



Town of Merrillville
Town Council Meeting Minutes
January 24, 2023
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 Dennis Walton of Faith Temple of Christ Church.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Led by Pastor Denise Walton.

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

Present were:

Councilman Minchuk- (Ward 3)

Councilwoman Uzelac- (Ward 4)

Councilman Spann- (Ward 1)

Councilman Pettit- (Ward 6)

President Bella- (Ward 5)

Five Present (5) Two Absent (2) Councilman White and Vice-President Hardaway

PETITIONS, COMMUNICATIONS, ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND REMONSTRATIONS:

*Black History Month Proclamation

The Black History Month Proclamation was read by Court Administrator Chanda Flowers.

A motion was made by Councilman Pettit to approve the Black History Month Proclamation, seconded by Councilwoman Uzelac.

No further questions or comments from the council.

Motion carries by voice vote 5-0.

*Letter from Town Engineering Administrator & Director of Public Works Steve King Recommending CORE Payment #27

Town Manager Reardon read the letter from Town Engineering Administrator & Director of Public Works Steve King recommending CORE Payment #27:

- Core Construction \$11,848.86
- Sweney Electric \$11,100.00
- Dant Clayton Corporation \$112,500.00

The total cost of CORE Payment #27 is \$135,448.86.

A motion was made by Councilman Pettit to approve the CORE Payment #27, seconded by Councilwoman Uzelac.

No further questions or comments from the council.

Motion carries by voice vote 5-0.

*Amended Agreement Between Town and Merrillville Stormwater for Accounting Services.

President Bella asked Madam Clerk-Treasurer Kelly White Gibson to give a synopsis on the agreement.

Madam Clerk-Treasurer Kelly White Gibson stated that the agreement is between Stormwater Utility and the Town of Merrillville to pay for accounting services provided by the Clerk-Treasurer Office for the Stormwater.

President Bella asked Attorney Svetanoff didn't he have anything to add.

Attorney Svetanoff stated that the Clerk-Treasurer's Office will provide Professional Services to the Utility as well as books and records. At this time, the agreement looks to be in order and should be voted on by the Town Council.

A motion was made by Councilman Spann to approve the amended agreement between the Town of Merrillville and the Merrillville Stormwater Utility, seconded by Councilwoman Uzelac.

No further questions or comments from the council.

Motion carries by voice vote 5-0.

CONSENT AGENDA

Accts. Payable Register Voucher Approval for January 24, 2023.

Approval of Town Council Meeting Minutes of January 10, 2023 & January 17, 2023

A motion was made by Councilman Minchuk to approve the Consent Agenda, seconded by Councilwoman Uzelac.

No further questions or comments from the council.

Motion carries by voice vote 5-0.

STANDING & SPECIAL COMMITTEES REPORTS

President Bella passed out Committees, Commissions, & Boards assignments.

BUDGET & FINANCE- HARDAWAY – President Bella stated that the Budget & Finance Committee remains the same. Vice-President Hardaway will remain Chair with Councilman Pettit and Councilman Minchuk as members.

Vice-President Hardaway was out of town and no report was given.

Town Manager Reardon stated there is nothing to add at this time.

COUNCIL AFFAIRS- PETTIT – President Bella stated that the Council Affairs Committee will remain the same. Councilman Pettit will remain Chair with Councilman Minchuk and Councilwoman Uzelac as members.

Councilman Pettit informed the council that Attorney Svetanoff is working on the pending ordinances that were discussed in the workshop. Councilman Pettit also requested from Attorney Svetanoff that the ordinances be ready for approval at the February 14, 2023 Town Council Meeting.

Attorney Svetanoff stated the thirteen ordinances will be ready for approval.

Councilman Pettit asked Director Shine is there a Planning Commission meeting in February.

Director Shine stated that possibly no but she is waiting on one person.

Councilman Pettit stated that the Council Affairs Committee will meet on the first Tuesday in February at 5:00pm. The thirteen ordinances will be reviewed before they are presented to the council for approval.

PUBLIC WORKS & UTILITIES - MINCHUK – President Bella stated that the Public Works & Utilities committee will remain the same. Councilman Minchuk will remain Chair with Councilman Spann and Councilwoman Uzelac as members.

Councilman Minchuk stated he won't be having a meeting until Director King gets back.

Councilman Minchuk also stated that about three inches of snow is expected and reminded residents to keep their cars off the street to allow the snow plows to clear and treat the streets.

ELECTIONS, PUBLIC RELATIONS, & TOWN BEAUTIFICATION-PETTIT - President Bella stated that the Election, Public Relations, & Town Beautification Committee will remain the same.

Councilman Pettit will remain Chair with Councilman Minchuk and Vice-President Hardaway as members.

Councilman Pettit stated there is no report at this time.

ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS- WHITE – President Bella stated that the Environmental Affairs Committee will remain the same. Councilman White will remain Chair with Councilwoman Uzelac and Councilman Spann as members.

Councilman White was absent because of illness.

Town Manager Reardon stated there was nothing to add at this time.

PERSONNEL POLICY & EMPLOYEE BENEFITS – HARDAWAY- President Bella stated that the Personnel Policy & Employee Benefits Committee will remain the same. Vice-President Hardaway will remain Chair with Councilwoman Uzelac and Councilman Pettit as members.

Vice-President Hardaway was out of town and no report was given.

PUBLIC SAFETY- MINCHUK- President Bella stated that the Public Safety Committee will remain the same. Councilman Minchuk will remain Chair with Councilman Spann and Councilwoman Uzelac as members.

Councilman Minchuk informed the council that a meeting is scheduled for February 2, 2023 at 3:00pm.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT-PETTIT – President Bella stated that the Economic Development Committee will remain the same. Councilman Pettit will remain Chair with Vice-President Hardaway, Councilman Minchuk, Deann Patena, and Jennifer Doffin as members.

Councilman Pettit stated at the Redevelopment Commission meeting a resolution was approved for a second draw with the Holiday Properties Group for improvements that was done.

Councilman Pettit also informed the council that several years ago a \$4,100,000.00 bond was authorized by the council and issued to construct 96th Avenue at Massachusetts which serves the Amazon facility. This will be the last draw for Holiday Properties Group.

PARKS & RECREATION- UZELAC – President Bella stated that the Parks & Recreation Committee will change. Councilwoman Uzelac will remain Chair with Councilman White and Councilman Spann as new members.

Councilwoman Uzelac informed the council that all five parks in Merrillville have been rehabbed. Councilwoman Uzelac also stated she is waiting for bids from Director Price regarding the shelter's roof at Rosenbaum Park

ABANDONED -BLIGHTED PROPERTIES-HARDAWAY – President Bella stated that the Abandoned-Blighted Properties Committee will remain the same. Vice-President Hardaway will remain Chair with Vicki Bunnell and Adra Breclaw-Csanyi as members.

Vice-President Hardaway was out of town and no report was given.

Town Manager Reardon stated there is nothing to add at this time.

DEAN & BARBARA WHITE COMMUNITY CENTER-MINCHUK & PETTIT – President Bella stated that the Dean & Barbara White Community Center Committee will remain the same. Councilman Pettit will remain Chair with Councilman Minchuk and Councilman White as members.

Councilman Pettit elaborated on the White Family's gift of \$10,000,000.00.

Councilman Pettit informed the council that he is going to change the meeting date for the committee to Tuesday January 31st at 4:30 P.M. at the Community Center to discuss the sponsorships and draw on the gift so graciously given by the White family.

SPECIAL PROJECTS (F & B TAX, DIVERSITY, 4TH of JULY CELEBRATION-HARDAWAY – President Bella stated that the Special Projects (F & B Tax, Diversity, 4th of July Celebration Committee will remain the same. Vice-President Hardaway will remain Chair with Councilman Pettit and Councilman Minchuk as members.

President Bella asked Town Manager Reardon to give a report regarding table sales for the Black History Dinner.

Town Manager Reardon stated that twenty-seven tables were sold. If anyone would like to purchase a table which seats eight, the price is \$600.00 per table. Individual tickets are \$75.00 and can be purchase at Town Administration or, the Dean and Barbara White Community Center's front desk. Alonso Weems from the Lilly Foundation will be the speaker. The evening will also include music, great food, dancing, and a cash bar. Dr. Dan Lackey is going to be the MC for the evening.

President Bella stated the event isn't political, but to celebrate Black History.

DEPARTMENT & COMMISSION REPORTS

LAKE COUNTY SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT-WHITE – President Bella stated he would entertain a motion to reappoint Councilman White as the Town's Representative on the Lake County Solid Waste Management District Board.

A motion was made by Councilman Spann to reappoint Councilman White as the Town's Representative on the Lake County Solid Waste Management District Board, seconded by Councilman Pettit.

No further questions or comments from the council.

Motion carries by voice vote 5-0.

President Bella asked Town Manager Reardon to notify Lake County Solid Waste Management District Board regarding the reappoint of Councilman White.

NORTHERN INDIANA REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION-HARDAWAY – President Bella stated that Vice-President Hardaway is currently the Town's Representative and has been appointed the Chairman of the board.

A motion was made by Councilman Minchuk to reappoint Vice-President Hardaway as the Town's Representative on the Northern Indiana Regional Planning Commission, seconded by Councilman Spann.

No further questions or comments from the council.

Motion carries by voice vote 5-0.

STORMWATER MANAGEMENT RESOURCES-LAKE – Director Lake stated that VS Engineering just completed a plan for 69th and Connecticut Street.

Director Lake also stated they are working with the school board to get an easement and FEMA on the audit for CSR recertification. Director Lake elaborated on several other projects in the works.

SOUTHSHORE VISITORS AND CONVENTION AUTHORITY – President Bella stated that Town Manager Reardon is currently the Town's Representative.

A motion was made by Councilman Minchuk to reappoint Town Manager Reardon as the Town's Representative on the Southshore Visitors and Convention Authority, seconded by Councilman Spann.

No further questions or comments from the council.

Motion carries by voice vote 5-0.

Town Manager Reardon informed the council that he is yielding his time to Director Shine.

FIRE TERRITORY BOARD-MINCHUK – President Bella stated that the council needs to appoint two new members.

A motion was made by Councilwoman Uzelac to reappoint Councilman Minchuk and Councilman Spann as the Town's Representative on the Fire Territory Board, seconded by Councilman Pettit.

No further questions or comments from the council.

Motion carries by voice vote 5-0.

Councilman Minchuk informed the council that he is yielding his time to Director Shine.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS/TOWN MANGER

Director Lake stated he yield his time to Director Shine.

Chief Nuses stated he has nothing to report at this time.

Town Manager Reardon informed the council that Director Shine put together an annual report of the activity in Planning and Building. The highlights from years 2018 through 2022 are follows:

- Permit Fees generated \$1,260,716.36
- Major Commercial Additions generated in 2022 alone \$146,524,714.00 in Merrillville.

Director Shine thanked the council, Attorney Svetanoff, and all the departments for supporting the Planning and Building Department. Director Shine elaborate on the annual revenue generated by the Planning and Building Department for years 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021 and 2022.

President Bella thanked everyone for all their hard work for the Town of Merrillville.

Town Manager Reardon stated there is nothing to report from Administration.

GENERAL ORDERS

A. Ordinances

First Readings: (Discussion and Roll Call Vote)

Ordinance 23-01 (Discussion and Voice Vote)

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

President Bella stated the ordinance is adding the Fire Inspector and a new Patrolman position that was negotiated with FOP to the salary ordinance.

President Bella asked Madam Clerk-Treasurer Kelly White Gibson and Financial Advisor Hudson did they have anything to add.

Madam Clerk-Treasurer Kelly White Gibson stated she has nothing to add. The salary ordinance just needed to be adjusted to add the two positions that were left off the approved salary ordinance.

Financial Advisor Hudson added that the Fire Inspector was under his on ordinance in 2022. Under Ordinance 23-01, he will be included with everyone else. During negotiations with the FOB, the Patrolman Special First Class position was adjusted on Ordinance 23-01. This ordinance will complete the FOB contract negotiation including pension payments.

A motion from Councilwoman Uzelac was made to approve Ordinance 23-01, seconded by Councilman Spann.

No further questions or comments from the council.

Motion carries by roll call voice vote 5-0.

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

None

B. Resolutions: (Discussion and Voice Vote)

Resolution 23-05 (Discussion and Voice Vote)

A Resolution of the Town of Merrillville, Lake County, Indiana, Transferring Monies Within the 2023 Budget.

A motion from Councilman Pettit was made to approve Resolution 23-05, seconded by Councilwoman Uzelac.

President Bella asked Madam Clerk-Treasurer Kelly White Gibson and Financial Advisor Hudson did they have anything to add.

Madam Clerk-Treasurer Kelly White Gibson stated this is cleanup and to transfer funds appropriately for the police department.

Financial Advisor Hudson stated the transfer is to move the Patrolman Special First Class salary to a separate line item. The amount is currently included in the Patrolman lump sum line item. Financial Advisor Hudson also stated an additional appropriation is being prepared to supplement the rest of the salary for the position. The additional appropriation will be presented at the next council meeting.

No further questions or comments from the council.

Motion carries by voice vote 5-0.

C. American Rescue Plan

AP Voucher Register Summary for ARP Purchases for January 24, 2023

President Bella informed the council that the ARP Voucher summary is \$16,604.15.

Councilman Pettit made a motion to approve \$16,604.15, seconded by Councilwoman Uzelac.

No further questions or comments from the council.

Motion carries by voice vote 5-0.

D.BZA & LARGE GATHERING ACTIONS

Petitioner: Crossroads Plaza
Owner: Crossroads Plaza
Request: Special Exception Approval
Purpose: To Allow Retail Sales Space
Location: 6110 Broadway
Zoning: M-2 industrial Zoning District

Planning and Building Director Shine elaborated towards the BZA Action.

President Bella asked Director Shine how long the building has been empty.

Director Shine stated the building has been empty for a lot of years.

Councilman Pettit asked Director Shine was there any remonstrators at the BZA.

Director Shine stated there were no remonstrators at the BZA.

Councilman Pettit informed the council this property requires a special exception because it was rezoned at M-2.

Councilman Pettit also informed the council he voted against the Petitioner several years ago and still opposes the Petitioner because the council was promised a 250,000 square foot industrial building and never got it. Councilman Pettit stated he is speaking as the Redevelopment Commission President and knows that his colleague Councilman White had some concerns about the condition of the roads and parking.

President Bella stated, as part of the conditions, the council will allow the Petitioner time to redo the parking lot.

The Petitioner's lawyer Mr. Anderson stated that he couldn't promise that condition will be met. What he can promise is the Petitioner will try to keep up the property.

Attorney Svetanoff stated that the council isn't asking that the entire parking lot be done this year or next year, but a plan on how it will be completed in phases.

Councilman Pettit inquired about the Petitioner having an outdoor vendor on the parking lot.

Director Shine stated the outdoor vendor will need approval from the Building and Planning Department.

President Bella informed the Petitioner's lawyer Mr. Anderson that one of the conditions is that a multi-year parking lot plan be presented to the council within six months by the Petitioner.

A motion from Councilman Pettit was made to approve Z32UV7-1222 with the conditions that were placed on it by the BZA along with a parking lot plan to be submitted to the council within six month. If there are outdoor vendors, they will receive a large gathering/special event permit. The motion was seconded by Councilwoman Uzelac with the conditions that Councilman Pettit mentioned.

No further questions or comments from the council.

Motion carries by roll call voice vote 5-0.

OLD BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

President Bella informed the council of the following appointments.

Stormwater Management Board

President Bella reappointed Ralph Simek.

Plan Commission

President Bella reappointed Councilwoman Uzelac, Councilman Minchuk, and Councilman Pettit.

Board of Zoning Appeals

A motion was made by Councilman Pettit to retain Andy Sylwestrowic to the BZA, seconded by Councilwomen Uzelac.

No further questions or comments from the council.

President Bella asked Attorney Svetanoff do the motion pass with five members present.

Attorney Svetanoff stated the vote passed.

Motion carries by roll call vote 3-Yes 2-Abstain.

Redevelopment Commission

President Bella reappointed Vice-President Hardaway, Councilman Pettit, and Councilman White.

A motion was made by Council Pettit to retain Councilman Minchuk and Councilwoman Uzelac to the Redevelopment Commission, seconded by Councilwoman Uzelac.

No further questions or comments from the council.

Motion carries by voice vote 5-0

Economic Development Commission

President Bella reappointed Councilman Pettit.

A motion was made by Councilwoman Uzelac to retain Vice-President Hardaway and Councilman Minchuk to the Economic Development Commission, seconded by Councilman Pettit.

No further questions or comments from the council.

Motion carries by voice vote 5-0

Police Commission

A motion was made by Councilman Pettit to reappoint William Polling to the Police Commission, seconded by Councilman Minchuk.

No further questions or comments from the council.

Motion carries by voice vote 5-0

A motion was made by Councilman Spann to reappoint Gene Ward to the Police Commission, seconded by Councilwoman Uzelac.

No further questions or comments from the council.

Motion carries by voice vote 5-0

SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

None

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Town Council Meeting February 14, 2023 at 6:30 P.M.

Town Office Closed Monday February 20th in observance of President's Day

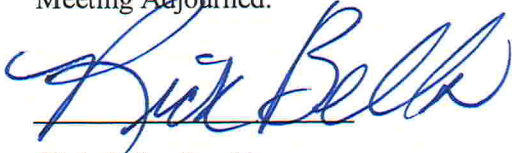
Plan Commission Public Meeting February 21st at 6:30 P.M.

Black History Celebration Dinner February 23rd at 5:00 P.M.

ADJOURNMENT:

A motion and a second were made and passed by voice vote.

Meeting Adjourned.



Rick Bella, President



Kelly White Gibson, Clerk-Treasurer

Minutes Submitted By Angela Lewis