



Town of Merrillville
Town Council Meeting Minutes
December 13, 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 by Pastor Robert Szoke of Impact Church.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Led by Commissioner Ward.

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:

*Community Crossing Matching Grant Fund Letter for INDOT

President Bella informed the council of a Community Crossing Matching Grand Fund letter received from Governor Holcomb. He also read the letter to the council. The preliminary amount that will be awarded is 738,253.00 of Community Crossing Matching Grant funds.

Director King elaborate on the projects that will utilize the funds in 2023. 1.476 million dollars of road projects will be done.

Councilman Spann asked Director King about the work that was supposed to be done on West 63rd Avenue. Director King stated West 63rd Avenue isn't part of the Community Crossing Matching Grant from INDOT, but funded through a local project.

President Bella informed Councilman Spann that all paving projects are done for 2022.

*Letter from Engineering Administrator Steve King regarding BFS Agreements for C&O Trail and Paser Pavement Re-Analysis 2023

Director King also informed the council of an engineering agreement received from Butler, Fairman, and Seufert for the Town's C and O Trail. This agreement is for Phase III of the project in amount of 154,000.00.

CONSENT AGENDA

Accts. Payable Register Voucher Approval for December 13, 2022
Approval of Town Council Meeting Minutes of November 22, 2022

Councilman Pettit made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda, seconded by Vice-President Hardaway

No further questions or comments from council.

Motion carries by voice vote 6-1.

Councilman White inquired about the NAY voice vote.

President Bella asked Councilman White did he vote NAY. Councilman White stated he voted YEA.

Motion carries by voice vote 7-0.

STANDING & SPECIAL COMMITTEES REPORTS

BUDGET & FINANCE- HARDAWAY – Vice-President Hardaway informed the council the 2023 budget was approved by the Department of Local Government and Finance. The general fund budget was approved for 11,243,851.00, and the total budget was approved for 46,500.000.00.

Vice-President Hardaway also informed the council that two more American Rescue Plan (ARP) grants were awarded. A grant for business and another for residential. We have awarded 118,000.00 and paid out 78,000.00 using ARP grant funds

COUNCIL AFFAIRS- PETTIT – Councilman Pettit informed the council a committee meeting did occur. Since he wasn't present at the meeting, Councilman Pettit asked Attorney Svetanoff and Town Manager Reardon to give updates to the council.

Attorney Svetanoff asked Town Manager Reardon to give the update.

Town Manager Reardon informed the council the five ordinances were reviewed. The ordinances were accepted and are expected to be present to the council with an addition five for consideration at the December 27th Town Council Meeting.

Councilman Pettit stated he will review the accepted ordinances before they are presented at the next Town Council Meeting on December 27, 2022.

PUBLIC WORKS & UTILITIES- MINCHUK – Councilman Minchuk informed the council that preparation is ongoing for winter. He reminded Town residents to move cars off the street to driveways during periods of snow.

Vice-President Hardaway informed the council that he sent a letter to Mayor Prince of Gary, Indiana. He read a portion of the letter to council. The letter was regarding the ongoing raw sewage problems with Gary Sanitary District. Vice-President Hardaway also stated he will wait for a response from Mayor Prince until January 2023.

President Bella stated that Vice-President Hardaway is welcome to use the legal expertise of Attorney Svetanoff to bring closure to this ongoing raw sewage problem with Gary Sanitary District.

Councilman White informed the council that the sewage problem is throughout Merrillville not just in one Ward. He also requested data from Vice-President Hardaway.

ELECTIONS, PUBLIC RELATIONS, & TOWN BEAUTIFICATION-PETTIT- No Report

ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS- WHITE – Councilman White informed the council that he is going over the by-laws regarding the role of Environment Affairs Committee. The bylaws or ordinance didn't include anything about Covid data, but retention ponds' design and maintenance. Councilman White stated the ordinance must be amended to included Covid data reporting.

President Bella asked Attorney Svetanoff to review the bylaws and ordinance for updating.

Councilman White informed the council that Center for Disease Control (CDC) is no longer reporting numbers for cases, hospitalizations, and deaths. The CDC is only reporting classifications of community spread. The levels are low, medium, or high. We are currently at medium level. He will look at the data again in thirty days. At that time, he will make a recommendation to the council on masking.

PERSONNEL POLICY & EMPLOYEE BENEFITS – HARDAWAY – No Report

PUBLIC SAFETY- MINCHUK- Councilman Minchuk informed the council that the next Public Safety meeting will be on Tuesday December 20, 2022 at 4:00 P. M. There will be an Executive Session at this meeting, and the entire council is invited and encouraged to attend.

Councilman Minchuk also informed the council of the committee's recommendation to fill Chief Cuttino's position. The recommendation is for Assistant Chief Nuses to be Interim Chief effective January 1, 2023, for six months. After six months, the normal process for a hiring will move forward.

Councilman Minchuk made a motion to appoint Assistant Chief Nuses to the position of Interim Police Chief on January 1, 2023 for six months, seconded by Councilman Pettit.

Assistant Chief Nuses thanked the Council for the opportunity.

Councilman Minchuk also stated that Assistant Chief Nuses in the interim position of Interim Police Chief he will have all duties, responsibilities, and privileges as a regular Police Chief.

President Bella asked Commissioner Ward to let the other commissioners know that Assistant Chief Nuses is being appointed as the Interim Police Chief effective January 1, 2023 for six months with full rights and benefits.

No further questions or comments from council.

Motion carries by roll call vote 7-0.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT-PETTIT – Councilman Pettit initially stated no report but asked to come back to it under his Dean and Barbara White Community Center reporting.

Councilman Pettit informed the council that a tax abatement resolution is on tonight's agenda.

Councilman Pettit also stated the Redevelopment Commission met and passed a resolution to award a 10-year tax abatement to 86th Place LLC for the four building on 86th Place between the two new building on Mississippi and First Image Laundry facility. This will be an additional 3,000,000.00 investment in the Town of Merrillville.

PARKS & RECREATION- UZELAC – Councilwoman Uzelac informed the council that she made a call to Director Price regarding roof repair on a building at Rosenbalm Park.

Director Price informed the council that bids, and invoices were obtained in April of 2022 for the repair. His department is currently seeking new bids for the project. After the bid process is completed, He will update the council.

Councilman White elaborated on a safety concern that occurred at IHOP restaurant in Merrillville where he had to call Merrillville police.

ABANDONED -BLIGHTED PROPERTIES-HARDAWAY – No Report

DEAN & BARBARA WHITE COMMUNITY CENTER-MINCHUK & PETTIT – Councilman Pettit informed the council that a meeting occurred last week where revenue projections and expenses for Dean & Barbara White Community Center were discussed. He also stated that another meeting will occur on December 29, 2022 at 12:00 P.M. noon to continue discussion.

Councilman Pettit also informed the council that the bleachers and sidewalk were install at Weiss Family Field. All the improvements have been completed for Phase I. Phase II of the project is taking the additional land north of the paved parking lot and putting in slag excess parking.

Director Price elaborated on the remaining events scheduled at the Dean and Barbara White Community Center for the remainder of 2022 and upcoming programs for 2023.

Councilman White asked to be included in the preparation for the Black History Program. He also asked Director Price how much of a deficit will Dean & Barbara White Community Center be in at end of 2022.

Director Price stated he has been proactive with providing information to the council regarding the deficit since October 27, 2021. The center has brought in over 300,000.00 in revenue. However, most of the deficit comes from salaries paid to staff who operate the Dean and Barbara White Community Center and twenty-four Parks. Director Price also stated the projections for 2023 will be presented to the council in February 2023.

Councilman Pettit added the fee for services at the Dean and Barbara White Community Center has increased. He asked President Bella for permission to go back to Economic Development section to give a report.

SPECIAL PROJECTS (F & B TAX, DIVERSITY, 4TH of JULY CELEBRATION-HARDAWAY – Vice-President Hardaway asked Town Manager Reardon how many applications have come in for the Town's Christmas House Decorating Contest.

Town Manager Reardon stated that thirteen applications have come into the Town Manager Office.

Vice-President Hardaway informed the council he is extending the deadline until December Friday December 16, 2022.

President Bella informed Vice-President Hardaway there are no applications for Ward 2. Vice-President Hardaway stated he would take care of it.

Vice-President Hardaway stated the Black History Banquet falls under the Special Projects committee. The dinner is going to be February 14, 2023. He is also looking for volunteers for Juneteenth and National Night Out. The fourth of July fireworks and parade falls under the umbrella of the Dean & Barbara White Community Center.

President Bella informed the council that the contract with the School Corporation is being reviewed.

Attorney Svetanoff stated the contract has been forward to the School Corporation council.

Councilman White informed the council bylaws states the Chairman of the Election and Public Relation Committee is over the Town's parade. He also stated that the ordinance may need to be amended to reflect what umbrella the parade falls under.

President Bella informed the council we may look at it, but a Special Committee was formed to take care of important events for the Town of Merrillville that Vice-President Hardaway chairs. He also stated that Attorney Svetanoff will review the ordinance.

Councilman Pettit suggested to the council that Town Manager Reardon and Attorney Svetanoff will be doing a comprehensive master plan. The plan will include new zoning ordinance and subdivision control ordinance. At that time, the committee will do comprehensive review of other ordinances.

DEPARTMENT & COMMISSION REPORTS

LAKE COUNTY SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT-WHITE – Councilman White informed the council a meeting was held last Thursday. A budget was passed for 2023.

Councilman White also stated there was discussion regarding the compost facility that the county operates.

President Bella asked how much is the budget that was passed was. Councilman White informed the council it was 3.7 million dollars which includes recycling grants that comes back to the Town. Councilman White also stated Lake County Solid Waste Management will be paying back their portion of the lawsuit for an over assessment in the amount of 85,000.00.

NORTHERN INDIANA REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION-HARDAWAY – Vice-President Hardaway stated he gave Town Manager Reardon information on broadband. The Town will be looking at a grant to get broadband connectivity in deficient areas such as Panhandle.

Vice-President Hardaway also stated next month a new slate of officers will be announced for 2023.

STORMWATER MANAGEMENT RESOURCES-LAKE – Town Manager Reardon informed the council there wasn't a formal report from Director Lake.

SOUTHSHORE VISITORS AND CONVENTION AUTHORITY – Town Manager Reader informed the council a board meeting follow by an executive session will is scheduled for Thursday December 15, 2022. He also stated he has a circular from the President regarding events and will share it with council and department heads.

FIRE TERRITORY BOARD-MINCHUK – Councilman Minchuk informed the council a meeting has been scheduled for Wednesday December 14, 2022.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS/TOWN MANGER

Director Price informed the council there will be a holiday schedule in terms of opening, and he is looking forward to 2023.

Assistant Chief Nuses had no formal report.

Town Manager Reardon commended the staff involved with preparation and cleanup for the Christmas Party that was held today. It was a great turnout and all departments were present.

GENERAL ORDERS

A. Ordinances

First Readings: (Discussion and Roll Call Vote)

Ordinance 22-28 (Discussion and Roll Call Vote)

An Ordinance of the Town of Merrillville, Lake County, Indiana, Authorizing Additional Appropriations in Various Funds for the 2022 Budget.

Councilman Pettit made a motion to approve Ordinance 22-28, seconded by Vice-President Hardaway

Financial Advisor Hudson informed the council that in talking with the Clerk's Treasurer Bookkeeper and having followed the Town's financials through the year Ordinance 22-28 is about cleanup. The Court Department and Town Administration in the general fund may need some additional appropriation based on their budget to finish up projected expenses for salaries, contractual services, and fuel for the rest of the year. The original amount budgeted would need some supplement. The general fund does have available 200,000.00 listed as cash balance. There will be unspent money to help offset the 200,000.00 so cash balance may not be reduced.

Financial Advisor Hudson also stated that the second half of American Rescue Plan money has been received now the funds may be shown in the books for the appropriation lines. The over three million is simply a holding line until additional plans are made for the rest of the expenditures.

Financial Advisor Hudson informed the council that the Community Gift Fund appropriation is the last transfer from the endowment that was brought over. The money is sitting in the balance of the fund. This additional appropriation is allowable under those calculations.

Financial Advisor Hudson also stated that the Public Safety CAGIT is an emergency backstop for the council. If by chance there was some extra need with the police department be it gasoline or something else the lowest fund because of the supplemental amount received in May has some additional cash. In you have a need; it can be used as a safety net.

President Bella asked Madam Clerk Treasurer White Gibson did she have anything else to add.

Madam Clerk Treasurer White Gibson stated that Financial Advisor Hudson covered the ordinance pretty well.

No further questions or comments from council.

Motion carries by roll call vote 7-0.

Ordinance 22-29 (Discussion and Roll Call Vote)

An Ordinance of The Town of Merrillville, Lake County Indiana, Amending Ordinance 22-21, 22-17, 22-09, and 21-29 and Pay for Employees of the Town of Merrillville, Indiana, for the Calendar Year 2023.

Vice-President Hardaway made a motion to approve Ordinance 22-29, seconded by Councilman Pettit.

Madam Clerk Treasurer White Gibson stated she did call President Bella regarding Ordinance 22-29. She also informed the council she has printouts and passed them out.

Madam Clerk Treasurer White Gibson informed the council she is sure the error on the ordinance is an oversight. She is sure the council didn't mean to reduce any employee's salaries on the Ordinance 22-29 since the consumer index is up 9% and inflation is higher than it's been in a decade since Covid.

We had a long hard fought battle in August and September 2022 and finally the salary ordinance was adjusted and amended in October of 2022 to reflect the increases for the salaries for my key office employees that I hired last year. When the council created the new departments and four employees were removed from my office, the council approved that salary. There was concern at that time that the council was going to provide an across the board raise for employees starting in 2023. I said, at that time, my employees based on the council amending the salary ordinance to reflect the money that I was taking out from what was going to be approved for my increase and given to my employees that my employees would waive the 2% increase the council has so generously given to or is giving to its employees at the Town.

In the process of putting together the Salary Ordinance 22-29, it was forgotten what was done for my staff. If you look at the information I just pass out, the current salary ordinance that is in effect and what they are being paid now compared to the propose 2% raise. The current salary is less. I'm asking to adjust the Salary Ordinance 22-29 back to the currently ordinance that is in effect. My staff won't take the 2%

increase. The money is already accounted for in the budget. In fact, it's a little bit less than what in the current salary ordinance that you're proposing.

President Bella asked Madam Clerk Treasurer Kelly White Gibson about money being moved to cover the difference.

Madam Clerk Treasurer stated the money has already been moved.

President Bella informed the council that he told Madam Clerk Treasurer Kelly White, he would like to approve Ordinance 22-29 as it is written tonight and on second reading it can be discussed and tweak in the second reading at the December 27th Town Council Meeting.

Vice-President Hardaway stated his motion is good.

Councilman Pettit stated his second is with a question. Who prepared Ordinance 22-29 and why is there an error in the Clerk Treasurer section.

President Bella stated the budget and finance committee instructed Financial Advisor Hudson how to do it. We told her a 2% for all employees.

Madam Clerk Treasurer Kelly White Gibson stated that it wasn't done on the current salary ordinance.

Councilman Pettit asked Vice-President Hardaway to amend his motion by inserting Madam Clerk Treasurer Kelly White Gibson middle column from the information she handed out and be done with it. Do it on second reading.

Vice-President Hardaway informed the council he will instruct Financial Advisor Hudson to make the necessary adjustments to Ordinance 22-28 for second reading.

Madam Clerk Treasurer Kelly White Gibson stated she wants to go on record. If the Clerk Treasurer's employees are getting their current salaries for 2023, they are waving the 2% increase the Town is giving for 2023.

Financial Advisor Hudson informed the council that the salary ordinance is down to four pages instead of five to make it more efficient.

Councilwoman Uzelac inquired of Financial Advisor Hudson did she take in consideration the 2% that the Clerk Treasurer's staff didn't take.

Financial Advisor Hudson stated she was asked to go with the prior salary ordinance rather than the current one that is in effect for the Clerk Treasurer's staff.

Madam Clerk Treasurer Kelly White Gibson stated she is objecting to Ordinance 22-29 because in effect it takes away money from her employees. She also reiterated that she has the money in her budget and isn't asking for any additional appropriation from the Town and her employees deserve it based upon their work, experience, and education.

No further questions or comments from council.

Motion carries by roll call vote Yes (5) No (1) Abstain (1)

Ordinance 22-30 (Discussion and Roll Call Vote)

An Ordinance of The Town of Merrillville, Lake County, Indiana, Authorizing a Fee for Credit/Debit Card Usage.

Councilman Pettit made a motion to approve Ordinance 22-30, seconded by Councilman Minchuk.

Madam Clerk Treasurer Kelly White Gibson stated we brought our office into the 21st century, and we made sure it was going to be convenient for companies during Covid to have other mechanisms by which people could pay instead of just by cash, check, or money order.

No further question or comments from council.

Motion carries by roll call vote 7-0.

Ordinance 22-31 (Discussion and Roll Call Vote)

An Ordinance of The Town of Merrillville Amending Ordinance No. 12-73, The Ordinance Amending the legislative Body Districts, Pursuant to the Requirements of I.C. 36-5-2-4.1 By Amending Code Section - 2-17 Of The Merrillville Town Code and Ordinance No. 12-73.

Vice-President Hardaway made a motion to approve Ordinance 22-31, seconded by Councilman Pettit.

Councilman White informed the council that he was irritated how the redistricting was handle because two people wasn't there when the maps were drawn himself and Councilman Spann. Councilman White also stated that he would like the council not to do this again where two days before the weekend they are given information to be voted on within two, three, or four days.

President Bella informed Councilman White that the redistricting was discussed in the workshop.

Councilman White informed the council he wanted to read on the record what he was told.

Councilman White reading from his document and his comments along with the council:

She said, beginning in August this year. We begin this time with cities contacting them monitoring what was happening and assisting them if they desire. However, we don not contact Towns because I was under and this is Kelsey Kaufman. I was under the mistaken impression that all towns his residential districts and not literal districts she should have known the things that she's been doing for 13 years. It took us a few days to fall up and few more to figure out which towns had single memory districts, and which one had residential districts. Merrillville became one of highest priority as it is the largest Town in Indiana. Thus, on December 1, I left message for council President Bella and Town Manager Pat Reardon neither one who I knew turned telling them that they needed to redistrict. Rick call me back and we spoke for a long time initially he was skeptical about the need to redistrict, but I explained the statue and the dangers of not registering including making the Town vulnerable to a lawsuit. Especially since your population deviation was a whopping 66 percent. If you don't redistrict by the 31st and someone sues the council you will lose and plaintiffs will have the right to draw the districts themselves. Something I'm sure you would like to avoid. When I started to end the conversation with good luck, Rick replied is that all you're going to offer us.

We draw maps free of charge for any local government that want them. It's getting pretty late for town your size to be doing a specialist when we're racing to finish mats for other municipalities. The next day Rick emailed a follow-up question. He asked me on that Friday to let him know what is happening since all you guys address. Over the weekend my son (Councilman White stated he doesn't know these people) who is a high school physics teacher and a wiz at drawing math created maps for three cities. (Councilman White stated he drew five maps and your person wasn't in that map. What you ask her to do, you said could you). He emailed thanking us. He mentioned that there was a candidate who was already running for Ward 7c she lived in precinct 29 which match two; four and five and also I think match one and three would be part of a different Ward. (Councilman White stated that mean she couldn't be there. You can't do favors for people. I'm running for re-election. If you're in the census block you just can't ask people Rick to tweak it so your candidate can get back in because your candidate was out.) I told Rick and he asked me if I could tweak this one on the map so that Precinct 29 could remain in Ward 7.

(Councilman White stated, if they put her out on the first five maps why would you want to put her on the sixth map?) I told Rick that I had misgivings about doing this because it might be other candidates who are interested in running and elections would be best run by uh, but was assured that no other candidates had declared. (Councilman White stated that nobody can declare until January 4th according to the election board. I can tell you I'm running for something, but to put it on record. Councilman Pettie stated that the date hasn't been set. Councilman White stated again that the date has been set. Councilman Petti stated he brought his books and Michelle said a date hasn't been set. Councilman White stated he talked to Michelle last night and she said January 4th that is what I understood. Even if it was January 1st, you can't do in a previous year and make a declaration and you can't do until it's legal to get in so I'm saying in that sense.) She said her son created another map that night and sent it in on Tuesday morning and that map turned out to be controversial and in retrospect especially at this late date would not have done it. (Councilman White stated she know she made a mistake. You made her think it was okay Rick. You assured her that a declaration was out there). This ends the reading of Councilman White's document.

President Bella stated that a declaration is out there. If someone announced on a website or a fundraiser, I would do that no matter where the person lived including council members. It's not popular to put people that are running for office in the same district. I'm the only one who can say that because it happened to me 20 years ago.

Councilman White stated he sent a letter to the Indiana Attorney General Office.

President Bella stated that this is what she also said, that wasn't read into the record by Councilman White: Final thought, no one likes redistricting. Which is one of the reasons why officials so often avoid it or do it improperly, it can create great discord and confusion especially in small communities, but it is absolutely fundamental to representative government. Which is why my team and I devoted so much of the past thirteen years without pay to ensure that local government in Indiana fulfill this obligation from Landmark Supreme Court cases such as Baker versus Carr, to equally momentous legislative achievements such as Voting Rights Act of 1965. This nation has asserted and reasserted the fundamental Democratic principle of one person one vote. Each citizen vote must be given as close to equal weight as every other citizens vote. The further a community's electoral system is from the ideal of one person one vote the greater it is the violation of that foundational principal put in local terms if one member of the Merrillville Council has thousands more constituents than another member as is true now then you do not have electoral or representational equality. This ends the reading of the document.

President Bella stated the new map was done to get a nice average of population per district. President Bella also stated that Ward 7 (Councilman White) was half the size of Ward 5 (President Bella) in population. Ward 5 and Ward 7 were used to figure out the deviation rate which is why you redistrict to begin with.

Councilman White stated that President Bella said a candidate had declared. President Bella stated by declaring he meant that the candidate had gone public declaring the run for office.

President Bella informed the council of the changes:

Ward 1 - Increase population from 4,721 to 5,304 by adding in Precinct 30 and removing Precinct 18. New precincts for Ward 1 will be 1, 2, 22, and 30 that changes the population to 5,304

Ward 2 - Removes precinct 19 placing it in Ward 7 while adding Precinct 18 removing that lower population precinct from Ward 1. New precincts are 9, 10, 11, and 18. The total population would be 5,140.

Ward 3 - There was no need to make any changers and the precincts will remain the same at 4, 8, 15 and 23 for a population total of 5,224.

Ward 4 - There was a need to add this Ward to assist in helping lower the population in Ward 5. The heaviest populated Ward. Part of Precinct 3 the northern portion will be added to this Ward. A smaller Precinct 30 will be moved toward one. Precincts in Ward 4 will be 16, 21, and part of Precinct 3.

Ward 5 - Precinct 2 will be moved to Ward 1 to lower the Ward 5 population while increasing Ward 1 population. Ward 5 also loses part of Precinct 3 a northern portion toward four precincts will be 13, 33, 34, and the southern portion of Precinct 3 for a total population of 5,321.

Ward 6 - This Ward will pick up part of Precinct 7 to increase the population number. Precinct 7 will be split with Ward 7. Precincts are now 5,12, and the Eastern portion of Precinct 7 for a total population of 5,185.

Ward 7 - There was a need to increase population total in this Ward. It will pick up Precinct 19 for Ward 2 while losing part of Precinct 7 which was a much lower populated precinct sharing that with Ward 6. The Precincts will be 19, 28, 29, and part of seven for a total population of 5,061.

President Bella also stated that to determine the population deviation, we took the highest populated Ward which still is Ward 5 minus the lowest populated Ward which is still Ward 7 and then divide that total by the average population figure of all Wards. The math looks like 5,321 minus 5,061 which equals 260 divided by the average of 5,206 which equals a 4.99 percent deviation rate. We will go from the worst in the state of Indiana to probably one of the best.

Councilman White stated he doesn't have any evidence that we will go from the worst to the best.

Councilman Minchuk stated that repeat discussion is starting and call for a vote.

No further questions or comments from council.

Motion carries by roll call vote Yes (5) No (2)

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

Ordinance 22-27 (Discussion and Roll Call Vote)

An Ordinance of The Town of Merrillville, Lake County, Indiana, Authorizing Additional Appropriations in the 2022 Casino Gaming Fund & 2022 Wheel Tax Revenue Fund.

Councilman Minchuk made a motion to approve Ordinance 22-27, seconded by Vice-President Hardaway.

Financial Advisor Hudson elaborated on Ordinance 22-27.

No further questions or comments from council or public.

Motion carries by roll call vote Yes (5) No (2)

B. Resolutions: (Discussion and Voice Vote)

Resolution 22-77 (Discussion and Voice Vote)

A Resolution of the Town of Merrillville, Lake County, Indiana, Transferring monies of the 2022 Budget Within the General Fund (Economic Development).

Councilman Pettit made a motion to approve Resolution 22-77, seconded by Vice-President Hardaway.

No further questions or comments from council or public.

Motion carries by voice vote.

Resolution 22-78 (Discussion and Voice Vote)

A Resolution of the Town of Merrillville, Lake County, Indiana, Transferring monies of the 2022 Budget Within the General Fund (Administration).

Vice-President Hardaway made a motion to approve Resolution 22-78, seconded by Councilman Pettit.

No further questions or comments from council or public.

Motion carries by voice vote.

Resolution 22-79 (Discussion and Voice Vote)

A Resolution of the Town of Merrillville, Lake County, Indiana, Transferring monies of the 2022 Budget Within the General Fund (Administration/Clerks).

Councilman Pettit made a motion to approve Resolution 22-79, seconded by Vice-President Hardaway.

No further questions or comments from council or public.

Motion carries by voice vote.

Resolution 22-80 (Discussion and Voice Vote)

A Resolution of the Town of Merrillville, Lake County, Indiana, Transferring monies of the 2022 Budget Within the General Fund (Human Resources).

Councilman Pettit made a motion to approve Resolution 22-80, seconded by Councilwoman Uzelac.

No further questions or comments from council or public.

Motion carries by voice vote.

Resolution 22-81 (Discussion and Voice Vote)

A Resolution of the Town of Merrillville, Lake County, Indiana, Encumbering monies of the 2022 Budget for the 2023 Year (Fire Department).

Councilman Minchuk made a motion to approve Resolution 22-81, seconded by Councilman Pettit.

No further questions or comments from council or public.

Motion carries by voice vote.

Resolution 22-82 (Discussion and Voice Vote)

A Resolution of the Town of Merrillville, Lake County, Indiana, Declaring an Area in the Town as an Economic Revitalization Area and Approving a Real Property Tax Abatement For 86th Place Partners LLC.

Councilman Pettit made a motion to approve Resolution 22-82, seconded by Councilman Minchuk.

Councilman Pettit informed the council this is in his Ward. The Redevelopment Commission looked this over. This is a ten-year abatement on the Indiana Code Graduating Scale. The petitioner has an excellent track record with the Town of Merrillville. Councilman Pettit continued to elaborate on the petitioner.

Councilman White inquired on how much is the tax abatement over the ten-year period.

Town Manager Reardon stated the estimate assessed value from this project is 133,000.00. If you take 3% of that as a tax that's what the estimate annual tax savings would represent. We won't know with certainty until the project's is finished, and the Township Assessor finish their work.

No further questions or comments from council or public.

Motion carries by voice vote.

Resolution 22-84 (Discussion and Voice Vote)

A Resolution of the Town of Merrillville, Lake County, Indiana, Encumbering Monies from the 2022 Budget Into the 2023 Year.

Councilman Pettit made a motion to approve Resolution 22-84, seconded by Vice-President Hardaway.

President Bella asked Madam Clerk Treasurer Kelly White Gibson about the encumbrance of 9,300.00 for Professional Services for the Law Office of John R. Cantrell. He asked is the money earmark for that person.

Madam Clerk Treasure Kelly White Gibson stated the Attorney is representing her in the lawsuit that Judge Velazco has brought against the Town and Clerk Treasurer Office.

President Bella asked is the amount of the encumbrance correct. Madam Clerk Treasurer Kelly White Gibson stated it made be more than that, but that is what is left in the appropriation.

No further questions or comments from council or public.

Motion carries by voice vote.

Resolution 22-86 (Discussion and Voice Vote)

A Resolution of the Town of Merrillville, Lake County, Indiana, Approving a Discount Request from the Merrillville Community School Corporation.

Councilman Pettit made a motion to approve Resolution 22-86, seconded by Councilman Uzelac.

Town Manager Reardon elaborate on Resolution 22-86.

Councilman White asked how much of a discount Merrillville Community School is getting from the Town.

Town Manager Reardon stated we won't know until Merrillville Community School comes in with an actual project.

No further questions or comments from council or public.

Motion carries by voice vote.

Resolution 22-87 (Discussion and Voice Vote)

A Resolution of the Town of Merrillville, Lake County, Indiana, Concerning Authorization for Execution of INDOT Agreements.

Councilman Pettit made a motion to approve Resolution 22-87, seconded by Councilman Minchuk.

No further questions or comments from council or public.

Motion carries by voice vote.

Resolution 22-88 (Discussion and Voice Vote)

A Resolution of the Town of Merrillville, Lake County, Indiana, Resending Resolution 22-71.

Vice-President Hardaway made a motion to approve Resolution 22-88, seconded by Councilman Pettit.

Financial Advisor Hudson elaborate on Resolution 22-88.

No further questions or comments from council or public.

Motion carries by voice vote.

C. American Rescue Plan

AP Voucher Register Summary for ARP Purchases for December 13, 2022

Vice-President Hardaway informed the council that the AP Voucher summary is \$185,927.08

Vice-President Hardaway made a motion to approve \$185,927.08, seconded by Councilman Minchuk.

Councilman White asked for a pie chart of American Rescue Plan expenditures and how much each Ward received.

No further questions or comments from the council.

Motion carries by voice vote.

D. BZA & LARGE GATHERING ACTIONS

None

OLD BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

Councilman White stated according to our Ordinances there are things we should be doing. If we're not going to follow the ordinances, he wants to know.

Attorney Svetanoff stated Councilman White can call him anytime with question regarding ordinances.

SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

None

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Plan Commission Meeting December 20th at 6:30 P.M.

Town Building Closed December 23rd & 26th for Christmas Holiday

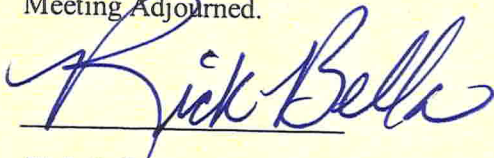
Redevelopment Commission Meeting December 27, 2022 at 6:00 P.M.

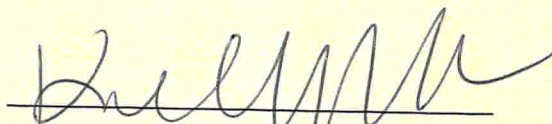
Town Council Meeting December 27th, at 6:30 P.M.

ADJOURNMENT:

A motion and a second were made.

Meeting Adjourned.


Rick Bella, President


Kelly White Gibson, Clerk-Treasurer

Minutes Submitted By Angela Lewis

