



Town of Merrillville
Town Council Meeting Minutes
March 08, 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 asked various veterans in the audience to lead 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:

Swearing in of new M.P.D officer George W. Fields Jr.

Madam Clerk Treasurer swore in new Merrillville Police Officer George W. Fields Jr.

Proclamation designation the month of March as Women's History Month

Proclamation for Women's History Month read by Code Enforcement Director Bunnell, Planning & Building Director Shine, and Economic Development Director Chilcott.

Councilwoman Uzelac made a motion to approve the proclamation to designate the month of March as Women's History Awareness month, seconded by Councilman Pettit.

No questions or comments from the council

Motion carried with a voice vote.

President Bella asked that the council to table the Luke Family of Brands BZA action per request of the petitioner.

Councilman White made a motion to table the BZA Action, second by Councilwoman Uzelac.

President Bella allowed 3 minutes public comment for this petition.

Vice President Hardaway made a motion to amend the agenda, seconded by Councilwoman Uzelac.

No discussion from the council.

Motion carried by voice vote.

Planning & Building Director Shine informed the council the Board of Zoning Appeal did deny the BZA action for Luke Family of Brands with four votes and one abstention.

Vice President Hardaway made a motion to deny the petition, seconded by Councilwoman Uzelac.

No further discussion from the council.

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

CONSENT AGENDA

Accts. Payable Register Voucher Approval: March 08, 2022

Approval of Town Council Meeting Minutes of February 22, 2022.

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

No discussion from the council.

Motion carried by voice vote.

STANDING COMMITTEES

BUDGET & FINANCE- HARDAWAY – Vice President Hardaway informed the council there will be an ARP meeting March 15, 2022 at 3:30 P.M. The meeting will cover criteria which will allow residents and businesses within the town to apply for various grants. Vice President Hardaway will give more information about the grants at the next town council meeting.

COUNCIL AFFAIRS- PETTIT – No Report

PUBLIC WORKS & UTILITIES- MINCHUK – No Report

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

ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS- WHITE –Councilman White informed the council according to the Lake County Dashboard on March 08, 2022 there were 18 cases of COVID-19 and 3 deaths. Councilman White stated Lake County is at a rate of less than 5% where prior to Lake County was at a 29% rate.

PERSONNEL POLICY & EMPLOYEE BENEFITS – HARDAWAY – No Report

PUBLIC SAFETY- MINCHUK- Councilman Minchuk informed the council the Public Safety committee did not meet for the month of March. The Public Safety committee will resume meetings in April.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT-PETTIT – No Report

PARKS & RECREATION- UZELAC- Councilwoman Uzelac informed the council all parks within the town are up to par thanks to the help of Parks Director Price. Councilwoman Uzelac stated the anticipation of spring and encouraged all residents to allow their children to use local parks nearest them.

ABANDONED -BLIGHTED PROPERTIES-HARDAWAY – Vice President Hardaway informed the council The Town of Merrillville has 56 tax sale properties out of 9,200 in Lake County. The 56 tax sale properties are on 59th and Washington St. Students of Indiana University Northwest along with Vice President Hardaway are monitoring the tax sale properties.

DEAN & BARBARA WHITE COMMUNITY CENTER-MINCHUK & PETTIT – Councilman Pettit informed the council he would like to call a meeting with Public Works & Engineering Director King, Councilman Minchuk, and Parks Director Price to discuss bid documents and concerns for the Horizon Bank Bridge.

Parks Director Price informed the council that the month of March celebrates the one year anniversary of the Dean & Barbara White Community Center. Director Price invites the council to attend a “Sip and Paint” held at the community center March 25, 2022, more information for the “Sip and Paint” will be sent to the council via email. Director Price reported a successful MMA match held at the community center. Director Price informed the council of the anticipation of a clinic as well as an All-Star Game where the Harlem Legends will face the Town of Merrillville All-Stars June 25-26, 2022. Director Price announced various spring break activities held at the Dean & Barbara White Community Center the week of March 28, 2022.

Special Projects (F & B Tax, Diversity) – HARDAWAY – Vice President Hardaway informed the council the Special Projects Committee is working on the 4th of July Parade. The committee anticipates a series of fireworks for the 4th of July will be displayed July 3, 2022. Vice President Hardaway informed the council a revised contract from Miller Fireworks was sent to the council via email. Vice President Hardaway informed the council that the 4th of July parade will begin at 11:00 A.M. The parade will start at the north end of Merrillville and will continue south of Merrillville. Applications to be a part of the parade can be found in the office of the Town Manager. Vice President Hardaway informed the council a Juneteenth celebration will be held at the Dean & Barbara White Center June 18, 2022 from 12:00 P.M.-5:00 P.M. There will be live music, a bounce house for children, and various vendors whom will be able to display their

products. Lastly Vice President Hardaway informed the council Principal Bonin of Merrillville Intermediate School approached him about a potential Municipal Day. During the May 10, 2022 town council meeting various students of Merrillville Intermediate School will be allowed to sit in for each council member. Vice President Hardaway will meet with Principal Bottom March 9, 2022 at 9:00am to discuss further details.

DEPARTMENT & COMMISSION REPORTS

LAKE COUNTY SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT-WHITE- Councilman White informed the council the Lake County Solid Waste Management committee will meet March 17, 2022. President Bella asked Councilman White for an update regarding the former Girl Scout Building. Councilman White informed President Bella the building is 60% completed with the various renovations.

NORTHERN INDIANA REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION-HARDAWAY- No Report

STORMWATER MANAGEMENT RESOURCES-LAKE- Director Lake informed the council the Stormwater Management Committee has received their lowest quote for the Risk Free Removal Project for Meadowdale phase one.

SOUTHSHORE VISITORS AND CONVENTION AUTHORITY- Mr. Reardon- Town Manager Reardon informed the council the Southshore Visitors and Convention Authority Committee is currently in the process of identifying a new President and CEO'S of the organization. Town Manager Reardon will supplement this verbal report with a copy of our latest legislative report that was just issued.

FIRE TERRITORY BOARD-MINCHUK- No Report

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Police Chief Cuttino informed the council he has met with Dr. Lackey of Merrillville School District March 7, 2022 regarding the Adopt a School Program. Chief Cuttino and Merrillville Superintendent Brown signed the Memorandum of Understanding. Various Town of Merrillville Police Officers that agreed to volunteer were given their assignments, the Adopt a School Program will begin within the upcoming months.

Economic Development Director Chilcott informed the council she currently is focusing on business retention while working to get new grant programs which will utilize the American Rescue Plan funds that can be used as an incentive for business and residential.

GENERAL ORDERS

A. Ordinances

First Readings: (Discussion and Roll Call)

Ordinance 22-08 (Discussion and Roll Call Vote)

An Ordinance of The Town of Merrillville, Lake County, Indiana Amending Ordinance 21-29, The 2022 Salary Ordinance. (Courts)

Vice President Hardaway made a motion to approve Ordinance 22-08, seconded by Councilwoman Uzelac.

No further discussion from the council.

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

Vice President Hardaway made a motion to suspend the rules and read Ordinance 22-08 on 2nd and final reading, seconded by Councilman White.

No further discussion from the council.

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

Ordinance 22-09 (Discussion and Roll Call Vote)

An Ordinance of The Town of Merrillville, Lake County, Indiana, Amending Ordinance 21-29 And Pay for Employees of The Town of Merrillville, Indiana, for The Calendar Year 2022 Councilman Pettit made a motion to approve Ordinance 22-09, seconded by Councilwoman Uzelac.

No further discussion from the council.

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

Vice President Hardaway made a motion to suspend the rules and read Ordinance 22-09 on 2nd and final reading, seconded by Councilman Pettit.

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)

Ordinance 22-04 (Discussion, Public Comment 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 on second reading, seconded by Councilman White.

President Bella asked if there was any public comment on this 2nd and final reading ordinance. No questions or comment from the public.

No question or comment from the council.

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

Ordinance 22-05 (Discussion, Public Comment 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.

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

President Bella asked if there was any public comment on this 2nd and final reading ordinance. No questions or comment from the public.

No question or comment from the council.

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

Ordinance 22-06 (Discussion, Public Comment 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"

Councilwoman Uzelac made a motion to approve Ordinance 22-06 on second reading, seconded by Councilman White.

President Bella asked if there was any public comment on this 2nd and final reading ordinance. No questions or comment from the public.

No question or comment from the council.

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

Ordinance 22-07 (Discussion, Public Comment 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 on second reading, seconded by Councilman Pettit.

President Bella asked if there was any public comment on this 2nd and final reading ordinance.

No questions or comment from the public.

No question or comment from the council.

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

Ordinance 22-08 (Discussion and Roll Call Vote)

An Ordinance of The Town of Merrillville, Lake County, Indiana Amending Ordinance 21-29, The 2022 Salary Ordinance. (Courts)

Vice President Hardaway made a motion to approve Ordinance 22-08 on second reading, seconded by Councilwoman Uzelac.

President Bella asked if there was any public comment on this 2nd and final reading ordinance.

No questions or comment from the public.

No further discussion from the council.

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

Ordinance 22-09 (Discussion and Roll Call Vote)

An Ordinance of The Town of Merrillville, Lake County, Indiana, Amending Ordinance 21-29 And Pay for Employees of The Town of Merrillville, Indiana, for The Calendar Year 2022 Vice President Hardaway made a motion to approve Ordinance 22-09 on second reading, seconded by Councilman Pettit.

President Bella asked if there was any public comment on this 2nd and final reading ordinance. No questions or comment from the public.

No further discussion from the council.

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

B. Resolutions: (Discussion and Voice Vote)

Resolution 22-09 (Discussion and Voice Vote) (Clarified)

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 Councilwoman Uzelac.

No further discussion from the council.

Motion carried with a voice vote.

Resolution 22-12 (Discussion and Voice Vote)

A Resolution of The Town of Merrillville, Lake County, Indiana, Authorizing A Transfer of Monies Within the Funds of The Parks Department

Councilman Pettit made a motion to approve Resolution 22-12, seconded by Vice President Hardaway.

No further discussion from the council.

Motion carried with a voice vote.

C. American Rescue Plan

AP Voucher Register Summary for ARP Purchases for March 08, 2022

Vice President Hardaway made a motion to approve the ARP Purchases payment voucher for March 08, 2022, seconded by Councilman Minchuk.

No questions or comments from the council.

Motion carried by roll call vote 6-1 absent.

D. BZA Actions & LARGE GATHERING ACTIONS

Petitioner: Luke Family of Brands

Owner: 5M Investment Group

Request: Special Exception Approval/Z3E3-0222

Purpose: To Allow a Convenience Store and Gas Station

Location: 3580-3600 73rd Ave & Whitcomb

Zoning: C-2, Community Commercial Zoning District

Case #: Z3E3-0222

Planning and Building Director Shine elaborated towards the BZA Action.

Vice President Hardaway made a motion to deny the BZA Action, seconded by Councilwoman Uzelac.

No further questions or comments from the council.

Motion denied with a roll call vote of 6-1 absent.

OLD BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

President Bella read a petition to vacate certain drainages and utility easements.

Councilman Pettit made a motion for a point of discussion, seconded by Vice President Hardaway.

Attorney Anderson spoke towards the easement.


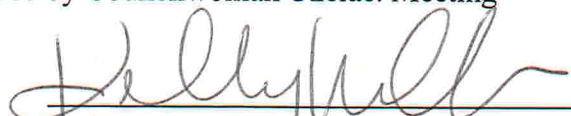
No further questions or comments from the council.
Motion carried with a roll call vote of 6-1 absent.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

RDC Workshop March 15, 2022 at 5:30 P.M.
Town Council Meeting March 22, 2022 at 6:30 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 Britni Reillo