

JANUARY 19, 2024

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

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Councilman Smotherman.

Present were: CLARK, SMOTHERMAN, WEINZAPFEL and WILLIAMS along with Clerk-Treasurer Karla Atkins. Councilman Arneberg arrived at approximately 8:53 a.m.

The following visitors were present: Nathan & Jeanne Maudlin, Donna & Wes Griffin, Bill Meyer, Diane Sanders, Charles Bandy, Jan Kahle, Andy Batt, Caroline Williams, Gail Angel, Aaron Straub, and David Angel.

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

Councilman Clark made and Weinzapfel seconded a motion the Executive Session Memorandum for January 1, 2024, be approved. All were in favor. Motion carried.

Councilman Weinzapfel made and Williams seconded a motion the Executive Session Memorandum for January 5, 2024, be approved. All were in favor. Motion carried.

Councilman Clark made and Weinzapfel seconded a motion the minutes of the January 11, 2024, Special Meeting be approved. All were in favor. Motion carried.

Councilman Clark reported the project proposed to connect the Harmonie State Park wastewater to the Town's system is currently on hold.

Councilman Weinzapfel stated she is working on bringing various stakeholders together for a meeting to develop a tree planting plan.

Councilman Weinzapfel reported the "welcome to New Harmony" sign was damaged by wind recently. Council is looking into how to best reinstall it.

Councilman Smotherman stated a meeting was held regarding the eclipse and the involvement of public safety.

Councilman Weinzapfel made and Williams seconded a motion that Jeff Smotherman serve as Council President. All were in favor. Motion carried.

President Smotherman designated the following department heads for 2024:

Public Safety & Administration (police, fire, HR, County Government, insurance, technology): Smotherman, Clark.

Public Works (gas, water, wastewater, solid waste): Clark, Smotherman

Streets and Streetscapes (streets, alleys, lights, sidewalks): Weinzapfel, Williams

Parks and Recreation (parks, trails, riverbank, cemetery): Williams, Arneberg

Economic Development (grants bridge relations, business relations): Williams, Arneberg

Councilman Williams made and Clark seconded a motion the Town Council meetings be held at 5:30 p.m. on the third Tuesday of each month. All were in favor. Motion carried.

Councilman Weinzapfel made and Clark seconded a motion that Nathan Maudlin be appointed as Town Attorney. He has agreed to provide his services pro-bono. All were in favor. Motion carried.

Councilman Clark made and Williams seconded a motion that Connie Weinzapfel, Rod Clark, and Johnathon Webber be appointed to the Plan Commission. All were in favor. Motion carried. The next Plan Commission meeting will be held on February 21 at 5:30 p.m.

President Smotherman appointed Angie Westfall to the Plan Commission to replace Allen Hatch.

President Smotherman appointed Rod Clark to replace Virginia Alsop on the Board of Zoning Appeals. Allen Hatch will need to be replaced by the Plan Commission at their next meeting.

Councilman Williams made and Weinzapfel seconded a motion that Jeanne Maudlin, Jim Ries, and Andy Batt be appointed to the Park Board to replace Missy Wade, Jill Garcia, and David Vonderscher respectively. All were in favor. Motion carried. The next Park Board meeting will be held at 6:00 p.m. February 15.

There was discussion about how to reinvest two certificates of deposit that are maturing February 11. They are currently earning 4.38% at United Fidelity. Councilman Arneberg mentioned working with a financial advisor. There was discussion about money market accounts. This would not lock in a rate for a set time period. United Fidelity currently is offering 5.48% on a 10-month CD, which is what Clerk-Treasurer Atkins recommended. Councilman Williams is in favor of diversifying and moving the funds to another institution. Councilman Arneberg noted United Fidelity has gotten some regulatory sanctions they are working to correct. However, 100% of the Town's funds are protected through the Public Deposit Insurance Fund. Council members will look into rates at other institutions prior to February 11.

President Smotherman announced Donnie Martin has resigned as zoning administrator effective February 1. Councilman Weinzapfel made and Williams seconded a motion that Tom Stahl be hired a zoning administrator effective February 1. All were in favor. Motion carried.

There was discussion regarding the carriage application from Horseshoe Bend Carriage Co. Council discussed whether or not they should be permitted on Church St. Councilman Clark made and Williams seconded a motion the application be approved as submitted. The following vote was taken: Ayes – Clark; Nays – Smotherman, Arneberg, Weinzapfel, and Williams. Motion denied. Councilman Williams made and Weinzapfel seconded a motion the application be approved with the stipulation that it not be allowed on Church St. All were in favor. Motion carried.

Councilman Weinzapfel stated the Town's comprehensive plan needs updated. She plans on getting many people involved in the process. Councilman Arneberg pointed out that an updated comprehensive plan is required by many grant applications.

Councilman Clark read Resolution 2024-1 in full. This resolution formalizes some of the goals of Council for the next four years. Councilman Clark made and Weinzapfel seconded a motion that Resolution 2024-1 be approved. All were in favor. Motion carried.

Councilman Weinzapfel stated the Indiana Office of Technology is a resource for the Town regarding an analysis of the Town's technology and the purchase of equipment.

Diane Sanders, with Historic New Harmony, reported a tree on the south side of the 400 block of Church St. has a split and will need to be removed. All five of the trees have issues, per Mrs. Sanders.

There was discussion regarding the tree removal request made by Steve Angel at the last meeting. Councilman Weinzapfel stated Council is not going to make a decision at this time so more investigating can be done to insure the right decision is made. Gail Angel spoke about their sewer problems which cannot be addressed until something is done about the trees. Councilman Williams made a motion the two trees on West St. be removed as requested. There was no second. Motion denied. Councilman Arneberg made and Williams seconded a motion the two trees be removed and replacements be planted within a year. Councilman Clark questioned why both trees need to be removed. He feels the Tree Board needs to take care of such issues. Councilman Arneberg withdrew her motion. Councilman Clark made and Williams seconded a motion that one tree be removed due to emergency sewer work that is needed. All were in favor. Motion carried.

Councilman Clark stated he started negotiations last year with Harmonie State Park about increasing their water rate. The first year increase will be 18%, the second year will be 12%, and the third year will be 10%. A public hearing will be held at the February meeting.

Councilman Clark 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 Clark made and Williams seconded a motion the meeting be adjourned. All were in favor. Motion carried and the meeting was adjourned at 9:59 a.m.

Jeffery Smotherman, President of Town Council

Attest:

Karla L. Atkins, Clerk-Treasurer