrich	✔			
Hunt	✔			
Keen			✔	
Thomas	✔			
VanBogaert	✔			

Clerk-Treasurer Rhodes stated that the vote was 6 AYES and 0 NAYS.

Mayor Dennis announced that Ordinance No. 06-14 passed on first reading.

Clerk-Treasurer Rhodes requested that there be two readings tonight. She explained that the purpose of this is to enable to accept the grant and there is a 30-day window to do that.

Chief Heath stated that the window began December 20.

Councilor Burch moved to suspend the rules to consider Ordinance No. 06-14 for second and final reading. The motion was seconded by Councilor Thomas.

The motion passed by voice vote.

Mayor Dennis read Ordinance No. 06-14 by title only.

Councilor Burch moved for passage of Ordinance No. 06-14 on second and final reading, and that the vote be by roll call. The motion was seconded by Councilor Thomas.

Councilor Hunt congratulated Chief Heath on acquiring the grant.

Mayor Dennis stated that it was a competitive grant.

Chief Heath stated that there were 2,500 applicants and we were one of 300 to receive it.

Clerk-Treasurer Rhodes called the roll call vote:

	AYE	NAY	ABSENT	ABSTAIN
Bunder	✔			
Burch	✔			
Dietrich	✔			
Hunt	✔			
Keen			✔	
Thomas	✔			
VanBogaert	✔			

Clerk-Treasurer Rhodes stated that the vote was 6 AYES and 0 NAYS.

Mayor Dennis announced that Ordinance No. 06-14 passed on second and final reading.

COMMUNICATIONS

► Councilor Burch expressed her appreciation for all of the City employees who have been out plowing the streets. She requested that the public drive with their lights on, especially at dawn and dusk.

Councilor Hunt stated agreed that the employees have done a great job at keeping us going.

► Councilor Bunder stated that he would like to turn attention briefly the Legal Report regarding the mention of the 111 Lutz Street fire. He stated that everybody goes to holiday parties, and the people in his district continue to be concerned about the investigation and would be interested in known where that stands.

City Attorney Burns responded that the State Fire Marshall has not completed the investigation, but he has received documents concerning any potential code violations. He has gotten into it deeply enough to realize that he has a conflict of interest which will remove him from the case. He has spoken to an attorney about representing the City to look at the matter and decide whether any ordinance violation complaints need to be filed by the City and take over that case.

Councilor Bunder asked how that works—if the City or City Attorney Burns hired the attorney.

City Attorney Burns responded that he makes a recommendation to the Mayor, and as the executive being in charge of enforcement, he chooses to accept the recommendation or not.

► Councilor Thomas stated that Councilor Bunder brought up a good point in the discussion about the SAFER grant about how the citizens may not know the staffing of the Fire Department. He asked if there are thoughts on if or how we communicate this information.

Mayor Dennis stated that we often indicate how many people we have on staff in each Department, but that number is often not directly associated with their ability to perform their job. Another topic we discuss is the mutual understanding and agreements that we have with other agencies, such as Tippecanoe County, Purdue, Lafayette, and the State. Because of our ISO rating, because our firefighters are so well trained, and because of the mutual agreements that have, the public is not at risk. Mayor Dennis stated that when he was a police officer in Lafayette, he went through this process to convince the Council that more police officers were needed and the presumption was that he was saying that City was not safe. But what we are saying is that we need additional staff to improve the quality of protection that we are providing. He emphasized that there is not a gap because of the mutual agreements. Lafayette has the same situation. Our community is well-protected, but individually we have mandatory overtime, vacations that are denied, and people that come in off-duty. This happens with both the Police and Fire Departments. So, the information is there, but the application of that information is not generally understood. He stated that it is a judgment call. He does not want to create panic based on a number without a valid explanation.

Councilor Bunder stated that he does not mean to imply that we are unsafe. He noted that if there is a house fire on Stadium Avenue, the street is clogged with fire trucks from the various Departments. The question becomes what happens in five years if there is a fire in the Menard's lumberyard, or in an apartment building that is ten stories tall. He believes that this is an easy sell, at least to his constituents. Everybody likes firefighters and policemen.

Mayor Dennis stated that there was a period of time when emergency services were the investment *du jour* for tax dollars. Our growth quotient was phenomenal over several years, and then it stopped. It did not stop because life got safer; it stopped because the money ran out. Then we started going backwards, with layoffs. He stated that he does not want to get to that point, and with his background he is staunch about his feelings about what we do with our money and he will take any opportunity to add more police officers or firefighters. He stated that the good news about annexation is that it comes with the revenue. The revenue kicks in and puts in the position to provide additional services, but as it stands right now with our firefighters, it would be nice to have that release valve. He does not want to look this opportunity in the eye and say no, and he believes it is a good investment.

<u>CITIZEN COMMENTS</u>
There were no comments.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business at this time, Councilor Burch moved for adjournment, and Mayor Dennis adjourned the meeting the time being 7:33 p.m.