



Town of Merrillville
Special Town Council Meeting Minutes
August 29, 2023
5:30 P.M.

CALL TO ORDER: President Bella called the meeting to order at 5:30 P.M.

ROLL CALL – Roll Call was taken by Accounts Payable Secretary Angela Lewis.

Present were:

Vice-President Hardaway - (Ward 2)

Councilwoman Uzelac - (Ward 4)

Councilman White - (Ward 7)

Councilwoman Neal – (Ward 1)

Councilman Pettit – (Ward 6)

President Bella - (Ward 5)

Five (6) Present and One (1) Absent - Councilman Minchuk

President Bella informed the council of the passing of Councilman Minchuk's father and information will be forthcoming regarding a service that will be held at Town Hall. Administrative Manager Rosas will be sending flowers to the funeral home on behalf of the council.

Vice-President Hardaway informed the council that he has an update from Councilman Minchuk, and everything will be held at Burns Funeral Home in Crown Point.

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

OLD BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

- **Approval of Interim Town Manager:**

President Bella informed the council that an Executive Workshop was held regarding Michael Griffin's qualifications for the Interim Town Manager position.

A motion was made by Vice-President Hardaway to approve the hiring of Mr. Griffin as the Interim Town Manager at a salary of 92,499.94 per Salary Ordinance 23-22, seconded by Councilwoman Neal.

Councilwoman Uzelac asked about the \$10,000.00 raise given to former Town Manager Patrick Reardon. She thought the annual salary was \$80,000.00.

President Bella informed the council that former Town Manager Reardon didn't get a \$10,000.00 raise at once, but two \$5,000.00 raises. He was at \$85,500.00. The council approved \$5,000.00 in July 2023 which brought him up to \$92,499.94. listed on the Salary Ordinance 23-22.

President Bella also informed the council that Mr. Griffin has committed to teaching college classes on Mondays and Wednesdays. We talked about this in the workshop and we are going to allow him to fulfill this commitment. He will go teach the classes and then come back to make up the time.

Councilman Pettit asked if Mr. Griffin hiring effective immediately and if he will be in the office on Wednesday, August 23, 2023, at 8:00 a.m.

President Bella informed the council that Mr. Griffin's effective date of hire will be when he is available to start. Mr. Giffin isn't here tonight because of health reasons.

Councilman Pettit informed the council that we owe the Director and Interim Town Manager King a firm decision that he can go back to the Street Department after Labor Day which is Tuesday, September 5, 2023. Councilman Pettit thanked the Director and Interim Town Manager for all he has done as Interim Town Manager.

Councilman Pettit added to the motion made by Vice-President Hardaway and seconded by Councilwoman Uzelac that Mr. Griffin given health is to report to Town Hall no later than Tuesday, September 5th at 8:00 am because Director and Interim Town Manager King is going back to the Street Department.

No further questions or comments from the council.

President Bella informed the council that we have learned through a court order that Ayes and Yess have the same meaning.

Councilman Pettit informed the council that Aye and Yes don't have the same meaning.

President Bella informed the council Aye and Yes are affirmative to voting.

Motion carries by voice vote 6-0.

GENERAL ORDERS

A. Ordinances

First Readings: (Discussion and Roll Call Vote)

Ordinance 23-22 (Discussion and Roll Call Vote)

An Ordinance of the Town of Merrillville, Lake County, Indiana, Amending Ordinances 23-18, 23-16, 23-01, AND 22-29A, The 2023 Salary Ordinance, and Pay for the Employees of the Town of Merrillville, Indiana for the Calendar Year 2023

*A motion was made by Vice-President Hardaway to approve Ordinance 23-22, seconded by Councilwoman Neal.

President Bella didn't entertain a motion.

The motion wasn't recognized by President Bella or voted on by the council.

President Bella informed the council that, instead of an 11.20% Town contribution to the Public Retirement Fund (PERF), a 3% Town contribution will be made to a qualified retirement account for Mr. Griffin.

Attorney Svetanoff informed the council that this satisfies the State Board of Accounts requirements in terms of this position.

Vice-President Hardaway informed the council that he wants to make it clear that Mr. Griffin is adamant about not looking for a full-time job. This is just interim for Mr. Griffin and at the end of the year, he will leave. When the full-time position opens up for Town Manager, he won't be applying for the permanent position.

Councilwoman Uzelac informed the council that Mr. Griffin will be staying possibly for six months.

President Bella informed the council that the length of time is the council's timetable and he doesn't want to say six months. Mr. Griffin will stay until the council hires someone new and helps transition the new Town Manager.

*A motion was made by Councilwoman Uzelac to approve Ordinance 23-22, seconded by Vice-President Hardaway.

No further questions or comments from the council.

Motion carries by roll call vote 6-0.

*A motion was made by Vice-President Hardaway to suspend the rules to read Ordinance 23-22 on second reading, seconded by Councilman Pettit.

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)

Ordinance 23-22 (Discussion, Public Comment, Roll Call Vote)

An Ordinance of the Town of Merrillville, Lake County, Indiana, Amending Ordinances 23-18, 23-16, 23-01, AND 22-29A, The 2023 Salary Ordinance, and Pay for the Employees of the Town of Merrillville, Indiana for the Calendar Year 2023

A motion was made by Vice-President Hardaway to accept Ordinance 23-22 on the second and final reading, seconded by Councilman Pettit.

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

Motion carries by roll call vote 6-0.

ADJOURNMENT:

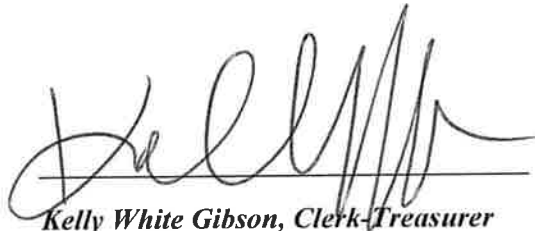
A motion and a second were made.

Motion carries by voice vote 6-0.

Meeting Adjourned.



Rick Bella, President



Kelly White Gibson, Clerk-Treasurer

Minutes Submitted By Angela Lewis