

PORTER TOWN COUNCIL MINUTES

MAY 26, 2026

The Town Council of the Town of Porter, Indiana met in a regularly scheduled session on Tuesday, May 26, 2026, at the Porter Town Hall, 303 Franklin Street, Porter, Indiana. The meeting was called to order by Town Council President Bill Lopez at 7:00 p.m.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Roll Call

William "Bill" Lopez..... Present
Kelly Karriman Present
James Burge Present
Don Craft..... Present
Laura Madigan Absent

A quorum was attained. Clerk-Treasurer Corinne Peffers was also present.

Additional Officials Present

Fire Chief Jay Craig, Police Chief Dan Dickey, Public Works Superintendent Jamie Spanier, Park Director Brian Bugajski, and Attorney Christopher Willoughby.

Approval of Minutes

Council Member Craft moved to approve the Minutes of May 12, 2026. Council Member Burge seconded the motion. Motion passed by all in favor voice vote.

Consideration of Claims and Sewer Adjustments

Council Vice President Karriman moved to approve the claims. Council Member Craft seconded the motion. Motion passed by all in favor voice vote.

Petitions & Comments from the Floor

On behalf of the Chesterton/Porter Rotary Club, Trent Albert addressed the Council regarding plans for the upcoming Family Fourth Fest at Hawthorne Park. Mr. Albert requested permission to place a two-sided banner across a roadway in Town, suggesting the pedestrian bridge over U.S. Highway 20 as a possible location to advertise the event. Public Works Superintendent Spanier discussed that banners across roadways are generally prohibited by the State but indicated they would contact appropriate officials to determine whether approval could be obtained. Staff advised that they would attempt to provide an answer within a few days due to the event's timeline.

Mr. Albert also requested permission to stencil the Fourth Fest and Chesterton-Porter Rotary logos along the parade route using washable chalk paint. Council members expressed no objection to the request. Safety concerns were discussed, and it was recommended that the Rotary Club coordinate with the Police Department for traffic safety measures while the stenciling was being completed.

Additional discussion occurred regarding alternate banner locations if permission could not be obtained for the pedestrian bridge. Council members suggested banners could potentially be placed near Hawthorne Park or mounted using temporary stakes rather than spanning a roadway. Mr. Albert stated the Rotary Club would proceed with preparing banners once dimensions and placement details were finalized.

Mr. Albert also informed the Council that the Family Fourth Fest continues to expand each year and noted that the Westchester Historical Society would participate with games, activities, and a booth during the event.

Reports

Clerk-Treasurer Report

Clerk-Treasurer Peffers reminded residents to download the Savvy Citizen app or sign up online at <https://savvycitizenapp.com/> to stay informed about Town news and updates.

Clerk-Treasurer Peffers also presented a request from Environmental Sustainability Commission member Devin Throw to renew the Town's Bird Town Indiana designation. The request noted that the Town has maintained the designation since 2016 and that renewal helps encourage bird conservation, habitat maintenance, environmental awareness, and continued community engagement in wildlife-related activities. The renewal application fee is \$100.

Council members expressed support for renewing the designation.

Council Member Craft moved to approve the \$100 expenditure and renewal application for the Town's Bird Town Indiana designation. Council Vice President Karriman seconded the motion. Motion passed by all in favor voice vote.

Attorney Report

No report.

Police Department Report

Chief Dan Dickey reported that Memorial Day weekend was generally uneventful despite very heavy beach traffic due to favorable weather conditions. Appreciation was expressed to the officers who worked during the busy holiday weekend, noting that Memorial Day marked the first of the Town's three major summer weekends.

He also discussed increasing concerns regarding electric bicycles ("E-bikes"). The department has been receiving complaints through social media, emails, and phone calls and advised that the issue is actively being monitored. It was noted that the Department is coordinating with the Council, neighboring agencies, and the Indiana Dunes National Park regarding enforcement and regulation issues, particularly because E-bike classifications and applicable regulations can be complicated. Concerns primarily involve excessive speeds, operation on sidewalks and trails, and unsafe operation in roadways that impedes traffic. Chief Dickey emphasized that both E-bikes and traditional bicycles are subject to traffic laws and that unsafe operation should be reported to the Police Department for enforcement action.

Council members discussed additional concerns regarding motor-driven cycles being improperly classified as E-bikes when they do not contain pedals. Discussion also included seasonal concerns regarding golf cart use, specifically juveniles operating golf carts on public streets without a driver's license. Chief Dickey confirmed that officers are aware of the issue and will stop underage drivers when observed. Council members and Chief Dickey emphasized that enforcement efforts are intended to promote public safety and prevent injuries, rather than discourage recreational use.

Fire Department Report

Fire Chief Craig reported a relatively slow Memorial Day weekend, with approximately 12 calls for service occurring between Friday and Monday and no major incidents reported. He also reported that

the first day of seasonal part-time staffing began successfully. Staff responded to four calls during the day, completed apparatus checks, performed station maintenance, and addressed equipment repairs.

Public Works Department Report

Superintendent Spanier reported that paving work on 23rd Street and other streets included in this year's paving program have been completed. Spanier stated that, due to concerns about increased vehicle speeds on newly paved roads, speed signs were placed along 23rd Street.

Spanier also thanked Vic for assisting with inspection work related to the paving project. He explained that by completing the inspection work in-house with only a few hours of overtime, the Town saved a substantial amount of money compared to contracting the work externally. The project went smoothly without major issues and stated that the department intends to continue utilizing similar in-house efforts in the future.

Council President Lopez commented that he felt more confident having Town employees inspect the paving work rather than paying outside contractors and stated that the Town received greater value for its money through the in-house approach.

Lastly, Spanier said that he expects to bring additional business before the Council at the next meeting regarding the possible purchase of a mini excavator. He will connect with Council members over the coming weeks to discuss the proposal and explained that acquiring the equipment sooner rather than later could assist the Town in completing stormwater-related projects.

Park Department Report

Park Director Brian Bugajski reported that the Town's Memorial Day event was held successfully at the park. Bugajski thanked the Porter Volunteer Fire Department for serving as the honor guard and noted that both American Legion Post 170 and VFW Post 2511 were represented at the ceremony. He also stated that representatives from all three local towns participated by presenting wreaths or providing remarks during the event. Additionally, members of the Chesterton High School Band provided music for the ceremony. Bugajski said that the event went well. Council members agreed and complimented the success of the event.

Bugajski also requested approval to waive park rental fees for the Chesterton-Porter Rotary Club in connection with the upcoming Fourth of July event at Hawthorne Park. He explained that the Rotary Club completes the standard rental agreement process each year and that the Town has historically waived the associated fees.

Council President Bill Lopez stated that waiving the fees was appropriate given the Rotary Club's significant contributions to the community and requested a motion to approve the fee waiver.

Council Member Craft moved to waive the park rental fees for the Rotary Club's Fourth of July event. Council Vice President Karriman seconded the motion. Motion passed by all in favor voice vote.

Building Commissioner/Director of Development Report

Building Commissioner/Director of Development Barry was absent but requested approval of nine (9) contractors who have met all their requirements and paid their fees.

Council Member Burge moved to approve the nine (9) contractors. Council Member Craft seconded the motion. Motion passed by all in favor voice vote.

Public Hearing: Appropriation of Proceeds of the General Obligation Bonds

Council President Lopez opened the public hearing at 7:17 p.m. regarding the appropriation of proceeds from the Town's proposed general obligation bond issuance and invited Attorney Dustin Meeks to provide an overview of the matter.

Attorney Meeks introduced himself as bond counsel with Barnes & Thornburg LLP and explained that the Town Council had previously approved the issuance of approximately \$1.65 million in general obligation bonds. He stated that the bond issuance was being coordinated through Barnes & Thornburg, the Town's municipal advisor Baker Tilly, and the Indiana Bond Bank. Mr. Meeks explained that because the bond proceeds would constitute extra budgetary funds beyond the Town's annual budget and tax levy, Indiana law required the Town to conduct a public hearing on the appropriation of the bond proceeds. He further explained that the proposed appropriation would fund the acquisition of public safety fire equipment and other capital improvements as authorized under the bond ordinance. Mr. Meeks then offered to answer questions from the Council or the public.

Council President Lopez opened the public hearing for comments regarding the appropriation of the bond proceeds. No members of the public spoke in favor of or against the appropriation. During discussion, Council President Lopez stated that the Town had performed its due diligence regarding the bond issuance and noted that the timing of the fire truck purchase allowed the Town to realize cost savings. He also thanked Barnes & Thornburg, Baker Tilly, Clerk-Treasurer Peffers, and the Fire Department for their work in coordinating the financing process and facilitating the purchase.

After confirming there were no additional comments from the public, Council President Lopez closed the public hearing at 7:20 p.m.

Old Business

Ordinance 2026-09, Appropriating the Proceeds Derived from the Sale of General Obligation Bonds of the Town, and All Matters Related Thereto

The Council considered Ordinance 2026-09, Appropriating the Proceeds Derived from the Sale of General Obligation Bonds of the Town, and All Matters Related Thereto on second reading.

TOWN OF PORTER, INDIANA ORDINANCE NO. 2026-09

AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF PORTER, INDIANA, APPROPRIATING THE PROCEEDS DERIVED FROM THE SALE OF GENERAL OBLIGATION BONDS OF THE TOWN, AND ALL MATTERS RELATED THERETO

WHEREAS, pursuant to an ordinance adopted by the Town Council (the "Town Council") of the Town of Porter, Indiana (the "Town") on May 12, 2026 (the "Bond Ordinance"), the Town Council authorized the issuance of the Town of Porter, Indiana General Obligation Bonds, Series 2026 (the "Bonds") to be issued in an amount not exceeding One Million Six Hundred Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$1,650,000), for the purpose of financing all or any portion of (i) the acquisition and equipping of firefighting equipment consisting of a ladder truck and related equipment for use by the Town, and (ii) miscellaneous projects or costs relating to the foregoing and other capital improvement or equipping projects at facilities owned or operated by the Town (clauses (i) and (ii), collectively, the "Project"), and paying related expenses, including the costs of issuing the Bonds; and

WHEREAS, the Town Council has found that there are insufficient funds available or provided for in the existing budget and tax levy which may be applied to the costs of the Project and such related expenses and

has authorized the issuance of the Bonds to procure such funds and that a need exists for the making of the additional appropriation hereafter set out; and

WHEREAS, notice of a hearing on said appropriation has been filed with the Indiana Department of Local Government Finance through its Gateway system as required by law, and the hearing on said appropriation has been held, at which all taxpayers and other interested persons had an opportunity to appear and express their views as to such appropriation.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF PORTER, INDIANA, AS FOLLOWS:

1. There is hereby appropriated a sum not to exceed One Million Six Hundred Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$1,650,000) out of the proceeds of the Bonds, together with all investment earnings thereon, for the purpose of providing funds to pay the costs of the Project, and paying related expenses including the costs of issuing the Bonds, as provided in the Bond Ordinance. Such appropriation shall be in addition to all appropriations provided for in the existing budget and shall continue in effect until the completion of the described purposes.

2. The President of the Town Council and the Clerk-Treasurer of the Town and other appropriate Officers of the Town are hereby authorized to take all such actions and execute all such instruments as are necessary or desirable to effectuate this Ordinance, including the filing of a report of this appropriation with the Indiana Department of Local Government Finance.

3. This Ordinance shall take effect, and be in full force and effect, from and after its adoption in conformance with applicable law.

ALL OF WHICH IS PASSED AND ADOPTED BY THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF PORTER, INDIANA, THIS 26TH DAY OF MAY, 2026.

Council Member Burge moved to adopt Ordinance 2026-09. Council Member Craft seconded the motion. Roll call vote taken: Don Craft – yes. James Burge – yes. Kelly Karriman – yes. Bill Lopez – yes. Ordinance 2026-09 passed and adopted.

Mutual Termination of Agreement Between the Towns of Chesterton and Porter for the Consolidation of Certain Police Services

The Council considered a proposed mutual termination agreement between the Towns of Chesterton and Porter concerning the consolidation of certain police dispatch services, which was tabled at the previous meeting.

Council President Lopez explained that the agreement formally acknowledged the Towns' intent to terminate the existing shared 911 arrangement in anticipation of consolidating dispatch services with the County's 911 center. He stated that the purpose of the agreement was to ensure all necessary steps and agreements were completed in the proper order before moving forward with additional actions related to the transition.

Council President Lopez noted that Council members had previously discussed the matter and had sufficient time to review and consider the agreement.

Council Vice President Karriman moved to approve the Mutual Termination of Agreement Between the Towns of Chesterton and Porter for the Consolidation of Certain Police Services. Council Member Craft seconded the motion. Motion passed by all in favor voice vote.

New Business

Barnes & Thornburg Engagement Letter for Bond Counsel Services

The Council considered a letter of engagement from Barnes & Thornburg LLP for bond counsel services related to the Town's general obligation bond issuance. Council President Lopez noted that the engagement letter was being presented later in the process due to the expedited nature of the bond proceedings.

Attorney Meeks addressed the Council and accepted responsibility for the delayed submission of the engagement letter. He explained that Barnes & Thornburg had moved quickly to begin work on the bond issuance and that the engagement documentation was inadvertently not forwarded to Clerk-Treasurer Peffers before the prior meeting. He apologized to the Council for the oversight and stated that the engagement letter was intended to formally document services already authorized by the Council, noting that a significant portion of the bond process still remained to be completed.

Town Attorney Christopher Willoughby confirmed that he had reviewed the engagement letter and found it acceptable. He also noted that the Council had previously approved the use of Barnes & Thornburg for bond counsel services and stated that the engagement letter was primarily a formalization of that prior approval.

Council Member Burge moved to approve the Barnes & Thornburg Engagement Letter for Bond Counsel Services. Council Member Craft seconded the motion. Motion passed by all in favor voice vote.

Council Comments

Council Member Craft complimented Bugajski for his work organizing the Town's Memorial Day ceremony and acknowledged the difficulty of coordinating participation among three different communities. Bugajski thanked the Council for the comments.

Council Member Burge also provided an update regarding the Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission (NIRPC) and advised residents that potholes on state roads may be reported by calling INDOT's pothole hotline, 1-855-INDOT-4U. It was explained that reported issues are forwarded to the appropriate substation for response and coordination with local municipalities when necessary. He further explained the role of NIRPC, noting that the Town of Porter is one of 53 participating governmental entities within the regional organization. NIRPC oversees various federal transportation, environmental, and economic development funding opportunities throughout Lake, Porter, and LaPorte Counties. Council Member Burge encouraged Town officials and residents to communicate any project ideas or concerns so they could be directed to the appropriate NIRPC representatives and stated that meetings with Town department heads may be scheduled in the coming weeks to improve coordination regarding future grant opportunities and regional projects.

Council Vice President Karriman reminded residents that Indiana law requires life jackets to be worn or carried when operating paddle boards, kayaks, canoes, and similar watercraft, with children age 16 and under required to wear life jackets at all times while using such equipment. Council President Bill Lopez emphasized the importance of beach safety, noting that many visitors are unfamiliar with the hazards of Lake Michigan. It was also noted that weather and beach hazard notifications are being circulated through local alert systems and encouraged residents and visitors to prioritize safety throughout the summer season.

Council President Lopez additionally thanked Bugajski for his work organizing the Memorial Day ceremony and commented that it is always a meaningful community event.

Adjournment

Council Member Craft moved to adjourn. Council Member Burge seconded the motion. There being no further business on the agenda, Council President Lopez adjourned the meeting at 7:28 p.m.

Pursuant to IC 5-14-1.5-2.9, this meeting was livestreamed to <https://www.youtube.com/@porterindiana>. A recording of the livestream will remain publicly available at <https://www.youtube.com/@porterindiana> for a minimum of ninety (90) days following the date of the meeting. Meeting agendas, minutes, and any memoranda may be viewed at townofporter.in.gov.

Approved this 9th day of June, 2026.

TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF PORTER

William Lopez, President

Kelly Karriman, Vice President

James Burge

Don Craft

Laura Madigan

ATTEST:

Corinne M. Peffers, Clerk-Treasurer