The Town Council met in regular session at the Town Hall at 5:00 p.m.

Present were: STRAW, GIBBS, WARRUM, WALKER, and WILSON along with Clerk-Treasurer Karla Atkins.

The following visitors were present: Betty Gibbs, Ed Adams, Lynn Clark, Jim Stinson, Brenda Drone, Jim Spann, Alvin & Jennifer Blaylock, Don & Virginia Alsop, David Flanders, Laura Nicholson, Caroline Williams, Valerie Werkmeister, Bobby Grider, and Scott Champlin.

Councilman Wilson made and Warrum seconded a motion the minutes of the previous regular and special meetings be approved. All were in favor. Motion carried.

Town Marshal Scott Champlin gave a report on the police cases, reports, etc. for the year ending December 31, 2014.

Councilman Warrum reported on some problems with the water wells and numerous water leaks.

Gas/street superintendent Bobby Grider gave an update on the storm water project.

Councilman Wilson made and Gibbs seconded a motion that Councilman Straw serve as President for 2015. All were in favor. Motion carried.

Council members agreed to retain the same department heads for 2015. They are as follows: Straw-gas, fire, South St. property; Gibbs-streets, river, trail, Posey Co. Solid Waste; Warrum-water, parks, cemetery; Walker-sewage; Wilson-police, cemetery.

Jim Spann, President of the New Harmony Business Associates, read written appeals to the Council regarding the bridge and former school property. Copies of the appeals were provided to Council.

Councilman Warrum made and Walker seconded a motion that the software maintenance agreement with Keystone be renewed for one year at a cost of $5,750. All were in favor. Motion carried.

Councilman Walker presented a proposal from Jeff Ahlers, with Kahn, Dees, Donovan & Kahn to serve as Town Attorney. She stated herself and Councilman Warrum had met with Mr. Ahlers and they were very impressed with the firm and the associates they met. They are proposing a two-tiered approach with a rate of $150. an hour for an associate in the firm and $190. an hour for a partner in the firm. Councilman Walker made and Warrum seconded a motion that Kahn, Dees, Donovan, & Kahn be hired as Town Attorney. All were in favor. Motion carried. Councilman Wilson noted that the Town was well served by Adam Farrar.

Clerk-Treasurer Atkins announced those who purchased the bicentennial banners for the light poles may pick them up at the Town Hall. There are also calendars remaining that can be picked up at no cost. Councilman Warrum stated that any banners not picked up will be taken to Harmonie Fest on February 13.

David Flanders informed Council that the Town’s application to be designated a statewide cultural district was not approved. He acknowledged and thanked those who had written letters of support for the application.

Councilman Wilson presented a request for proposals for the former school property. He and Councilman Walker would like to distribute the RFP where they feel it might be effective, and he asked for input on this. There will be a three-month window for people to submit proposals. Councilman Walker stated she had prepared a written “New Harmony School Facts” which lists the actions Council has taken since it took ownership of the property. This document will be made available to the public upon request. Councilman Wilson would like to conduct a public open house at the property. No date has been set at this time. Once proposals are received, Council will review them and a public vote will be taken as to what direction to go. Councilman Walker stated she has gotten two estimates to demolish the school and make it a green space, with one being $350,000, and the other $400,000. Councilman Warrum pointed out the building has been shown a number of times, but nothing materialized. Councilman Walker made and Gibbs seconded a motion that the request for proposals for the former school property be approved. All were in favor. Motion carried.

Councilman Wilson reported that Attorney Farrar had reviewed the inter-local agreement that was presented to the Town regarding the Harmony Way Bridge. He recommended that Council not accept the agreement unless they want to own the bridge. He also stated the agreement was written in such a
way that it is hard to make a counter proposal. Councilman Wilson does feel, however, that Council should try to make a counter offer. He also requested that the Town’s new legal counsel review the agreement and give his opinion. Councilman Gibbs stated he thinks the Posey Co. Commissioners should have met with the Town Council prior to sending the agreement. Councilman Wilson commented that a response from Council should be sent to the Commissioners. Councilman Warrum noted that per Attorney Farrar, the agreement is not even a legal agreement. Councilman Warrum made and Gibbs seconded a motion that the Agreement for Assurances for Purchase of Harmony Way Bridge, as presented by the Posey Co. Commissioners be rejected. All were in favor. Motion carried.

Councilman Gibbs made and Warrum seconded a motion the claims be allowed and the Clerk pay the same. All were in favor. Motion carried.

Councilman Walker made and Gibbs seconded a motion that Council continue to meet the third Thursday of each month at 5 p.m. All were in favor. Motion carried.

Councilman Gibbs commented a truck is needed to be used with the chipper. He would prefer a used truck over a new one. He stated the Town of Poseyville may have a truck for sale soon.

Councilman Gibbs stated an additional full-time Town worker is needed. Councilman Gibbs made and Warrum seconded a motion that the Town advertise for a full-time laborer. All were in favor. Motion carried.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:42 p.m.

Joe Straw, President of Town Council

Attest:

Karla L. Atkins, Clerk-Treasurer