

AUGUST 15, 2023

The Town Council met in regular session at the Town Hall at 8:30 a.m.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by President Blaylock.

Present were: BLAYLOCK, ALSOP, CLARK, and WADE along with Clerk-Treasurer Karla Atkins.

The following visitors were present: Jan Kahle, Donnie Martin, Kyle Rapp, Patrick Hickey, Robin Lewis, Joshua Janik, Trisha Lopez, John Foley, and Aaron Straub.

Councilman Wade made and Clark seconded a motion the minutes of the previous regular meeting be approved. All were in favor. Motion carried.

Councilman Wade made and Clark seconded a motion the minutes of the August 7, 2023, special meeting be approved. All were in favor. Motion carried.

Councilman Clark reported he has learned through INDOT that paving of Church St. is planned for 2025.

President Blaylock announced the alley paving is complete. He reported there is an issue with the pedestrian door at the Fire Station and he is looking into options.

Kyle Rapp, with the Posey Co. Health Dept., spoke to Council regarding the Health First Indiana Program. This is additional funding their department will be receiving. He asked for suggestions on ways to use the funds.

Council discussed a letter received from Robin Lewis requesting the Town donate some old Christmas decorations to Harmonie State Park. She asked that the old garlands and the red plastic bells be donated as Harmonie State Park desires to participate in Christmas in New Harmony. Councilman Wade stated the garlands have already been promised to Harmonie, but he thinks the Town should keep the bells. He continued by saying Harmonie has also asked about the Santa house. The Santa house has not been used the past couple of years due to the cost of moving it. The house was also being damaged during moves. Councilman Clark made and Wade seconded a motion a decision on the donation be tabled until the September meeting. All were in favor. Motion carried.

Patrick Hickey, with E-REP, spoke to Council about conducting an income survey in hopes of being eligible for grant funds to do a comprehensive plan. A planning grant through OCRA to do a comprehensive plan would only require a 10% match from the Town. Once completed, the income survey would be valid for five years, and could be used as eligibility for other grants. Before the income survey can begin, the Town must submit a letter to OCRA requesting permission to do the survey. The income survey would be mailed to residents. The fee for E-REP to do the survey is \$2,000. Councilman Clark made and Wade seconded a motion that the Town send a letter to OCRA requesting approval to do an income survey. All were favor except Councilman Williams. Motion carried. Councilman Clark will work with Patrick on drafting the letter.

President Blaylock stated that office employee, Anita Hawkins, was hired at a set salary which was set to be reviewed after ninety days. The ninety days has now passed. He recommended an increase to \$16.50/hr. Councilman Williams commented he feels this is too low, and recommended \$18/hr. President Blaylock stated he has a problem with that because when Becky Harvey left she was making \$18/hr. after twenty-two years of service. Councilman Williams stated she was being underpaid. Councilman Alsop commented this is due to previous Council not raising it. Councilman William made and Alsop seconded a motion that Anita Hawkins hourly rate be increased to \$18/hr., effective September 1, 2023. All were in favor except President Blaylock. Motion carried.

President Blaylock requested a Special Meeting be held on August 22 to meet with two companies regarding upgrading the meter reading process. He would also like to discuss replacement or repair of the Town's bucket truck at this meeting.

Councilman Wade reported two trees are going to be replaced on Church St. in front of the Marathon Station. He would like to replace the sidewalk with regular concrete and reduce the size of it to allow for the new trees.

Councilman Wade stated the Park Board plans to replace the pickets at Playtopia. They have decided to allow people to purchase them and have them engraved for \$35. There are approximately 140 available to be purchased. The money and ordering will be handled by Harmonie Associates.

Councilman Williams made and Wade seconded a motion that the cart being stored in the garage at Murphy Park be sold at Wilson's Auction, with the selling fee waived. All were in favor. Motion carried.

Councilman Wade announced Tom Guggenheim has fifty trees available at no cost to residents. Those interested should contact Barb McConnell.

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

There being no further business, Councilman Wade made and Clark seconded a motion the meeting be adjourned. All were in favor. Motion carried and the meeting was adjourned at 9:30 a.m.

Alvin Blaylock, President of Town Council

Attest:

Karla L. Atkins, Clerk-Treasurer