



Town of Merrillville
Town Council Meeting Minutes
April 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.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: President Bella invited the veterans in the audience to lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLLCALL – Roll Call was taken by Office Manager Joi Whiteside

Present were: Vice President Hardaway- (Ward 2)

Councilman Spann- (Ward 1)

Councilwoman Uzelac- (Ward 4)

Councilman Pettit- (Ward 6)

Councilman White- (Ward 7)

President Bella- (Ward 5)

Six present (6) One absent (1) Councilman Minchuk (Ward 3)

PETITIONS, COMMUNICATIONS, ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND REMONSTRATIONS:

Letter from Town Engineering Administrator endorsing Core Construction's recommendation to approve payment for Application #27 to various vendors for work completed at the Merrillville Community Center.

Vice-President Hardaway made a motion to approve payment for Application #27, seconded by Councilwoman Uzelac.

Public Works & Engineering Director King informed the council he would provide documentation for the application once available.

No discussion from the council.

Motion carried by voice vote.

Letter from Town Engineering Administrator endorsing Core Construction's recommendation to approve payment for Application #1 to various vendors for work completed at Merrillville Town Hall Conference Room.

Vice-President Hardaway made a motion to approve payment for Application #1, seconded by Councilman Spann.

No discussion from the council.

Motion carried by voice vote.

Letter from Town Engineering Administrator for approval of 2022 Street resurfacing bid award. Director King informed the council that opening of the resurfacing pavement bids took place April 07, 2022. With Milestone Contractor being the low bid of \$4,963,183.20 Director King recommended Milestone Contractor as the awarding bidder.

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

Vice President Hardaway asked if Town Attorney Svetanoff had reviewed any paper work for the awarding bidder. Attorney Svetanoff informed the council himself along with professional staff would review all paperwork.

Councilman Pettit informed the council the resurfacing pavement bid is for Ward 2 and Ward 6.

Councilman Spann informed the council Ward 1 did not receive a lot of paving.
Director King informed Councilman Spann due to weather and Indiana American Water the pavement for Ward 1 was not completely fulfilled however, money is still available for pavement to be completed.
No further discussion from the council.
Motion carried by roll call vote 6-1 absent.

Letter from Town Engineering Administrator for approval of 2021 Community Crossing grant bid award.

Director King informed the council Reith Riley Construction Co., Inc. was the low bidder of \$1,644,174.85. Due to the Indiana Department of Transportation giving the Town of Merrillville a 50% match the original \$1 million amount to be awarded was adjusted to \$822,087.42 which will be matched with the Wheel Tax.

Vice President Hardaway made a motion to approve Reith Riley construction Co., Inc. for \$1,644,174.85, seconded by Councilman Pettit.

Vice President Hardaway confirmed the direction of the pavement.

No further discussion from the council.

Motion carried by voice vote.

Awards by Veteran Services

Jason Zaideman Founder of Operation Combat Bikesaver NFP Inc. a local non-profit organization based out of Crown Point, Indiana, which provides therapy to veterans in local communities to prevent suicide and homelessness. Mr. Zaideman informed the council on April 02, 2022 a veteran went missing, prior to the veteran being missing Mr. Zaideman brought them out of a psych ward in Gary, IN for mental health services. Mr. Zaideman had reason to believe the veteran was going to possibly harm themselves. Mr. Zaideman reached out to Corporal Minchuk to find out the protocol to help find the veteran. Upon arriving to the veteran's residence Mr. Zaideman called 911 to discuss with the dispatchers the possibility of a missing person. Mr. Zaideman stated the veteran could not be found anywhere, once several officers arrived on scene everything began to unfold and the veteran was found. Mr. Zaideman gave an award to the Merrillville Police Department then gave the "Brotherhood Award" to Corporal Reynolds, Corporal Minchuk, Officer Osbrone, Officer Perez and Officer Lito. Mr. Zaideman thanked the EMS and the Lake County 911 dispatch for their efforts and offered his service if ever needed.

Arbor Day Proclamation

Office Manager Joi Whiteside read the Arbor Day Proclamation.

Vice President Hardaway made a motion to approve the Arbor Day Proclamation, seconded by Councilman Spann.

No discussion from the council.

Motion carried by voice vote.

Autism Awareness "Bens Blue Bags" Proclamation

Fire Chief Yerga informed the council of the significance of Autism Awareness blue.

Lieutenant Paramedic Matt Kodicek from the Crown Point Fire Department is the Creator of the Ben's Blue Bag which is named after his son Ben. Lieutenant Paramedic Kodicek presented items which were enclosed in the Ben's Blue Bag. The council awarded Matt and Ben Kodicek a Proclamation from the council.

Office Manager Joi Whiteside read the Autism Awareness Proclamation.

Vice President Hardaway made a motion to approve Autism Awareness Bens Blue Bags, seconded by Councilman White.

No discussion from the council.

Motion carried by voice vote.

Provider Appreciation Proclamation

Office Manager Joi Whiteside read the Provider Appreciation Proclamation.

Vice President Hardaway made a motion to approve May 06, 2022 as Provider Appreciation Day, second by Councilwomen Uzelac.

Vice President Hardaway thanked Merrillville resident Latricia Johnson for bringing Provider Appreciation Day to the council's attention.

President Bella informed the council Ms. Johnson couldn't make it to the town council meeting due to a work conflict.

No discussion from the council.
Motion carried by voice vote.

CONSENT AGENDA

Accts. Payable Register Voucher Approval: April 26, 2022
Approval of Town Council Meeting Minutes of April 12, 2022.
Councilman Pettit made a motion to approve the consent agenda, seconded by Councilman White.

No discussion from the council.
Motion carried by voice vote.

STANDING COMMITTEES

BUDGET & FINANCE- HARDAWAY – Vice President Hardaway informed the council he encourages all council members to read the rules and regulations for the ARP Residential & Business Grant Application. Vice President Hardaway made a motion to approve ARP Residential & Business Grant Application which will open May 01, 2022, second by Councilman Pettit.

No discussion from the council.
Motion carried by voice vote.

COUNCIL AFFAIRS- PETTIT – Councilman Pettit informed the council of a Council Affairs committee meeting May 04, 2022 at 5:30 P.M. to discuss chapter 2 codes and the bylaws.

PUBLIC WORKS & UTILITIES- MINCHUK – Director King informed the council spring cleanup ended on April 18, 2022. Director King also stated branch pick up will begin May 1, 2022 - September 30, 2022 it will be 20 mins per location and nothing bigger than 6 inches. Residents can take branches to 5750 Tyler Street Monday through Friday 7:15 A.M. - 2:45 P.M. Director King also stated a service ticket would be left in resident's mailbox or door if they can't get through or a car is in the way. The Public Works Department will revisit the area once all town branches are collected.

ELECTIONS, PUBLIC RELATIONS, & TOWN BEAUTIFICATION-PETTIT - Councilman Pettit informed the council the Election, Public Relations, & Town Beautification committee continues to diligently reconstruct the exterior of the Town Municipal Building. May 05, 2022 there will be a pre-construction meeting to discuss the reconstruction of the buildings sidewalks closest to Broadway. Councilman Pettit informed the council he would discuss the bridge signage concerns with Councilman White, and Director King May 4, 2022 at 4:30 P.M. Councilman Pettit encourages all Lake County residents to vote May 03, 2022. Voting will be available for all 27 Merrillville precincts from 6:00 A.M. – 6:00 P.M.

ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS- WHITE – Councilman White informed the council as of April 25, 2022 59 COVID-19 cases were detected 13 of which were hospitalized and 1 deceased. Councilman White also informed the council people of all age are 57% vaccinated ages 5 and up are 60% vaccinated, ages 60 and older are 87% vaccinated.

PERSONNEL POLICY & EMPLOYEE BENEFITS – HARDAWAY – Vice President Hardaway informed the council he would discuss potential summer assistance with Director King and Parks Department Director Price.

PUBLIC SAFETY- MINCHUK- No Report

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT-PETTIT – Councilman Pettit informed the council of an RDC meeting held prior to the Town Council meeting. During the RDC meeting a resolution for the Silos at Sanders Farm was discussed regarding the confirmatory tax abatement. Councilman Pettit recommended a public safety facility to the RDC where Colorado St would be the desired location. The tax abatement and concerns regarding the North Station located at 57th Ave will be brought to Councilman Minchuck and the Public Safety committee's attention. Councilman Pettit informed the council Financial Advisor Bob Swintz will begin to prepare a timeline for the funding of the Crow Holdings utility reimbursement as they develop 195 acres.

PARKS & RECREATION- UZELAC- Councilwoman Uzelac informed the council of an article from the Northwest Indiana Times regarding grants which will be going toward bike trails. Town Manager Reardon informed the council the grant is a collaborative effort amongst all town departments. Town Manager Reardon stated due to all collaborate efforts an application was submitted in a timely manner which was reviewed by the state.

ABANDONED -BLIGHTED PROPERTIES-HARDAWAY – No Report

DEAN& BARBARA WHITE COMMUNITY CENTER-MINCHUK & PETTIT – Councilman Pettit informed the council there is CPR training over the April 29-May 01, 2022 weekend. A volleyball tournament will be held at community center during the month of May. Councilman Pettit informed the council of other sponsorship opportunities for the outside concession Town Manager Reardon will reach out to various companies to spark some interest. Director Price informed the council the wallpapering has been complete as well as the flooring. Director Price stated another wrestling tournament will be held May 07-May 08, 2022. Epic Volleyball will host events held May 14-May 15-2022. The Daddy Daughter dance will take place May 20-2022 and the Mother Son dance take place May 21-2022 both Frozen and Superhero characters will be on attendance at both dances. Director Price informed the council of a sponsorship meeting with Chick-fil-A that went very well, the community center hopes to sell Chick-fil-A product at future events. Summer preparation has begun with mowing and cleaning graffiti. Director Price informed the council he has spoken with the NFL about a potential summer flag football program.

Special Projects (F & B Tax, Diversity) – HARDAWAY Vice President Hardaway informed the council June 18-2022 there will be a Juneteenth celebration held at the Dean and Barbra White Community Center, as of now 8 vendors are anticipated on being in attendance. Vice President Hardaway invites residents to attend the Juneteenth committee meeting April 28, 2022 at 10:00 A.M. to offer any input or ideas. There will be a meeting May 5, 2022 to discuss planning for the 4th of July parade. Vice President Hardaway informed the council 4th of July parade float applications are still being collected, firework preparations for July 3rd are being finalized. August 2, 2022 the Dean & Barbra White Community Center will host National Night Out, where there will be a live band and DJ in attendance.

DEPARTMENT & COMMISSION REPORTS

LAKE COUNTY SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT-WHITE- Councilman White informed the council the ADA is awaiting an occupancy approval once approved they will move into their building.

NORTHERN INDIANA REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION-HARDAWAY- No Report

STORMWATER MANAGEMENT RESOURCES-LAKE- No Report

SOUTHSHORE VISITORS AND CONVENTION AUTHORITY- Mr. Reardon- Town Manager Reardon informed the council the SouthShore Visitors and Convention board made a final selection for their new President CEO. Town Manager Reardon stated the executive committee is negotiating with the President Elect David Uran Mayor of Crown Point, Indiana, and hopes the Mr. Uran will be in place by the end of May.

FIRE TERRITORY BOARD-MINCHUK- No Report

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Director Chilcott expounded on the bike trail grant. The trail will be constructed along the abandoned Seattle Railroad Corridor from the eastern boundaries of Lake County from Oak Ridge Prairie to Mississippi St. The main trail will be constructed to Ellsworth Pl to the Innsbrook neighborhood.

Police Chief Cuttino informed the council he would like to recognize and show appreciation to the attending officers. Chief Cuttino informed the council of an obstruction regarding a business owner from Illinois and a towing firm.

Planning and Building Director Shine encourages all residents to obtain a building permit and hire license contractors for all work done on homes. Director Shine informed residents her department has a list of licensed contractors that are permitted to work in the town.

GENERAL ORDERS

A. Ordinances

First Readings: (Discussion and Roll Call)

None

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

Ordinance 22-11 (Discussion and Roll Call Vote)

An Ordinance of The Town of Merrillville, Lake County, Indiana, Amending Ordinances 21-15, 21-10 & 20-16, The Park User Fees for The Town of Merrillville.

Vice President Hardaway made a motion to approve Ordinance 22-11, seconded by Councilman Pettit.

No discussion from the council.

Motion carried by roll call vote 6-1 absent.

B. Resolutions: (Discussion and Voice Vote)

Resolutions 22-14 (Discussion and Voice Vote)

Resolution Confirming the Designation of an Economic Revitalization Area and Approving the Deduction from Assessed Value of New Real Property Improvements.

Councilman Pettit made a motion to approve Resolutions 22-14, seconded by Vice President Hardaway.

No discussion from the council.

Motion carried by voice vote.

Resolutions 22-16 (Discussion & Voice Vote)

A Resolution of the Town of Merrillville, Lake County, Indiana, to Amend the Merrillville Fiscal Recovery Plan.

Vice President Hardaway made a motion to approve Resolution 22-16, seconded by Councilman Pettit.

No discussion from the council.

Motion carried by voice vote.

C. American Rescue Plan

AP Voucher Register Summary for ARP Purchases for April 26, 2022.

Vice President Hardaway made a motion to approve the ARP Purchases payment voucher for April 26, 2022, seconded by Councilman Pettit.

Vice President Hardaway informed the council the voucher amount was \$67,777.51 the allowed amount was \$63,120.00

No questions or comments from the council.

Motion carried by roll call vote 6-1 absent

D. BZA Actions & LARGE GATHERING ACTIONS

None

OLD BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

None

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Town Council Meeting May 10, 2022 at 6:30 P.M.

Town of Merrillville Municipal Day May 10, 2022 at 5 P.M.

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion to adjourn by Councilman White, seconded by voice vote. Meeting adjourned.


Rick Bella, President


Kelly White Gibson, Clerk-Treasurer

Minutes Submitted By Britni Reillo

