



Town of Merrillville
Town Council Meeting Minutes
July 11, 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.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Led by Vice-President Hardaway.

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

Present were:

Vice-President Hardaway- (Ward 2)

Councilman Minchuk- (Ward 3)

Councilwoman Uzelac- (Ward 4)

Councilman White - (Ward 7)

Councilwoman Neal - (Ward 1)

Councilman Pettit - (Ward 6)

President Bella - (Ward 5)

All Seven (7) Present

PETITIONS, COMMUNICATIONS, ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS, AND REMONSTRATIONS:

Swearing in of Councilwoman Ward 1 Rhonda Neal

The first black woman to serve on Merrillville’s Town Council Rhonda Neal was sworn in by Judge Velazco and Madam Clerk-Treasurer Kelly White Gibson.

Parade Winner and Special Mentions

Vice-President Hardaway informed the council that the parade was great this year and thanked everyone for their participation. We had over forty-five entries this year. The following winners were:

- Outstanding Performance - Pierce Middle School Cheerleading Group and Merrillville High School Cheerleading Group
- Honorable Mention (Float Winner) - Descent of the Holy Ghost Orthodox Church
- Overall, Winner – The Party Chaser

Parade Judges’ Appreciation

Vice-President Hardaway thanked and presented each judge with a gift card. The parade volunteer judges were:

- Marissa Clark
- Makayla Clark
- Craig Bonneau

CONSENT AGENDA

Accts. Payable Register Voucher Approval for July 11, 2023.
Approval of Town Council Meeting Minutes of June 27, 2023.

A motion was made by Councilwoman Neal to approve the Consent Agenda, seconded by Councilman Pettit.

No further questions or comments from the council.

Motion carries by voice vote.

STANDING & SPECIAL COMMITTEES REPORTS

BUDGET & FINANCE- HARDAWAY – Vice-President Hardaway informed the council that he has nothing to report at this time.

COUNCIL AFFAIRS- PETTIT – Councilman Pettit informed the council that he has nothing to report at this time.

STREET DEPARTMENT- MINCHUK – Councilman Minchuk informed the council that he has nothing to report at this time.

ELECTIONS, PUBLIC RELATIONS, & TOWN BEAUTIFICATION-PETTIT— Councilman Pettit informed the council that he has nothing to report at this time.

ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS- WHITE - Councilman White informed the council that he would like to follow up with the Town's Fire Chief on the testing of the mold at the Hickory Lake Ridge Apartment Complex at the next council meeting.

Councilman White also informed the council that break-ins are occurring at the apartment complex.

Councilman White welcomed Councilwoman Neal to the committee.

PERSONNEL POLICY & EMPLOYEE BENEFITS – HARDAWAY- Vice-President Hardaway informed the council that he has nothing to report at this time.

PUBLIC SAFETY- MINCHUK- Councilman Minchuk informed the council that last week interviews were conducted for the Chief of Police position. All three candidates interviewed well, and the committee was very impressed with all of them after the interviews.

Councilman Minchuk also informed the council that the Police Commission was included during the interview process. The committee asked the commission to submit a recommendation for the council's review. The commission did submit a recommendation to the committee. The recommendation was that Interim Chief of Police Nuses be named the new Chief of Police.

Councilman Minchuk informed the council that he as well as the council would like to accept the Police Commission's recommendation to make Interim Chief of Police Nuses the Town of Merrillville permanent Police Chief and have him sworn in at the next council meeting.

A motion was made by Councilman Minchuk to accept the recommendation of the Police Commission to appoint Interim Chief Nuses as the permanent Chief of Police, seconded by Vice-President Hardaway.

President Bella asked Attorney Svetanoff to confirm the motion and second.

Attorney Svetanoff confirmed the motion and the second.

Councilman Minchuk asked Judge Velazco will he be available for the swearing-in of Chief of Police Nuses at the next council meeting.

Judge Velazco informed the council that he would be available.

No further questions or comments from the council.

Motion carries by roll call vote 7-0.

President Bella asked Councilman Minchuk did he have anything else to add to his report.

Councilman Minchuk informed the council that the committee had a meeting and went over several topics with the Police and Fire Departments on how to increase numbers and programs. Once the committee concludes, he will report back to the council.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT-PETTIT – Councilman Pettit informed the council that listed on the agenda there is a resolution for real property tax incentive at the Ameriplex at the Crossroads for Holladay Properties. The property is right next door to Attorney Svetanoff's office on 98th Avenue.

Councilman Pettit also informed the council and public that he apologized for his absence at the last council meeting due to a family emergency. The committee will resume its economic development priorities

PARKS & RECREATION- UZELAC – Councilwoman Uzelac informed the council that Rosenbalm Park was vandalized. A perpetrator cut up the new rubberized floor that was installed and threw it on top of the gazebo which also had a brand-new roof installed.

Councilwoman Uzelac also informed the council that she did make a report, and Director Price sent someone out. Chief Nuses did inform her that he did try to have officers out there watching the area.

Councilwoman Uzelac informed the council that this wasn't the first incident of vandalism. It was a year ago that a swing was sawed off on a brand-new swing set.

Councilwoman Uzelac thanked Chief Nuses for his help and hope he has officers out watching all of the parks in the Town of Merrillville.

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

DEAN & BARBARA WHITE COMMUNITY CENTER-PETTIT – Councilman Pettit informed the council that he would like the committee to get back into the fourth Thursday of the month meeting starting with the July calendar.

Councilman Pettit asked Director Price to check the month of July for a meeting date and stated that he would speak with Town Administrative Manager Rosas.

SPECIAL PROJECTS (F & B TAX, DIVERSITY, 4th of JULY CELEBRATION-HARDAWAY - Vice-President Hardaway informed the council that informed the council that we had great fireworks on July 3rd. The fireworks started at 9:00 pm once it got dark outside. We appreciate all the residents and the surrounding areas for coming out and supporting the Town of Merrillville. We estimate over a thousand cars in attendance, so we had a great crowd even with a condensed parking area.

Vice-President Hardaway also informed the council that the parade on July 4th was a great event. He thanked the Parks Department and Director Shine for their participation in helping to facilitate the parade.

Job Fair July 27th from 11:00 am – 3:00 pm

Vice-Present Hardaway informed the council that the Town of Merrillville's next event is the Job Fair which is going to be on July 27th from 11:00 am until 3:00 pm at the Dean and Barbara White Community Center. If anyone is looking for employment or businesses looking for employees, this is a great opportunity for you to come out and present what you have to offer.

National Night Out

Vice-President Hardaway inform the council that The National Night Out will be on Tuesday, August 1, 2023, and details for this event will be presented at the next council meeting, but we would like to make sure the entire community comes out and support the National Night Out.

Vice-President Hardaway also informed the council there was some confusion last year with this event. He hopes to clear up any confusion because each ward will be represented with a designated area where the residents from that ward will be able to have a conversation with their council person. Signs will be posted to separate each ward and we encourage people to go and meet their council person.

President Bella asked Town Manager Reardon how many companies are participating in the Job Fair.

Town Manager Reardon informed the council that presently there are fifty-two companies including, Amazon, Horseshoe Casino, Hard Rock Casino, and several other big-name companies. We are looking to fill our capacity and expect approximately eight hundred plus in attendance during the four hours.

DEPARTMENT & COMMISSION REPORTS

LAKE COUNTY SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT-WHITE – Councilman

White informed the council that he has nothing to report at this time.

NORTHERN INDIANA REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION-HARDAWAY – Vice-President Hardaway informed the council that a meeting will be held next week.

STORMWATER MANAGEMENT RESOURCES-LAKE – Director Lake informed the council that Gough Construction will be remobilizing next week and a half to finish the Kaiser Ditch Lateral Project. The company got delayed with another job.

Director Lake also informed the council that quotes are being requested for the Turkey Creek Risk-Free Removal project. This is the same thing we did in Meadowdale Metal Land, but this will be for Turkey Creek. The project for Turkey Creek will be completed in phases.

Director Lake informed the council that proposals are being reviewed for all the drainage for Independence Hill Third Edition and Country Club Hill subdivision which is south of 61st Avenue. Reichelt is almost done with the 101st Clay Street Drainage Project. We still have a little bit of ditch clearing to do on the Westside of Clay Street.

Director Lake also thanked Chris Bynum and his volunteers for the cleanup efforts of the pond behind Geno's Steakhouse. The Town owns a part of the pond behind Gino's Steakhouse.

Director Lake informed the council that in partnership with Lake County Parks, we received a U.S. Forest Service Grant. He stated that further details will be forthcoming about the grant. We are planning something big with the trees in the Town of Merrillville.

Councilman White asked Director Lake for an update on the Hickory Ridge Pumping Station.

Director Lake informed the council that Little Calumet River Basin Development Commission at the next meeting will approve our half of the cost which is close to \$1,000,000.00. We also have another submittal into Congressman Mrvan's office for the other half that will complete the entire financing of the project. The plans and permits are done. We are shovel-ready.

Councilman White informed the council that he received calls regarding the pond over at Barkley Village.

Director Lake informed the council that the pond that Councilman White mentioned isn't part of the Town's inventory of ponds.

Councilman White informed the council that the pond is dangerous for children. He also asked if there was anything the Town can do to implement safety measures.

Director Lake informed the council that we can discuss doing a redesign and retrofitting something like a safety ledge.

Councilman White informed the council that he will talk with Director Lake about the safety ledge.

Councilwoman Uzelac informed the council that she received several telephone calls regarding the machines close to Rosenbalm Park. Mr. Joe Fish told her that the department is waiting on approval from NIPSCO before the machines can be moved.

Director Lake informed the council that two gas lines have to be relocated as soon as that is done the machines will be removed.

Councilwoman Uzelac asked about the Kaiser Ditch.

Director Lake informed the council it's the Kaiser Ditch Lateral. We are replacing all crossings. The crossings are in, and we just have to extend the ends. When we are extending out, there are a few gas lines in the way.

Councilwoman Uzelac asked Director Lake if the county have to be involved in this project.

Director Lake informed the council that this is a non-regulated tributary to Kaiser Ditch.

SOUTHSHORE VISITORS AND CONVENTION AUTHORITY – Town Manager Reardon informed the council that we continue with our assessment of possible potential recommended sites for a County Convention Center. The assessment should be completed in about six to eight weeks. We will then report back to the organization. We are working in tandem with the Indiana Regional Development Authority (RDA). The RDA is redoing its study from several years ago. Town Manager Reardon stated he would keep the council updated on the progress.

Town Manager Reardon also informed the council that he will be sharing the schedule of events here in the county and the next board meeting for Southshore Visitors and Convention Authority is next Thursday, July 20, 2023.

FIRE TERRITORY BOARD-MINCHUK – Councilman Minchuk informed the council that a meeting is scheduled for July 27th at 3:30 pm and invited Councilwoman Neal to the meeting.

Vice-President Hardaway informed the council he would like to make a motion to replace Councilman Spann with Councilwoman Neal. The Fire Territory was near and dear to Councilman Spann.

A motion was made by Vice-President Hardaway to appoint Councilwoman Neal as the representative from the Town Council on the Fire Territory Broad replacing the late Councilman Spann, seconded by Councilman Minchuk.

No further questions or comments from the council.

Motion carries by voice vote 7-0.

Councilman White informed the council that according to the Redevelopment Authority, there is an appointment open for the late Councilman Spann's position which expires on December 31, 2023. Councilman White would like the position of Vice-President to be filled by Councilwoman Neal.

A motion was made by Councilman White to appoint Councilwoman Neal as the representative from the Town Council on the Redevelopment Authority Board replacing the late Councilman Spann as Vice President, seconded by Councilman Pettit.

President Bella informed the council that we appoint members not officers on boards. The members elect their officers. The vacancy doesn't vacate the Vice-Presidency it vacates the membership. President Bella asked Attorney Svetanoff to confirm his statement.

Attorney Svetanoff stated that the statement is correct.

Councilman White stated that the Town Council makes the appointment and reiterated that was his motion for Vice-President.

President Bella stated that he doesn't think the motion wasn't accurate.

Councilman White stated that Councilman Pettit seconded his motion.

Councilman Pettit informed the council that it is a membership, and the late Councilman Spann's slot will be filled by the council. The Redevelopment Authority Board elected its officers on the 1st of the year.

Attorney Svetanoff stated that the Redevelopment Authority Board will select the person to fill the Vice-President vacancy from its members.

Councilman White informed the council that there is a vacancy now that doesn't expire until December 31, 2023, and he is asking the council to take the vote. He made a motion, and the motion was seconded.

President Bella informed the council that as long as the Attorney agrees with the motion.

Councilman White stated that the Attorney agrees.

No further questions or comments from the council.

Motion carries by voice vote 7-0.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS/TOWN MANAGER

Director Price – Parks Department

Director Price informed the council that the department was able to keep up with trash pickup after the July 4th holiday which was a heavy load.

Director Price also informed the council that he did contact Bruce Brown regarding concerns about the Pruzin Bridge possibly giving out due to wear and tear. He also discussed some other things along that trail with Mr. Brown.

Chief Nuses – Police Department

Chief Nuses informed the council and audience that scammers are in the Town of Merrillville. The scammers are targeting homeowners and proposing estimates for \$100.00 to \$200.00 to get the homeowner money for repairs or updates. The scammers are leaving with the money charged for the estimate. Chief Nuses informed the council and audience not to give anyone money until the job is completed and even then, go by a contract.

Chief Nuses also informed the council and audience that the scam calls have made a resurgent. The callers are pretending to be law enforcement officers and requesting money on behalf of a loved one who is in jail. The scammers are targeting the elderly.

Chief Nuses informed the council that his department is doing what it can, but the calls aren't coming from this country and artificial intelligence is being used. He recommends that the council and audience not give anyone money.

Chief Nuses also informed the council that posted on the department's Facebook page is information regarding the Speeding Slow You Down Campaign. It's a grant that has been paid for by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. The campaign will be between the timeframe of July 10th through July 31st. The campaign will include Merrillville Police Department and other neighboring agencies participating in a Speed Blitz. During the speed blitz, the officers will be stopping vehicles and enforcing traffic. He also warned the council and audience to watch their speed.

Councilman White asked Chief Nuses to elaborate on the Hickory Lake Ridge Apartment Complex incidents of doors being kicked in by juveniles.

Chief Nuses informed the council that incidents of doors of the vacant property being kicked in and the property being destroyed by juveniles. The department has the names of the juveniles are they're being processed through the juvenile court system. The other issue at the complex is squatting in the vacant buildings. He is in contact with the potential new owner to see if they can board up the vacant buildings.

Director Shine – Building and Planning

Director Shine informed the council that we are still going forward with the Town's Comprehensive Plan. There were a couple of articles in the newspaper regarding the plan. We are still looking for members of the community to serve on the Momentum Community Committee. The first meeting will be on July 19th. At 5:30 pm at the Dean and Barbara White Community Center. There is still time for people to sign up. We are looking for people to partner with the Town to make Merrillville a wonderful place to live for the next twenty years.

President Bella asked Director Shine to update the council regarding the vacation of the street that Mr. Joseph Berger has been complaining about, especially at the last council meeting. President Bella stated he knows headway has been made between Director Shine, Town Manager Reardon, and Director Lake regarding Mr. Berger's complaint.

This Section Includes Verbatim Conversations Regarding Mr. Joseph Berger (Joe)

Director Shine informed the council what had happened with the street is that the Geographic Information System (GIS) people fly over and take pictures. Unfortunately, Mr. Berger has an opened ended driveway where you can go out on Massachusetts Street right Matt (Director Lake), and then you can out on Broadway. It was never recorded at the Lake County Recorder's Office. If you go to the Lake County Recorder's all of the property that belongs to Mr. Berger was never recorded as a street. The GIS picked it up as a street, therefore many maps picked it up as a street. What happened was that Matt Lake (Director) went in and edited it in the GIS. I don't know how long it takes for them to get that straighten out, but as far as what the county says and there is a Platter Survey on file at the county and on the county GIS. It is all of his property, and it has never been a street there so that's unfortunately what happened with Mr. Berger's property.

President Bella informed the council that Director Lake reached out to Google Right Matt (Director Lake).

Director Lake informed the council that there are several mapping programs and software out there so the first thing I did was went on Google Maps and requested a correction that they delete that out of the system. They replied back and end up deleting it in Google Maps. I then went into the Environmental Systems Research Institute (ESRI) website they didn't allow a deletion, but I modified it to where it's a private gravel one-way road. It's so undesirable that no one ever go down it for that purpose. I submitted it to Apple Maps as well still waiting to hear back on that change. I think if we get a hold of Amazon Dispatch they might help out as well.

Director Shine stated that she did put in a call to Amazon because I think Mr. Berger's major complaint was that the Amazon's trucks were going through there, and I did put in a call to Amazon to make sure that they take that off of their route. The lady told me she was, but she going to get back with me with something a little formal Mr. President we can have it in our file.

President Bella asked Councilman Pettit did he have anything to add.

Councilman Pettit informed the council that obviously being the councilman for twenty years this is the first time this has popped up. I've had long conversation with Joe (Mr. Berger). I've known Joe a long-long time. It is somewhat surprising that this has come up. Everything Matt (Director Lake) and Sheila (Director Shine) has said is absolutely correct. These are unique lots because they have double what we call double frontage from Broadway to Massachusetts Street and there are lots south of Joe's (Mr. Berger) and there are a couple of lots north of Joe's (Mr. Berger). Joe (Mr. Berger) did a nice job of improving the drive, unfortunately he made it an attractive nuisance. You know, he's his own worst enemy. Quite frankly if he would have put up concrete blocks at the end of his lot up to Massachusetts people won't go through there. It is private property, and I gotta stress Town employees cannot go on private property correct Mr. Svetanoff (Attorney Svetanoff)

Attorney Svetanoff stated correct.

Councilman Pettit stated okay so there's it's not a public right-of-way. He did a nice job of improving it years and years ago and so I'm in constant contact with Joe (Mr. Berger). Joe (Mr. Berger) text me probably once a week, twice a week, three times a week so we stay in touch. We're trying to work on the property to the north. Sheila (Director Shine) and I had a meeting with the new owner, and we still need to work on that Sheila (Director Shine) to get that property cleaned up. It has been an eyesore that's one of Joe's (Mr. Berger) contentions that we continue to work on, and we will stay in touch with Joe (Mr. Berger).

President Bella stated thank you Mr. Pettit (Councilman Pettit) and asked Kelly (Madam Clerk-Treasurer Kelly White Gibson) do you think it'd we can take this section of the minutes verbatim so that we can actually send them to Mr. Berger so that he knows we discussed it. We're s making great progress on his issue, and we can move forward.

Madam Clerk-Treasurer Kelly White Gibson stated absolutely.

President Bella stated thank you very much.

Madam Clerk-Treasurer Kelly White Gibson stated no problem.

This ends the verbatim conversation regarding Mr. Joseph Berger (Joe).

Director King – Street Department

Director King informed the council that the Street Department has been very busy assisting with the Town's fireworks on the 3rd of July and assisting with the parade keeping the route clean and working with the Police Department to keep the roads blocked.

Director King also informed the council that the department is hot patching, crack sealing, and busy maintaining Town-owned property.

Director King informed the council that his department is getting several calls a day regarding branch pickup. The Town's Spring 2023 Newsletter was mailed to all the residents and is also on the Town's website listing the pickup times. Our department pic up branches twice a year. Once in the Spring and at the end of April or early May. The next pickup will be in Fall 2023 in October. The reason we don't do it all year long is staffing. We are a department of twenty-five employees serving a Town of 36,000 residents. We could pick up branches all day long. We just don't have the staffing to do it. We do have a facility on the North end of Town at 5750 Tyler. Residents are more than welcome to bring those branches to that location.

Councilman Pettit informed the council he has two things for Director King and Director Lake. He asked Director King to confirm that once the drainage project is complete, his department is going to be resurfacing Clay Street.

Director King confirmed that is correct.

Councilman Pettit also informed the council that he thought there is a policy regarding storm damage. He has received several calls regarding storm damage from senior citizens in Chapel Manor. The problem is the seniors can't get the debris to the facility located at 5750 Tyler Street. We need to evaluate this or look maybe at subcontracting out storm damage branch pickup while the Street Department is busy with other Town projects.

Director King informed the council they can pick up the branches that have been doing it for the last four Saturdays.

Councilman Pettit requested that storm damage branch pickup be a workshop item.

Councilman White informed the council that property owners' contractors are responsible for removing branch debris from any trees they have cut down for the property owner.

President Bella asked Director King to elaborate on the speed humps that were installed in the Foxmoor Subdivision

Director King informed the council that the first set of speed humps was installed in Foxmoor Subdivision on Wright Street. As far as he can tell, they seem to be working to slow people down. The speed humps are only going in residential areas.

Councilwoman Uzelac asked Director King will the council members work with him.

President Bella informed the council member to give their location recommendations to Director King to review and Chief Nuses will also review the location.

Councilman White asked Town Manager Reardon to ask Director Bunnell of Code Enforcement to come to the Town Council Meeting.

Town Manager Reardon informed Councilman White he will take care of it and also that Code Enforcement is now part of the jurisdiction of the Police Department.

GENERAL ORDERS

A. Ordinances

First Readings: (Discussion and Roll Call Vote)

Ordinance 23-18 (Discussion and Roll Call Vote)

An Ordinance of the Town of Merrillville, Lake County, Indiana, Amending Ordinances 23-01 and 22-29a, and pay for Employees of The Town of Merrillville, Indiana. For the Calendar Year 2023.

A motion was made by Councilman Pettit to approve Ordinance 23-18, seconded by Councilwoman Uzelac.

Councilman Pettit asked Madam Clerk-Treasurer Kelly White Gibson or town Manager Reardon if a need for Ordinance 23-18 is there to be read on second reading because the employee is already on staff.

President Bella informed the council this would help the payroll department in paying the employee from the proper account.

Madam Clerk-Treasurer informed the council that this is an appropriation and must be published. She asked Attorney Svetanoff for confirmation.

Attorney Svetanoff confirmed it must be published.

No further questions or comments from the council.

Motion carries by roll call vote 7-0.

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

Ordinance 23-16 (Discussion, Public Comment, and Roll Call Vote)

An Ordinance of the Town of Merrillville, Lake County, Indiana, Amending Ordinances 23-01 and 22-29a, and pay for Employees of The Town of Merrillville, Indiana. For the Calendar Year 2023.

A motion was made by Vice-President Hardaway to approve Ordinance 23-16, seconded by Councilman Minchuk.

Mrs. Flowers asked the council how the Town Manager's salary was only brought up for consideration.

Vice-President Hardaway informed the council and audience that the raise of \$10,000.00 for that position was split. Instead of giving the whole amount in January 2023, \$5,000.00 was given in January 2023 and the other \$5,000.00 is being approved in Ordinance 23-16.

No further questions or comments from the council or the public.

Motion carries by roll call vote 5-Yes and 2-Abstain.

Ordinance 23-17 (Discussion, Public Comment, and Roll Call Vote)

An Ordinance of the Town of Merrillville, Lake County, Indiana, Authoring Additional Appropriations in The 2023 Budget.

A motion was made by Councilman Pettit to approve Ordinance 23-17, seconded by Vice-President Hardaway.

No further questions or comments from the council or the public.

Motion carries by roll call vote 7-0.

B. Resolutions: (Discussion and Voice Vote)

Resolution 23-24 (Discussion, Public Comment, and Voice Vote)

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

Representatives from Holiday Properties elaborated on the request.

A motion was made by Councilman Pettit to approve Resolution 23-24, seconded by Councilman White.

Councilman White asked the representatives will they be at the Town's Job Fair.

The Representatives stated if there is an opportunity to participate in the Job Fair they will participate.

Councilman Pettit informed the council that this went through the Economic Development Committee with favorable recommendations. This is a 7.4-million-dollar investment in the Town of Merrillville creating approximately fifty full-time jobs with an annual payroll of 2.5 million dollars. They will be adhering to the sliding Indiana Code Scale for tax incentives whereby the first year is 100% and then they start paying 95%, 10%, 15%, and so on. The new assessed value will be 2.4 million dollars.

Town Manager Reardon confirmed the amount and stated the amount is correct.

Councilman Pettit also informed the council that the estimated gross real estate savings is \$643,500.00, and the anticipated tax incentive fee will be 96,525.00. He asked Town Manager Reardon to elaborate on the fee.

Councilman White informed the council he would like to see Merrillville residents hired for the building process.

Councilman Pettit informed the council that they will either hire union contractors with this incentive or do a project labor agreement with Randy Palmateer.

No further questions or comments from the council or the public.

Motion carries by roll call vote 7-0.

Resolution 23-25 (Discussion and Voice Vote)

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

A motion was made by Councilman Pettit to approve Resolution 23-25, seconded by Councilwoman Uzelac.

President Bella asked Madam Clerk-Treasurer Kelly White Gibson if Resolution 23-25 passes, can we go to the second reading on Ordinance 23-18 to pay the Animal Control position?

Madam Clerk-Treasurer Kelly White Gibson informed the council that Ordinance 23-18 must be advertised because it is for an additional appropriation and go to second reading.

No further questions or comments from the council.

Motion carries by voice vote 7 -0.

Resolution 23-26 (Discussion and Voice Vote)

A Resolution of the Town of Merrillville, Lake County, Indiana, Approving a Credit/Debit Card User Fee.

A motion was made by Councilman Minchuk to approve Resolution 23-26, seconded by Councilman Pettit.

President Bella asked Madam Clerk-Treasurer did she has anything to add.

Madam Clerk-Treasurer Kelly White Gibson informed the council that we promised to make things easier for the residents so they wouldn't have to use cash or checks. This also allows people to pay online with debit or credit cards.

No further questions or comments from the council.

Motion carries by voice vote 7 -0.

C. American Rescue Plan

AP Voucher Register Summary for ARP Purchases for July 11, 2023

Vice-President Hardaway informed the council that the ARP Voucher summary is \$39,415.00.

Vice-President Hardaway made a motion to approve \$39,415.00, seconded by Councilman Minchuk.

No further questions or comments from the council.

Motion carries by voice vote 7-0.

D.BZA & LARGE GATHERING ACTIONS

Petitioner: Myesha Jones

Owner: Novogroder West Lake LLC

Request: Special Exception Approval

Purpose: Daycare Center

Location: 8374 Louisiana Street

Zoning: C-3 Highway Commercial Zoning District

Planning and Building Director Shine elaborated on the BZA

Councilman Pettit made a motion to approve the BZA Action, seconded by Councilman Minchuk.

Councilman Pettit asked the Petitioner about taking up more than half of the 12,000-square-foot building.

The Petitioner confirmed that they will be taking over more than half of the building. The front half will be an adult daycare and the back half will be used for the childcare center.

Councilman Pettit asked the Petitioner how will drop off of the children be handled.

The Petitioner stated that the center will have twenty-two parking spaces. Parents will be required to park their vehicles in the front, bring their children into the facility, sign them in, and exit the facility.

No further questions or comments from the council.

Motion carries by roll call vote 7-0.

Petitioner: Alfreida Pointer

Owner: Hal Schwartz

Request: Special Exception Approval

Purpose: Certified Nursing Assistant Training Program

Location: 5429 Broadway

Zoning: C-3 Community Commercial Zoning District

Planning and Building Director Shine elaborated on the BZA

Vice-President Hardaway made a motion to approve the BZA Action, seconded by Councilman White.

Councilwoman Uzelac asked the Petitioner will the students be placed in employment after training.

The Petitioner stated yes, the students are placed in employment.

Councilwoman Neal asked the Petitioner will students get assistance with clinical training.

The Petitioner stated yes, the students will receive assistance with clinical training.

No further questions or comments from the council.

Motion carries by roll call vote 7-0.

Applicant: St. Elijah Cathedral Serbfest
Owner: St Elijah Cathedral Serbfast
Request: Approval for Large Gathering Permit St. Elijah Cathedral Serbfast
Purpose: Church Fundraiser
Location: 8700 Taft Street
Date: July 22nd noon – midnight & July 23rd noon - 5:00 pm

Planning and Building Director Shine elaborated on the Large Gathering Action

Councilwoman Uzelac made a motion to approve the Large Gathering Action, seconded by Councilman Pettit.

President Bella informed the council that we do this every year and asked Director Shine to confirm.

Director Shine confirmed that this is an annual event.

Councilman White asked about the time on July 22nd and whether the fest will be inside or outside.

Director Shine informed the council that the fest will be both inside and outside. The owner also has a pavilion that everything sits under.

No further questions or comments from the council.

Motion carries by voice vote 7-0.

Applicant: St. Sava Church
Owner: St. Sava Church
Request: Approval for Large Gathering Permit
Purpose: St. Sava Serb Fest/Church Fundraiser
Location: 9191 Mississippi Street
Date: July 28th thru July 29th noon – midnight & July 30th noon - 10:00 pm

Planning and Building Director Shine elaborated on the Large Gathering Action.

Councilman Pettit made a motion to approve the Large Gathering Action, seconded by Councilwoman Uzelac.

Councilwoman Uzelac informed the council this is an annual fest, and it draws a big crowd.

No further questions or comments from the council.

Motion carries by voice vote 7-0.

OLD BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

None

SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

None

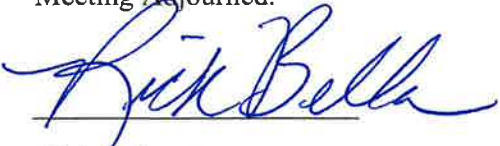
ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- Plan Commission Meeting July 18th at 6:30 pm
- Town Council Meeting July 25th at 6:30 pm
- RDC Meeting July 25th at 6:30 pm
- Job Fair July 27th from 11:00 am – 3:00 pm at the Dean and Barbara White Community Center

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