

Regular Board of Works Meeting In Person and Hybrid/Zoom on August 18, 2025

The Board of Public Works and Safety met in regular session on Monday, August 18, 2025 at 4:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers of City Hall, City of Michigan City, on Hybrid/Zoom and streamed live on the "Access LaPorte County" Facebook page.

The meeting was called to order by President Skyler York

On the call of roll, the following Board Members were found to be present or absent.

Noted present in person: Candice Antisdell, Tamiko Smith, Gene Simmons, Peggy Moore, Skyler York (5)

Absent: None (0)

Also noted in attendance:

Corporate Counsel Amber Lapaich; Izabelle Galvin Ellis, Clerk of the Board of Works; Deputy Attorney Ryan Beall; Tim Werner, City Engineer; Wendy Vachet, Public Works Director; Jeff Bruder, Michigan City Fire Marshall; D'Marcus Briscoe, Code Enforcement Manager; Terry Greetham, Special Events Director; Sue Downs; Building Commissioner; Andrew Matanic, IT Director; Captain Greg Jesse, Michigan City Police Department; Shannon Eason, Superintendent of Parks Department; Shong Smith, Street Director; Drew White, ALCO.

Approval of Minutes

Mr. Simmons made a motion to approve the August 4, 2025 minutes as presented, seconded by Mrs. Moore and was approved with the following vote:

AYES: (5) Antisdell, Smith, Simmons, Moore, York

NAYS: (0) None

Awarding of Request for Quotes

Awarding of Request for Quotes for Walker Street Park/Gardens concrete slab.

Andrew Matanic, IT Director, addressed the Board explaining that they had received three (3) quotes and listed the prices:

B&E Concrete LLC in the amount of \$4,550.00

New Tech in the amount of \$15,000.00

Deutscher Construction LLC in the amount of \$8,500.00

Mr. Matanic stated that B&E Concrete was the lowest responsible and responsive quote and recommended that the project be awarded to B&E Concrete LLC.

Mrs. Moore asked when the project will start, and Mr. Matanic said within the next few weeks after the project is awarded and then the entire project with the shed will be completed by the end of September, early October.

Mr. Simmons made a motion to award the project to B&E Concrete LLC, seconded by Mrs. Moore and was approved with the following vote:

AYES: (5) Antisdel, Smith, Simmons, Moore, York

NAYS: (0) None

Fire Merit Commission

Results of recent election conducted to select the Democratic appointee to the Fire Merit Commission.

President York stated that there were two (2) nominees, Marlin Garner and Geoff Plummer, and listed the numbers from voting:

Marlin Garner received 22 votes.

Geoff Plummer received 6 votes.

President York stated that Marlin Garner won the election and will be a new member of the Fire Merit Commission as a Fire Department appointee.

Singing Sands Trail Property Acquisition

The Michigan City Parks Department requested to purchase parcels 28 and 28A from Maple City Ventures for the Singing Sands Trail.

President York stated that this is a continuation of purchasing parcels for the Marquette Greenway Singing Sands Trail and this is the procurement of property to continue adding to the trail.

Mrs. Smith made a motion to approve the purchase of parcels, seconded by Mrs. Antisdel and was approved with the following vote:

AYES: (5) Antisdel, Smith, Simmons, Moore, York

NAYS: (0) None

Request for Special Purchase

The Planning and Inspection Department requested a special purchase of two (2) 2021 Jeep Grand Cherokees, two (2) 2022 Jeep Renegades and one (1) 2022 Jeep Grand Cherokee, that are currently being leased, and buy them out for a total amount of \$101,911.05.

President York explained that the lease is up for the following vehicles and they're looking to purchase the vehicles and make them a permanent part of their fleet; further stating that they are well maintained and have low mileage.

Scott Meland, 200 Kenwood Place, made a comment.

Mrs. Smith made a motion to approve the special purchase, seconded by Mrs. Antisdel and was approved with the following vote:

AYES: (5) Antisdel, Smith, Simmons, Moore, York

NAYS: (0) None

Request for Special Event & Road Closure

The American Legion Post 451, American Legion Riders, requested the following:

- To host their annual Labor Daze Festival on September 6, 2025 from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.
- To close Washington St., from Skwiat Legion Ave. to May St., and Skwiat Legion Ave from Franklin St. to Washington St. from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Lisa Bullert, American Legion Post 451, addressed the Board explaining the closure and how this is their fifth year hosting this event; further explaining that Skwiat Legion Ave. would be a single-lane closure to ensure safety of getting in and out of the event and the Washington St. closure would be from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Captain Greg Jesse, Michigan City Police Department, and Shong Smith, Street Director, stated that they do not see an issue with the closures and approve them.

Mrs. Antisdel made a comment reminding people of the new 90-Day Policy for Special events. Madam Clerk Izabelle Galvin Ellis stated that they did submit their initial request form 90 days in advance.

Mrs. Antisdel made a motion to approve the special event and road closure, seconded by Mr. Simmons and was approved with the following vote:

AYES: (5) Antisdel, Smith, Simmons, Moore, York

NAYS: (0) None

Request for Gravel

Patricia Williams, 447 Walker St., requested to have gravel put on the side of her property at School St. and Walker St.

Nobody was present to address the request.

Tim Werner, City Engineer, addressed the Board stating that there's a grade going downhill from the Southshore Tracks, which caused the apron of the alleyway and Ms. William's driveway to erode away; further stating that the Street Department has re-graded the alley apron and they will re-gravel the City easement next to Ms. William's home.

Scott Meland, 200 Kenwood Place, made a comment.

Mrs. Antisdell made a motion to approve the request for gravel, seconded by Mr. Simmons and was approved with the following vote:

AYES: (5) Antisdell, Smith, Simmons, Moore, York

NAYS: (0) None

Request to Use City Easement

Mrs. Terry Browne-King, 336 N Carroll Ave., requested to plant flowers on the City Easement in front of her home.

Mrs. Terry Browne-King, 336 N Carroll Ave., addressed the Board explaining what she is wanting to plant native plants on the City easement.

Tim Werner, City Engineer, addressed the Board stating the rules of what can be planted; further explaining that trees have to be 8- inches tall and flowers need to be less than 36 inches tall.

Earnie Hollyhan, 302 Gladys St., made a comment.

Scott Meland, 200 Kenwood Place, made a comment.

Tommy Kulavik, 1316 Ohio St., made a comment.

Corporate Counsel Amber Lapaich made a comment to streamline this process and refer these requests to the Planning and Engineering Department to get permitting and tracking.

Mrs. Antisdell and Mrs. Moore made comments complimenting Mrs. Browne-King on her hard work and yard.

Mr. Simmons made a motion to approve the request to plant on City Easement, seconded by Mrs. Moore and was approved with the following vote:

AYES: (5) Antisdell, Smith, Simmons, Moore, York

NAYS: (0) None

Request for Road Closure for Special Event

High Praise Ministries requested to host their annual Community Picnic on Sunday, August 31, 2025 from 12 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. and to close part of the alley-way between Cedar St. and Spring St. for event-goers to cross safely during the event.

Nobody was present to address the request.

Captain Greg Jesse, Michigan City Police Department, stated that he has no issues with the closure and approves of it.

President York made a comment supporting the closure, stating that this is an annual event that is a big part of the community.

President York made a motion to approve the event and alley closure, seconded by Mr. Simmons and was approved with the following vote:

AYES: (5) Antisdel, Smith, Simmons, Moore, York

NAYS: (0) None

Payroll Claims Docket

Payroll Docket	August 8, 2025	\$823,853.25
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Mrs. Smith made a motion to approve the payroll claims docket as presented, seconded by Mr. Simmons and was approved with the following vote:

AYES: (5) Antisdel, Smith, Simmons, Moore, York

NAYS: (0) None

Claims Docket

August 18, 2025

Municipal	\$1,141,827.14
CDBG	\$0.00
Health & Life	\$38,364.00
Special Events	\$500.00
Zoo Casino Agreement	\$0.00
Workers Comp	\$0.00
ARP Local Fiscal Recovery	\$392,388.04
TOTAL CLAIMS:	\$2,573,079.18

Mr. Simmons made a motion to approve the claims docket as presented, seconded by Mrs. Smith and was approved with the following vote:

AYES: (5) Antisdel, Smith, Simmons, Moore, York

NAYS: (0) None

Proposal – Unfinished Business

Approval of proposal to repave City Hall parking lot. This was tabled from July 21, 2025.

Tim Werner, City Engineer, addressed the Board stating that he had received a second quote from NWI Asphalt in the amount of \$34,850, as opposed to Reith & Riley Construction's proposal in the amount of \$44,240.00, and recommended to award the project to NWI Asphalt.

President York asked if Mr. Werner is pleased with their work, and Mr. Werner stated yes.

Mrs. Antisdel asked why the parking lots are being repaved, and Mr. Werner stated that they have reached their lifeline and Mayor asked for the public parking lot to be repaved first and then next year the North parking lot will hopefully be paved.

President York asked if the project included striping, and Mr. Werner stated yes.

Mrs. Smith made a motion to approve the awarding of proposal to NWI Asphalt, seconded by Mrs. Antisdel and was approved with the following vote:

AYES: (5) Antisdel, Smith, Simmons, Moore, York

NAYS: (0) None

Request for Trash Receptacle & Sign Repair – Unfinished Business

Councilman Don Przybylinski is requesting the following items:

- Installation of trash receptacle at City bus stop at Northeast corner of Barker Ave. and Franklin St.
- Reconstruction of the stop sign guard rail triangle at the corner of Chicago St., 10th St. and Kentucky St.

This was tabled from July 7, 2025.

Shong Smith, Street Director, addressed the Board stating that the trash receptacle has been relocated to the corner by the bus stop at the Northeast corner of Barker Ave. and Franklin St.

Mr. Smith stated that for the guard rail, they are looking at removing it, repaving the triangle and striping it.

Mrs. Antisdel made a motion to remove the trash receptacle issue from the pending item list and keep the guard rail request on the pending item list for the September 2, 2025 Board meeting, seconded by Mrs. Smith and was approved with the following vote:

AYES: (5) Antisdel, Smith, Simmons, Moore, York

NAYS: (0) None

Awarding of Bid – Unfinished Business

Awarding of bid for the demolition of 901 Manhattan St. This was tabled from July 7, 2025.

Corporate Counsel Amber Lapaich stated that she had reached out to the Bankruptcy Trustee and they plan on abandoning several properties, including 901 Manhattan St., so the Board will need to wait for the order to abandon before awarding the demolition and asked the Board to table the request until the next meeting for the order.

Tommy Kulavik, 1316 Ohio St., made a comment.

Mrs. Moore made a motion to table the awarding of demolition until the September 2, 2025 Board meeting, seconded by Mrs. Smith and was approved with the following vote:

AYES: (5) Antisdell, Smith, Simmons, Moore, York

NAYS: (0) None

Public Comment

Tommy Kulavik, 1316 Ohio St., made a comment thanking the Board for removing the Meat Truck Transient License Request from the Board of Works Agenda.

Mr. Kulavik made a comment about vacant structures and how there are a large number of unoccupied structures throughout our City.

Earnie Hollyhan, 302 Gladys St., made a comment stating that our Vector Control should help clear the alleyways of weeds and overgrown grass, specifically between Gladys and Emma St.

Scott Meland, 200 Kenwood Place, made a comment stating that he thinks the green dumpster next to City Hall should be taken away.

Mr. Meland made a comment stating that we should have a fee schedule for street closures.

Mr. Meland also made a comment asking if there have been any City Departments enforcing the new ordinances on code and trash, further explaining that there should be follow-up with the new ordinances.

Demolition Hearing

Public Hearing on Order to Demolish Unsafe Building at 1605 Franklin St. in Michigan City, Indiana

Petitioner D'Marcus Briscoe, Code Enforcement Manager, Sue Downs, Building Commissioner, Jeff Bruder, Fire Marshall, Tim Werner, City Engineer, Wendy Vachet, Director of Public Works, were present on behalf of the City of Michigan City and were sworn in.

Respondent Werner Graf, 2747 Audubon St., New Orleans, LA, appeared in person and without counsel and was sworn in.

Witnesses Jeff Wright, 652 Quail Ridge Rd., LaPorte, IN, and John Vode, Precision Maintenance Solutions, and Fernando Patino, Building Preservationist, appeared in person and without counsel and were sworn in.

Corporate Counsel Amber Lapaich set the record, stating that an Order to Demolish was issued by the Planning Department on or about July 9, 2025, to Graf Dairy LLC and Werner Graf II regarding the property at 1605 Franklin St.

Evidence was heard and given by petitioner D'Marcus Briscoe, Code Enforcement Manager, stating that after inspecting the property, he found that the roof collapsed and the first floor is collapsed into the basement and concluded that the building is structurally impaired and unsafe for anybody at the property, a fire hazard, a public health hazard and a vacant, blight to the community, therefore himself, his predecessor Christine Vanderborg, Sue Downs, Building Commissioner, and Tim Werner, City Engineer, all agreed with the Order to Demolish. Mr. Briscoe explained that Werner Graf, Graf Dairy LLC, has owned the property for three (3) years, and that Mr. Graf had not presented a plan for the structure until after the Order to Demolish was issued.

Deputy Attorney Ryan Beal asked the respondent, Werner Graf, if he had any questions, and discussion ensued between Mr. Graf and Mr. Briscoe on how the structure is a safety hazard to the community, and how Mr. Briscoe came to his conclusion to demolish.

Evidence was heard and given by witness Sue Downs, Building Commissioner, stating Mr. Graf had a demolition permit that was expired in March of 2025 for the structure but his contractor did not have workers comp insurance until March 2025 and did not register in Cloudpermit until April 28, 2025, and with that the demolition order was issued on July 9, 2025; further explaining that the building is not fully secured allowing it to be broken in to several times and catching on fire and agrees with Mr. Briscoe that the building should be demolished.

Deputy Attorney Ryan Beal asked Mr. Graf if he had any questions, and discussion ensued between Mr. Graf and Mrs. Downs on how the structure is a safety hazard to the community due to it not being properly secured.

Evidence was heard and given from witness Jeff Bruder, Fire Marshall, stating that a fire occurred at the building on August 28, 2023 and believes that the property should be demolished for public safety purposes.

Deputy Attorney Ryan Beal asked Mr. Graf if he had any questions, and discussion ensued between Mr. Graf and Mr. Bruder on how the structure is a safety hazard to the community due to it not being properly secured.

Evidence was heard and given from witness Tim Werner, City Engineer, stating that the building does not seem structurally sound due to their being no roof or flooring, and is

worried either the building will fall in on itself or the front façade will collapse forward onto the sidewalk; further stating that he agrees with Mr. Briscoe's decision to demolish the building.

Deputy Attorney Ryan Beal asked Mr. Graf if he had any questions, and discussion ensued between Mr. Graf and Mr. Werner on the integrity of the building and whether or not it will collapse.

Evidence was heard and given from witness Wendy Vachet, Public Works Director, stating that she had previously met with Mr. Graf about his plans to secure the building, and repair the building because it does have steel framing and saving the façade, but it is a very technical plan, and also provide contracts and a schedule of when the project will be complete so it's no longer a concept; further stating that she agrees with Mr. Briscoe on the demolition of the building.

Evidence was heard and given by respondent Werner Graf, giving the history of the building, the vision and plan for the future of the building; stating that he was originally going to demolish the building but found that it does have a steel structure and it is in good condition, so they changed plans to refurbish the building; further asking the Board to give him and his team 100 days to complete the demolition of the building and save the façade.

Deputy Attorney Ryan Beal asked if there were any questions, and discussion ensued between Ms. Vachet and Mr. Graf on the concept and actions going forward with the project with a schedule.

Evidence was heard and given by witness Jeff Wright, 652 Quail Ridge Rd., La Porte, IN, who is Mr. Graf's structural engineer and submitted evidence to the Board as Exhibit A; further explaining that the structure is sufficient and adequate to preserve the façade of the building.

Deputy Attorney Ryan Beal asked if there were any questions, and discussion ensued between Ms. Vachet and Mr. Wright on the structural integrity of the building and the bracing system that will be used to save the façade.

Evidence was heard and given by witness John Vode, Precision Maintenance Solutions, stating his plan to secure the structure of the building and the type of bracing systems that can be used, but won't know what system to use until the building is cleared out.

Mrs. Smith asked what the 100-day timeline looks like for securing the building, and discussion ensued between Mr. Vode, Mr. Graf, Ms. Vachet and Fernando Petino regrading the timeline and that the next steps to clear out the building, then do another assessment before deciding on the bracing system.

President York asked Building Commissioner Sue Downs if she can review the plans or if she would like to have a structural engineer review the plans with her. Ms. Downs stated that she would have the City Engineer review the plans and request benchmarks and footings in the project.

Mrs. Moore asked how long has this plan been in place for this project. Mr. Graf did not answer the question and stated that he has been working with his witnesses for over two and half years.

Discussion ensued between Mrs. Moore and Mr. Graf on his history with Michigan City and the properties he owns.

Mr. Simmons made a comment about his concern for the building and its integrity and secureness.

Mr. Graf and Ms. Vachet made their final comments.

Mrs. Antisdell made a motion to take the Order of Demolition under advisement and to make a motion at the next Board meeting on Tuesday, September 2, 2025, seconded by Mrs. Moore and was approved with the following vote:

AYES: (5) Antisdell, Smith, Simmons, Moore, York

NAYS: (0) None

Mrs. Antisdell made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Mrs. Moore and was approved with the following vote:

AYES: (5) Antisdell, Smith, Simmons, Moore, York

NAYS: (0) None


BOW President, Skyler York


BOW Clerk, Izabelle Galvin Ellis