



Town of Merrillville
Town Council Meeting Minutes
April 25, 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 Robert Szoke of Impact Church.

Vice-President Hardaway informed the council that the first African American Police Commissioner Michael Smith passed away on April 7, 2023.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Led by Commissioner Ward.

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

Present were:

Vice-President Hardaway- (Ward 2)

Councilman Minchuk- (Ward 3)

Councilwoman Uzelac- (Ward 4)

Councilman White - (Ward 7)

President Bella- (Ward 5)

Five (5) were Present at Roll Call and Two (2) were Absent Councilman Pettit and Councilman Spann
Councilman Spann came in after the roll call at 6:39 pm.

**PETITIONS, COMMUNICATIONS, ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS, AND
REMONSTRATIONS:**

National Letter Carriers Proclamation

-Madam Clerk-Treasurer Kelly White Gibson read the National Letter Carriers Proclamation.

-Vice-President Hardaway made a to approve the National Letter Carriers Proclamation,
seconded by Councilwoman Uzelac

-No further questions or comments from the council.

-Motion carries by voice vote 5-0.

Ben's Blue Bags Proclamation

-Firefighter Scott Molchan read Ben's Blue Bags Proclamation.

-President Bella asked the Firefighters to show the council and audience the content of Ben's
Blue Bag.

-The Firefighters showed the council and audience several sensory stimulation items used for
people with Autism Spectrum Disorder.

-Vice-President Hardaway made a motion to approve the Ben's Blue Bags Proclamation,
seconded by Councilman Minchuk.

-No further questions or comments from the council.

-Motion carries by voice vote 6-0.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT-PETTIT – Councilman Pettit was absent.

PARKS & RECREATION- UZELAC – Councilwoman Uzelac informed the council that she wants to know from Director Price whether bids were received from vendors regarding the Rosenbaum Park shelter.

Town Manager Reardon informed the council that he can answer the question regarding the bids. Town Manager Reardon stated that he is working with Director Price and his staff. Building Commissioner Brown was brought in to assist us with this process. We will have all the information and recommendations to the council at the next meeting on May 9, 2023, for Rosenbalm and Pruzin Parks

ABANDONED -BLIGHTED PROPERTIES-HARDAWAY – Vice-President Hardaway informed the council that he has nothing to report at this time.

DEAN & BARBARA WHITE COMMUNITY CENTER-MINCHUK & PETTIT – Councilman Pettit was absent.

President Bella asked Councilman Minchuk or Council White did they have anything to report regarding the Dean and Barbara White Community Center.

Councilman Minchuk and Councilman White informed the council that they have nothing to report at this time.

SPECIAL PROJECTS (F & B TAX, DIVERSITY, 4th of JULY CELEBRATION-HARDAWAY - Vice-President Hardaway informed the council that he will yield to Director Shine for the Juneteenth Celebration report.

Director Shine informed the council that the Juneteenth Freedom Festival will be held on June 17, 2023, at the Dean and Barbara White Community Center from 12:00 pm to 5:00 pm. The Town of Merrillville will have the following at the festival:

- Food Trucks
- The Corvette Club
- Resource Tent
- Community Health Net
- Vendors
- Entertainment

Director Shine thanked all the core committee members for their hard work and dedication. If anyone has any questions or wants to be a vendor, please contact her office. Director Shine also stated that the Town has received donations and sponsorships. She thanked everyone for their participation.

President Bella asked Vice-President Hardaway did he have anything to add.

Vice-President Hardaway stated there is nothing more to add at this time.

DEPARTMENT & COMMISSION REPORTS

LAKE COUNTY SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT-WHITE – Councilman White stated that the Recycling Grant Committee will be meeting on May 8, 2023. The committee will be determining all nineteen communities that comply with the Solid Waste District contracts or agreements that they have with the community. Solid Waste District will be releasing checks in an estimated amount of \$1,200,000.00 to the entire community. The Town of Merrillville is on tap to receive approximately \$96,000.00.

Councilman White also informed the council that another meeting will be held in the second or third week in May.

NORTHERN INDIANA REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION-HARDAWAY – Vice-President Hardaway informed the council that he has nothing to report at this time.

STORMWATER MANAGEMENT RESOURCES-LAKE – Director Lake was absent.

President Bella asked Town Manager Reardon did he have anything to report on behalf of Director Lake.

Town Manager Reardon stated that he has nothing to report at this time

Director Shine informed the council that Ordinance 23-14 is the second part of the process. The first part was approved, signed, and recorded at Lake County. The second part requires us to advertise and have a public meeting which is why we are here tonight.

Glenn Boren of Development Visions Group elaborated on Ordinance 23-14.

Vice-President Hardaway made a motion to approve Ordinances 23-14, seconded by Councilwoman Uzelac.

President Bella asked Attorney Sventanoff did he have any comments on Ordinance 23-14.

Attorney Svetanoff informed the council that all the documents and notices were reviewed. Since everything is in order, he recommends that the council move forward with approval.

No further questions or comments from the council.

Motion carries by roll call vote 6-0.

Ordinance 23-15 (Discussion Roll Vote)

An Ordinance of the Town of Merrillville, Lake County, Indiana Appropriating Additional Monies Within the Various Fire Protection Territory Funds for the Year 2023 Not Included in the Current Budget.

Councilman Minchuk made a motion to approve Ordinances 23-15, seconded by Councilman Spann.

Councilman Minchuk informed the council that the Fire Department will be purchasing two items. The first is the Exit Drills In The Home (EDITH). We bring out this house at fundraisers and events. This house is used to train kids on what to do in case of a fire. The current house is very dated, and it is time for an upgrade to newer technology. The second item that will be purchased by the Fire Department is the property located behind the Ross Township building on 73ed Avenue that has come up for sale.

Attorney Svetanoff added that the Town is in coordination with the Fire Territory's attorney to help with the acquisition of the property because any property that is acquired by Fire Territory must be in the name of the Town under the Ordinance. We are currently working with Attorney Jones on that particular issue.

President Bella added to clarify the EDITH house isn't an actual house, but a mobile trailer. The mobile trailer is set up like a house and filled with smoke to teach children how to get down and find exits, and doors during a fire drill.

Councilman White stated since the item wasn't included in the current budget, how will this item be purchased?

President Bella asked Madam Clerk-Treasurer Kelly White to comment.

Madam Clerk-Treasurer Kelly White Gibson informed Councilman White that the money wasn't appropriated for the EDITH mobile trailer, but the money is in the budget.

Council Minchuk added that there is money in the Fire Territory budget to purchase both the EDITH mobile trailer and the property behind Ross Township.

No further questions or comments from the council.

Motion carries by roll call vote 6-0.

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

None

B. Resolutions: (Discussion and Voice Vote)

None

C. American Rescue Plan

AP Voucher Register Summary for ARP Purchases for April 25, 2023

Vice-President Hardaway informed the council that funding is still available for home improvement under the American Rescue Plan (ARP) funding. The Town allocated \$300,000.00 for residents and businesses to apply for funding, The Town isn't close to spending the funding. The only projects being funded at this

SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

None

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- Town Council Meeting (Municipal Day) May 9th at 6:30 pm
- Reception Before Municipal Day May 9th at 5:30 pm
- Plan Commission Public Meeting May 16th at 6:30 pm

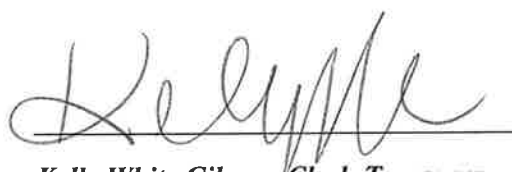
ADJOURNMENT:

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