

TOWN OF MUNSTER
MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE TOWN COUNCIL
APRIL 17, 2023

A meeting of the Munster Town Council convened at 7:00 p.m. on Monday, April 17, 2023. Ordinance 1830 is the basis for holding electronic meetings. The announced meeting location was Munster Town Hall. Councilors, Staff, and the public had the option to participate via Zoom meeting technology.

Councilors Chuck Gardiner, Andy Koultourides, Lee Ann Mellon, Ken Schoon, and Steven Tulowitzki were physically present at Town Hall. President Gardiner presided. Also present in Town Hall were Clerk-Treasurer Wendy Mis, Controller Patricia Abbott, Town Manager Dustin Anderson, Deputy Town Manager Jill DiTommasso, Police Chief Stephen Scheckel, Lieutenant Dan Broelmann, Planning Director Thomas Vander Woude, Superintendent of Operations Chris Spolnik, Town Attorney Dave Westland, and Munster Representative to the Hammond Sanitary District Mike Hawkins. Fire Chief Mark Hajduk, and Director of Operations Steve Gunty were present virtually. The news media were not represented.

President Gardiner opened the meeting with a moment of silence followed by the pledge of allegiance.

SOUTH SHORE CONVENTION ANNUAL REPORT

President/CEO of the South Shore Convention and Visitors Authority David Uran presented the annual report of the organization and was available to answer questions.

PUBLIC HEARING: ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATIONS (3)

Introduced ORDINANCE 1898 is AN ORDINANCE FOR THE ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATION OF FUNDS FOR THE YEAR 2023 (1). Ordinance 1898 was introduced at the April 3, 2023, meeting and had first reading. The General Fund is seeking an additional appropriation in the amount of \$700,000.00.

The procedure for securing the additional appropriations requires a public hearing and the adoption of an ordinance by the Town Council. Upon passage of the ordinance, the information will be forwarded to the Department of Local Government Finance who will make a determination within fifteen days of submittal.

President Gardiner opened the floor for comment. There being no one requesting to speak, the floor was closed.

PUBLIC COMMENT

The Town of Munster accepts public comments submitted both in-person and electronically. The public was informed, via the agenda posted at munster.org, that questions or comments about an item on the agenda were to be emailed to danderson@munster.org.

Mr. Jerry Baffa, 910 Ridge Road, is the president of the Sand Oak Condominiums Association and expressed his concerns about the proposed reduction in the number of lanes on Ridge Road.

Ms. Pat Piekarczyk, 910 Ridge Road, spoke in opposition to the proposed plan to reduce the number of lanes on Ridge Road. She is concerned about safety.

Mr. Leroy Frank, 242 Terrace Drive, echoed the previous comments about Ridge Road. Mr. Frank also expressed concerns about streetlights and additional police officers.

No one else rose to claim the floor.

CONSENT AGENDA

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Minutes of a regular meeting held on April 3, 2023

ACCOUNTS PAYABLE VOUCHER REGISTERS

Confirmation of Voucher Register #23-4B dated 04/07/23 totaling \$497,625.36
Confirmation of Voucher Register #23-4C dated 04/10/23 totaling \$53,323.73
Confirmation of Voucher Register #23-4D dated 04/10/23 totaling \$32,284.11
Confirmation of Voucher Register #23-4E dated 04/06/23 totaling \$672,832.01
Confirmation of Voucher Register #23-4F dated 04/13/23 totaling \$194,687.54
Approval of Voucher Register #23-4G dated 04/17/23 totaling \$95,091.00
Confirmation of Voucher Register #23-4H dated 04/13/23 totaling \$2,137.71

WATER BILL ADJUSTMENTS 2023-22 THROUGH 2023-24

Staff received requests for adjustment under the leak adjustment policy adopted by the Town Council on April 8, 2013. The customer has completed the required form and the request meets all the criteria for adjustments as follows:

Adjustment Number	Average Usage	Actual Usage	Length of Time	Original Bill	Requested Adjustment Amount	Adjusted Bill
2023-22	7,000	35,000	2 months	\$ 202.99	\$ 118.93	\$ 84.06
2023-23	3,000	14,000	2 months	\$ 84.05	\$ 47.45	\$ 36.60
2023-24	8,000	38,000	2 months	\$ 219.57	\$ 123.97	\$ 95.60

ANNUAL OPERATIONAL REPORT FOR LOCAL ROADS AND STREETS

This item was removed from the Consent Agenda and will be presented at the next regular meeting.

ANNUAL RED FLAG REPORT

This item was removed from the Consent Agenda and will be presented at the next regular meeting.

Councilor Schoon moved, with a second by Councilor Tulowitzki, to suspend the rules, waive the readings, and adopt the Consent Agenda as corrected. Councilors Schoon, Mellon, Tulowitzki, Koultourides, and Gardiner voted in favor; none voted against.

OLD BUSINESS

ORDINANCE 1898: ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATIONS (1)

Introduced ORDINANCE 1898 is AN ORDINANCE FOR THE ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATION OF FUNDS FOR THE YEAR 2023 (1). This matter was the subject of a public hearing earlier this evening.

Councilor Schoon moved, with a second by Councilor Koultourides, to approve introduced Ordinance 1898 as presented. Councilors Schoon, Mellon, Tulowitzki, Koultourides, and Gardiner voted in favor; none voted against. Motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS

PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE: NIPSCO POTHOLING OF GAS MAINS

The Town has been working with SEH Engineering and NIPSCO on the design to extend the existing bike trail south of Schoon Ditch into Highland. Two pedestrian bridges are needed to cross Hart Ditch and Cady Marsh Ditch. There are several underground and overhead utilities in this corridor including electric transmission lines. To gain approval from NIPSCO the Town must verify the horizontal and vertical locations of two NIPSCO gas mains in the proposed area.

Staff sought quotes from four vendors for hydro-excavation at twenty locations. One quote was received by the deadline. Blood Hound Underground Utility Locators will perform the work at a not-to-exceed cost of \$36,038.00.

Councilor Tulowitzki observed the interest shown in this as part of the public engagement for the Comprehensive Plan.

President Gardiner commented on the importance of connecting the bike trails and the delays from the utilities involved.

Councilor Tulowitzki moved, with a second by Councilor Schoon, to authorize the Town Manager to sign the contract with Blood Hound Underground Utility Locators to complete the hydro-excavation work at a cost of \$36,038.00. Councilors Schoon, Mellon, Tulowitzki, Koultourides, and Gardiner voted in favor; none voted against. Motion carried.

PURCHASE OF NEW LEAF VACUUM

Public Works received a proposal from Brown Equipment Company for the purchase of a new leaf vacuum priced through Sourcewell. This purchase is part of the Capital Plan. Unit #393 is a 2005 leaf vacuum and will be used as trade-in. The new unit is a 2023 American Road Model ALC-25 with 25 cubic yard debris hopper for a price of \$97,500.00 less trade-in of \$7,500.00 for a total price of \$90,000.00. The purchase will come from the 2022 bond proceeds.

Councilor Koultourides moved, with a second by Councilor Schoon, to approve purchase from Brown Equipment Company for a new 2023 American Road Leaf Vacuum with trade-in of \$75,000.00 for a net price through Sourcewell of \$90,000.00 to replace Unit #393. Councilors Schoon, Mellon, Tulowitzki, Koultourides, and Gardiner voted in favor; none voted against.

PURCHASE OF ADDITIONAL HYPOCHLORITE DOSING PUMPS

At the January 16, 2023, meeting, Council approved procurement of hypochlorite dosing pumps from Metropolitan Industries for \$89,871.00. The installation of the equipment at the Calumet Avenue station was awarded to Morrison Construction for \$26,400.00 at the March 20, 2023, meeting.

Morrison has raised concerns about the condition of the pipe to be tapped for the chlorine injection port. The pipe tee is not a common or readily available size. If it were to fail during installation, the pump station would be offline for an extended period while a replacement could be manufactured. As an alternative, Staff is recommending reuse of the existing injection port sites which would require the purchase of two additional dosing pumps at a cost of \$14,515.00.

Councilor Tulowitzki moved, with a second by Councilor Mellon, to authorize purchase of two additional dosing pumps from Metropolitan Industries for the quoted price of \$14,515.00. Councilors Schoon, Mellon, Tulowitzki, Koultourides, and Gardiner voted in favor; none voted against. Motion carried.

ORDINANCE 1899: AMENDMENT #2 TO 2023 SALARY ORDINANCE

Proposed ORDINANCE 1899 is AMENDMENT #2 TO THE 2023 SALARY ORDINANCE. Amendment #2 to the 2023 Salary Ordinance makes two changes. First, an additional Police Officer is authorized bringing the total

sworn officers, including the Chief, to forty-four. Chief Scheckel has provided a separate memo with more information on this. The second issue relates to interim staffing levels. Exhibit A of the Salary Ordinance sets the number of authorized personnel in each position. There is no authority to exceed these numbers, even on a temporary basis.

There are times when the Town knows that leadership personnel are leaving due to retirement or other employment opportunities. For higher grade positions, it is beneficial for the successor employee to have time to shadow and train with the outgoing employee. Staff would like to have the flexibility to exceed the authorized number of employees in these situations to allow a smoother transition. Exhibit H: *Transitional Employees* has been drafted to stipulate the conditions under which this can happen. The basic framework follows.

1. The Department Head, Town Manager, and Clerk-Treasurer must approve all Transitional Employees prior to recruitment efforts for the separating employee.
2. Only positions at Grades 10 and higher are eligible for consideration.
3. The separating employee must formally commit to separating employment from the Town on a specific date. Employment will not continue beyond the stated separation date.
4. Items to consider before approval of a Transitional Employee are the length of transition, funding availability, number of Transitional Employees in a department at one time.
5. Transitional Employees can be in place for a period of thirty days or less.

Councilor Tulowitzki sought clarification that the additional officer is a result of assigning a School Resource Officer last fall. This position will backfill that patrol officer.

CLERK-TREASURER'S NOTE: Ordinance 1895 allowed for the new School Resource Officer and brought the total number of authorized sworn officers to 43. Ordinance 1899 will raise the authorized level to 44.

President Gardiner noted that the transitional employee idea came from the Board of Safety.

Councilor Tulowitzki moved, with a second by Councilor Koultourides, to hear Ordinance 1899 on first reading and set second reading for the next regular meeting. Councilors Schoon, Mellon, Tulowitzki, Koultourides, and Gardiner voted in favor; none voted against. Motion carried.

ORDINANCE 1900: ESTIMATING WATER METERS

Proposed ORDINANCE 1900 is AN ORDINANCE AMENDING SCHEDULE A, A NON-CODIFIED PORTION OF THE MUNICIPAL CODE, AMENDING PENALTIES FOR FAILURE TO INSTALL A WORKING METER. Each month, water meters are read remotely through a transponder on the meter. Each month there are some meters whose usage data was not captured, and a second attempt is made to get the reading. If a reading is still not captured, the usage for the water account is estimated by taking a twelve-month average. If a reading is not captured on the next billing cycle, the account is estimated again, and the customer is contacted requesting them to make an appointment for maintenance personnel to look at the meter and possibly install a new one. There is no charge for the maintenance call or for a new meter if it is needed.

Most customers respond to the initial tag and follow through with the maintenance call. Some customers do not. Currently, there is no mechanism to require a customer to follow through. Right now there are a handful of accounts that have been estimated for almost a year with the customers being tagged each month. Staff suggests a tiered approach to encourage compliance as follows.

1. First month – Estimate the account with the previous 12 months average usage.
2. Second month – Estimate the account with the previous 12 months average and tag the property requesting the customer contact the Town to set an appointment for Maintenance Staff to examine and possibly change the meter.
3. Third month – Estimate the account at double the 12-month average usage and tag the property. This would be the second tag.
4. Fourth and each subsequent month – Estimate the account at double the 12-month average usage and assess a non-refundable fee of \$50.00.

Ordinance 1900 has been drafted for this purpose. Because there is a fine associated with it, the ordinance must be advertised. If adopted, the ordinance will go into effect after the required publication is made.

Councilor Koultourides moved, with a second by Councilor Schoon, to hear proposed Ordinance 1900 on first reading and schedule second reading. Councilors Schoon, Mellon, Tulowitzki, Koultourides, and Gardiner voted in favor; none voted against. Motion carried.

ORDINANCE 1901: REZONING PROPERTY AT 800 MAC ARTHUR BOULEVARD

Proposed ORDINANCE 1901 is AN ORDINANCE REZONING THE PROPERTY AT 800 MAC ARTHUR BOULEVARD TO A SD-PUD DISTRICT. Community Foundation NWI has submitted an application to establish a Planned Unit Development at 800 MacArthur Boulevard to allow the addition of two stories of parking and a heliport deck to the existing three-story parking garage located on the property.

The property is currently zoned CD-4.A which has a height limitation of 50 feet or 4 stories. The proposed expansion would increase the height of the parking garage to about 70 feet. In addition, the current zoning permits one principal structure. Currently the parcel includes both the parking garage and an office building. Making the property a PUD would permit the modification of a legal non-conforming structure and the additional height of the building.

Representatives of the property appeared before the Plan Commission on March 14, 2023 where a public hearing was held with no remonstrances. The Plan Commission voted to forward a favorable recommendation for approval to the Town Council. The Council must now take final action to adopt, reject, or amend the proposal.

Councilor Tulowitzki moved, with a second by Councilor Koultourides, to adopt Ordinance 1901 rezoning the property at 800 MacArthur Boulevard to a SD-PUD district in accordance with plans submitted under PC Docket 23-001. Councilors Schoon, Mellon, Tulowitzki, Koultourides, and Gardiner voted in favor; none voted against.

RADIO UPGRADE: POLICE DEPARTMENT

The portable radios currently in use at the Police Department are out of warranty and outdated. They have a very limited ability to communicate inside buildings and are unusable in large buildings including Town, School Town, and hospital buildings.

The proposed new radios have new technology which automatically switches between wi-fi and cellular service providing open communication and eliminating blind spots. The Lake County Dispatch Center is already on this technology and is ready for Munster to upgrade.

The cost to acquire the radios is \$455,070.34 for the first year. Years two through five have an annual cost of \$20,130.00 for a grand total of \$535,590.34.

Councilor Schoon asked about the funding source. The Clerk-Treasurer's office is recommending using ARPA funds.

Councilor Tulowitzki moved, with a second by Councilor Schoon, to approve purchase of new Motorola portable radios for the Police Department for a five-year total cost of \$535,590.34. Councilors Schoon, Mellon, Tulowitzki, Koultourides and Gardiner voted in favor; none voted against.

DISPOSAL OF SURPLUS EQUIPMENT

The Clerk-Treasurer's Office and Police Department presented surplus equipment in need of disposal as follows.

Item	Model	Serial Number
GE Almond-color 20.6 cubic foot refrigerator	TBX21DA	
Ikey keyboard	SB87TPMUSB	03261402476

Ikey keyboard	SB87TPMUSB	0122013046144
Streamlight handheld flashlight		C4-274633A
Cradlepoint for squad car		MM130062400460
Cradlepoint for squad car		MM130062400465
Cradlepoint for squad car		MM120380501409
Taser		3T710001Y9
Taser		2X29000558
Fujitsu Tablet		R6X01412
ACER tablet	Icona	31704546616
ACER tablet	Icona	31109033916
ACER tablet	Icona	31501422116
ACER tablet	Icona	31502848916

Panasonic camera systems include the following items.

Microphones	Chargers	Recorders	Displays	Cameras
TX130100001-V12	HC130100026	LGA00006	LCA00091	MDA00080
TX120731601-V12	HC120731871	LFA00581	LFA00040	A8TA00102
TX131100648-V12	HV12073.1601	LFA00546	LGA00013	A8TA00107
TX120731868-V12	HC120731868	LFA00584	LEA00039	DOTA00089
TX131100677-V12	HC130100004	LGA00529	LCA00076	A8TA00117
TX120731857-V12	HC131100677	LFA00639	LCA00053	A8TA00154
TX130100029-V12	HC131100587		LDA00005	A8TA00166
TX130100027-V12	HC131100586			A8TA00033
TX120731874-V12	HC130100032			
TX131100646-V12	HC131100584			
TX131100692-V12	HC131100585			
TX120833054-V12	HC130100027			
TX130100233-V12	HC130100029			
TX120731873-V12	HC130100002			
TX120731867-V12	RX120731873			
TX130100004-V12	HC131100649			
TX1301000043-V12	RX120731631			
TX120731874-V12	HC120833054			
TX130100234-V12	HC130100233			
TX130100032-V12	HC131100676			
TX120731575-V12	RX120731576			
TX130400018-V12	RX120731601			
TX120731631-V12	RX120731874			
TX131100584-V12	RX120833054			
TX131100649-V42	RX120731588			
TX130100026-V12	HC130100003			
TX130100002-V12				
TX131100676-V12				
TX131100650-V12				
TX131100585-V12				
TX130100028-V12				
TX120731589-V12				

Councilor Schoon, with a second by Councilor Mellon, to declare surplus and approve the disposal of the listed equipment. Councilors Schoon, Mellon, Tulowitzki, Koultourides, and Gardiner voted in favor; none voted against. Motion carried.

LETTER OF ENGAGEMENT: ECONOMIC FISCAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

Saxon Partners is the owner of the former Lansing Country Club and are seeking assistance from the Town to construct the infrastructure necessary at the site. Before committing to such an endeavor, the Town needs assurances of the economic impact for Munster.

Financial Advisor Baker Tilly has presented a letter of engagement to provide such an analysis. The cost of the engagement is not-to-exceed \$25,000.00. Saxon Partners has agreed to reimburse the Town for the cost of this analysis.

President Gardiner stated this is part of the Town's due diligence for the project.

Councilor Tulowitzki, with a second by Councilor Koulourides, to authorize the Town Manager to execute the economic impact analysis agreement with Baker Tilly. Councilors Schoon, Mellon, Tulowitzki, Koulourides, and Gardiner voted in favor; none voted against. Motion carried.

SERVICE AGREEMENT RENEWAL: ACCELA

On February 4, 2019, the Munster Town Council approved a four-year service contract with Accela, inc. for the PublicStuff software program. This is used to create work orders primarily related to Public Works and Code Enforcement. Originally implemented in 2015, residents and Staff are able to view all requests and track work as it is completed.

The current agreement expires at the end of this month. Staff recommend entering into a one-year contract at a cost of \$9,303.17 and using the next year to investigate alternatives and to determine if it is still the best solution for the future. The proposed contract will expire April 30, 2024. The cost will be paid from 4401-11402-63611, the Cumulative Capital Improvement Fund.

Councilor Tulowitzki moved, with a second by Councilor Schoon, to authorize the Town Manager to enter into a one-year service contract with Accela, Inc. for the PublicStuff program. Councilors Schoon, Mellon, Tulowitzki, Koulourides, and Gardiner voted in favor; none voted against. Motion carried.

REPORTS

Town Council members and Staff have recently received many questions about the Ridge Road Streetscape plan. The idea to improve Ridge Road was addressed in the Town's 2010 Comprehensive Plan. The Council members, Staff and residents at that time highlighted opportunities and desires for the corridor. In 2020, with the South Shore train extension closer to reality, the Council decided it was a good time to address what had been talked about for years. The Town hired a consultant to develop a plan to improve stormwater runoff, reduce neighborhood street flooding, improve walking and biking connectivity, and make the corridor more attractive and safer overall. It was a year-long process that included extensive community outreach activity that engaged both staff and residents for their input.

That process produced a concept plan. Now it is time to engage a design engineering firm and traffic specialist to conduct more in-dept analyses. The design and engineering phase will include more public discussion and full staff input including our Fire and Police Departments. It will analyze current and projected traffic volumes, traffic speed, potential spill over to neighboring streets, emergency vehicle accessibility, and safety improvement strategies. It will also identify solutions for long-term issues like the double stoplight at Harrison, the volume of curb cuts, and the abundance of unsightly utility poles. The goal is to produce an outcome that all residents can be proud of and one that will improve the quality of life along the Ridge Road corridor.

The project will invest \$21 million into the northern part of Munster, with only \$4 million coming from the Town due to a large federal grant received in 2022. The \$4 million will be taken from money on-hand that must be used for capital projects. These funds are statutorily restricted in how they can be used.

A list of frequently asked questions is available at munster.org. Please email additional questions to any of the Council members or the Town Manager.

PORTFOLIO REPORTS

This portion of the meeting has been added to give elected officials an opportunity to share news about the various boards and commission on which they serve as liaison.

No reports were given.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

(Unless stated otherwise, all meetings of the Town Council begin at 7:00 p.m. at Munster Town Hall.)

The Town Council will hold a regular meeting on Monday, May 1, 2023. The Redevelopment Commission will hold a regular meeting immediately following.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Council, and upon a motion by Councilor Schoon and seconded by Councilor Tulowitzki, the meeting adjourned at 7:56 p.m. by voice vote.

ATTEST:

Chuck Gardiner, President

Wendy Mis, Clerk-Treasurer