



Town of Merrillville
Town Council Meeting Minutes
December 27, 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 Earl Barton of Impact Church.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Led by Vice-President Hardaway

ROLL CALL – Roll Call was taken by Madam Payroll Administrator Johnson.

Present were: Vice-President Hardaway- (Ward 2)

Councilman Minchuk- (Ward 3)

Councilwoman Uzelac- (Ward 4)

Councilman Spann- (Ward 1)

Councilman Pettit- (Ward 6)

President Bella- (Ward 5)

Six Present (6) One Absent (1) Councilman White

PETITIONS, COMMUNICATIONS, ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND REMONSTRATIONS:

A letter from Town Engineer and Public Works Director Steve King was read to the council regarding the bid opening for 86th Avenue Broadway Extension project from Madison Street to Broadway. Based on the recommendation of Robinson Engineering, Director King concurred that the contract be awarded to Wreath Riley Construction as the lowest responsive and reasonable bidder in the amount of \$1,273,669.25.

President Bella inquired of Town Manager Reardon regarding any action needed on the letter.

Town Manager Reardon stated action needed to be taken. A motion was made by Councilman Pettit and seconded by Vice-President Hardaway to approve the recommendation from Town Engineer and Public Works Director Steve King.

Councilman Pettit stated the funding for this project will come out of Merrillville Road Tiff District.

Councilman Pettit also stated the balance will have to be checked with Director Chilcott and Bob Swintz once the draw comes in next week.

No further questions or comments from the council.

Motion carries by voice vote 6-0.

CONSENT AGENDA

Accts. Payable Register Voucher Approval for December 27, 2022

Approval of Town Council Meeting Minutes of December 13, 2022

Councilwoman Uzelac made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda, seconded by Vice-President Hardaway

No further questions or comments from the council.

Motion carries by voice vote 6-0.

STANDING & SPECIAL COMMITTEES REPORTS

BUDGET & FINANCE- HARDAWAY – No Report

COUNCIL AFFAIRS- PETTIT – No Report

PUBLIC WORKS & UTILITIES- MINCHUK – Councilman Minchuk informed the council that Public Works Crews stayed on top of the snowstorm throughout day and night both days.

Councilman Minchuk also informed the council there weren't a lot of complaints from the residents. He also thanked everyone for their cooperation.

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

ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS- WHITE – No Report -Councilman White wasn't present at the meeting.

PERSONNEL POLICY & EMPLOYEE BENEFITS – HARDAWAY – No Report

PUBLIC SAFETY- MINCHUK- Councilman Minchuk informed the council the committee met in executive session but has nothing to report at this time.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT-PETTIT – Councilman Pettit informed the council a resolution is on the agenda. This is the final step in approving tax abatement for 86th Place Partners LLC.

PARKS & RECREATION- UZELAC – No Report

ABANDONED -BLIGHTED PROPERTIES-HARDAWAY – Vice-President Hardaway informed the council cars were parked on the street during and after the snowstorm. He will address this with Code Enforcement.

Councilwoman Uzelac informed the council that a boat is still in the driveway in her ward.

Vice-President Hardaway stated the committee will also address that issue after the ordinance is approved.

Councilman Pettit asked is it a warning for parking on the grass. Vice-President Hardaway stated the first offense is a warning. After the second offense, a ticket will be issued by Code Enforcement.

DEAN & BARBARA WHITE COMMUNITY CENTER-MINCHUK & PETTIT – Councilman Pettit informed the council that a committee meeting at noon on Thursday, December 29, 2022, at the Dean & Barbara White Community Center to go over finances and other operational items.

SPECIAL PROJECTS (F & B TAX, DIVERSITY, 4TH of JULY CELEBRATION-HARDAWAY – Vice-President Hardaway informed the council that a meeting is scheduled for Thursday, January 5, 2023, at 11:00 am to discuss the Black History Dinner and finalize plans. We are hoping to sell tables for the event. We already have the speaker and music lined up.

Councilwomen Uzelac asked where the event will be held. Vice-President Hardaway stated at Dean & Barbara White Community Center.

Vice-President Hardaway informed the council he received a complaint about the Christmas Decorating Contest not being well advertised even though it was posted on the website and in the newspaper. In the future, Vice-President Hardaway will give Town Manager Reardon a list of all Special Events to be posted on the website.

Vice-President Hardaway also introduced the winners of the 2022 Christmas Decorating Contest. They are as follows:

Ward 1 - Mark Carpenter
Ward 2 - Audrey Tarver
Ward 3 - Greg Keenan
Ward 4 - Mike and Peggy Mahy
Ward 5 - Tiffany Mosby
Ward 6 - Scott Bonesteel
Ward 7 - Anna Ortiz

Each winner was awarded a yard sign, gift card, and plaque.

Vice-President Hardaway thanked the winners.

DEPARTMENT & COMMISSION REPORTS

LAKE COUNTY SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT-WHITE – No Report - Councilman White wasn't present at the meeting.

NORTHERN INDIANA REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION-HARDAWAY – Vice-President Hardaway stated no report, and the next meeting is on January 19, 2023.

President Bella asked were new officers selected for 2023. Vice-President Hardaway stated tentatively he will be chairman in 2023.

STORMWATER MANAGEMENT RESOURCES-LAKE – Town Manager Reardon informed the council there was nothing to report at this time from Director Lake.

SOUTHSHORE VISITORS AND CONVENTION AUTHORITY – Town Manager Reader informed the council he passed out a flyer informing the council about upcoming events. A meeting is upcoming in mid to late January 2023.

FIRE TERRITORY BOARD-MINCHUK – Councilman Minchuk informed the council a meeting occurred, and several items were discussed. One was the Salary Ordinance. At the meeting, the committee voted to amend the Salary Ordinance for part-time Firefighters and Firefighter/EMTs. Part-time Firefighters will increase to \$15.00 and Firefighter/EMTs will increase to \$20.00.

Councilman Minchuk also informed the council he will make a motion for the changes when the Salary Ordinance comes up on tonight's agenda.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS/TOWN MANGER

Director Shine informed the council there's no report tonight.

Assistant Police Chief Nuses informed the council to be aware of scams going on in the Town of Merrillville.

Town Manager Reardon informed the council of the winner of Department Door Decorating Contest. The winning department is Human Resource and Economic Development. The prizes were a trophy and a gift card from Domino's Pizza.

Councilman Pettit informed the council that the Crossroads Chamber of Commerce is going to have a Business Excellence Awards event on Thursday, March 9, 2023, at the Dean and Barbara White Community Center.

Councilman Pettit also stated that he graciously volunteered the council to sponsor one of the ten awards that will be given out that night.

GENERAL ORDERS

A. Ordinances

First Readings: (Discussion and Roll Call Vote)

None

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

Ordinance 22-28 (Discussion, Public Comment, 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.

President Bella pointed out that council packets are available online for the public.

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

Motion carries by roll call vote 6-0.

Ordinance 22-29A (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.

Councilman Minchuk made a motion to approve Ordinance 22-29A with an amendment for section Fire Protection Territory under the line-item Part-time Firefighter will be amended to \$15.00 and Part-time Firefighter/EMT positions will be amended to \$20.00, seconded by Vice-President Hardaway.

Financial Advisor Hudson elaborate on Ordinance 22-29A and made a comment. Financial Advisor Hudson stated the numbers in the bi-weekly and annual columns are the maximum. These amounts will need to be adjusted for 2023. If the year 2023 is a 27-pay year, the bi-weekly amounts will need to be reduced accordingly to the proper divisional mathematical equation. Financial Advisor Hudson also stated she will get in touch with Payroll Administrator Johnson to confirm what 2023 will be in regard to 26 versus 27 pays.

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

Motion carries by roll call vote 6-0.

Ordinance 22-30 (Discussion, Public Comment and Roll Call Vote)

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

Vice-President Hardaway made a motion to approve Ordinance 22-30, seconded by Councilman Pettit.

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

Motion carries by roll call vote 6-0.

Ordinance 22-31 (Discussion, Public Comment 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.

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

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

Motion carries by roll call vote 6-0

B. Resolutions: (Discussion and Voice Vote)

**Public Hearing for resolution 22-88*

Resolution 22-88 (Discussion and Voice Vote)

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

Councilman Pettit made a motion to approve Resolution 22-88, seconded by Councilman Spann.

Councilman Pettit elaborated on Petitioner 86th Place Partners LLC.

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

Motion carries by voice vote.

Resolution 22-89 (Discussion and Voice Vote)

A Resolution of the Town of Merrillville, Lake County, Indiana, to Create Funds related to the Opioid Settlement.

Financial Advisor Hudson stated the State of Indiana has reached a settlement with some drug companies regarding opioid problems. The drug companies have been ordered to pay every municipality in the state affected a particular sum of money. The entire receipt of the funds will come through 2038. The Town of Merrillville in total will receive \$275,000.00. The funds will be restricted and non-restricted. The largest part of the funding is restricted.

Vice-President Hardaway made a motion to approve Resolution 22-89 with a question, seconded by Councilman Pettit.

Vice-President Hardaway stated the year should be 2022, not 2002. Financial Advisor Hudson confirmed the year should be 2022, not 2002.

The year in Ordinance 22-89 will be corrected.

The motion and seconded was amended to reflect the date change.

No further questions or comments from the council.

Motion carries by voice vote.

Resolution 22-90 (Discussion and Voice Vote)

A Resolution of the Town of Merrillville, Lake County, Indiana, Amending the Personnel Policy Manual.

Vice-President Hardaway made a motion to approve Resolution 22-90, seconded by Councilman Pettit. Financial Advisor Hudson informed the council that the policy language has been removed from the salary ordinance to the policy manual in order to streamline the salary ordinance.

President Bella added that he asked Financial Advisor Hudson to do this to be more concise.

No further questions or comments from the council.

Motion carries by voice vote.

Resolution 22-92 (Discussion and Voice Vote)

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

Financial Advisor Hudson elaborated on the encumbrances in Resolution 22-92.

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

Councilwoman Uzelac made a motion to approve Resolution 22-92, seconded by Councilman Spann.

Motion carries by voice vote.

Resolution 22-93 (Discussion and Voice Vote)

A Resolution of the Town of Merrillville, Lake County, Indiana, Transferring Monies Within The 2022 Budget.

Financial Advisor Hudson elaborated on the transfers in Resolution 22-93.

Councilwoman Uzelac made a motion to approve Resolution 22-93, seconded by Councilman Spann.

No further questions or comments from the council.

Motion carries by voice vote.

C. American Rescue Plan

AP Voucher Register Summary for ARP Purchases for December 27, 2022

Vice-President Hardaway informed the council that the AP Voucher summary is \$11,040.00

Vice-President Hardaway made a motion to approve \$11, 040.00, seconded by Councilman Pettit.

No further questions or comments from the council.

Motion carries by voice vote.

D. BZA & LARGE GATHERING ACTIONS

None

OLD BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

None

SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

None

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

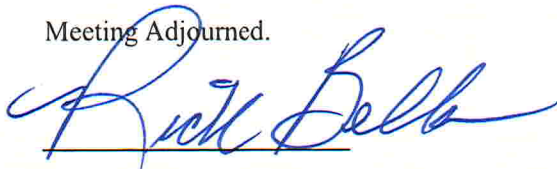

Town Building Closed December 30th & January 2nd for New Years

Town Council Meeting January 10th at 6:30 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