



Town of Merrillville
Town Council Meeting Minutes
February 22, 2022
6:30 P.M.

CALL TO ORDER: President Bella called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

INVOCATION/MOMENT OF SILENCE: A brief invocation was given along with a moment of silence.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Vice President Hardaway led the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL – Roll Call was taken by Madam Clerk Treasurer White Gibson.

Present were: Vice-President Hardaway- (Ward 2)

Councilman Minchuk- (Ward 3)

Councilwoman Uzelac- (Ward 4)

Councilman Pettit- (Ward 6)

Councilman White- (Ward 7)

President Bella- (Ward 5)

Six present (6) One absent (1) Councilman Spann (Ward 1)

PETITIONS, COMMUNICATIONS, ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND REMONSTRATIONS:

Presentation by MIS celebrating Black History month

Principal Karen Bonin, Activities Lead Mrs. Baldwin, along with students of Merrillville Intermediate School presented a display of various influential African American leaders. Vice President Hardaway thanked the students, Principal Bonin, and Mrs. Baldwin for a wonderful presentation.

CONSENT AGENDA

Accts. Payable Register Voucher Approval: February 22, 2022

Approval of Town Council Meeting Minutes of February 08, 2022.

Councilwoman Uzelac made a motion to approve the consent agenda, seconded by Councilman Pettit.

No discussion from the council.

Motion carried by voice vote.

STANDING COMMITTEES

BUDGET & FINANCE- HARDAWAY – Vice President Hardaway informed the council a budget and finance as well as an ARP meeting will be held Wednesday, March 2, 2022 at 3:30 P.M.

COUNCIL AFFAIRS- PETTIT – No Report

PUBLIC WORKS & UTILITIES- MINCHUK – Councilman Minchuk thanked the Public Works Department for their hard work regarding salting and plowing. Councilwoman Uzelac thanked Public Works & Engineering Director King for assisting residents with various fallen mailboxes around the community.

ELECTIONS, PUBLIC RELATIONS, & TOWN BEAUTIFICATION-PETTIT- Councilman Pettit informed the council of a committee meeting where various bridges including the 61st Ave over I-65 Bridge, 93rd Ave Bridge, and I-65 over US30 Bridge were discussed with the anticipation of possible branding the bridges. Councilman Pettit thanked all department heads for

creating a PowerPoint which will be presented to the Crossroad Regional Chamber of Commerce.

ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS- WHITE –Councilman White informed the council of a data update from the Indiana Dashboard regarding COVID-19. As of February 21, 2022 221 cases have been discovered in the state of Indiana. A total of 108 Omicron variant cases have been reported for the state of Indiana with 1,679 deaths from the variant. Councilman White informed residents the council will remain monitoring the status of COVID-19.

Councilwoman Uzelac informed the council 18 deaths have occurred as of Friday, February 18, 2022 due to COVID-19.

Councilman White informed the council of a link called “Retrack” which covers recycling. The link will be presented to the council at the March 8, 2022 town council meeting.

PERSONNEL POLICY & EMPLOYEE BENEFITS – HARDAWAY – No Report

PUBLIC SAFETY- MINCHUK- Councilman Minchuk informed the council negotiations with the Fraternal Order of Police are concluding, both parties involved are at an agreement at this time. An official signing will be prepared for the March 8, 2022 town council meeting.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT-PETTIT – Councilman Pettit informed the council a Redevelopment Commission meeting was held prior to the current town council meeting. During the meeting two resolutions regarding the economic development plan for Liberty Estate and the final resolution on the developer back bond issue were approved.

PARKS & RECREATION- UZELAC- Councilwoman Uzelac informed the council after discussing with Parks Department Director Price the Erie Lackawanna bike trail has been cleaned.

ABANDONED -BLIGHTED PROPERTIES-HARDAWAY – No Report

DEAN & BARBARA WHITE COMMUNITY CENTER-MINCHUK & PETTIT – Parks Department Director Price informed the council Saturday, February 26, 2022 a special MMA event will be held at the Dean & Barbara White Community Center, tickets for the event are still available. Director Price informed the council of the anticipated summer concert series. Four dates are selected for the summer concert series. The Dean & Barbara White Community Center will host their first summer soccer league in connection with the Merrillville soccer league. Director Price informed the council of various events and dates the community center anticipates for the near future.

Special Projects (F & B Tax, Diversity) – HARDAWAY – Vice President Hardaway informed the council a fireworks display will be held Sunday, July 3, 2022.

Town Manager Reardon has contacted Congressman Mrvan regarding a possible fly-over for the parade vacate. Planning for the 4th of July parade will begin Thursday, February 24, 2022. A Juneteenth event will be held Saturday, June 18, 2022 at the Dean & Barbara White Community Center various vendors will be able to display their products as well as sale food with live music. Vice President Hardaway invites all residents to become a part of the Juneteenth Celebration committee.

Councilman White informed the council a large group anticipates hosting a Juneteenth celebration as well. Councilman White asked that Vice President Hardaway collaborate with the anticipated group for Juneteenth. Councilman White informed the council he would invite Mr. Fletcher a resident within the community to join the Juneteenth Celebration committee.

Councilman Minchuk informed the council the groundbreaking for Pawsville is taking a little longer than expected due to materials on back order. A materials list will be prepared. A list of sponsorships will be created as well as a pamphlet that will be given to the public.

DEPARTMENT & COMMISSION REPORTS

LAKE COUNTY SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT-WHITE- Councilman White informed the council he would discuss the possibility of an E-Waste Recycling Program with Lake County Solid Waste board members.

NORTHERN INDIANA REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION-HARDAWAY– Vice President Hardaway informed the council Monday, February 28, 2022 he would attend the Destination 2022 Summit held at Valparaiso University for market rate housing.

STORMWATER MANAGEMENT RESOURCES-LAKE- Director Matt Lake informed the council Wednesday, February 16, 2022 he attended the Little Calumet River Basin Development Commission Meeting where two applications for the Taney ditch flood control improvement project and the Hickory Ridge Lake Apartments flood control project. The Town of Merrillville will be awarded \$426,000 for both projects.

SOUTHSHORE VISITORS AND CONVENTION AUTHORITY- Mr. Reardon- No Report

FIRE TERRITORY BOARD-MINCHUK- Councilman Minchuk informed the council the Fire Territory Board had their first committee meeting the week of February 14, 2022 where officers for the Fire Territory Board were selected, Joseph Shudick was elected Chairman and Steven Minchuk was elected Vice President of the fire territory committee.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Police Chief Cuttino informed the council his department has spoken with Dr. Lackey of Merrillville High School with the intent of the Merrillville Police Department adopting Merrillville High School through volunteering their services and time throughout the school year for various events, and school trips.

Vice President Hardaway made a motion to donate \$1,500 to the Adopt a School Program, seconded by Councilman Minchuk.

President Bella informed the council of the formatting for the Adopt a School Program. The council will donate \$1,500 the Urban League of Northwest Indiana will donate \$1,500 and the Merrillville School System will put in \$3,000.

No further discussion from the council.

Motion carried by voice vote.

Code Enforcement Director Bunnell informed the council few tickets were given for snow violations. The Code Enforcement Department has a new full time Code Enforcer.

Economic Development Director Chilcott informed the council of a preliminary proposal from Trammell Crow Company. Trammell Crow Company would like to have a warehouse distribution facility located on the 86 acres alongside I65 & 73rd Ave. The developers will host a neighborhood meeting for neighboring companies at the Dean & Barbara White Community Center Thursday, February 24, 2022 at 6:30 P.M.

Public Works & Engineering Director King thanked the Public Works plow drivers for their services.

Councilman White thanked Director King for his work with INDOT on 57th St & Broadway.

GENERAL ORDERS

A. Ordinances

First Readings: (Discussion and Roll Call)

Ordinance 22-04 (Discussion and Roll Call Vote)

An Ordinance Of The Town Of Merrillville Indiana, Providing That The Zoning Ordinance Town Of Merrillville, Lake County, Indiana Be Amended By Changing The Established M-1, Industrial Zoning District Classification To Cis/ Commercial / Industrial Special Zoning District Classification.

Councilman Pettit made a motion to approve Ordinance 22-04, seconded by Councilwoman Uzelac.

Planning and Building Director Shine elaborated on the ordinance.

Councilman Pettit gave further detail to the ordinance.

No further discussion from the council.

Motion carried with a roll call vote 6-1 absent.

Ordinance 22-05 (Discussion and Roll Call Vote)

An Ordinance Of The Town Of Merrillville Indiana, Providing That The Zoning Ordinance Town Of Merrillville, Lake County, Indiana Be Amended By Changing The Established R-2, Residential Zoning District Classification And C-3, Highway Commercial Zoning District Classification To A Planned Unit Development Zoning District Classification.

Planning and Building Director Shine elaborated on the ordinance.

President Bella asked that the questions from the petitioner be addressed.

Planning and Building Director Shine informed the council the town's ordinance requires that the town advertises twice during the preliminary portion, notices are to be sent to adjacent property owners the final portion will be sent out via meeting notice. The initial planning

commission meeting letter was dated October 8, 2021 the actual planning commission workshop was held October 5, 2021 the preliminary planning commission meeting was held October 19, 2021. The final plan unit development meeting was held January 27, 2022.

Town Attorney Svetanoff informed the council the petition was well advertised.

Councilman Pettit informed the council all buildings that touch the board of the Liberty Square Apartments were notified.

Councilman Pettit made a motion to approve Ordinance 22-05, seconded by Councilwoman Uzelac.

President Bella asked that petitioners trust that the council, the board of zoning appeal, and the planning commission is doing their jobs when vetting through developers.

No further discussion from the council.

Motion carried with a roll call vote 6-1 absent.

Ordinance 22-06 (Discussion and Roll Call Vote)

An Ordinance Of The Town Of Merrillville Indiana, Providing That The Zoning Map Of The Town Of Merrillville, Lake County, Indiana Be Amended To Provide For A New Planned Unit Development To Be Known As The "Liberty Estates Planned Unit Development"

Town Attorney Svetanoff elaborated on the ordinance.

Councilwoman Uzelac made a motion to approve Ordinance 22-06, seconded by Councilman Pettit.

No discussion from the council.

Motion carried with a roll call vote 6-1 absent.

Ordinance 22-07 (Discussion and Roll Call Vote)

An Ordinance Of The Town Of Merrillville, Lake County, Indiana Amending Ordinance 21-29, The 2022 Salary Ordinance.

Vice President Hardaway made a motion to approve Ordinance 22-07, seconded by Councilman Minchuk.

Vice President Hardaway informed staff the first disbursement will be Friday, April 8, 2022, the second disbursement will be Friday, July 15, 2022, third disbursement will be Friday, October 7, 2022, and the final disbursement will be Friday, December 30, 2022.

Councilman Pettit informed staff this is a one-time bonus for 2022.

Financial Advisor Hudson elaborated on the ordinance.

President Bella informed the council the disbursements will come from the lost revenue portion of the ARP Fund.

No further discussion from the council.

Motion carried with a roll call vote 6-1 absent.

Second Readings: (Discussion, Public Comment and Roll Call Vote)

None

B. Resolutions: (Discussion and Voice Vote)

Resolution 22-07 (Discussion and Voice Vote)

An Amendment To Original Resolution 20-39 Of The Town Of Merrillville, Lake County, Indiana, To Approve The Issuance Of A Credit Card And Authorize Use For Certain Expenditures.

Vice President Hardaway made a motion to approve Resolution 22-07, seconded by Councilman Pettit.

President Bella informed the council the card would be given to Director King for the Public Works and Engineering Department.

President Bella and Director King clarified Councilman Whites various questions.

No further discussion from the council.

Motion carried with a voice vote.

Resolution 22-09 (Discussion and Voice Vote)

A Resolution Of The Town Council Of The Town Of Merrillville, Indiana, Approving The Issuance Of Bonds Of The Town Of Merrillville Redevelopment Commission, And Related Matters

Vice President Hardaway made a motion to approve Resolution 22-09, seconded by Councilman Pettit.

Councilman Pettit elaborated on the resolution.

Vice President Hardaway pointed out an error in the amount for the development plan. President Bella asked that the \$6,000,000 be crossed out and replaced with \$10,000,000. The correct resolution will read \$10,000,000.

Vice President Hardaway's motion stands to approve the \$10,000,000 figure, Councilman Pettit's second stands as the \$10,000,000 figure.

No further discussion from the council.

Motion carried with a voice vote.

Resolution 22-10 (Discussion and Voice Vote)

Resolution Of The Town Council Of The Town Of Merrillville, Indiana, Approving A Form Of Economic Development Agreement Among The Town Of Merrillville, The Town Of Merrillville Redevelopment Commission, And Liberty Estates, LLC

Vice President Hardaway made a motion to approve Resolution 22-10, seconded by Councilman Minchuk.

No further discussion from the council.

Motion carried with a voice vote.

C. American Rescue Plan

AP Voucher Register Summary for ARP Purchases for February 22, 2022

Vice President Hardaway made a motion to approve the ARP Purchases payment voucher, seconded by Councilwoman Uzelac.

No questions or comments from the council.

Motion carried by voice vote.

D. BZA Actions & LARGE GATHERING ACTIONS

None

OLD BUSINESS

Councilman Pettit informed the council and department heads the Crossroad of Chambers Excellence Award Program will be Thursday, March 10, 2022 at the Dean & Barbara White Community Center. Councilman Pettit noted Aquinas Catholic Community School was awarded \$1,500,000 from the Big Shoulders Program.

NEW BUSINESS

Parks Department Director Price informed the council the Dean & Barbara White Community Center will host the State of Indiana Health Department from February 23, 2022 – February 25, 2022 for both COVID-19 vaccinations and booster shots.

Councilman White asked that the council host an annual awards program for notable African American's within the community. Councilman White asked that the awards program be held in March.

Councilman Pettit suggested the awards program be held during the Juneteenth celebration.

Councilman White asked that the council work as a unit for the awards program.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Executive Workshop March 1, 2022 at 4 P.M.

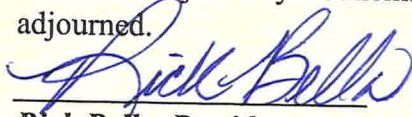
Plan Commission Workshop March 1, 2022 at 6:30 P.M.

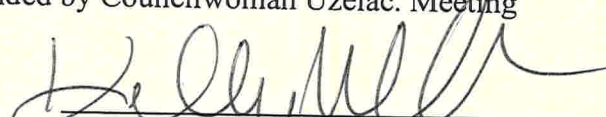
Town Council Meeting March 8, 2022 at 6:30 P.M.

Executive Workshop March 1, 2022 at 4 P.M.

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion to adjourn by Councilman White, seconded by Councilwoman Uzelac. Meeting adjourned.


Rick Bella, President


Kelly White Gibson, Clerk-Treasurer

Minutes Submitted By Chantalle Scott

