

MAY 16, 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, WADE, and WILLIAMS along with Clerk-Treasurer Karla Atkins and Attorney Erin Bauer.

The following visitors were present: Jan Kahle, Trisha Lopez, Patrick Hickey, Diane Sanders, Connie Weinzapfel, Debbie Bennett-Steersman, Lora Arneberg, Patty Owen, Gary Owen, David Vonderscher, Chris Laughbaum, Paul Allison, Randy Owens, Mike Little, Stacey Rapp, Kent Schuette, Josh Janik, and Bobbi Jo Bottomley.

Councilman Wade made and Williams 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 April 25, 2023, Special Meeting be approved. All were in favor. Motion carried.

Councilman Clark made and Wade seconded a motion the minutes of the May 9, 2023, Special Meeting be approved. All were in favor. Motion carried.

President Blaylock opened the public hearing for the COVID-19 Phase 3 Supplemental Grant. Patrick Hickey, with the Evansville Regional Economic Partnership, reviewed details of the grant. The grant is for funding assistance to small businesses. The grant amount is \$250,000 with no local match required. The list of businesses to receive funds was provided to Council. The public hearing was closed at 8:40 a.m.

Councilman Clark made and Wade seconded a motion the contract for grant administration services for the COVID-19 Phase 3 Supplemental Grant be approved. The contract amount is \$6,250. All were in favor. Motion carried.

Paul Allison and Randy Owens, with the New Harmony Ministry Association, spoke about some of the programs and services they provide. They are currently in need of a summer youth program director, and soon will begin a fundraising drive.

Councilman Wade made and Alsop seconded a motion that the mulch and weed block for Playtopia be paid from the New Harmony School Building Fund. Reimbursement from Harmonie Associates will then be returned to the School Building Fund. Councilman Clark thanked Harmonie Associates for their support. All were in favor. Motion carried.

Councilman Wade made and Williams seconded a motion that Ordinance 2023-2 be adopted. This is an amendment to the salary ordinance effective June 1, 2023. All were in favor. Motion carried.

Councilman Wade made and Williams seconded a motion the Disaster Recovery Plan as presented by Clerk-Treasurer Atkins be approved. This is necessary due to personnel and supplier changes. All were in favor. Motion carried.

Gary Owen requested a sewer fee waiver for his mother's property at 1119 Lynnwood . Patty Owen was also present at the meeting. Councilman Alsop made and Wade seconded a motion that a sewer fee waiver be granted for 1119 Lynnwood. All were in favor. Motion carried.

Gary Owen reported he owns the property at 1115 Lynnwood, and that the surrounding properties have weeds, unlicensed vehicles, etc. His complaint was noted.

Diane Sanders, with Historic New Harmony, reported on some upcoming projects they have planned.

Stacey Rapp filed a complaint about a "spite" fence at 336 Tavern St. She stated there is a state law which prohibits spite fences. It was installed over a year ago. Attorney Bauer was asked to look into this.

Councilman Williams obtained a revised quote for tree removal at Maple Hill Cemetery. One tree was removed from the original quote and another added. He would like to obtain additional quotes. Councilman Alsop made and Wade seconded a motion the revised quote dated 5-1-23 from American Eagle Tree Service be approved. All were in favor. Motion carried.

There was a follow-up discussion regarding the nuisance complaint at 1017 Steammill St./LDA Properties. Some clean-up has been done, but more remains. Councilman Clark noted there are still two unlicensed cars that need removed. Lora Arneberg, the landowner, questioned whether or not she can legally remove the cars. Attorney Bauer agreed to look into the legal side.

Lora Arneberg presented photos of the proposed light pole banners. They would like to install 27 total. They plan to keep them up for one year. She also mentioned possibly attaching QR codes to the lamp posts that people could scan to find out more about events etc. There was discussion regarding who should install the banners. Councilmen Wade and Clark volunteered to help with installation.

Councilman Clark gave an update on the 2024 eclipse. There was discussion regarding parking, restroom facilities, etc.

Councilman Clark has continued to look into updating the Town's Comprehensive Plan. He stated Posey Co. has begun the process of updating their plan through a company called American Structurepoint. If the Town chooses to have the same firm do its update, there would be cost savings if it is done the same time as Posey County's. The estimated cost of the Town's update is \$32,000. Councilman Williams stated he would like to have a special meeting with American Structurepoint. Councilman Clark will gather more information.

Councilman Wade reported the mulch at Playtopia has been replaced and the floor at the Murphy Park Shelter is complete. The start date on the new shelter will be in August. The sidewalk work is scheduled for June. They are looking into a grant to do some other projects.

Councilman Wade reported some issues with playground safety need to be addressed. He stated there needs to be a cushion at the bottom of each slide and swing. He would like to place barriers around each playground area. The estimated cost of the materials for this is \$3288 plus the cost of additional mulch which is to be determined at a later date. The pea gravel is going to be removed from the small playground at Murphy Park and replaced with mulch. Councilman Williams made and Alsop seconded a motion that the \$3288 from timbers for the parks be approved to be paid from the School Building Fund. Councilman Clark questioned why Council doesn't transfer a set amount of money from the School Building Fund into the Park Board Fund for the Park Board to spend how they see fit. President Blaylock stated Council is responsible for all Town funds, and he feels things should continue to be handled as they have been in the past. Councilman Clark asked that Attorney Bauer look into this. All were in favor. Motion carried.

Councilman Wade reported some of the playground equipment behind the former school building can be donated to the Town upon receipt of a release stating the Town agrees to insure and accept liability for the equipment once it is moved. Attorney Bauer will prepare this once she is provided details by Lora Arneberg. Councilman Clark made and Williams seconded a motion to accept the donation and have Attorney Bauer prepare the required release. All were in favor. Motion carried.

Councilman Wade made and Williams seconded a motion that a nuisance violation letter be sent to the property owner at 822 East St. regarding high weeds and grass. All were in favor. Motion carried.

Councilman Williams made and Alsop seconded a motion that a nuisance violation letter be sent to 1019 North St. regarding an unlicensed vehicle on the property. All were in favor. Motion carried.

Councilman Clark made and Williams seconded a motion that a nuisance violation letter be sent to the property owner at 626 Frederick St. regarding high weeds and grass. All were in favor. Motion carried.

President Blaylock asked for Council to make a list of any trees they think need to be trimmed or taken down so quotes can be obtained. Councilman Clark stated he feels this is the responsibility of the Tree Board. Councilman Clark made and Williams seconded a motion that the Tree Board be requested to make a list of problem trees by the next meeting. Councilman Wade stated the Tree Board needs help with this. All were in favor. Motion carried.

President Blaylock read a Proclamation at the request of the Garden Club. The proclamation proclaims June 4-10 as National Garden Week. Councilman Wade made and Alsop seconded a motion the Proclamation be approved. All were in favor. Motion carried

Councilman Wade asked what Council plans to do about getting part-time help. President Blaylock does not think additional help is needed at this time, only better management. Councilman Alsop stated she feels more help is needed for mowing, etc. Councilmen Clark and Williams commented they would like to talk to Supt. Grider before making a decision. Councilman Wade made and Alsop seconded a motion the subject be added to the agenda. The following vote was taken: ayes – Alsop, Williams, Wade; nays – Clark, Blaylock. Motion denied due to two-thirds not voting aye.

Councilman Wade made and Williams 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 Williams seconded a motion the meeting be adjourned. All were in favor. Motion carried and the meeting was adjourned at 10:03 a.m.

Alvin Blaylock, President of Town Council

Attest:

Karla L. Atkins, Clerk-Treasurer