



Town of Merrillville
Town Council Meeting Minutes (Amended)
July 26, 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 from Richard Augie of Impact Church.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Led by any veteran in attendance.

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 White – (Ward 7)

Councilman Spann- (Ward 1)

Councilman Pettit- (Ward 6)

President Bella- (Ward 5)

Seven Present (7)

PETITIONS, COMMUNICATIONS, ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND REMONSTRATIONS:

The Proclamation recognizing AHEPA Centennial Anniversary

- Engagement Letter from Robert W. Baird & Co. (Baird) to provide sole Book running managing underwriting or placement agent services to the Town Regarding the offering and issuance \$2,000,000.00 Tax Increment Revenue Bond Anticipation Note, Series 2022.

Councilman Pettit made a motion to approve the engagement letter, seconded by Councilwoman Uzelac.

- Letter from Town Engineering Administrator endorsing Core Construction's recommendation to approve payment for Application #3 to various vendors for work completed at Merrillville Town Hall Conference Room.

Councilman Pettit made a motion to approve the letter from Town Engineering, seconded by Councilwoman Uzelac.

- Letter from Town Engineering Administrator endorsing Core Construction's recommendation to approve payment for Application #28 to various vendors for work completed at the Merrillville Community Center.
 - Building Corporation/Redevelopment Commission MCC Requisition # 50; review and approval for payment.
 - Redevelopment Authority/Redevelopment Commission MCC Requisition #51 review and approval for payment.

Councilman Pettit made a motion to approve the letter from Town Engineering Administrator, seconded by Councilwoman Uzelac.

CONSENT AGENDA

Accts. Payable Register Voucher Approval for July 26, 2022

Approval of Town Council Meeting Minutes of June 12, 2022

Councilwoman Uzelac made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda, seconded by Vice-President Hardaway

Motion carried by voice vote.

STANDING COMMITTEES

BUDGET & FINANCE- HARDAWAY – Vice President Hardaway informed the council that starting the week of August 1, 2022 department heads will meet with Trista. There will be a schedule out by the end of the week.

COUNCIL AFFAIRS- PETTIT – No Report

PUBLIC WORKS & UTILITIES- MINCHUK – Councilman Minchuk informed the council that he will be meeting with Director King and some of the Public Works staff prior to the next council meeting.

ELECTIONS, PUBLIC RELATIONS, & TOWN BEAUTIFICATION-PETTIT – Councilman Pettit informed the council that there is a request from the Merrillville Corporation to wave permit fees.

Councilman Pettit made a motion to approve the 50% building permit fees, seconded by Vice-President Hardaway.

Motion carried by roll call vote 6-1 abstention.

Councilman Pettit informed the council that he received an invoice from Hubinger Landscape Corporation.

Councilman Pettit made a motion to approve Hubinger Landscape to take care of the planters on 93rd Ave, Seconded by Councilwoman Uzelac.

Motion Carried by roll call vote 7-0.

ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS- WHITE – Councilman White informed the council that there have been 68 new admitted cases in the local hospitals. There are also 140 new cases per day which is an increase by 38% from two weeks ago. Councilman White also stated that there is a 17% positive rate which is a 2 and half increase.

Councilwoman Uzelac also informed the council that the Covid-19 numbers are rising, that even President Joe Biden has Covid-19. Councilwoman Uzelac also stated that there is only 55% of America that is vaccinated.

PERSONNEL POLICY & EMPLOYEE BENEFITS – HARDAWAY – Vice-President Hardaway informed the council that later on the agenda there is an Ordinance for the new Personnel Policy Manual. Vice-President Hardaway informed the council that HR Director Pettit is in the audience if anyone has questions on the manual.

PUBLIC SAFETY- MINCHUK – Councilman Minchuk informed the council that he wanted to thank the Merrillville Fire Department and the Merrillville Police Department. Councilman Minchuk stated both departments have shown up to lots of community events and have been working really hard throughout the community.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT-PETTIT – Councilman Pettit informed the council that he would like to make a motion to purchase the real state via 7150 Broadway, seconded by Councilman Minchuk.

Councilman Pettit elaborated more towards the land purchase.

Motion carried by roll call vote 7-0.

PARKS & RECREATION- UZELAC – Councilwoman Uzelac informed the council that all parks are up to par. Councilwoman Uzelac also stated that Director Price and she have been in contact about an upcoming party at Rosenbaum Park.

ABANDONED -BLIGHTED PROPERTIES-HARDAWAY – No Report

DEAN& BARBARA WHITE COMMUNITY CENTER-MINCHUK & PETTIT – Councilman Pettit informed the council that there is a meeting scheduled Thursday July 28, 2022 at 4:00P.M. The meeting will be over to discuss the Boys & Girls Club after school program.

Special Projects (F & B Tax, Diversity) – HARDAWAY – Vice President Hardaway informed the council that August 2, 2022 is National Night Out from 5:00P.M.-8:00P.M. At the Dean & Barbra White Community Center. Vice-President Hardaway reminded the council about welcome week at Merrillville Intermediate School. Vice-President Hardaway informed the council that some Merrillville employees were invited by the Salvation Army to take a student back to school shopping.

DEPARTMENT & COMMISSION REPORTS

LAKE COUNTY SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT-WHITE- Councilman White informed the council that there was a board meeting July 21, 2022. Councilman White informed the council that the Solid Waste Management President would like for the council to come see her and visit the new building. Councilman White stated that at the meeting a resolution was made to transfer funds.

NORTHERN INDIANA REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION-HARDAWAY– Vice-President Hardaway informed the council there was a meeting July 21, 2022. Vice-President Hardaway informed the council that the government has created a Federal Discretionary Grant Program. All information about the Federal Discretionary Grant Program will be given to Town Manager Reardon.

STORMWATER MANAGEMENT RESOURCES-LAKE- Director Lake informed the council that StormWater just finished a draft of their flood hazard ordinance. Director Lake explained that the ordinance is to maintain compliance with a national flood insurance program. Director Lake explained that Stormwater's permit was received for the Taney ditch project.

SOUTHSHORE VISITORS AND CONVENTION AUTHORITY– Town Manager Reardon informed the council that he could not attend the meeting last week due to a scheduling conflict. Manager Reardon did state he talked to President and CEO Uran about the meeting that he could not attend. Manager Reardon stated he would like to find a time that works best for the council and the visitor's convention bureau to meet.

FIRE TERRITORY BOARD- Minchuk- Councilman Minchuk informed the council that the next meeting is scheduled to be in September.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Assistant Chief Nuses informed the council that he wanted to thank Councilman Minchuk for the recognition of the Merrillville Police Officers. Chief Nuses informed the council that there were 4,602 calls for service in the month of June, that's 1,500 more than the month prior. Chief Nuses stated how proud he is of the Merrillville Police officers. Chief Nuses also informed the council that he met with Julie Altoff a state representative on Friday to discuss some hurdles that the Merrillville Police Department is facing.

Director King informed the council that the Public Works department has been extremely busy with helping out with town events. Director King stated the road projects are ongoing for the paving program. Director King also stated that there was a parcel that was purchased for the west side of Broadway. Unfortunately Public Works had to hold out so that project will happen next year. Director King informed the council about the nipsco switching towers that are going up all over the county. These switching towers help nipsco lessen their power outages.

Director Price informed the council that the lions club had an event where a Colorado blue spruce tree was planted. Director Price also stated that at the Dean & Barbra White Community Center there will be a MMA fight on Saturday July 30, 2022. There will also be a jazz and gospel festival on Sunday July 31, 2022 from 12:00P.M.-9:00P.M.

GENERAL ORDERS

A. Ordinances

First Readings: (Discussion and Roll Call)

Ordinance 22-19 (Discussion and Roll Call Vote)

An Ordinance Amending Town Ordinance 94-05 Entitled "An Ordinance Of The Town Of Merrillville, Lake County, Indiana, For The Establishment Of A Merrillville Town Court", As It Pertains To The Closure Of The Merrillville Town Court And The Orderly Transition Of Cases And Repealing All Town Code Sections And Ordinances, Or Parts Thereof, In Conflict Herewith.

Councilman Pettit made a motion to approve Ordinance 22-19, seconded by Councilman Minchuk. Vice-President Hardaway stated he would like to suspend any hiring at the moment to see if any of the court employees would like to fill any open positions.

President Bella elaborated towards Ordinance 22-19.

Motion carried by roll call vote 5- 1 abstention, 1 no.

Ordinance 22-20 (Discussion and Roll Call Vote)

An Ordinance Establishing A Personnel Policy Manual For The Employees Of The Town Of Merrillville, Lake County, Indiana, Entitled "Personnel Policy Manual For The Town Of Merrillville" And Repealing All Ordinances Or Parts Thereof, In Conflict Therewith.

Vice-President Hardaway made a motion to approve Ordinance 22-20, seconded by Councilman Pettit.

Director Pettit informed the council about the process of updating the Personnel Manual.

Clerk-Treasurer White Gibson asked Director Pettit "in the new amended policy did human resources because the last policy did not include the Clerk-Treasurer's office in regard to certain sections was it an intent in effect that the Clerk-Treasurer's office would have to adhere to all the policies in the personnel policy manual." Director Pettit answered yes to Clerk-Treasurer White Gibson.

Clerk-Treasurer White Gibson stated "for the recorded I have spoken with my attorney and I disagree with personnel policy manual. I will adopt the portions of the personnel policy manual that are relative to all town employees but there are certain portions of it that do apply to the Clerk-Treasurer's office never have in the past and by statue do not apply now". That is the legal opinion of Clerk-Treasurer White Gibson's attorney.

Clerk-Treasurer White Gibson stated the statue makes the Clerk-Treasurer's office an independent office as an elected official and part of the Clerk-Treasurer's duties is to prescribe how our employees are hired and how they are paid. As well as to be able to hire her own employees and not have to go through the human resources department. Clerk-Treasurer White Gibson also stated the Clerk-Treasurer office does adhere to the policies the personnel policies in terms of time off, police checks and drug policy. There is not very much of a difference but there are other towns and other cities whose Clerk-Treasurer and Judge have their own personnel policy. Those town's or cities Clerk-Treasurer or judge adopt portions of the cities or town's policy but they have their own sections that are added to the policy and then that's their policy which would be Clerk-Treasurer White Gibson's intent.

Motion carried by roll call vote 7-0.

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

B. Resolutions: (Discussion and Voice Vote)

Resolution 22-53 (Discussion and Voice Vote)

A Resolution Authorizing And Approving Appointment Of Appraisers And Acquisition Of Certain Real Estate, 220 78TH (Approx.) Avenue, Approximately 0.56 Acre And 7706 Adams (Ext.) Street, Approximately 0.15 Acre, Steve Sieraki Owner And All Matters Related Thereto.

Councilman Pettit made a motion to approve Resolution 22-53, seconded by Councilman Minchuk.

Motion carried by voice vote.

Resolution 22-54 (Discussion and Voice Vote)

A Resolution Authorizing And Approving Appointment Of Appraisers And Acquisition Of Certain Real Estate, 7809 Madison (Approx.), Approximately 1.564 Acres, John Thomas Gartner, Owner And All Matters Related Thereto.

Councilman Minchuk made a motion to approve Resolution 22-54, seconded by Councilman Pettit

Motion carried by voice vote.

Resolution 22-55 (Discussion and Voice Vote)

A Resolution Authorizing And Approving Appointment Of Appraisers And Acquisition Of Certain Real Estate, 7809 Madison (Rear), Approximately 0.71-Acre, Raymond P. Gartner, Owner And All Matters Related Thereto.

Councilman Pettit made a motion to approve Resolution 22-55, seconded by Councilwoman Uzelac.

Town Manager Reardon elaborated on Resolution 22-55.

Motion carried by voice vote.

C. American Rescue Plan

AP Voucher Register Summary for ARP Purchases for July 26, 2022

Vice-President Hardaway made a motion to approve the American Rescue Plan, seconded by Councilman Pettit.

D. BZA Actions & LARGE GATHERING ACTIONS

Petitioner: Tony settele

Owner: Anton Settele, Danica Pejnovic & Pete Sormaz

Request: Large Gathering Permit- St. Sava Serb Fest

Purpose: Church Fundraiser

Location: 9191 Mississippi Street

Date: July 29, 2022 12:00 P.M.-12:00 A.M. July 30, 2022 12:00 P.M. – 12:00A.M. & July 31, 2022 12:00 P.M. – 10:00 P.M.

Town Manager Reardon elaborated towards the BZA Action.

Councilman Pettit made a motion to approve the BZA Action, seconded by Councilwoman Uzelac.

No further questions or comments from the council.

Motion carried by voice vote

OLD BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

Councilman Pettit and Town Manager Reardon elaborated about the recent job fair that took place at the Dean & Barber White Community Center.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Town Council Meeting August 9, 2022 at 6:30 P.M.

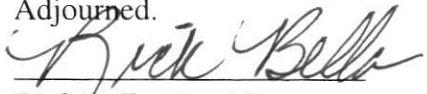
National Night out August 2, 2022 at the Dean & Barbra White Community Center from 5:00P.M. - 8:00P.M.

Boys & Girls Club after school program registration will be August 17, 2022 (there will only be 50 students allowed).

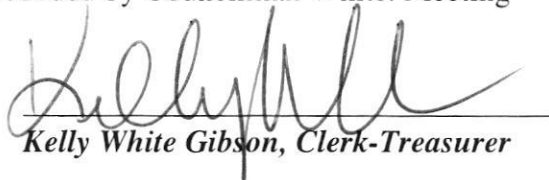
ADJOURNMENT:

Motion to adjourn by Vice-President Hardaway, seconded by Councilman White. Meeting

Adjourned.



Rick Bella, President



Kelly White Gibson, Clerk-Treasurer

Minutes Submitted By Britni Reillo