

**REGULAR MEETING OF THE COMMON COUNCIL
CITY OF ELWOOD, MADISON COUNTY, INDIANA
COUNCIL CHAMBERS, MUNICIPAL BUILDING
DECEMBER 02, 2024 6:30PM**

Meeting called to order by Mayor Todd Jones followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and a prayer. Members present: Dave Abernathy, Kim Everson, Joe Kelich, Sam Tyner, Jim Watters and John Wright. Member Absent: Danielle Noone. City Attorney, Jeff Graham was present for the meeting.

Minutes from the November 04, 2024 regular meeting were presented to the council for approval. Wright made to approve the minutes; seconded by Kelich. All in favor.

Minutes from the November 19, 2024 special meeting were presented to the council for approval. Wright made to approve the minutes; seconded by Kelich. All in favor.

Mayor Jones gave the State of the City as attached.

The 2025 Elwood Redevelopment Commission Spending Plan was presented to the council. Abernathy made a motion to acknowledge receipt of plan; seconded by Wright. All in favor.

ORDINANCE NO. 2480 – AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CITY OF ELWOOD, INDIANA CODE OF ORDINANCE, TITLE XI, BUSINESS RESOLUTIONS TO ADD CHAPTER 115 HOTELS AND PLACES OF PUBLIC LODGING. Wright made a motion to read and consider Ordinance 2480; seconded by Watters. All in favor. Ordinance 2480 read title only. Watters made a motion for unanimous passage on the same night as introduced; seconded by Wright. All in favor. Watters made a motion to vote on Ordinance 2480 by roll call vote; seconded by Wright. Roll call vote: Abernathy – aye, Everson – aye, Kelich – aye, Tyner – aye, Watters – aye, Wright – aye. Ordinance 2480 passed.

Watters made a motion to table Resolution 2024-16 & 2024-17 till Judge Noone could be present for further explanation; seconded by Abernathy. All in favor.

Noone made a motion to amend Ordinance 2474 to the original \$600; seconded by Everson. All in favor.

RESOLUTION NO. 2024-18 – A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE CLERK-TREASURER OF THE CITY OF ELWOOD, INDIANA, TO TRANSFER FUNDS WITHIN FUNDS. Abernathy made a motion to read and consider Resolution 2024-18; seconded by Kelich. All in favor. Resolution 2024-18 read title only. Wright made a motion for unanimous passage on the same night as introduced; seconded by Watters. All in favor. Wright made a motion to vote on Resolution 2024-18 by roll call vote; seconded by Watters. Roll call:

Abernathy - aye, Everson - aye, Kelich - aye, Tyner - aye, Watters - aye, Wright - aye.
Resolution 2024-18 passed.

Watters made a motion to table the handicap sign issue till Councilwoman Noone could be present as it is in her district; seconded Wright. All in favor.


Watters made a motion to adjourn; seconded by Wright. All in favor.



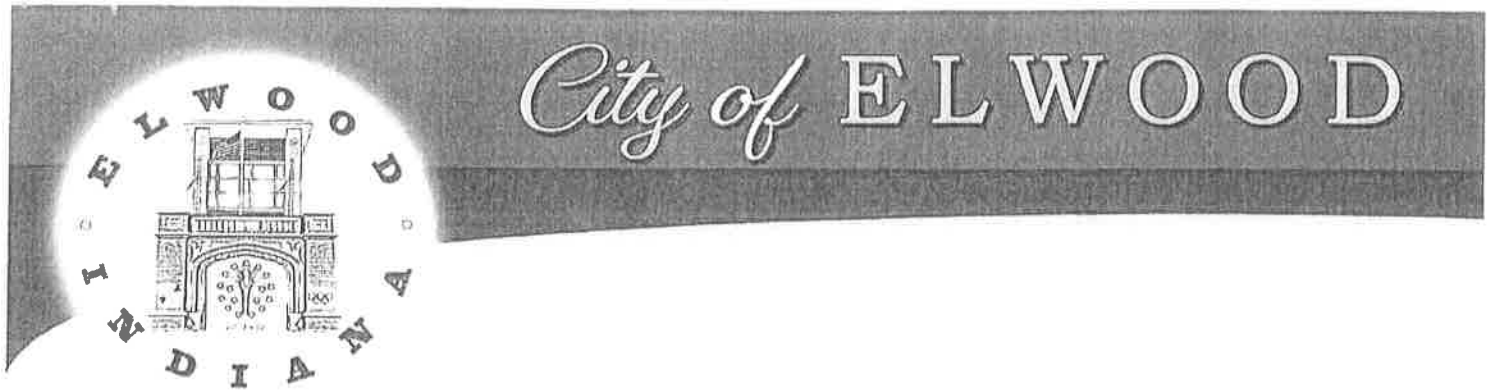
Todd Jones, Mayor



Council President/President Pro-Tem

ATTEST: 

Allison M. Roby, Clerk-Treasurer



Monday, December 2, 2024

State of the City 2023

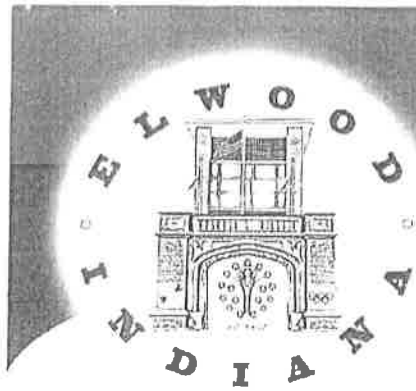
Tonight, I stand proudly before you to deliver the 2023 State of the City. Per the Indiana Statute, I must report to the City Council on the City's financial well-being from the previous year. As I deliver my 9th State of the City, I am reminded of this administration's goals when coming into office on January 1, 2016. Our main goal was to operate a fiscally responsible and efficient government that continued to improve the quality of life in the City of Elwood. It was crucial that we operated things in a "what's best for Elwood way" and not in a Democratic or Republican way. I am proud to say since 2016 we are still operating that way!

Our administration continues to deliver excellent city services and sustain solid cash reserves due to the exceptional financial management of Madam Clerk Ali Roby, our Department Heads, and the Board of Works and Public Safety.

Todd Jones
City of Elwood Mayor

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As I mentioned before, because of being good financial stewards, we have seen cash reserves grow by \$827,836 since taking office in 2016. There have been critics about excessive spending and being bad financial stewards, but as you can see, those accusations are false as the proof is in the pudding with the numbers.

We were able to invest in the City's most important asset: its people. In 2023, we gave all departments, including Police and Fire, 10% raises.

The City currently has an S&P Bond rating of "A," meaning there is a reasonable likelihood that a financial institution would honor any debt obligation it incurs.

The City of Elwood continues to invest in its infrastructure due to the Community Crossings Match Grant. Since 2017, \$5,318,494 has been allocated for paving, and the City has contributed \$1,329,624 of that total.

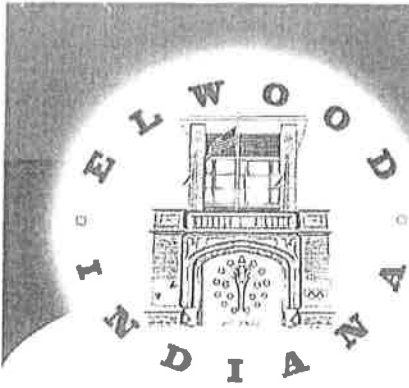
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Another goal for this administration was to build up the Rainy Day Fund, which has a balance of \$175,000. Before taking office in 2016, the Rainy Day Fund had a balance of \$75,000. Due to our great financial management, we have maintained the \$175,000 peak and not have to dip into reserves.

The City of Elwood maintains a solid financial position despite its high property tax credit/circuit breaker environment. The circuit breaker is approximately 39% of the property tax levy, and the City receives roughly 61% of its certified property tax.

However, the City's net assessed value increased by nearly \$23M from 2024 to 2025.

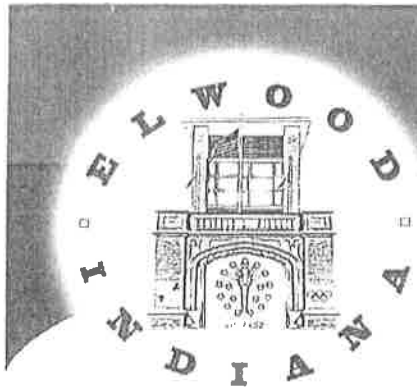
This is over 10% growth and should help lower the circuit breaker.

The Redevelopment Commission/TIF Allocation areas have significantly increased since being established, and their projects' assessed values have increased. The ERC is expected to increase its cash position by \$276,670.00, leaving an end balance of over \$2M. The City is consistently looking to use its TIF revenues to invest in different

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projects that benefit the community. Several notable projects have helped change the landscape of the City of Elwood, including Elwood Golf Links, Mary Beth Dunnichay Aquatic Center, Rosens Incorporated, the acquisition of the 17 acres off of St. Rd. 37 with an option to purchase two acres for a new hotel. As well as the acquisition and demolition of the Saint Stephens Episcopal Church and the purchase of the Valentine building. Other future potential projects will include the construction of a new fire station, the Elwood Athletic Complex, the previously mentioned hotel, new restroom facilities at Callaway Park and additional utility infrastructure.

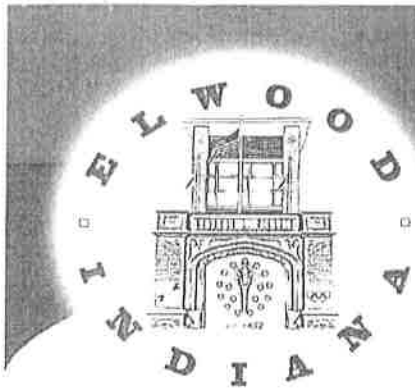
The City of Elwood will continue its aggressive stance on eliminating derelict properties from its neighborhoods, protecting the biggest asset most people have: Which is their homes.

Moving on to the Utilities, Operating revenues have remained consistent compared to recent years, meaning we haven't seen permanent disconnection through commercial

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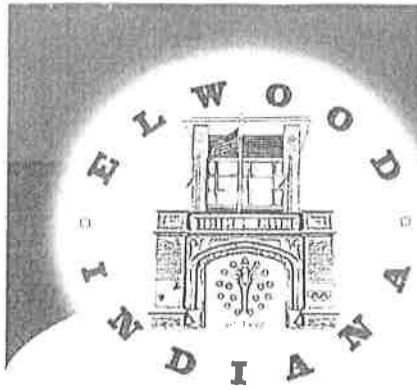
or industrial users. Marginal operation and maintenance expenses increase due to natural inflation; utilities can commit revenues to such expenses; however, the more revenues committed to operation and maintenance, the lesser available for utility capital investments. Master utility capital improvement plans are being updated to understand needs and correlating priorities to provide exceptional service to users. Operating cash reserves exceed 120 days, with the expectation that they will continue to maintain healthy cash reserves.

In closing, you can clearly see we are on solid financial ground and on the right track to continue to move the City forward by being great financial stewards and having the foresight to capture potential population growth. We have accomplished many things since taking office in 2016 while not increasing taxes. The City of Elwood continues to be noticed for all the right reasons. None of this could be accomplished without having the right people in the right positions. My most profound appreciation and thanks go out to all of our city employees, department heads, Madam Clerk Ali Roby, the Redevelopment

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Commission, the Board of Works and Public Safety, the Elwood Planning Commission, the Board of Zoning and Appeals, the Elwood Park Board, the Elwood City Council, and all of our great businesses and outstanding citizens. It truly takes everyone working together to make Elwood a vibrant destination spot where people want to come to live, raise a family, work, and play.

Thank you.

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