



GOSHEN COMMON COUNCIL

Minutes of the JULY 28, 2025 Regular Meeting

Convened in the Council Chamber, Police & Court Building, 111 East Jefferson Street, Goshen, Indiana

At 6:01 p.m., assisted by Mayor Gina Leichty, Calla Hobbs (a student at Goshen Intermediate School) called the meeting to order and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor Leichty asked Clerk-Treasurer Aguirre to conduct the roll call and these were the results.

Present: Linda Gerber (At-Large) Phil Lederach (District 5) Doug Nisley (District 2)
Megan Peel (District 4), Donald Riegsecker (District 1) Matt Schrock (District 3)
Council President Brett Weddell (At-Large)
Youth Adviser Abril Reyes (non-voting)

Absent: None

Approval of Minutes:

Mayor Leichty asked the Council's wishes regarding the minutes of the May 19, 2025 Regular Meeting and June 13 Education/Work Session as prepared by Clerk-Treasurer Aguirre. Councilor Nisley moved to accept the minutes as presented. Councilor Schrock seconded the motion. **Motion passed 7-0 on a voice vote.**

Approval of Meeting Agenda:

Mayor Leichty presented the agenda as prepared by the Clerk-Treasurer. Councilor Peel moved to approve the agenda as presented. Councilor Lederach seconded the motion. **Motion passed 7-0 on a voice vote.**

Privilege of the Floor:

At 6:03 p.m., Mayor Leichty invited public comments on items germane to the work of the Council that may not be already on our agenda this evening.

Mayor Leichty reminded the audience that the Council is responsible for making laws related to public safety, infrastructure, land use, zoning, utilities and budgeting that are within the limits defined by Indiana law and within the City's geographical boundaries.

The Mayor said that although in recent months there have been a number of speakers who have expressed their grief and urgency around international conflicts and humanitarian crises, Councilors govern locally within a legal framework and are not allowed to speak to federal and international issues outside their jurisdictional authority.

The Mayor said, "All requests and concerns related to international issues should be relayed to our Senators, Banks and Young, or Representative Yakym. We also cannot petition federal issues outside our official capacity. And the reason for this is that we are respecting the structure of government to which we've been elected. It is not a sign of disengagement or a lack of concern or compassion for those impacted."

Mayor Leichty said she also wanted to address the escalation of rhetoric around some of these issues. She said there have been Council members who have been accused by some speakers, during privilege of the floor, of being complicit in genocide. Just this week, outside her office, the Mayor said someone wrote accusations in chalk towards her on the sidewalk.



The Mayor continued, "I just want to remind you that there are real risks associated with these types of misconstruing of people's character and our intent, and there can be dangerous consequences as a result."

Mayor Leichty said on June 24, an angry man who had petitioned the President for a pardon if he killed a Democrat mayor, was stopped by Indiana State police before he reached Mayor Robert Listenberger's home in Plymouth, just 50 miles from Goshen. The Mayor said, "Inflammatory language can escalate, particularly towards women in office. So, I want to reiterate. We must protect lawful civic dialogue, even when we passionately disagree, especially when we passionately disagree."

"The Councilors here will tell you that there are many times that we vehemently disagree, but we've made it a priority in our policy to do so respectfully without denigrating each other's character, and without fictionalizing intent behind any of the decisions that we are called to make, particularly those that are difficult."

"So again, I want to say that our Council members continue to show respect and restraint while listening carefully during privilege of the floor. We hear your concerns, but we are staying focused on what we are lawfully permitted and legally allowed to do."

Mayor Leichty then reminded speakers, again, to address the Council on issues that are germane to the Council's jurisdiction. She said each speaker would be given up to three minutes, and thanked them in advance for maintaining clarity, mutual respect and purpose in their conversations.

James Loewen of Goshen expressed concern about the closure of the City's Recycling Center, 802 North Indiana Ave., in July due to abuse by people from Goshen or outside the area. He wished City officials luck in resolving the issues so the facility can remain open.

Loewen said perhaps the City can install more surveillance cameras and when violators are identified, perhaps increase the penalties for offenders – higher fines or perhaps "naming and shaming" offenders. He added, "I think the City deserves it financially. I think recycling has been a benefit from the for the bottom line, and it's also something good for all of us"

Mayor Leichty thanked Loewen and said the recycling center has challenged staff. She noted that the City provides curbside recycling for all residents and that most of the people who have used the recycling center are coming from outside the City because Goshen was the last remaining recycling center in the county.

Mayor Leichty said the City has an agreement with the county to provide recycling service. She said, "What we did not realize when we signed that agreement with the county was that the other available recycling centers throughout the county were going to immediately close, leaving Goshen ... for managing everybody's recycling."

"Now, while the vast number of people who use the recycling center do so responsibly, those who don't make an extraordinary amount of work and a dangerous amount of work for our City employees, (dumping) everything from dead chickens to bed-bug infested mattresses. And it's taken a herculean effort from our staff to keep up with those who choose to use it irresponsibly."

"And that's why all of the other recycling centers have closed, because we cannot seem to get public cooperation in handling items properly. So, we're continuing to evaluate that we're looking at what options are available to us, but for the time being, we don't plan on opening in the near future until we are able to find an alternative solution."

Mayor Leichty said the City added cameras, but the amount of time it took to review the footage and identify people and follow up and issue tickets "has not been commensurate with the time we've increased the fine level. And the increased fines have not prevented people from misbehaving as well."



Mayor Leichty said the City also added fencing and considered a pay gate or investing more funds at the site. She said the only feasible management tool would be to provide staffing at all times the recycling center was open and that would be financially impossible for the City, particularly because of impending budget cuts.

"We've made some very earnest efforts to try to accommodate this since I've been in office in 2023, and at this point are just coming up short in spite of the creativity of our team," the **Mayor** said.

In response, **Loewen** asked if the City has had any negotiations with other municipalities about resuming recycling.

Mayor Leichty said, "Every facility that I am aware of has simply given up." She said East Goshen Mennonite Church had recycling bins but could not maintain this service with volunteers and closed after two years. However, people continued dumping items on the church's lawn. And she said the same will likely happen at the City's closed recycling facility.

Council President Weddell asked if it might be possible to have recycling at the City Environmental Center, which accepts yard waste, is privately managed and has a secure site.

Mayor Leichty asked **City Director of Public Works & Utilities Dustin Sailor** to respond to that idea.

Sailor said, "We discussed that today. That's been evaluated to some extent. Years ago, the gatehouse was right up by the entrance. It's been moved back toward the actual recycling area for wood products to facilitate and track who goes in and out because the only spot for recycled materials would be up closer towards the gate, and we'd have to move that gatehouse closer to be able to track and monitor."

Councilor Schrock said that while the recycling center was behind the East Goshen Mennonite Church, "there was never any dumping outside those containers over there." **Mayor Leichty** said, "That's actually not true. Their volunteers had to go out regularly and clean up the materials there." **Councilor Schrock** said he was surprised to hear that because he visited a few times a week and never saw anything on the ground.

Councilor Schrock said he wanted to make sure illegal dumping wasn't just considered an East Goshen problem.

Mayor Leichty said, "It's not Goshen residents who are presenting this issue. It's people outside the City who are taking advantage of a helpful resource rates here in the City for illegal dumping." **Council President Weddell** said illegal dumping has a problem everywhere in the county.

Glenn Null of Goshen agreed that illegal dumping is problem he has even seen in his neighborhood. He said old mattresses are sometimes dumped outside homes and even at schools. He said he has called police over this issue. **Null** said he hasn't attended Council meetings lately because the school board meets at the same time, but remembers when Goshen had a Republican mayor – a time "when the City Council actually had their job and they did their job. They didn't give up any of their power to the department heads or the mayor. They took responsibility for what they did ... and they stood up to the mayor."

Null added, "I suggest that maybe the Council needs to look at what they really are supposed to do, not what they've degenerated down to. If you don't exercise your power, you lose your power ... I'd like to see it turned back to where you are responsible for what you are, and don't give that power up to anybody."

Ana Loucks of Goshen spoke extensively about the privileges some people in Goshen have and others do not. She also called for all people to be treated well. **Loucks** said: "It is a true privilege to be standing before you today on this weekday, at this time in this building – a building that sparks memories from 10 years ago, when I first experienced the Goshen Police Department in person, sitting in the passenger seat of a car that had just been pulled over."



Loucks said, "I had the privilege of not being questioned, while my partner was forced to get out, handcuffed and made to stand behind our car for 20 minutes, as Goshen police, harassed and bombarded him with the same kind of questions: 'Are you sure you're not related to the thief? Are you sure you're not covering for him? Are you sure he's not your cousin or nephew?'"

"You see, my partner doesn't have the same privilege as I do, of being born with far less melanin in his skin, and neither did the kid who stole ... It is a privilege that I was born in the country I reside in, and my belonging is not questioned because I look like I belong. It is a privilege to not have to ask off work in order to be here. It's a privilege that I have transportation that I have in it, and a computer to look the needed information and details of this meeting. "It's a privilege that English is my first language, and I can fluently read and write a nastily confusing and utterly nonsensical language that just so happens to be the only one this agenda is written in, and the only one spoken in the whole of city meetings. It is a privilege that I am familiar with the formal etiquette, academic and practiced literary language and the silent rules of the type of governance and process that is used in City Council meetings.

Loucks continued, "It's a privilege that I went through our democratic system, and held several 30-plus minute meetings with the representative of then-Senator Braun, now, Governor Braun. It's a privilege that my outward appearance made Senator Braun's representative comfortable enough to say things like, 'The thing I hate about Mexicans is their beautiful brown skin and their glowing white teeth.' It is a privilege that I am not used to incredibly racist remarks casually said to me.

"It is a privilege that consequences are usually minor when I do not use the subjectively and arbitrarily correct amount of self-restraint when I communicate my thoughts and feelings to someone

"I mention these privileges, because on the other side of the coin are barriers and if that coin always shows just one side, we cannot begin to understand how our sometimes silent privileges can be silent barriers for someone else. I do not come to you today with the simple goal of venting. You are the faces of our City.

"And it would be my privilege to work with you in breaking down the known and unknown barriers that exist for a large portion of our population – a population that Goshen should be grateful for, and proud of – one that we should all stand beside and support. I would also like to note that clearing barriers and obstacles is the prerequisite. Once the path to City Council is accessible, it is the building of bridges that will truly allow equitable connection."

Loucks closed with the following:

"Recently a friend from Palestine told me the story of the Kafiya, which is now seen all over the world as a sign of solidarity. Palestinian farmers wore them in order to keep the sun off their necks and shoulders. Then the Israeli occupation targeted people who wore Kafiyas. And instead of this small population putting away Kafiyas and ending decades-long tradition, everyone wore Kafiyas. Because how can you easily target a farmer in a Kafiya when everyone is wearing a Kafiya?"

"I wonder what is Goshen's Kafiya? How can we stand together as a community made up of human beings and genuinely look out for and support our literal neighbors? Is it possible? I don't know. But I'm really tired of not trying." The Mayor thanked Loucks for her comments.

Peter Miller of Goshen said, "I just want to say I love public services. I love the public library. I love roads, I love having plumbing, etc., So I just want to voice my full-throated support of any taxes you're able to raise to cover the shortcoming caused by Senate Bill 1 (property tax reduction). I just was reading through the notes and saw it was like an estimated 40% cut to the budget."



Mayor Leichty interrupted Miller and said he would have an opportunity to voice his support later in the meeting.

At 6:28 p.m., Mayor Leichty closed the public comment period.

1) Presentation: Induction of the City of Goshen into the Ductile Iron Pipe Century Club

Paul Hanson, the regional director of the Ductile Iron Pipe Research Association (DIPRA), a nonprofit trade association that represents manufacturers of ductile iron pipe and offers recognition to utilities with century old pipe, or cast iron. DIPRA founded the Cast Iron Pipe Century Club in 1947 to publicly recognize utilities that have cast iron pipe that has served for at least 100 years. Hanson said Goshen was joining almost 600 other water utilities to achieve this recognition.

Hanson said City Director of Public Works & Utilities Dustin Sailor did some research and discovered that the first cast iron water mains in Goshen were installed before 1895. He said an article at that time in the *Goshen Times* noted the installation of 1½ miles of pipe in the downtown core area and another six or seven miles had also been put in primarily to replace wooden water mains. He said the installation was conducted by plumbing professional and a Goshen resident by the name of C.E. Kurtz. He said the records indicated that the majority of those cast iron mains, especially in downtown area that were installed around that time, continue to provide service today.

"Longevity of service such as this can only be achieved by excellence in pipe, design, installation, and operations and maintenance over an extended period of time," Hanson said. "Those folks who made the commitment to iron pipe over a century ago made a wise decision that the ratepayers of Goshen are still enjoying today."

Hanson said this presentation also allows DIPRA "to recognize the daily commitment of your superintendent of water treatment and sewer, Marv Shepherd, and all his fellow engineering and professionals, water professionals, both past and present, in providing the citizens of Goshen with safe, plentiful, and reliable drinking water, something we can't really do without."

Hanson presented the City with a plaque welcoming the City of Goshen into the Ductile Iron Pipe Century Club.

2) City financial report and budget update (Clerk-Treasurer's Office)

Clerk-Treasurer Richard Aguirre delivered a financial and budget update to Councillors.

BACKGROUND:

In a July 28, 2025 memorandum to the Common Council, Deputy Clerk-Treasurer Jeffery Weaver wrote that he was attaching financial reports summarizing the budget and cash balance performance for Civil City funds included in the 2025 budget, which was approved by the Council in October 2024. These reports were intended to provide a reasonable understanding of the City's financial position. They were unaudited and may require some interpretation.

Fund Balance Report

This report of the reconciled cash balance of budgeted funds for June 30, 2025, illustrated the City's liquidity position across all funds and demonstrating that each fund maintained a sufficient balance to support budgeted expenditures.

Budget Report – Revenues

Weaver wrote that this page summarized revenue collections for each fund through June 30, 2025, showing progress toward projected revenue levels. Some funds receive the levy in two allotments in June and December (General, Debt Service, MVH, Cumulative Fire, Park & Recreation, Aviation, CCD, Cumulative Sewer).



Budget Report – Expenditures

Weaver wrote that this report displayed expenditures incurred to date for each fund, allowing for an assessment of spending trends relative to annual appropriations, with an expected 50% of the budget left at this point in 2025.

Budget Report – Expenditures in the General Fund

Weaver also wrote that the last page broke down the General Fund by department, providing a focused view of each department's budget performance to date.

SUMMARY OF JULY 28, 2025 COUNCIL DISCUSSION OF CITY FINANCIAL REPORT:

Mayor Leichty invited a presentation from Clerk-Treasurer Aguirre.

Aguirre provided an overview of his City financial report and budget update. Key points:

- Deputy Clerk-Treasurer Weaver is on vacation and "wisely chose to go to a place without cell phone service."
- This financial report shows financial activity through the first half of the year.
- The City is taking in what we should be taking in and spending what we should be spending.
- The fund balance report shows higher revenue and that's because the City received its June levy payment.
- The City will get another levy payment in December, but June is usually higher because many people pay off their entire yearly property tax bills in June.
- The City had a \$111 million cash balance at the end of June, primarily due to the larger levy payment.
- The City had some larger expenditures, including a payment of \$292,763.53 to the Fire Pension Fund and a payment of \$153,553.20 to the Police Pension Fund.
- There are some new budget lines for expenditures that are "zeroed out" due to a lack of activity and will eventually be used to pay bond expenses.
- The final page shows the department expenditures in the General Fund, which shows that a little over 50% of budgets have been spent.
- Variations in the spending are normal, with some departments spending more than 50% and some less.

Noting the variations in department spending, Mayor Leichty said the report showed the Community Relations Commission (CRC) has spent 74% of its budget. She said the CRC sponsors two large yearly events, one in the spring and one in the fall, and so a large portion of that budget has already been spent on the first event of the year. The Mayor said the two events are the International Women's Day and the Indigenous People's Day Celebration. She said in next year's budget there will be an income line to offset those expenditures. So, she said it should appear differently in future budgets, because the City will have ticket sales for the spring event.

Council President Weddell noted that the report actually showed that the CRC has 74% of its budget remaining.

Mayor Leichty said, "You're right. So, actually we've spent a lot less."

Mayor Leichty invited a motion from the Council to approve the financial and budget report.

Councilors Weddell and Riegsecker made a motion to approve the budget and financial report. **On a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously, a by a 7-0 vote.**



3) Ordinance 5230 - Additional Appropriations

Mayor Leichty called for the introduction of Ordinance 5230, *Additional Appropriations*. At this point, Councilor Peel said she had to recuse herself (because of her employment with Lacasa, one of the intended recipients of one of the proposed appropriations). Councilor Peel left the Council chamber.

Council President Weddell asked the Clerk-Treasurer to read Ordinance 5230 by title only, which was done. Weddell/Gerber made a motion to approve Ordinance 5230 on First Reading.

Council President Weddell said Ordinance 5230 included an expenditure for Lacasa. He announced that he serves the board of Lacasa, adding "it is an unpaid position, and I have no financial interest in Lacasa."

Clerk-Treasurer Aguirre said, "Councilor Peel did bring to my attention that there are other items on Ordinance 5230 she would have liked to vote on, so we'll look into making sure that future appropriations or category transfers involving Lacasa are separate so that she can participate."

BACKGROUND:

Ordinance 5230, *Additional Appropriations*, was seeking the Common Council's authorization to spend additional and available money from various accounts. The Mayor and Clerk-Treasurer proposed this ordinance because the Council is the City's fiscal body which authorizes the City's budget and any budget adjustments.

In a July 28, 2025 memorandum to Councilors, Deputy Clerk-Treasurer Jeffery Weaver wrote that an appropriation is "permission to spend available money" and is tied to a specific fund. Within a fund there are four spending categories (Personnel, Capital Expenditures, Supplies and Other Services and Charged) and multiple accounts. Weaver wrote that it is possible to get permission to move budgeted spending between accounts and categories, but sometimes the total appropriation within a fund is insufficient for the fund's total spending, due to emergencies, unforeseen circumstances, or budget errors.

In this case, the Mayor and Clerk-Treasurer proposed an additional appropriation because the expenditures are necessary and paying the expenditure might otherwise overspend the budgeted appropriation, Weaver wrote.

Weaver continued that after Council approval, the Clerk-Treasurer would submit the additional appropriation to the Department of Local Government Finance ("DLGF") for final approval. The DLGF will only approve an additional appropriation if the Clerk-Treasurer proves that the City has cash available for the additional appropriation and the following year's budget. The memo then detailed the new requested appropriations.

Weaver explained that the City plans to implement FASTER Asset Fleet Management software to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of managing its vehicle and equipment assets. This new system will support the Central Garage by maintaining service records and work orders, managing parts and inventory, reporting on asset lifecycles and depreciation, and integrating seamlessly with the City's existing ERP system. The current system—a custom-built platform based on Microsoft Access—is no longer supported and limits the City's ability to maintain and upgrade operations. An appropriation of \$130,000 was requested to cover the installation of the new software, including the full migration of existing data into the new system.

Weaver wrote that additional appropriations were needed for the Redevelopment Fund due to an error during the 2025 budget process. Although major expenditure lines were properly entered, the part-time and benefits categories were not correctly submitted to the State's budgeting system. As a result, the personnel costs for the Redevelopment Fund were underbudgeted. Appropriations of \$40,000 for part-time wages and \$34,400 for benefits were requested to fully fund these categories in the Redevelopment Operating Fund for the remainder of the year.



In explaining another appropriation request, **Weaver** wrote Common Council Resolution 2023-02 authorized a forgivable loan of up to \$250,000 to LaCasa, Inc. to support infrastructure improvements for permanent supportive housing owned by Oaklawn Psychiatric Center, Inc. However, the funds were not appropriated at the time the resolution was adopted. As LaCasa has now submitted requests for reimbursement, an appropriation is necessary to fulfill the City's financial commitment outlined in the resolution.

Weaver also wrote that the TIF Bond Payment Fund is used to make lease payments to the Bank of New York for the 2015 Redevelopment Authority Lease Rental Bonds. For 2025, the total lease obligation is \$388,000. However, the adopted budget only appropriated \$310,000, which covered the principal portion of the payment but did not include the remaining \$78,000 needed to cover interest or other required components. An additional appropriation of \$78,000 was therefore requested to authorize full payment of the lease obligation for 2025.

Finally, **Weaver** wrote that the City is now obligated to begin payments on the Indiana Avenue Bonds and the East College Avenue Bonds. For both bond issues, the City collects revenue in the appropriate TIF fund and transfers the necessary debt service amount to an account held by the Bank of New York, which serves as the bond trustee. The Bank of New York then disburses the principal and interest payments directly to the bondholders on the City's behalf. In this instance, **Weaver** wrote that the Council is authorizing the Indiana Avenue TIF district to transfer \$58,000 to the Indiana Avenue Bond Payment Fund at the Bank of New York. This appropriation also authorizes the Bond Payment Fund to disburse the upcoming debt service payment.

Similarly, **Weaver** wrote that the Council is appropriating \$604,680 from the East College Avenue TIF district to the corresponding Bond Payment Fund and authorizing \$481,680 of that amount to be used for the current debt service payment. These appropriations reflect current payment obligations. However, it is likely that an additional appropriation will be required near the end of the year to account for debt service transfers scheduled for December. **Weaver** wrote that each affected fund has sufficient cash balances to spend these appropriations. If the ordinance is approved, the Clerk-Treasurer's office will submit necessary information to the DLGF for final approval.

SUMMARY OF JULY 28, 2025 COUNCIL CONSIDERATION & APPROVAL OF ORDINANCE 5230:

Mayor Leichty invited a staff presentation on Ordinance 5230.

Clerk-Treasurer Aguirre told Councilors there are four main budget spending areas – personal services, supplies, services and charges and capital outlays. He said when there was a need by the departments to spend more in one area than they had originally planned, they have to come to the Council for an additional appropriation.

Aguirre said Ordinance 5230 listed the requested appropriations and the department heads present could explain the requested additional appropriations. He said one that was noteworthy was \$130,000 requested by the Central Garage for software. **Aguirre** said **City Fleet Manager Carl Gaines** could explain this appropriation.

Gaines said the current software is 19 years old, the department has outgrown it and needs something different.

After considering the options, **Gaines** said the one chosen is expensive to implement, but it has a reasonable annual fee and does everything needed. In response to a question from the **Mayor**, **Gaines** said the Central Garage has 830 assets and the fleet is valued at \$24.9 million.

Mayor Leichty said the fleet includes everything from trimmers to excavators, to dump trucks, to plows, to fire trucks, to ambulances, to police vehicles. It is mostly, by and large, vehicles and work trucks. **Gaines** said, "Everything has just escalated in prices in the last 10 years." He added that the Central Garage has an inventory worth \$250,000 to supply parts for the fleet. And he said the new software will just help track all of that and will be more efficient.



Mayor Leichty said the current software is at the end of its life and starting to fail. So, she said that is the Central Garage is bringing this request to the Council along with the other requested appropriations.

Mayor Leichty asked if Councils had any questions.

Clerk-Treasurer Aguirre said his office took responsibility for one of the requested appropriations. He said of the hundreds of budget lines that had to be entered for the 2025 budget, the Clerk-Treasurer's Office understated the amount of part-time wages and benefits requested for Redevelopment, so an additional appropriation is requested. He said the appropriation for Lacasa is for a major project for which the funds were approved by the Council but not yet appropriated.

Councilor Riegsecker asked the reason for the bond payments. **Aguirre** said those appropriations were for upcoming bond payments. He added, "We need the money to have in our accounts" for two payments.

Councilor Riegsecker asked why the City didn't already have those payments in the budget. **Aguirre** said "because we don't know exactly what they're going to be and because there are additional costs beyond the bond itself that we have to pay. So, they'll tell us, like in June, this is how much you have to pay."

Mayor Leichty asked **City Redevelopment Director Becky Hutsell** if she wanted to comment.

Hutsell said, "I will note that we receive two TIF payments annually. Typically, the first one is received the last week of June, and then the second one is received the third or fourth week of December, and from those payments we make a 100% payment. Whatever they pay in, we pay back as that bond payment.

"They built out a little quicker than we anticipated. We're still trying to figure out exactly where those are coming in at. We are just reaching the point where payments are due for Indiana Avenue, we built in a few years of capitalized interest. Same thing with Brinkley's project. And so, this is our first go around with the economic development revenue bonds. We are only paying out the money that comes in.

"But again, the State is changing the way that certain things are assessed. So, we don't even know exactly what to plan for Indiana Avenue and Brinkley. It's a matter of how much they're assessing; is a building fully complete, or is it just 50%? So, we're at the mercy of the Assessor's Office and what they actually charge and then how much we're putting towards the payment based on what we receive. And we have about two weeks to figure it out.

"So, we have been working closely with Clerk-Treasurer's office to figure out the best way to plan ahead for these, so that we can make the payments as soon as they come in, so that we don't end up with this into the next year situation. So, we're learning as we go."

Council President Weddell said the City could set aside more than ultimately needed, and then would have as surplus. Either way, he said "it's a straight pass through. So, we're not going to pay more than what's coming in."

At 6:48 p.m., **Mayor Leichty** invited questions from members of the audience. There were none.

On a voice vote, Councilors unanimously passed Ordinance 5230, *Additional Appropriations*, on First Reading by a 6-0 margin, with all Councilors present voting "yes," at 6:48 p.m. Councilor Peel was not present for the vote.

Councilors gave unanimous consent to proceed with Second Reading of Ordinance 5230.



Mayor Leichty called for the introduction of Ordinance 5230, *Additional Appropriations*, on Second Reading. Council President Weddell asked the Clerk-Treasurer to read Ordinance 5230 by title only, which was done. Weddell/Nisley made a motion to approve Ordinance 5230 on Second Reading.

Mayor Leichty invited questions or comments from Councilors or the audience. There were none.

On a voice vote, Councilors unanimously passed Ordinance 5230, *Additional Appropriations*, on Second Reading by a 6-0 margin, with all Councilors present voting "yes," at 6:48 p.m. Councilor Peel was not present for the vote.

After the vote Councilor Peel returned to her seat in the Council Chamber.

4) Resolution 2025-15 - A Resolution Providing for the Transfer of Appropriations

Mayor Leichty called for the introduction of Resolution 2025-15, *A Resolution Providing for the Transfer Of Appropriations*. Council President Weddell asked the Clerk-Treasurer to read Resolution 2025-15 by title only, which was done.

Weddell/Schrock made a motion to approve Resolution 2025-15.

BACKGROUND:

Resolution 2025-15 would authorize the transfer of appropriations between major spending categories within specific City funds – from one category to another.

In a July 28, 2025, memorandum to the Common Council, Deputy Clerk-Treasurer Jeffery Weaver wrote that Resolution 2024-15 would authorize transfers necessary to ensure that City departments can meet their operational needs while staying within the legal appropriation limits set by the adopted budget.

Weaver wrote that the transfers do not increase overall spending but instead reallocate existing budget authority between categories such as Personal Services, Supplies, Services & Charges, and Capital Outlays. He indicated this flexibility is essential to adapt to evolving departmental needs as actual expenditures vary throughout the year.

Under Indiana law and Department of Local Government Finance (DLGF) guidance, the Common Council must approve any transfers between major appropriation categories. This resolution formalizes those adjustments, allowing departments to continue essential services and maintain compliance with state reporting requirements.

Weaver wrote that once approved, the Clerk-Treasurer's Office will update the City's financial records and notify affected departments of the adjustments. These transfers are routine and help ensure that each fund remains properly aligned with the City's operational priorities. Category transfers does not require notification to the State.

SUMMARY OF July 28, 2025 COUNCIL CONSIDERATION & APPROVAL OF RESOLUTION 2025-15:

Mayor Leichty invited a presentation about Resolution 2025-15 from the Clerk-Treasurer.

Clerk-Treasurer Aguirre said Resolution 2025-15 was a common request, just a category transfer. He explained there are four main spending categories – Personal Services, Supplies, Services & Charges, and Capital Outlays.

Aguirre said when departments have more need in one category or another, the Clerk-Treasurer's Office is required to bring those to the Council after departments request a transfer.



Aguirre introduced a revised resolution, which was distributed to Councilors before the meeting. The amended resolution included an added/needed Legal Department transfer of \$11,075 from Personnel Services, Legal/Insurance, to Professional Services, Legal/Other Services & Charges (EXHIBIT #1)

Council President Weddell/Councilor Nisley made a motion to replace the version of Resolution 2025-15 in the council packet to the copy of the resolution provided to Councilors at the meeting, noting that it includes an added/needed Legal Department transfer of \$11,075. **On a voice vote, the motion passed 7-0.**

Aguirre said if Councilors had any specific questions, it would be more efficient to ask department heads.

Mayor Leichty invited questions or comments from the audience. There were none.

At 6:51 p.m., Mayor Leichty invited questions from members of the audience. There were none. Councilors indicated they were ready to vote.

On a voice vote, Councilors unanimously passed Resolution 2025-15, A Resolution Providing for the Transfer Of Appropriations, by a 7-0 margin, with all Councilors voting yes, at 6:51 p.m.

5) Ordinance 5226 - Approving the Financing for the Purchase of a Combination Sewer Jetter Rodder Truck through U.S. Bancorp Government Leasing and Finance, Inc.

Mayor Leichty called for the introduction of Ordinance 5226, *Approving the Financing for the Purchase of a Combination Sewer Jetter Rodder Truck through U.S. Bancorp Government Leasing and Finance, Inc.*

Council President Weddell asked the Clerk-Treasurer to read Ordinance 5226 by title only, which was done. Weddell/Schrock made a motion to approve Ordinance 5226 on First Reading.

BACKGROUND:

Ordinance 5226 would approve and authorize the financing for the purchase of a combination Sewer Jetter Rodder Truck through U.S. Bancorp Government Leasing and Finance, Inc. According to Ordinance 5226:

- The City's Water and Sewer Utility is purchasing a new combination sewer jetter rodder truck for a purchase price of \$585,977;
- The City's Water and Sewer Utility wishes to make an initial down payment of \$120,000 due at closing and finance the amount of \$336,477 through U.S. Bancorp Government Leasing and Finance, Inc.
- The City's Water and Sewer Utility will be obligated under the terms of Property Schedule No.6 to a certain Master Tax-Exempt Lease/Purchase Agreement, attached hereto and made a part hereof, to make five annual payments of \$74,839.90, at an interest rate of 4.41% with the first payment due Jan. 30, 2026.

If Ordinance 5226 was approved by the Council, it would be ordained that the financing of the purchase of a combination sewer jetter rodder truck through U.S. Bancorp Government Leasing and Finance, Inc. pursuant to Property Schedule No.6 to a certain Master Tax-Exempt Lease/Purchase Agreement was approved.



SUMMARY OF JULY 28, 2025 COUNCIL CONSIDERATION & APPROVAL OF ORDINANCE 5226:

Mayor Leichty invited a staff presentation on Ordinance 5226.

City Attorney Bodie Stegelmann said the City Water and Sewer Utility needs a new jetter rodder truck, whose trade name is Vector and which sweeps out catch basins. The purchase amount of that vehicle is \$585,977.

Stegelmann said the vendor is providing a trade-in allowance of \$130,000, so there's a balance to be financed or paid and the Water and Sewer Utility would like to pay that over five years. And in order to finance a purchase like this, Council approval is required.

Stegelmann said there will be a down payment of \$120,000 with the balance of \$336,477 being financed. That would be paid over five years at an interest rate of 4.4 1%. He said this would be substantially the same arrangement the City used when it purchased its last similar vehicle.

Mayor Leichty invited questions or comments from the Council.

In response to a question from Councilor Schrock, **Stegelmann** said the payments would be annual. He said the payment would be \$74,839.90.

Council President Weddell asked about the leasing terms. **Stegelmann** said the City will own the truck at the end of the lease.

Councilor Gerber asked the year of the truck being traded. **Stegelmann** said 2016.

In response to a comment from **Council President Weddell** about the lifespan of such trucks, **City Director of Public Works & Utilities Dustin Sailor** said, "We're dealing with dirt, mud, sewage, and we're pumping that through the truck continuously. A lot of wear happens on the equipment."

Mayor Leichty invited additional questions from the Council. There were none.

At 6:54 p.m., **Mayor Leichty** invited questions from members of the audience. There were none.

On a voice vote, Councilors unanimously passed Ordinance 5226, Approving the Financing for the Purchase of a Combination Sewer Jetter Rodder Truck through U.S. Bancorp Government Leasing and Finance, Inc, on First Reading by a 7-0 margin, with all Councilors voting "yes," at 6:54 p.m.

Councilors gave unanimous consent to proceed with Second Reading of Ordinance 5226.

Mayor Leichty called for the introduction of Ordinance 5226, *Approving the Financing for the Purchase of a Combination Sewer Jetter Rodder Truck through U.S. Bancorp Government Leasing and Finance, Inc.,* on Second Reading. **Council President Weddell** asked the Clerk-Treasurer to read Ordinance 5226 by title only, which was done.

Weddell/Nisley made a motion to approve Ordinance 5226 on Second Reading.

Mayor Leichty invited questions or comments from Councilors or the audience. There were none.

On a voice vote, Councilors unanimously passed Ordinance 5226, Approving the Financing for the Purchase of a Combination Sewer Jetter Rodder Truck through U.S. Bancorp Government Leasing and Finance, Inc, on Second Reading by a 7-0 margin, with all Councilors voting "yes," at 6:55 p.m.



6) Ordinance 5224, An Ordinance to Amend Ordinance PC 90-41, known as the Meijer PUD, Passed and Adopted by the Board of County Commissioners of Elkhart County, on the 17th day of September 1990 Mayor Leichty called for the introduction of Ordinance 5224, *An Ordinance to Amend Ordinance PC 90-41, known as the Meijer PUD, Passed and Adopted by the Board of County Commissioners of Elkhart County, Indiana, on the 17th day of September 1990.* Council President Weddell asked the Clerk-Treasurer to read Ordinance 5224 by title only, which was done.

Weddell/Nisley made a motion to approve Ordinance 5224 on First Reading.

BACKGROUND:

Ordinance 5224 would amend Ordinance PC 90-41, known as the Meijer PUD, passed and adopted by the Board of County Commissioners of Elkhart County, Indiana, on the 17th day of September 1990.

In a July 28, 2025 memorandum to the Common Council, City Planning & Zoning Administrator Rhonda Yoder wrote that the Goshen Plan Commission met on June 17, 2025, in regular session, and considered a request for a Planned Unit Development (PUD) major change and PUD preliminary site plan approval to permit a bank with drive-through on an undeclared outlot, with the outlot proposed without street frontage and with access via easements, for the subject property generally located at 4522 Elkhart Road, Lot 1 of Meijer Subdivision, and zoned Commercial B-3PUD (Planned Unit Development), part of the Meijer PUD, with the following outcome:

Forwarded to the Goshen Common Council with a favorable recommendation by a vote of 8-0.

Yoder wrote that the Plan Commission's recommendation was based upon the following and with the following conditions:

1. The proposed outlot development for a bank with drive-through is consistent with the overall Meijer PUD and prior outlot approvals.
2. The proposed outlot is approved without street frontage and with access via easements.
3. The approved preliminary site plan is PUD Preliminary Site Plan, Amendment to Meijer PUD, Sheets 1 and 2, prepared by Abonmarche and dated 6/01/25, subject to final review by all City departments.
4. Signs shall meet Zoning Ordinance requirements, with one freestanding monument sign permitted and with allowed wall sign area determined by the signable wall area on the building façade where each sign is located.
5. Landscaping shall meet Zoning Ordinance requirements, including landscaped area for the freestanding sign and street trees. The number of required street trees will be calculated using the lot line length adjacent to grass areas and spacing of 50 feet, with large species and diverse species (minimum of three different species) required.
6. Subdivision approval shall occur, with a recorded plat on file, before a zoning clearance/building permit is issued.
7. PUD final site plans, including a detailed landscape plan, shall be submitted for the outlot and for the modified Meijer site and approved before a zoning clearance form/building permit is issued, and may be reviewed by Staff on behalf of Plan Commission.
8. Site plan approval by Goshen City Engineering is required for site drainage, post construction, site utilities and right-of-way access, as applicable, before a zoning clearance/building permit is issued.

Yoder also wrote that prior to the Plan Commission meeting, the City Planning office received no inquiries related to the request, and at the Plan Commission meeting, no comments/questions were received during the public hearing.



According to Ordinance 5224, Meijer Stores Limited Partnership, First Federal Savings Bank, and Abonmarche submitted an application on May, 28 2025 to allow a major change to a previously approved Planned Unit Development (Overlay).

If the Common Council approved Ordinance 5224, Ordinance PC 90-41 would be amended as follows:

1. In addition to requirements established in Ordinance PC 90-41, additional requirements are established by this Ordinance.
2. That the Goshen Plan Commission did after a public hearing determine the amendment to be a major change.
3. The proposed outlot development for a bank with drive-through is consistent with the overall Meijer PUD and prior outlot approvals.
4. The proposed outlot is approved without street frontage and with access via easements.
5. The approved preliminary site plan is PUD Preliminary Site Plan, Amendment to Meijer PUD, Sheets 1 and 2, prepared by Abonmarche and dated 6/01/25, subject to final review by all City departments.
6. Signs shall meet Zoning Ordinance requirements, with one freestanding monument sign permitted and with allowed wall sign area determined by the signable wall area on the building façade where each sign is located.
7. Landscaping shall meet Zoning Ordinance requirements, including landscaped area for the freestanding sign and street trees. The number of required street trees will be calculated using the lot line length adjacent to grass areas and spacing of 50 feet, with large species and diverse species (minimum of three different species) required.
8. Subdivision approval shall occur, with a recorded plat on file, before a zoning clearance/building permit is issued.
9. PUD final site plans, including a detailed landscape plan, shall be submitted for the outlot and for the modified Meijer site and approved before a zoning clearance form/building permit is issued, and may be reviewed by Staff on behalf of Plan Commission.
10. Site plan approval by Goshen City Engineering is required for site drainage, post construction, site utilities and right-of-way access, as applicable, before a zoning clearance/building permit is issued.

SUMMARY OF JULY 28, 2025 COUNCIL CONSIDERATION & APPROVAL OF ORDINANCE 5224:

Mayor Leichty invited a staff presentation on Ordinance 5224.

City Planning & Zoning Administrator Rhonda Yoder Rhonda Yoder said she was bringing to the Council a recommendation from Plan Commission from its June 17 meeting – a planned unit development major change and preliminary site plan approval for a bank with a drive through on an undeclared outlot with the outlot proposed without street frontage and with access via easements. She said this was for a property at 4522 Elkhart Road. Yoder said this request was being forwarded to the Council with a favorable recommendation, by an 8-0 vote.

Yoder said the proposed outlot development was consistent with the overall Meyer Planned Unit Development (PUD) and with prior outlot approvals. She noted on was approved without street frontage and with access via easements and a few conditions listed related to the approved preliminary site plan – signs, landscaping, the need for subdivision approval after this approval is in place and approval of PUD final site plans.

Mayor Leichty invited Council questions for Yoder. There were none.

At 6:58 p.m., Mayor Leichty invited questions from members of the audience. There were none.



Mayor Leichty asked if Councilors were ready to vote. They indicated that they were.

On a voice vote, Councilors unanimously passed Ordinance 5224, *An Ordinance to Amend Ordinance PC 90-41, known as the Meijer PUD, Passed and Adopted by the Board of County Commissioners of Elkhart County, Indiana, on the 17th day of September 1990, on First Reading by a 7-0 margin, with all Councilors voting "yes," at 6:58 p.m.*

Councilors gave unanimous consent to proceed with Second Reading of Ordinance 5224.

Mayor Leichty called for the introduction of Ordinance 5224, *An Ordinance to Amend Ordinance PC 90-41, known as the Meijer PUD, Passed and Adopted by the Board of County Commissioners of Elkhart County, Indiana, on the 17th day of September 1990, on Second Reading.* Council President Weddell asked the Clerk-Treasurer to read Ordinance 5224 by title only, which was done.

Weddell/Nisley made a motion to approve Ordinance 5224 on Second Reading.

At 6:59 p.m., Mayor Leichty invited questions from Councilors or members of the audience. There were none.

On a voice vote, Councilors unanimously passed Ordinance 5224, *An Ordinance to Amend Ordinance PC 90-41, known as the Meijer PUD, Passed and Adopted by the Board of County Commissioners of Elkhart County, Indiana, on the 17th day of September 1990, on Second Reading by a 7-0 margin, with all Councilors voting "yes," at 6:59 p.m.*

7) Resolution 2025-14 - A Resolution of the Goshen Common Council regarding approval of various revised allocation provisions and expansion of Southeast Housing Allocation Area and Consolidated River Race/US 33 Allocation Area

Mayor Leichty called for the introduction of Resolution 2025-14, *A Resolution of the Goshen Common Council regarding approval of various revised allocation provisions and expansion of Southeast Housing Allocation Area and Consolidated River Race/US 33 Allocation Area.* Council President Weddell asked the Clerk-Treasurer to read Resolution 2025-14 by title only, which was done.

Weddell/Lederach made a motion to approve Resolution 2025-14.

BACKGROUND:

Resolution 2025-14 would approve various revised allocation provisions and expansions of the Southeast Housing Allocation Area and Consolidated River Race/US 33 Allocation Area.

In a July 28, 2025, 2024 memorandum to the Common Council, City Redevelopment Director Becky Hutsell wrote that Resolution 2024-14 would approve "several significant revisions and expansions" relating to tax increment financing (TIF) allocation areas in the City of Goshen. Hutsell said these changes reflect updates to long-standing economic development areas and their associated plans, enabling the City to support infrastructure, public safety, and educational investments across designated redevelopment zones.



Hutsell said the following key actions would be approved by passage of Resolution 2025-14:

1. Expansion of Allocation Areas

Southeast Housing Allocation Area

Three parcels would be added to this TIF district:

- Parcel 20-11-27-426-038.000-015
- Parcel 20-11-27-426-039.000-015
- Parcel 20-11-27-326-008.000-015

These additions are intended to support housing development initiatives in the Southeast region.

Consolidated River Race/US 33 Allocation Area

This area is expanded by incorporating multiple parcels as listed in Exhibit A of Amending Declaratory Resolution No. 09-2025.

2. Revisions to Allocation Provision Expiration Dates

Expiration dates for the following allocation areas have been revised:

- 2004 and 2007 Keystone I Expansion Allocation Areas
- 2004 and 2006 Century Drive Expansion Allocation Areas
- Southeast Allocation Area and Expanded Southeast Allocation Area
- 2004, 2005, and 2006 River Race Expansion Allocation Areas
- North US 33 Allocation Area
- Downtown Allocation Area
- Consolidated River Race/US 33 Allocation Area
- 2013 Consolidated Expansion I and II Allocation Areas
- Lippert/Dierdorff Allocation Area

3. Expanded Authorized Expenditures

The amendments also allow for new categories of expenditures:

Public Safety Services: Revenues may now be allocated toward both capital and operational expenses for police and fire departments, including the construction of a fire station.

Educational and Training Programs: Funds may be directed to eligible entities for programs as outlined in Indiana Code 36-7-25-7.

Legal and Procedural Compliance

- The resolution aligns with IC 36-7-14-41(c), requiring Common Council approval for any expansion of economic development area boundaries.
- The Council's approval follows the recommendations of the Redevelopment Commission and Plan Commission and reflects amendments made through Declaratory Resolutions adopted between February and April 2025.

Conclusion

"Resolution No. 2025-14 represents a continued commitment by the City of Goshen to enhance its economic development strategies through careful expansion and modernization of existing TIF areas. These updates will support strategic infrastructure investments, affordable housing, public safety, and workforce development throughout key redevelopment zones in the city."

A map showing the various allocation areas was attached. Due to the scale, specific boundaries are a bit unclear but this layer will soon be visible on the GIS dashboard that is accessible to Council members.



SUMMARY OF July 28, 2025 COUNCIL CONSIDERATION & APPROVAL OF RESOLUTION 2024-14:

Mayor Leichty invited a presentation on Resolution 2024-14.

Redevelopment Director Becky Hutsell said before the Councilors was Resolution 2024-14, formal approval for the various Tax Increment Financing (TIF) amendments initially brought to the Council at the end of June – a Plan Commission order stating that this was all in line with the City's Comprehensive Plan, **Hutsell** said the matter was then the subject of a Redevelopment Commission public hearing in July. No public comments were received and the matter was approved by the Redevelopment Commission.

Hutsell said the amendments in Resolution 2024-14 accomplish three key things:

- Authorize two small expansions to the Southeast Housing Allocation Area by adding three peripheral parcels to the Cherry Creek Planned Unit Development (PUD) and subdivision to that TIF area and two small areas to the Consolidated River Race TIF.
- Revise the expiration dates on several of our TIF areas.
- Authorize expanded expenditures to allow for public safety services and educational and training programs.

Hutsell said City staff members have been working on these changes with Baker Tilly Municipal Advisers and the Ice Miller law firm and have followed all of the procedural compliance regulations. She asked for approval of the resolution so staff can "continue to do good work throughout all of our various TIF areas here in Goshen."

Mayor Leichty asked Councilors if they had questions or comments about Resolution 2025-14. They did not.

At 7:01 p.m., **Mayor Leichty** asked if there were any questions or comments about Resolution 2025-14 from audience members. They did not.

On a voice vote, Councilors unanimously passed Resolution 2025-14, A Resolution of the Goshen Common Council regarding approval of various revised allocation provisions and expansion of Southeast Housing Allocation Area and Consolidated River Race/US 33 Allocation Area. 14, by a 7-0 margin, with all Councilors voting "yes," at 7:01 p.m.

8) Ordinance 5227-Transfer Control of the City of Goshen's Storm Water Facilities to the Goshen Board of Public Works and Safety

Mayor Leichty called for the introduction of Ordinance 5227, *Transfer Control of the City of Goshen's Storm Water Facilities to the Goshen Board of Public Works and Safety*. Council President Weddell asked the Clerk-Treasurer to read Ordinance 5227 by title only, which was done.

Weddell/Peel made a motion to approve Ordinance 5227 on First Reading.

BACKGROUND:

Ordinance 5227 would transfer control of the City of Goshen's Storm Water Facilities to the Goshen Board of Public Works and Safety.

According to Ordinance 5227:

- Ordinance 4295 established the Department of Stormwater Management which is controlled by a three-member Board of Directors.



- Indiana Code § 8-1.5-3-3(a) provides that the Common Council may adopt an ordinance to provide for the control of the city's storm water facilities by the municipal works board, the board that controls the city's municipally owned utilities.
- The board that controls the city's municipally owned utilities is the Goshen Board of Public Works and Safety.
- The City of Goshen seeks to transfer control of its Department of Stormwater Management to its Board of Public Works and Safety.

If approved by the Council it would be ordained:

- **Section 1.** The City of Goshen Department of Stormwater Management established under I.C. 8-1.5-5 and Ordinance 4295 is continued.
- **Section 2.** In accordance with Indiana Code § 8-1.5-3-3(a) and (b), the control of the City of Goshen's storm water facilities shall be transferred from the three-member Board of Directors of the Department of Stormwater Management established under Ordinance 4295 to the Goshen Board of Public Works and Safety. The transition of control from the Board of Directors of the Department of Stormwater Management to the Board of Public Works and Safety shall be effective upon the adoption of this ordinance – no special procedure for transition is necessary, as three (3) members of the Board of Public Works and Safety comprised the Board of Directors of the Department of Stormwater Management at the time of consideration of this ordinance.
- **Section 3.** The Board of Public Works and Safety has the powers and duties prescribed by Indiana Code § 8-1.5-3-4(a), and Indiana Code § 8-1.5-5-6, as amended from time to time.
- **Section 4.** The provisions of Indiana Code 8-1.5-5, as amended from time to time, are hereby adopted by reference.
- **Section 5.** All ordinances and parts of ordinances, specifically including Ordinance 4295, inconsistent or in conflict with the terms of this ordinance are repealed to the extent of the inconsistency or conflict.
- **Section 6.** This ordinance shall be in full force and effect from and after its passage, approval, and adoption according to the laws of the State of Indiana.

SUMMARY OF JULY 28, 2025 COUNCIL CONSIDERATION & APPROVAL OF ORDINANCE 5227:

Mayor Leichty described the purpose of Ordinance 5277 and related Ordinance 5278.

The Mayor said that the Board of Works & Safety meets at the same time as the Stormwater Board. Due to a procedural element, the Mayor said she has to close the Board of Works meeting and open the Stormwater Board meeting and then close the Stormwater meeting and go back to the Board of Works meeting.

Mayor Leichty said, "What I would like to do is just have a combined Board of Public Works and Stormwater Board since it is the same people and not have to go through the procedural rigmarole. So, the two ordinances that you have before you are essentially facilitating what seems like a simple process of merging those two boards who already meet at the same time and combining them into one board. But because the stormwater ordinance that we adopted earlier this year references the Stormwater Board as a stand-alone board, all of the instances where it says Stormwater Board had to be modified in the Stormwater Ordinance.

"So, what is before you is trying to simplify our government by having one combined board that's already meeting at the same time as another board with largely the same people. There would be two people who are currently on the Board of Works who would be added to this combined board of the Stormwater Board. But for all intents and purposes it's one board already. So, that is the background information in regard to this board."



Mayor Leichty invited questions or comments from Councilors.

Clerk-Treasurer Aguirre said "Mayor, if I could just say two other advantages to this is that the Stormwater Board can't operate if two members of the (three-member) Stormwater Board are absent. The Board of Works can function with three members. So, there has been, I think, once, when there were two Stormwater Board members were absent. This will allow that function to continue. and this will simplify the minutes."

Council President Weddell joked, "So, you have an ulterior motive, Mr. Aguirre? That's okay."

Mayor Leichty invited further comments from Councilors. There were none.

At 7:04 p.m., the Mayor invited questions of comments from the public.

Glenn Null of Goshen said his comments would echo what he said during Privilege of the Floor about power being concentrated in the Mayor and City Department heads. Null said, "All of a sudden, you're starting to merge a bunch of these committees together, and power is now being transformed into one or two groups ... It's kind of like if you've been around me enough at meetings to know that I've always said, there's a hundred people that run a City. That's, you know, the president of this bank or who runs the hospital or somebody on the school board. Now we're getting to the point where now who runs the city itself, government wise, it's going to be a handful ... the Board of Works."

Null continued, "And I can't remove the Board of Works because I don't vote for them. I've always said the Board of Works is somebody that says 'yes.' In government we don't need people that just say 'yes.' We need people that question. You start putting all these boards together, and then 10 people are running everything. I have a concern about that because the whole purpose of having multiple boards is to have diversity."

Null said the City needs to have a wide range of people serving and he would prefer separate boards.

Mayor Leichty responded, "Your point is well taken. I will say, if you've ever met (Board of Works member) **Mike Landis**, you know that these things are not simply passed without a lot of scrutiny."

Nicholas Sanger of Goshen asked about the different responsibilities of the two boards, saying he wondered if they had overlapping or different duties.

Mayor Leichty said, "It's a complete overlap. So, the Board of Public Works handles all water and wastewater as well as street infrastructure (issues). So, the Board of Works is already hearing those requests from the Director of Public Works during the Board of Works meetings. Then we pause, and the same Director of Public Works, or sometimes the Stormwater Coordinator, will present an item that is also part of the public works system of the City and then we'll go back to the agenda. So, it is already part of the same purview of the Board of Public Works."

Mayor Leichty added, "I'm not sure the history of how it became a separate board, but it's the same people that are presenting at the same meeting. It's just that we have to hit the gavel, log out of one meeting, log into the other meeting, and then we go back to the to complete the agenda of the Board of Public Works, which is why they meet at the same time with mostly the same people, because they're hearing about public works initiatives, and stormwater is an important component of that, but it's held separately."

At the request of **Council President Weddell**, **Mayor Leichty** clarified the composition of the Board – five people serve on the Board of Works and two of those also serve on the Stormwater Board.



Affirming the Comment by the Clerk-Treasurer, the Mayor said, "A board of three is a pretty small board, and so if two people have to be absent, we cannot hear any of the stormwater content. So, it would be nice to have a little bit more flexibility."

Council President Weddell said, "Then you're going to have more people that vote on stormwater issues than you would otherwise, which could in theory bring more discussion and contemplation ... I will also say that the Mayor is one that appoints all of those members. As Council members, we don't appoint anyone"

Councilor Gerber said, "I will add, Councilor Riegsecker and I sit in a lot of the Board of Works meetings, and there are some quite robust discussions, so there's no lack of questioning of what's going on."

Council President Weddell said, "Mr. Landis comes overly prepared, and I say that in a very positive way. He takes his position ... very seriously."

Mayor Leichty asked if Councilors were ready to vote. They indicated that they were.

On a voice vote, Councilors unanimously passed Ordinance 5227, *Transfer Control of the City of Goshen's Storm Water Facilities to the Goshen Board of Public Works and Safety*, on First Reading by a 7-0 margin, with all Councilors voting "yes," at 7:11 p.m.

Councilors gave unanimous consent to proceed with Second Reading of Ordinance 5227.

Mayor Leichty called for the introduction on Second Reading of Ordinance 5227, *Transfer Control of the City of Goshen's Storm Water Facilities to the Goshen Board of Public Works and Safety*. Council President Weddell asked the Clerk-Treasurer to read Ordinance 5227 by title only, which was done.

Weddell/Peel made a motion to approve Ordinance 5227 on Second Reading.

Mayor Leichty invited questions or comments from Councilors or the audience. There were none.

On a voice vote, Councilors unanimously passed Ordinance 5227, *Transfer Control of the City of Goshen's Storm Water Facilities to the Goshen Board of Public Works and Safety*, on Second Reading by a 7-0 margin, with all Councilors voting "yes," at 7:11 p.m.

9) Ordinance 5228 - City of Goshen Stormwater Management Ordinance

Mayor Leichty called for the introduction of Ordinance 5228, *City of Goshen Stormwater Management Ordinance*. Council President Weddell asked the Clerk-Treasurer to read Ordinance 5228 by title only, which was done.

Weddell/Peel made a motion to approve Ordinance 5228 on First Reading.

BACKGROUND:

Ordinance 5228 would make revisions to the City Stormwater Management Ordinance to reflect the transfer of the control of the city's stormwater facilities from the three-member Stormwater Board to the Board of Public Works and Safety.



In a July 28, 2025 memorandum to the Common Council, City Legal Compliance Administrator Shannon Marks wrote that with the transfer of control of the City's storm water facilities to the Goshen Board of Public Works and Safety under Ordinance 5227, it was also necessary to revise the City of Goshen Stormwater Management Ordinance so that reference is made to the correct governing board.

Marks wrote that all prior references to "City of Goshen's Stormwater Board," "City of Goshen Stormwater Board," "Goshen Stormwater Board," "Stormwater Board," "City of Goshen's Board of Public Works and Safety and Stormwater Board," "City of Goshen Board of Public Works and Safety and Stormwater Board," and "Goshen Board of Public Works and Safety and Stormwater Board" have been changed to "Goshen Board of Public Works and Safety" or "Board."

In addition, Marks wrote it was necessary to make corrections to some cross references, along with some other additions and deletions to language. Rather than providing the entire Stormwater Management Ordinance showing all changes, below was a summary of the changes, with the exception of corrections to spelling, capitalization and punctuation:

According to Ordinance 5228:

- The City of Goshen Stormwater Management Ordinance was passed Dec. 16, 2024, and adopted Dec. 17, 2024, by Ordinance 5209.
- The Goshen Common Council has passed an ordinance to transfer the control of the City of Goshen's stormwater facilities from the three-member Board of Directors of the Department of Stormwater Management and grant the control to the Goshen Board of Public Works and Safety by Ordinance 5227.
- The transfer of control to the Goshen Board of Public Works and Safety has necessitated revisions to the City of Goshen Stormwater Management Ordinance.
- Additional revisions to the City of Goshen Stormwater Management Ordinance are also necessary.

If approved by the Council it would be ordained:

- (1) The attached City of Goshen Stormwater Management Ordinance is adopted in its entirety.
- (2) Ordinance 5209 is hereby repealed as of the effective date of this Ordinance. All other ordinances and parts of ordinances inconsistent or in conflict with the terms of this Ordinance are repealed to the extent of the inconsistency or conflict. All Ordinances, or parts thereof, not inconsistent or in conflict with this Ordinance shall remain in full force and effect.
- (3) The repeal by this Ordinance of any other ordinance does not affect any rights or liabilities accrued, penalties incurred or proceedings begun prior to the effective date of this Ordinance. Those rights, liabilities, and proceedings are continued and penalties shall be imposed and enforced under such repealed ordinance as if this Ordinance had not been adopted.
- (4) The provisions of this Ordinance are severable, and the invalidity of any phrase, clause or part of this Ordinance shall not affect the validity or effectiveness of the remainder of the Ordinance.
- (5) This Ordinance shall be in full force and effect from and after its passage, approval and adoption according to the laws of the State of Indiana.

SUMMARY OF JULY 28, 2025 COUNCIL CONSIDERATION & APPROVAL OF ORDINANCE 5228:

Earlier in the meeting, Mayor Leichty explained the purpose of Ordinance 5228, which was companion legislation to Ordinance 5227, which had just been approved.



Mayor Leichty invited questions or comments from Councilors. There were none.

At 7:12 p.m., Mayor Leichty invited questions from members of the audience. There were none.

Mayor Leichty asked if Councilors were ready to vote. They indicated that they were.

On a voice vote, Councilors unanimously passed Ordinance 5228, *City of Goshen Stormwater Management Ordinance*, on First Reading by a 7-0 margin, with all Councilors voting "yes," at 7:12 p.m.

Councilors gave unanimous consent to proceed with Second Reading of Ordinance 5228.

Mayor Leichty called for the introduction of Ordinance 5228, *City of Goshen Stormwater Management Ordinance*, on Second Reading. Council President Weddell asked the Clerk-Treasurer to read Ordinance 5228 by title only, which was done.

Weddell/Peel made a motion to approve Ordinance 5228 on Second Reading.

Mayor Leichty invited questions or comments from Councilors or the audience. There were none.

On a voice vote, Councilors unanimously passed Ordinance 5228, *City of Goshen Stormwater Management Ordinance*, on Second Reading by a 7-0 margin, with all Councilors voting "yes," at 7:13 p.m.

10) Ordinance 5229 - An Ordinance Imposing a Municipal Wheel Tax and Municipal Vehicle Excise Tax and Creating the City of Goshen Municipal Wheel Tax Fund and the City of Goshen Municipal Surtax Fund
Mayor Leichty called for the introduction of Ordinance 5229, *An Ordinance Imposing a Municipal Wheel Tax and Municipal Vehicle Excise Tax and Creating the City of Goshen Municipal Wheel Tax Fund and the City of Goshen Municipal Surtax Fund*. Council President Weddell asked the Clerk-Treasurer to read Ordinance 5229 by title only, which was done.

Weddell/Lederach made a motion to approve Ordinance 5229 on First Reading.

BACKGROUND:

Ordinance 5229 would impose a Municipal Wheel Tax and Municipal Vehicle Excise Tax and create the City of Goshen Municipal Wheel Tax Fund and the City of Goshen Municipal Surtax Fund.

According to Ordinance 5229:

- Indiana Code 6-3.5-11 (the "Wheel Tax Act") authorizes the Common Council of the City of Goshen, Indiana ("Common Council") to impose by ordinance an annual municipal wheel tax of not less than Five Dollars (\$5.00) and not more than Forty Dollars (\$40.00) on certain classes of vehicles registered within the City of Goshen;
- I.C. 6-3.5-10 (the "Excise Tax Act") authorizes the Common Council to impose by ordinance an annual municipal vehicle excise tax (the "Surtax") at a specific amount of at least Seven and 50/100 Dollars (\$7.50) and not more than Twenty-Five Dollars (\$25.00) on certain vehicles registered in the City;



- The Wheel Tax Act prohibits the Common Council from adopting an ordinance imposing a municipal wheel tax unless the Common Council concurrently adopts an ordinance under I.C. 6-3.5-10 to impose the annual municipal vehicle excise tax;
- The Excise Tax Act prohibits the Common Council from adopting an ordinance imposing a municipal vehicle excise tax unless the Common Council concurrently adopts an ordinance under I.C. 6-3.5-11 to impose the annual municipal wheel tax;
- City of Goshen seeks to concurrently adopt a municipal vehicle excise tax pursuant to I.C. 6-3.5-10 and a municipal wheel tax pursuant to I.C. 6-3.5-11;
- The City of Goshen will not be eligible for Community Crossings Lane Mile Direct Distributions unless it adopts a municipal wheel tax and a municipal vehicle excise tax;
- The City has developed a transportation asset management plan, approved by the Indiana Department of Transportation, that the City will send to the Indiana Bureau of Motor Vehicles and the Department of State Revenue, along with this ordinance, if adopted; and
- The Common Council deems it necessary to impose the annual municipal vehicle excise tax and the annual municipal wheel tax so that it may generate revenue to adequately construct, reconstruct, repair, and maintain the streets and roads under the jurisdiction of the City.

If approved by the Council it would be ordained:

Section 1. Municipal Wheel Tax and Municipal Wheel Tax Fund

A. Definitions. The definitions set forth in Indiana Code § 6-3.5-11-1, as amended, are incorporated herein by reference and shall apply throughout this Section 1.

B. Imposition and Rate of Municipal Wheel Tax. Effective January 1, 2026, a municipal wheel tax ("Wheel Tax") in the amount of Forty Dollars (\$40.00) shall be imposed on each of the following classes of vehicles registered in the City of Goshen pursuant to I.C. 6-3.5-11, as amended:

1. Buses.
2. Recreational vehicles.
3. Semitrailers.
4. Trailers with a declared gross weight of more than nine thousand (9,000) pounds.
5. Trucks and tractors with a declared gross weight or more than eleven thousand (11,000) pounds.
6. Any other vehicle to which the Wheel Tax applies, pursuant to I.C. § 6-3.5-11-3, as amended.

C. Exempt Vehicles. A vehicle is exempt from the Wheel Tax if the vehicle is:

1. Owned by the State of Indiana;
2. Owned by a state agency of the State of Indiana;
3. Owned by a political subdivision of the State of Indiana;
4. Subject to the annual municipal vehicle excise tax imposed pursuant to I.C. 6-3.5-10;
5. A bus owned and operated by a religious or non-profit youth organization and used to transport persons to religious services or for the benefit of its members;
6. A school bus;
7. A motor vehicle that is funeral equipment and that is used in the operation of funeral services as defined in I.C. § 25-15-2-17; or
8. Any other vehicle exempt from the Wheel Tax under I.C. § 6-3.5-11-4, as amended.



D. Collection of Wheel Tax. The Wheel Tax is due and shall be collected by the Indiana Bureau of Motor Vehicles each year at the time the vehicle is registered.

E. City of Goshen Municipal Wheel Tax Fund. The "City of Goshen Municipal Wheel Tax Fund" is hereby created and shall be a non-reverting fund. The Clerk-Treasurer shall deposit the Wheel Tax revenues received in the City of Goshen Municipal Wheel Tax Fund.

F. Use of Municipal Wheel Tax Fund. The City may only use the Wheel Tax revenues in the Municipal Wheel Tax Fund for the following purposes:

1. To construct, reconstruct, repair, or maintain streets and roads that are under the jurisdiction of the City of Goshen;
2. As a contribution to an authority established under I.C. § 36-7-23;
3. For the City's contribution to obtain a grant from the local road and bridge matching grant fund under I.C. 8-23-30; and
4. Any other use allowed under I.C. 6-3.5-11, as amended.

G. Accounting of Municipal Wheel Tax Fund. On or before October 1st of each year, the Clerk Treasurer shall provide the Mayor and the Common Council an estimate of the Wheel Tax revenues to be received by the City during the next calendar year. The City shall include the estimated Wheel Tax revenues in the City's budget estimate for the next calendar year.

H. Transmittal of Ordinance. The Common Council authorizes the Mayor or the Mayor's designee to provide a copy of this Ordinance and a copy of a letter from the Department of Transportation approving the City of Goshen transportation asset management plan to the Indiana Department of Revenue and to the Indiana Bureau of Motor Vehicles, as required by I.C. § 6-3.5-11-8, as amended.

Section 2. Municipal Vehicle Excise Tax and Municipal Surtax Fund.

A. Definitions. The definitions set forth in Indiana Code § 6-3.5-10-1, as amended, are incorporated herein by reference and shall apply throughout this Section 2.

B. Imposition and Rate of Municipal Vehicle Excise Tax. Effective January 1, 2026, a municipal vehicle excise tax ("Surtax") in the amount of Twenty-five Dollars (\$25.00) shall be imposed on each of the following classes of vehicles registered in the City of Goshen pursuant to I.C. 6-3.5-10, as amended:

1. Passenger motor vehicles.
2. Motorcycles.
3. Motor driven cycles.
4. Collector vehicles.
5. Trailer vehicles with a declared gross weight of 9,000 pounds or less, except for a trailer described in I.C. 6-6-5-0.5(2).
6. Trucks with a declared gross weight of 11,000 pounds or less.
7. Mini-trucks.
8. Military vehicles.
9. Any vehicle that is subject to the vehicle excise tax under I.C. 6-6-5, as amended.

C. Collection of Surtax. The Surtax is due and shall be collected by the Indiana Bureau of Motor Vehicles each year at the time a vehicle is registered.



D. City of Goshen Municipal Surtax Fund. The "City of Goshen Municipal Surtax Fund" is hereby created and shall be a non-reverting fund. The Clerk-Treasurer shall deposit the Surtax revenues received in the City of Goshen Municipal Surtax Fund.

E. Use of Municipal Surtax Fund. The City may only use the Surtax revenues in the City of Goshen Municipal Surtax Fund for the following purposes:

1. To construct, reconstruct, repair, or maintain streets and roads under the jurisdiction of the City of Goshen;
2. For the City's contribution to obtain a grant from the local road and bridge matching grant fund under I.C. 8-23-30; or
3. Any other uses allowed under I.C. 6-3.5-10, as amended.

F. Accounting of Municipal Surtax Tax Fund. On or before October 1st of each year, the Clerk Treasurer shall provide the Mayor and the Common Council an estimate of the Surtax revenues to be received by the City during the next calendar year. The City shall include the estimated Surtax revenues in the City's budget estimate for the next calendar year.

G. Transmittal of Ordinance. The Common Council authorizes the Mayor or the Mayor's designee to provide a copy of this Ordinance and a copy of a letter from the Department of Transportation approving the City of Goshen transportation asset management plan to the Indiana Bureau of Motor Vehicles, as required by I.C. § 6-3.5-10-6, as amended.

Section 3. Other Ordinances.

All ordinances and parts of ordinances inconsistent or in conflict with the terms of this Ordinance are repealed to the extent of the inconsistency or conflict.

Section 4. Severability.

The provisions of this Ordinance are severable, and the invalidity of any phrase, clause, or part of this Ordinance shall not affect the validity or effectiveness of the remainder of the Ordinance.

Section 5. Effective Date.

This Ordinance shall be in full force and effect from and after its passage, approval, and adoption according to the laws of the State of Indiana.

SUMMARY OF JULY 28, 2025 COUNCIL CONSIDERATION & APPROVAL OF ORDINANCE 5229:

Mayor Leichty introduced what she called a "local option highway user tax" or the "wheels for walks" proposal, because the money generated "would be just under what we would spend in a year on our sidewalk program."

The Mayor said the proposed ordinance would create a wheel tax on heavier vehicles like trailers, RVs and trucks at \$40 a year and an excise surtax on standard passenger vehicles, like cars, SUVs and motorcycles at \$25 a year. Together, she said it was estimated that these two taxes would generate approximately \$750,000 a year, with every dollar being dedicated to road and street work, including pothole repair, paving, curb repair and sidewalk maintenance.

Mayor Leichty said passing the ordinance also would make Goshen eligible for guaranteed State funding through the new Lane Mile Distribution Program the State has established. She said, "any excise or wheel tax has to be adopted by the end of August each year to go into effect the following year, which is one of the reasons why we're hearing this now."



Mayor Leichty continued, "This was not anybody's choice that is an elected official in this room. Let me be clear: The wheel tax option has existed for Goshen for some time, but what has changed is the State's new requirement, through House Enrolled Act 1461, which ties future reliable funding to local tax adoption. If we don't adopt, we miss out while other cities have the option to move forward.

"There were many good intentions with this bill, but it's not the clarity and thoughtful consideration for local municipalities that we would love to see from our State government. Cities like Goshen are now left to clean up a process that we did not ask for or design."

Mayor Leichty said the "trouble" with House Enrolled Act 1461 is that it has introduced a second layer of taxation on what Elkhart County residents already pay, "and we, as municipal residents of Elkhart County, would be paying a double tax. Councilors are right to be frustrated. The public is right to be frustrated, and I share that frustration. The original version of the State bill included a provision to address this double taxation, but that provision was removed before it was passed."

Mayor Leichty said she has discussed this issue with State legislators, and they have acknowledged this problem and talked about an interest in fixing it. "However, there is already talk that the Legislature may not touch any budget-related bills in 2026, which means potentially the earliest fix that they may come up with would come in 2027, or later. In the meantime, if we wait, we risk missing out on guaranteed funding while other communities lock in their share."

Mayor Leichty said the City needs better streets and sidewalks and other infrastructure improvements. Despite that, she said the City faces a \$850,000 loss in property tax revenue in 2026 due to the passage of Senate Bill 1." She said this legislation will impact every City department.

In fact, the **Mayor** said, "We are already making serious deep cuts in the City spending for 2025. We are not waiting. We started in February of this year, making cuts, and we have already cut \$30 million in capital projects and deferred staffing from our 2025 budget that was approved by Council last year. And departments are being asked to hold 2026 budgets flat or lower than they did in 2025."

Mayor Leichty said the Council's approval of the proposed Municipal Wheel Tax and Municipal Vehicle Excise Tax would generate dedicated revenue and give the City "some breathing room in a very lean year, and helps us shift some of the paving costs out of the General Fund into this small resource."

Mayor Leichty added that continuing assessment of the conditions of City streets shows that many are in dire need of repairs that would cost about \$52 million, not including needed sidewalk repairs. If adopted, she said the Municipal Wheel Tax and Municipal Vehicle Excise Tax would raise about \$750,000, with the distribution restricted to paying for City infrastructure improvements.

Mayor Leichty said House Enrolled Act 1461, which passed this year, created a new Lane Mile Distribution Program guaranteed to provide funding for cities who adopt a wheel tax. She said, "Acting now ensures our eligibility, gives us more control over the 2026 budget planning and helps us start addressing this \$52 million dollar problem with a stable local resource."

In summarizing, **Mayor Leichty** said, "This is not how any of us would have chosen to approach road funding, but it is the hand we've been dealt by the State. We have stretched our General Fund. We've cut tens of millions of dollars in projects and staffing, and we're trying to do more and more with less. But this ordinance will give us a small but reliable revenue stream, some access to new State funding, and a way to begin preserving our infrastructure before it falls into even more repair. Nobody believes that \$750,000 is going to solve a \$52 million dollar problem, but it gives us a start. We can't afford to wait to fall farther behind."



The Mayor concluded, "So, I encourage the Council to adopt this ordinance, so we can continue to repair potholes, fix streets, build walkable sidewalks, and allow kids to safely reach their schools and invest in our community."

Councillor Peel said, "I think I'd like to start with the one comment that I think we all know. The most we hear about from our residents is, 'When is my street going to get fixed? When is my sidewalk going to be fixed?' And we need money to do that. So, that's all I'm going to say about that."

Councillor Riegsecker confirmed that \$750,000 would be raised from the proposed Municipal Wheel Tax and Municipal Vehicle Excise Tax. He also asked if by imposing these fees, the City would be guaranteed a portion of the new Lane Mile Distribution Program. **Mayor Leichty** said that was unknown, but the City won't be eligible for those funds if it doesn't impose these taxes.

Council President Weddell said, "There's three revenue streams. The wheel and excise tax, should it pass, then the Lane Mile Distribution, which is guaranteed money but we don't know how much, because it depends on how many communities participate. And then the third stream would be the competitive grant – Community Crossings."

Mayor Leichty responded "Yes, you're absolutely right."

Councillor Gerber said, "We already fund the Community Crossings grant through our vehicle registration and our gas and diesel taxes that we pay at the pump. So, community money is already going into that pot of money ... through things that we already pay into."

Councillor Nisley asked how many of those grants the City has received.

Mayor Leichty said there are two grant cycles a year and the City has applied for grants, but not every cycle.

City Director of Public Works & Utilities Dustin Sailor said, "We currently have one that is \$1.5 million. Next year, they're going to drop it back down to \$1 million for Community Crossings. Over time, we've probably had about 10 Community Crossing grants, and they vary in size. This last one, \$1.5 million has been the largest."

Councillor Nisley asked how much roadway the \$750,000 raised through Ordinance 5229 would fix.

Sailor said, "Full reconstruction is a little over a million dollars a block. So, it doesn't go very far. A lot of this is going to go to mill and resurface ... Looking at each one of your districts, it's like whack-a-mole. Which road do we go for because they all need some type of treatment."

Mayor Leichty said **Sailor** wasn't giving himself enough credit, adding, "He's very methodical with his approach. It's not whack-a-mole in his world."

Sailor said, "It is more than that but when you have all these roads that are rated 3s or 4s, and you know they're on the decline, it's a chore to pick out which one are you going to invest the money into."

Council President Weddell said after the Council's earlier work session on road conditions, "I think we all looked at each other and said, 'How are we going to fund this?' ... Even if Senate Bill 1 wasn't part of this discussion, this would be something that we should be considering, regardless, because it is one available revenue source to generate ... \$750,000. That's not an insignificant amount."

"But we didn't know where we were going to get funding, and I think any avenue that we can get funding that is stable and is generated by users who use the roads, who wear and tear on the roads, this is definitely something we would have to consider, regardless of anything else that's going on from the State."

Councillor Lederach said, "I agree with you, **Councilman Weddell**, because if you look at it singularly as instituting a tax, nobody wants to do it. But if you look at the picture of what happened with Senate Bill 1 and the deficits that we're going to be running, we're going to be needing to grasp as many straws as we can to try to fill the hole."



Councilor Lederach continued, "Now that's a mixed metaphor, but I think you'll get what I'm getting at ... So, in the big picture, it helps. And even the Republican super majority that passed this bill must want us to. They're incentivizing it. They're saying you've got to pass it or you're not going to get the matching funds. So, it's an interesting twist to the whole legislative session."

Council President Weddell said, "This comment doesn't have anything to do with Senate Bill 1, but I always was under the understanding with property tax caps, which was put into our Constitution and voted on twice by the general public, the concept was to go away from a reliance on property taxes and instead go to user fees and whatnot. And this is kind of that concept. Again, you know, SB 1 keeps coming into the conversation, rightfully so, but I think, even removing that from the conversation, this is something that we would need to be discussing."

Mayor Leichty said, "**Councilor Weddell**, you make an excellent point, because this enabling legislation has been available to this body for a long time as a result of property tax caps. So, you're absolutely right in that this is something that was presented as an available option."

"Goshen has never considered it, nor do I think we would be considering it now, except for the imposition of the House Bill that has added it as a requirement for us to be eligible for funding. So, that, in addition to all of the other road needs that we have is the only reason ... I don't think there's a person in this room that wants to raise anybody's taxes, even at \$25 a year, but the State has made this requirement. We are responding."

Councilor Peel said, "I think another question should be asked just for clarification. So, the issue of the double taxation. So, the county can also implement or do a wheel tax. So, if they do, where will that money go?"

Mayor Leichty said the county already has imposed a wheel tax and the City of Goshen gets a distribution from the county, but the county could choose not to at any point. She added, "And, again there is some talk about and again looking at the legislation that was passed, and whether or not they want to add in the provision that would eliminate that duplication. But it's there presently, and we don't know for certain when that will be re-addressed."

Councilor Gerber asked if the county could increase its wheel tax. **Mayor Leichty** said that was possible.

Councilor Nisley said there was a limit on how much the wheel tax could be increased.

Councilor Nisley then said, "I'm just going to say, I've got a problem with this. For me, I look further down the road of having to put a new water well in, the cost of that. It just seems that we're kind of put in the cart before the horse."

Councilor Nisley concluded, "I said I would not vote on something that raises fees or taxes until we look at our budget and make sure we've eliminated everything out of there that we can before we go to the public and ask them for more money. So, with that, said, you probably realize I'm not going to vote for it."

Councilor Riegsecker asked if this measure had to be approved now. **Mayor Leichty** said these taxes needed to be approved by Aug. 31. **Council President Weddell** added that two readings of the measure were required.

Councilor Riegsecker asked if these taxes would need to be approved every year. **Mayor Leichty** said she wasn't sure. She added that these taxes could be rescinded at any time.

Councilor Gerber said, "Well, we've really been handed some rubbish from the State, and I'm certain no one in here wants to do this. No one wants to pass a surtax, but we're left with very few tools. And so, I'm asking all of us, regardless of party, everyone in the audience who has skin in the game, to push back. It sounds like there might be a possibility that they would consider correctional legislation in the next year. And I think we need to reach out to our State lawmakers and say, 'Look, this is hurting our community, and we need you to make changes. We don't want to raise fees and taxes and the cost of living in Goshen.'"



Councillor Gerber concluded, "So the tool that we have before us tonight is to pass this wheel and excise tax so we can at least replace a portion of our lost revenue, fund the roads and sidewalks repairs in our City and serve our community. And I think it's important that we do this."

Councillor Schrock asked if the funds raised through this ordinance would be used strictly roads and sidewalks.

Mayor Leichty said, "It's absolutely restricted. We cannot use it for anything else. It's a dedicated fund that gets set up non-reverting. The State has established very specific guidelines for how it can be used."

At 7:35 p.m., Mayor Leichty invited comments and questions from the audience.

Peter Miller of Goshen, who lives by the Public Library, said the conversation seemed "strikingly similar to 401K contributions in that if we don't do this, we just miss out on money. So, it's kind of seems like a no-brainer to me.

"The other thing that kind of scratches up my brain is I actually really like the heavy vehicle portion of it. I don't know how many people are familiar with the Fourth law power, but the wear and tear on a road is proportional to the Fourth power of the weight on the axle, which is kind of hard to comprehend. But what this means is a 9-ton vehicle exerts over 3,000 times as much wear and tear on a road as a 1-ton vehicle; like it's absurd the impact that weight plays on these things," **Miller** said.

"So yes, I also want to further voice my support in specifically targeting that portion of the infrastructure. Just in general, roads are hugely expensive. As a country, we subsidize them through all other sources of revenue. So, I think we should be looking to drivers such as myself to say, 'Hey, pay your fair share.' So yeah, that's all."

Glenn Null of Goshen spoke against the ordinance, saying it just appeared the City was seeking to move money around and imposing extra taxes on residents.

If approved, **Null** said he would be paying 10-plus percent more for his license plate next year than he did this year. He said, "Three years ago when I purchased my new trailer, I was paying \$1,500 for license plates just for the trailer, so, needless to say it has come down some, but I'm still paying over \$1,000 for all my vehicles, which two of them would fall into the \$40 range."

Null questioned the costs for registering various vehicles. He also said the \$750,000 to be raised through this ordinance would pay for repairs on less than a block of street repairs.

Mayor Leichty asked **Null** what he thought about the State imposing a wheel tax and excise tax requirement on municipalities. **Null** said, "Well, I'll tell you as somebody that served on a board, I did never like that the State said, 'This is what you're going to do, and we're not going to pay for it.' We pushed back as best we could from the local level, but we took the heat. It's like you're taking the heat, and if you can't stand the heat, get out of the kitchen."

As for the double taxation issue, **Null** criticized collection of the new taxes through the Bureau of Motor Vehicles, which he said was difficult to deal with. He said, "They make the IRS look like Girl Scouts selling cookies. You ever dealt with them when they think that when you think they're wrong? Oh, no, you don't get a chance."

Null said he doubted the taxes would ever be withdrawn and that the \$40 fee for his trailer would be unfair because he tows it on City streets less than 100 miles. He and Councillors also discussed other vehicles subject to taxes.

Ida Short of Goshen, who lives near the former Chandler Elementary School, said she supported the proposed wheel and excise taxes.



"I understand it's not an easy decision, but I do really love living in a society and living in a town, and I understand that that takes maintenance and care. And while I often walk to work, I would still love to pay into this tax, and will happily pay for the car that I occasionally use, because I want to care for my community. And I just want to say that as a small business owner, I feel like I see a pattern of prices of things going up; things becoming unreliable, a lot of change. And you just have to make choices that sometimes never feel good. And so, I just appreciate the fact that you are trying to address a small part, even if it feels like a very tiny gesture," Short said.

Paul Stauffer of Goshen said the reason the Council was considering wheel and excise taxes was because of the passage of Senate Bill 1, which will cut property taxes and was passed in April by the Republican super majority in the Indiana Legislature.

Stauffer said, "That bill radically defunded many of Indiana's cities and schools, and Goshen is now staring down a loss of over a third of its annual revenue as a result of that. Our **State Senator, Blake Doriot**, who is a Republican, voted to defund our City. Our **State Representative, Joanna King**, also a Republican, and I would like to note her seat is up on the ballot again next year, also voted to defund our City.

"And of course, our **Republican Governor, Mike Braun**, signed the bill into law, because Mike Braun apparently doesn't care about Indiana's cities. Whether as a result of malice or malpractice, the Republicans in Indianapolis appear to be united in their radical attack on cities like ours."

Stauffer continued, "I'm grateful that this Council takes their fiscal responsibility to the City more seriously. And, as has been noted several times here, nobody likes voting for additional fees, taxes, anything like that, but I hope everybody on this Council, regardless of their party affiliation, will have the courage to do what is necessary to keep our City on a stable financial footing in the years to come, even if doing so feels politically difficult for you."

Stauffer concluded, "When Goshen residents hear reporting about these new fees, or they see them appear the next time they renew their vehicle registrations, I hope they understand who created this situation that made this necessary, and who here took responsible action in response."

Kyle Richardson of Goshen said, "I think everyone, myself included, would like to pay less taxes and receive more services. Unfortunately, math makes that impossible, especially with the passage of Senate Bill 1. I think all of us are going to be facing fewer services and services that we care about are going to be cut, and we're probably going to see more taxes like this being passed.

"So, we will pay more taxes and receive less services. This one is a very small one, and it comes with other money from the State. This is a no-brainer. This is as easy as these questions are going to get. There's going to be more, and they're going to be harder."

Nicholas Sanger of Goshen said he supported the proposed wheel and excise taxes. He said, "I know not everyone owns a house or home, but due to Senate Bill 1, we will be paying less taxes there, but we can make up for it a little bit via vehicles. I also know that \$750,000 a year isn't that much compared to a \$1 million for a block (in street repairs), but I know potholes are rough or can be rough and I know they can cause damage to cars, too.

"So, if I'm driving, and if I hit a bad pothole, I'm going to be spending more than \$25 to fix whatever damage was caused."



Tim Doyle of Goshen, who lives on South 7th Street, asked the Clerk-Treasurer the amount-allocated for street repairs and how much would be provided if the wheel and excise taxes were approved. **Clerk-Treasurer Aguirre** said he could not say because street repairs are paid from various funds.

Doyle said that for the point he wanted to make, the exact amount was not needed. For the sake of argument, he suggested that perhaps \$2 million was budgeted for street repairs. If the ordinance passed, he asked if an additional \$750,000 would be allocated for street repairs and that the amount wouldn't be reduced by \$750,000.

Mayor Leichty responded, "Not necessarily because we'll have lost revenue from other places. So, we are determining how that money will be replaced." **Doyle** said, "So again, this is not providing necessarily additional money." The **Mayor** said, "No, it's guaranteeing that we don't lose additional money."

Doyle said, "I don't think you made that clear when you shared it. So, again, nobody likes paying additional fees, and revenues are challenged always. Those are the challenges when you're running a business or a government, or whatever it might be.

"But I think it's a little bit disingenuous when you presented as such that we're going to have \$750,000 to spend additional on our roads when you're not. And I think if this Council chooses to pass something like this, which certainly sounds like it's appropriate, I would encourage you to hold the line and not let that budget be cut.

"Make those changes happen somewhere else. Maybe we can't afford certain luxuries in the community that we currently have. Maybe, you know, the Mayor's prize golf cart has to be sold."

Mayor Leichty responded, "I want to make clear that's a personal vehicle and I love it. Give me credit for that."

Doyle responded, "But there are certain things, there are certain types of positions, within our local government, that maybe are more in the luxury category. And maybe some of those need to be looked at. You know, there's a 7th Street and Douglas intersection ... If it weren't for the patches, there would be nothing left there. Half of it is down to dirt and it's been years.

Doyle continued, "So, you know, some of the stuff when we're bringing in new revenue, you can't just say, 'Well, we're going to reduce it over here and put it over here.' That's kind of what they said with the lottery in Indiana 20 some years ago; that this was all going to go to education. They didn't increase the education budget by the amount that was collected on the lottery."

"That was a bait and switch, and I feel when you bring it up like this, it's a bit of a bait and switch. So, I certainly appreciate the challenges when you look at the funding like this. But again, I would encourage you as a Council, that if you pass that you do not allow the revenues to be reduced from the General Fund currently."

Council President Weddell said, "I think he has a valid point. I understand your point as well. With reduced revenues, everything will be get reduced."

Mayor Leichty said, "Everything. Every department is going to be impacted in some way."

Council President Weddell said, "But his point makes perfect sense. The fact that is, you don't want to put \$750,000 in the fund, but then transfer \$750,000 and spend it on a fleet of golf carts that aren't needed."

The **Mayor** joked, "Come on now; easy on the golf carts."

Council President Weddell said, "So, I think that point is very valid that we all have to look at it."

Mayor Leichty said, "As we have discussed already, there are \$52 million worth of pressing repairs. There are a number of things that we are prioritizing as we look at potential cuts, and those have to do with infrastructure. They have to do with public safety. They have to do with basic quality of life amenities.



"And we are making very careful strategic decisions about what gets cut. And as I mentioned already, we've cut more than \$30 million dollars from this year's budget on proposed projects. Now, I think all of you know what happens when you defer maintenance. The costs only get bigger over time."

Mayor Leichty concluded, "So, these projects that we had planned and carefully vetted and chosen to put into the 2025 budget didn't just miraculously appear. They appeared because they were necessary, but we've had to make very hard decisions this year about carefully planning for the future in light of the revenue reductions that are already being imposed, and will continue to get worse as the next few years progress."

At 7:52 p.m., Mayor Leichty closed the public comment period.

Councilor Riegsecker then read a lengthy statement outlining his position on the proposed wheel and excise taxes. **Councilor Riegsecker** said he analyzed the impact of Senate Bill 1, the Legislative Assembly property tax cut law. He said, "It appears to me that the residential homeowner is not going to benefit much from this. So, I get a little hesitant about raising fees without understanding everything totally."

"So, it appears that the 1% tax cap is probably still going to hold all the way through the next six years if everything is correct through my calculations. Now, there is one thing that the resident will get, and that's either after the tax cap you'll be able to subtract off the supplemental homestead credit of 10% of your gross tax or \$300, I think, whichever is less. So, everybody's going to benefit there. Okay, so not that we want to raise taxes, but I'm feeling a little more comfortable that I can get some of that back a little bit at a time, and \$25. If you get 300, and you give me \$25, I can live with that OK."

Councilor Riegsecker said, "Now the bigger one must be commercial, must be agricultural. It must be somewhere else that they're getting all these cuts from. So, if we're if we're paying more, you know, \$40, if they're paying that for trucks and tractors ... I'm not opposed to getting that back because somebody must be getting these cuts because I'm not and you're not."

With the property tax cuts people will be getting, **Councilor Riegsecker** said he believes many can afford wheel and excise taxes. However, he said if City fees start to move toward, \$300, he will be hesitant to continue those.

Councilor Lederach pointed out that the Council will only be able to increase fees if given that authority by the Legislative Assembly.

Councilor Schrock asked how many of the \$32 million in projects cut from the 2025 City budget were essential.

Mayor Leichty said \$14.8 million of public safety projects were cut, including the elimination of the new South Fire Station, the elimination of the police evidence storage facility, and the suspension of additional firefighter positions. Next year, the Mayor said, the City planned to add three firefighters to reach required staffing standards. And the three added firefighter positions in the next budget also have been cut.

As for City facilities, **Mayor Leichty** said the City Annex Building will no longer be made compliant with the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards and employees will continue working in the Annex basement in subpar working conditions and won't move to ADA-compliant facilities on the second floor. She also said the City also won't replace the Shanklin Park Pool, which is closed.

Mayor Leichty said funding for public art at the airport has been eliminated. She said many planned or vacant City positions have been suspended and no longer will be filled. "So, we've made a significant amount of cuts already, and we're planning more for next year," the Mayor said.



Mayor Leichty continued, "So there's no lack of responsibility and foresight and careful planning on the part of our Department heads, and I want to give them tremendous credit for their willingness to make very difficult and painful decisions. I think they all need to be commended because there has been an awareness and a cognizance of thinking of the greater good, not just what's good for their department, and their willingness to pause these important projects that have been in the works, some of them for 10 years.

"And I know the Council has been working closely to help facilitate much needed improvements, and so to lose some of those planned resources for our community, it's not something that we take lightly."

Clerk-Treasurer Aguirre said, "I wanted to add one thing. Remember the last budget consideration. The budget item, and I have the time on this, the one expenditure that you asked the most questions about was the half-position I wanted to add to the Clerk-Treasurer's Office. It was very apparent to me that you were skeptical about the need for that half-position.

"In consultation with the Mayor, it became clear early in the year that we would have property tax reform, and that we would have reductions. I didn't feel good about hiring a full-time person. even though you gave me the authority to have that added half-position, knowing that at the end of the year, or maybe sooner, I'd have to lose that position.

"So, we chose to leave that open, and it's not because we didn't use need it or couldn't use it," Aguirre said.

"It's because I wanted to save money also for the City, and to make sure that the Clerk-Treasurer's Office did not go over (the budget) at all and that we went into the next budget cycle, knowing that we were among the departments that the Mayor mentions that were trying to look out for the City finances. I hope that doesn't sound self-serving to you, but it's just something we did and it was a conscious decision."

Mayor Leichty asked if Councilors had additional comments or questions. They did not.

Council President Weddell then said, "Just so the public knows, we normally hold our votes with the Clerk-Treasurer if we do a roll call vote, calling each Council member's name, and then they vote in the affirmative or negative. One of our allowances for voting in our Council rules is to have a written vote, which I'll be requesting tonight. It's only been utilized one other time.

"Our votes will still be completely public. Our names will be attached to how we vote, but what will not happen is, I won't be able to sit in the seat and watch how everyone else votes prior to my voting. So, that way no one knows how each of us are going to vote until we secretly fold our piece of paper. We'll hand it to the presiding officer, which is the Mayor, and then she will read each Council members vote, and how they voted. That way, it's totally fair."

Council President Weddell said he would distribute prepared ballots with each Councilor's name for a vote – yes, no or an abstention – on the First Reading of Ordinance 5229. He distributed the ballots to Councilors who voted and folded their ballots. Council President Weddell then collected the ballots and gave them to the Mayor, who opened and read aloud the votes of all Councilors and Youth Adviser Reyes.

On a written ballot vote, Councilors passed Ordinance 5229, *An Ordinance Imposing a Municipal Wheel Tax and Municipal Vehicle Excise Tax and Creating the City of Goshen Municipal Wheel Tax Fund and the City of Goshen Municipal Surtax Fund*, on First Reading by a 6-1 margin, with Councilors Gerber, Lederach, Peel, Riegsecker, Schrock and Weddell voting "yes" and Councilor Nisley voting "no" at 8:04 p.m. Youth Adviser Reyes cast a non-binding "yes" vote.



Councilors did not give unanimous consent for the Second Reading of Ordinance 5229, so the matter will be considered at the Council's next meeting, on Aug. 25, 2025.

Elected Official Reports:

Mayor Leichty invited reports from Council members. There were none.

Adjournment:

Councilor Nisley made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Councilor Riegsecker seconded the motion. **By a 7-0 voice vote, Councilors unanimously approved the motion to adjourn the meeting.**

Mayor Leichty adjourned the meeting 8:06 p.m.

EXHIBIT #1: A revision to Resolution 2025-15, A Resolution Providing for the Transfer of Appropriations, which was distributed to Councilors before the meeting. The amended resolution included an added/needed Legal Department transfer of \$11,075 from Personnel Services, Legal/Insurance, to Professional Services, Legal/Other Services & Charges. Councilors approved Resolution 2025-15.

APPROVED:


Gina Leichty, Mayor of Goshen

ATTEST:

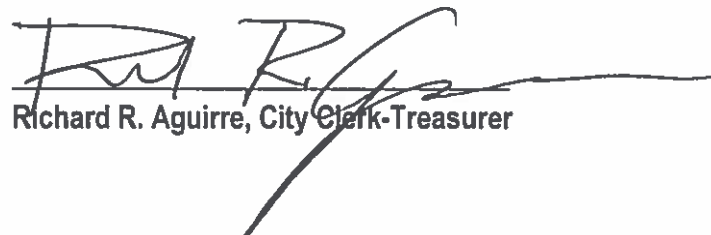

Richard R. Aguirre, City Clerk-Treasurer

Exhibit #1

**GOSHEN COMMON COUNCIL
Resolution 2025-15**

A Resolution Providing for the Transfer of Appropriations

WHEREAS it is necessary to transfer funds budget categories to cover expenses.

WHEREAS certain existing budget appropriations have unobligated funds that are available for the category transfer.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Goshen Common Council approves the transfer of funds between the following budget categories:

GENERAL FUND CATEGORY TRANSFER FROM:

Budget Category: Supplies
Line Number: 1101-5-18-4220351
Line Name: Central Garage / Small Tools
Amount of the Transfer: (\$7,500.00)

GENERAL FUND CATEGORY TRANSFER TO:

Budget Category: Capital Projects
Line Number: 1101-5-18-4450501
Line Name: Central Garage / Machinery & Tools
Amount of the Transfer: \$7,500.00
Purpose of Transfer: To cover the full expense of a shop air compressor.

GENERAL FUND CATEGORY TRANSFER FROM:

Budget Category: Personnel Services
Line Number: 1101-5-05-4110130
Line Name: Legal / Full Time Personnel
Amount of the Transfer: (\$4,660.00)

Budget Category: Personnel Services
Line Number: 1101-5-05-4130501
Line Name: Legal / Insurance
Amount of the Transfer: (\$11,075.00)

GENERAL FUND CATEGORY TRANSFER TO:

Budget Category: Professional Services
Line Number: 1101-5-05-4310000
Line Name: Legal / Other Services & Charges
Amount of the Transfer: \$15,735.00

Purpose of Transfer: To cover compensation due under amended agreement with Barks, Kolbus, Rife & Shuler, LLP.

GENERAL FUND CATEGORY TRANSFER FROM:

Budget Category: Capital Projects
Line Number: 2206-5-00-4420001
Line Name: Aviation / Capital Projects
Amount of the Transfer: (\$27,300.00)

GENERAL FUND CATEGORY TRANSFER TO:

Budget Category: Personnel Services
Line Number: 2206-5-00-4110130
Line Name: Aviation / Full-Time Personnel
Amount of the Transfer: \$25,000.00

Budget Category: Personnel Services
Line Number: 2206-5-00-4110140
Line Name: Aviation / Part-Time Personnel
Amount of the Transfer: \$2,300.00
Purpose of Transfer: To account for the hire of a new part-time employee earlier in the year than originally budgeted, and for a pay equity adjustment.

PASSED by the Goshen Common Council on July _____, 2025.

Presiding Officer

ATTEST:

Richard R. Aguirre, Clerk-Treasurer

PRESENTED to the Mayor of the City of Goshen on July _____, 2025, at _____ a.m./p.m.

Richard R. Aguirre, Clerk-Treasurer

APPROVED and ADOPTED on November _____, 2025.

Gina Leichthy, Mayor