

FEBRUARY 20, 2024

The Town Council met in regular session at the Town Hall at 5:30 p.m.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by President Smotherman.

Present were: SMOTHERMAN, ARNEBERG, CLARK, and WEINZAPFEL along with Clerk-Treasurer Karla Atkins and Attorney Nathan Maudlin.

A list of visitors is attached.

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

Councilman Weinzapfel made and Clark seconded a motion the minutes of the January 23, 2024, Special Meeting be approved. All were in favor. Motion carried.

Councilman Clark reported he recently met with Farrar Environmental and there will soon be an increase in their fees for the wastewater utility.

Councilman Clark stated the Harmonie State Park wastewater project could still proceed with possibly federal funds as a subsidy.

Councilman Clark expressed concern about the Town's purchasing policies.

Councilman Clark is looking into locking in additional gas for next winter as prices have dropped substantially.

Councilman Clark is getting quotes for lighting at the Recycling Center.

Councilman Arneberg reported Councilman Williams has been in contact with the current mowing contractor for Maple Hill Cemetery regarding mowing for the 2024 season.

Councilman Arneberg is looking into firms to do a comprehensive plan.

Councilman Weinzapfel reported tree planning is ongoing around Town. She is also researching the problem of buckling sidewalks.

Councilman Weinzapfel is working with One New Harmony and Blaffer Foundation on enhancing the entrance to Town.

President Smotherman announced he has been working with many others regarding the upcoming Eclipse.

Councilman Clark made and Weinzapfel seconded a motion the Keystone maintenance agreement be renewed for a year at a cost of \$10065. All were in favor. Motion carried.

Councilman Clark made and Arneberg seconded a motion the street closure request from Historic New Harmony for Heritage Week to be held April 24-26 be approved. All were in favor. Motion carried.

Councilman Arneberg made and Weinzapfel seconded a motion the shelter house fee be waived and Murphy Park closed on August 17 for the Relay for Life. All were in favor. Motion carried.

Judy Voegel spoke regarding the proposed 5K in conjunction with the Relay for Life. She explained the route to be used. Councilman Clark made and Weinzapfel seconded a motion the requested to hold the 5K be approved. All were in favor. Motion carried.

Carrie Thompson, with Posey Co. EMA, discussed Posey County's mitigation plan. Councilman Clark made and Weinzapfel seconded a motion that Resolution 2024-3 be approved. This resolution adopts the Posey County Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan. All were in favor. Motion carried.

Clerk-Treasurer Atkins explained that Roger Wade had originally submitted a quote for \$1420 for gutters at the new Murphy Park Shelter. This quote was approved by Council on 4-18-23. Mr. Wade subsequently submitted an invoice for \$2070 in December, 2023. He also submitted an invoice from Mann's Guttering which shows he paid them directly for the gutters. Councilman Clark made and Weinzapfel seconded a motion the invoice for \$2070 be approved to be paid from the New Harmony School Building Fund. All were in favor. Motion carried.

Councilman Arneberg made and Clark seconded a motion that Ordinance 2024-1 be approved. This ordinance changes the Town Council regular meeting schedule to the third Tuesday at 5:30 p.m. All were in favor. Motion carried.

Councilman Clark discussed Ordinance 2024-2. This ordinance increases the water rate charged to Harmonie State Park. He noted that he had quoted incorrect rates in the January meeting. The increase should be 12% in 2024, 10% in 2025, and 8% in 2026. Councilman Clark read the ordinance in full. Councilman Weinzapfel made and Arneberg seconded motion that Ordinance 2024-2 be adopted. All were in favor. Motion carried.

Councilman Clark made and Weinzapfel seconded a motion that Bobby Grider be authorized to travel to French Lick for the Alliance of Rural Water conference from March 12-14. All were in favor. Motion carried.

Councilman Clark made and Weinzapfel seconded a motion that Terry Brown be hired at a rate of \$19.50 per hour to fill the vacancy created when Brian Strader was promoted to the superintendent position. All were in favor. Motion carried.

President Smotherman reviewed the proposed budget for the Eclipse weekend. The total is \$4000. Councilman Clark made and Weinzapfel seconded a motion that up to \$4000 be allowed from the Riverboat Fund to cover public safety issues relating to the Eclipse. All were in favor. Motion carried. Councilman Arneberg noted One New Harmony is paying half the cost of the porta potty's and the Ribeyre Center, as well as preparing printed maps. President Smotherman will look into getting a dumpster for the weekend. He will report back at the next meeting. Councilman Weinzapfel made and Arneberg seconded a motion that side by sides be permitted as an emergency exception for public safety use from 6 p.m. April 5 to midnight on April 8. All were in favor. Motion carried.

Councilman Weinzapfel read Resolution 2024-2 in full. This resolution authorizes Town Council members to participate in meetings electronically. Councilman Arneberg made and Weinzapfel seconded a motion that Resolution 2024-2 be adopted. All were in favor. Motion carried. It was noted this will require setting up the necessary equipment before it can be utilized.

President Smotherman stated the Fire Dept. is requesting the funds to purchase 16 used air packs from other Fire Depts. The total cost of the air packs is \$8000, with Harmony Township and the Town splitting the cost. Councilman Clark made and Weinzapfel seconded a motion that \$4000 from the Public Safety Fund be allocated to the cost of the air packs. All were in favor. Motion carried.

Gary Barnes inquired about parking for the Eclipse. Councilman Arneberg responded this will be included in the map being developed by One New Harmony.

Rosie Benton asked what Council plans to do about derelict houses and junk cars in Town. President Smotherman responded that Council will be following the Town ordinances.

Dan Busler informed Council about dogs roaming near his house. He noted 1112 Lynnwood is in poor condition and needs to be condemned. There is also a garage next to 1112 Lynnwood that is unsafe. Mr. Busler asked if sewer rates will be decreasing once the plant is paid for. President Smotherman stated Council will look into these issues and get back with him.

Jim Brown asked for sewer fee waivers on two vacant lots he owns on Freeman Lane. The structures were recently removed. President Smotherman informed him he needs to obtain building permits for the structures that were removed and pay the fees for the permits. He can then request a sewer fee waiver by getting on the Council agenda. He will need to commit to not building on the lots in order for the waivers to be granted. Mr. Brown stated he was told by the previous zoning administrator that permits were not required.

Docey Lewis noted the brightness of the street lights. Councilman Weinzapfel stated this is something she plans on looking into. Discussion was held regarding replacement of sidewalks and if grants are available for this.

Councilman Clark reported the Town's contract for cable services expires in March, 2024. Sparklight is not interested in renewing due to the advancements in cable TV.

Councilman Clark reported some of the remote readers for the water dept. have been delivered. Software should be installed soon.

President Smotherman announced Council is in discussions regarding amending the food truck ordinance. He asked Council members to review and be ready to discuss at the next meeting.

President Smotherman stated Council may make changes to the agenda. More discussion is needed.

Councilman Weinzapfel brought up the Centerpoint rate hike. She would like Council to address this further at the next meeting.

Councilman Clark made and Arneberg seconded a motion that repairs to the dump truck be approved. The estimated cost is \$1000. All were in favor. Motion carried. There was discussion regarding the approval process for repairs, etc.

Councilman Clark addressed a claim payable to Roger Wade for \$5500. This invoice was for repairs to the gate at Murphy Park that was damaged by a camper and the Town was paid \$5500 by the campers' insurance company. Clerk-Treasurer Atkins stated \$4060 of the invoice is for reimbursement to Roger Wade, and the remaining \$1440 is his labor charges. Councilman Clark commented he is comfortable paying the reimbursement portion of the invoice, but not the labor cost. He continued Council has been advised by the Town Attorney that Council cannot do business with itself. The statute allowing this was not followed, conflict of interest, etc. Councilman Clark made and Weinzapfel seconded a motion that the claims be allowed and the Clerk pay the same, with the exception of the claim to Roger Wade for \$5500. All were in favor. Motion carried. Alvin Blaylock pointed out permission was not given to Roger Wade by the previous Council to do the repair.

There being no further business, Councilman Weinzapfel made and Clark seconded a motion the meeting be adjourned. All were in favor. Motion carried and the meeting was adjourned at 7:26 p.m.

Jeffrey Smotherman, President of Town Council

Attest:

Karla L. Atkins, Clerk-Treasurer