

**TOWN OF MUNSTER
MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE TOWN COUNCIL
NOVEMBER 9, 2023**

A meeting of the Munster Town Council convened at 7:00 p.m. on Thursday, November 9, 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 Koulourides, Lee Ann Mellon, Ken Schoon, and Steven Tulowitzki were physically present at Town Hall. Also present in Town Hall were Clerk-Treasurer Wendy Mis, Controller Patricia Abbott, Town Manager Dustin Anderson, Deputy Town Manager Jill DiTommaso, Police Chief Steve Scheckel, Town Attorney Dave Westland, and Superintendent of Operations Chris Spolnik. The news media were represented by Stephen Euvino with *The Times of Northwest Indiana*.

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

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.

No one rose to claim the floor.

CONSENT AGENDA

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Minutes of a regular meeting held on October 16, 2023

ACCOUNTS PAYABLE VOUCHER REGISTERS

Confirmation of Voucher Register #23-9L dated 09/30/23 totaling \$114,066.60
Approval of Voucher Register #23-9M dated 09/30/23 totaling \$7,688,809.36
Confirmation of Voucher Register #23-10H dated 10/19/23 totaling \$252,946.33
Confirmation of Voucher Register #23-10I dated 10/20/23 totaling \$461,039.24
Confirmation of Voucher Register #23-10J dated 10/26/23 totaling \$920,318.81
Confirmation of Voucher Register #23-11A dated 11/03/23 totaling \$461,043.97
Confirmation of Voucher Register #23-11B dated 11/02/23 totaling \$20,436.23
Confirmation of Voucher Register #23-11C dated 11/03/23 totaling \$53,323.73
Approval of Voucher Register #23-11D dated 11/09/23 totaling \$266,573.85

MINUTES OF BOND BID OPENING

Approval of the minutes of the bond bid opening held October 18, 2022

TREASURER'S REPORT

The September 2023 Treasurer's Report was presented.

WATER BILL ADJUSTMENTS 2023-50

Staff received a request 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 an adjustment.

The average usage for this customer is 2,000 gallons/month and the period in question had 62,000 gallons in one month. The original bill totaled \$333.18. The requested adjustment for water usage and sales tax is \$315.06 making the amount due \$18.12.

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

NEW BUSINESS

ORDINANCE 1921: FRANCISCAN ALLIANCE PUD AMENDMENT

Proposed ORDINANCE 1921 is AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE FRANCISCAN ALLIANCE PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT (PUD) TO THE TOWN OF MUNSTER, INDIANA. The purpose of the amendment is to reconfigure structures on the Franciscan Hospital Medical Camput to meet the new height regulations of the U.S. Federal Aviation Administration. The reconfiguration will accommodate a three-story addition to an existing three-story medical structure, the construction of a new five-story medical structure, the addition of a new facilities plant, the relocation of a helipad, and the development of a new parking lot and expansion of an existing parking lot.

Representatives of the property appeared before the Plan Commission on September 12, 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.

Councilor Schoon moved, with a second by Councilor Koultourides, to approve Ordinance 1921 for PC23-016. Councilors Schoon, Mellon, Tulowitzki, Koultourides, and Gardiner voted in favor; none voted against. Motion carried.

INTERLOCAL AGREEMENT WITH LAKE COUNTY, INDIANA

Lake County was a recipient of American Recovery Plan Act (ARPA) funding. Some of their funding is being used to assist other units of government within the county. Under Lake County Council Resolution No. 2022-72, \$250,000.00 has been allotted to the Town of Munster for the rehabilitation and maintenance of the Calumet Avenue water tanks. An interlocal agreement has been prepared formalizing the arrangement. Both the Lake County Council and Lake County Commission has approved the agreement.

Munster must now approve the agreement in the exact same form as the other bodies. This document is presented for approval this evening. Once approved, it must be recorded to go into effect.

Councilor Koultourides moved, with a second by Councilor Mellon, to approve the interlocal agreement with Lake County, Indiana as presented. Councilors Schoon, Mellon, Tulowitzki, Koultourides, and Gardiner voted in favor; none voted against. Motion passed.

INTERLOCAL AGREEMENT FOR MAIN STREET PATCHING

The Town of Schererville contacted Munster regarding the pavement conditions on Main Street. An interlocal agreement among the Towns of Dyer, Munster, and Schererville has been drafted to split the cost of patching Main Street from Indianapolis Boulevard to Calumet Avenue. Dyer will contract with Milestone through their existing 2023 patching contract; Schererville has provided most of the leg work regarding design and project scoping; Munster will provide construction oversight. Total cost to Munster for the work is \$55,440.00 which represents the cost of patching from Hart Ditch to the Highland town line. The Town of Dyer will invoice Munster for its portion of the cost.

Munster must now approve the agreement in the exact same form as the other bodies. This document is presented for approval this evening. Once approved, it must be recorded to go into effect.

Councilor Koultourides moved, with a second by Councilor Tulowitzki, to approve the interlocal agreement with Schererville and Dyer to patch Main Street between Hart Ditch and the Highland town line. Councilors Schoon, Mellon, Tulowitzki, Koultourides, and Gardiner voted in favor; none voted against. Motion passed.

PAVEMENT PATCHING: WHITE OAK LANE AND JANICE LANE

The intersection of White Oak Avenue near Janice Lane experienced a water main break resulting in significant damage to the pavement. Staff sought three quotes to perform the work and two were received as follows.

Site Services	\$23,737.00
Rieth-Riley	\$42,290.00

Councilor Tulowitzki moved, with a second by Councilor Mellon, to approve the quote from Site Services, Inc. to perform pavement patching at White Oak Avenue and Janice Lane in the amount of \$23,737.00. Councilors Schoon, Mellon, Tulowitzki, Koultourides, and Gardiner voted in favor; none voted against. Motion passed.

ADDITIONAL COSTS FOR VEHICLE PURCHASE

Council approved the purchase of a new 2023 Ford F350 truck 4x4 regular cab with stake bed to replace Unit #314 at the December 19, 2022 meeting. The original price quoted from Lindco for the tailgate lift and snowplow was \$34,133.00. Since that time, the cost has increased by \$3,062.00 to \$37,195.00.

Councilor Mellon, with a second by Councilor Tulowitzki, to approve the price increase of \$3,062.00 to Lindco for the new Ford F350 truck with stake bed to replace Unit # 314 for a total cost of \$66,915.00 from the original price of \$63,853.00. Councilors Schoon, Mellon, Tulowitzki, Koultourides, and Gardiner voted in favor; none voted against. Motion passed.

CHANGE ORDER NO 1: WEST 45TH STREET PAVING

At the April 3, 2023, meeting, Council awarded Milestone Contractors North, Inc. the contract to pave West 45th Street at a cost of \$797,370.00. Work began in July. Because of the significant delays in obtaining approval from CSX to work in their right-of-way, Staff directed Milestone to pave the majority of the project and remobilize later to complete the portion in the right-of-way once approval was received. They were able to take advantage of a planned track outage for the on-going NICTD project which allowed for substantial completion in September.

Milestone has requested a change order to cover the costs to remobilize and to complete additional work requested by the Town as follows.

Remove and replace ADA ramp at Margo Lane	\$ 1,867.50
Adjust casting	\$ 1,495.00
Separate mobilization for work in CSX right-of-way	<u>\$16,500.00</u>
Total	\$19,862.50

Councilor Tulowitzki moved, with a second by Councilor Koultourides, to approve Change Order No. 1 to the contract for the 2023 West 45th Street Paving in the amount of \$19,862.50. Councilors Schoon, Mellon, Tulowitzki, Koultourides, and Gardiner voted in favor; none voted against. Motion carried.

LEAD AND ASBESTOS ABATEMENT

At the meeting of January 16, 2023, the Council approved the purchase of flow meters and hypochlorite dosing systems for the Calumet Avenue and River Bend pump stations in the amount of \$89,871.00. At that March 20, 2023 meeting, Council approved the installation contract in the amount of \$26,400.00.

While preparing for the work, the contractor discovered lead and asbestos which must be remediated before work can begin. Staff requested quotes from three companies. Only M & O Environmental Services provided a quote which was in the amount of \$12,900.00. The work will be paid from the Water Cash Operating Fund.

Councilor Schoon moved, with a second by Councilor Mellon, to approve the proposal by M & O Environmental Services in the amount of \$12,900.00 for the remediation of lead paint and asbestos at the Calumet Avenue Pumping Station. Councilors Schoon, Mellon, Tulowitzki, Koultourides, and Gardiner voted in favor; none voted against. Motion passed.

RESOLUTION 2116: CONFIRMATORY RESOLUTION CENTENNIAL VILLAGE

Proposed RESOLUTION 2116 is A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF MUNSTER, INDIANA, CONFIRMING THE DESIGNATION OF AN ECONOMIC REVITALIZATION AREA AND APPROVING THE DEDUCTION FROM ASSESSED VALUE OF NEW REAL PROPERTY IMPROVEMENTS. Under the terms of the Development Agreement with Centennial Village LLC, the Town must take steps to allow declining tax abatement on the residential property taxes for the housing units in Centennial Village. The Economic Development Commission took action on March 15, 2023 by approving its Resolution 23-01. Council adopted Resolution 2107 at the June 5, 2023 meeting affirming the recommendation of the Economic Development Commission. Council must confirm its prior action in order for the abatement to take effect. Resolution 2116 has been drafted for this purpose.

Councilor Koultourides moved, with a second by Councilor Tulowitzki, to approve Resolution 2116: A Resolution of the Town of Munster, Indiana, Confirming the Designation of an Economic Revitalization Area and Preliminarily Approving the Deduction from Assessed Value of New Real Estate Property Improvements. Councilors Schoon, Mellon, Tulowitzki, Koultourides, and Gardiner voted in favor; none voted against. Motion carried.

RESOLUTION 2117: LEASE PURCHASE OF POLICE VEHICLES

Proposed RESOLUTION 2117 is a RESOLUTION OF THE GOVERNING BODY OF THE TOWN OF MUNSTER, AUTHORIZING, PURSUANT TO THE IC 5-22-1 (COLLECTIVELY, "AUTHORIZING LAW"), THE INCURRING OF LEASE OBLIGATIONS IN ANY AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$285,830.00 TO BE EVIDENCED BY THE EXECUTION AND DELIVERY OF A MASTER EQUIPMENT LEASE-PURCHASE AGREEMENT, AN ESCROW AGREEMENT AND AN EQUIPMENT SCHEDULE WITH RESPECT TO THE ACQUISITION, PURCHASE, FINANCING, AND LEASING OF CERTAIN EQUIPMENT FOR THE PUBLIC BENEFIT; AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTION AND DELIVERY OF DOCUMENTS REQUIRED IN CONNECTION THEREWITH; AND AUTHORIZING THE TAKING OF ALL OTHER ACTIONS NECESSARY TO THE CONSUMMATION OF THE TRANSACTIONS COMTEMPLATED BY THIS RESOLUTION. At the August 7, 2023, meeting, Council approved the purchase of two Ford Interceptor AWD vehicles for the patrol division and administration and two Ford F150 pick-up trucks for the administration of the Munster Police Department from Bloomington Ford through the State QPA program.

Staff has sought quotes for a three-year lease with six semi-annual payments. The total lease amount is \$285,830.00 for the vehicles with all emergency equipment included. Flagstar Public Funding Corp. provided the best annual rate at 5.77%. The final total amount including finance charges is \$315,375.41 with the first payment due May 1, 2024. The amortization is shown below.

Payment #	Payment Date	Principal	Interest	Payment Total	Option Purchase Price
1	05/01/24	\$ 44,316.37	\$ 8,246.20	\$ 52,562.57	\$ 246,343.90
2	11/01/24	\$ 45,594.90	\$ 6,967.67	\$ 52,562.57	\$ 199,837.10
3	05/01/25	\$ 46,910.31	\$ 5,652.26	\$ 52,562.57	\$ 151,988.58
4	11/01/25	\$ 48,263.67	\$ 4,298.89	\$ 52,562.56	\$ 102,759.64
5	05/01/26	\$ 49,656.08	\$ 2,906.49	\$ 52,562.57	\$ 52,110.43
6	11/01/26	\$ 51,088.66	\$ 1,473.91	\$ 52,562.57	\$ -

Councilor Koultourides moved, with a second by Councilor Mellon, approve Resolution 2117 and to authorize the Police Department to purchase four squads through Flagstar Public Funding Corp.. Councilors Schoon, Mellon, Tulowitzki, Koultourides, and Gardiner voted in favor; none voted against. Motion carried.

ORDINANCE 1922: AMENDMENT #3 TO 2023 SALARY ORDINANCE

Introduced ORDINANCE 1922 is AMENDMENT #3 TO THE 2023 SALARY ORDINANCE. Staff has met to begin discussions on the 2024 salary ordinance. One matter that was addressed was the annual holiday bonus. The bonus of \$100.00 has been in place since the late 1990s. The general sentiment is this amount should be increased.

Taking inflation into account, Staff believes the bonus should increase to \$225.00 and requests this increase go into effect this year. Bonuses are issued to all regular employees and firefighters. Those who start after January 1 have their bonus prorated. Town Councilors are exempted from the bonus, and the bonus is paid out on the first payroll of December.

IC 36-5-3-2(c) states, “The compensation of an elected town official may not be changed in the year for which it is fixed, nor may it be reduced below the amount fixed for the previous year.” As a result, the ordinance will be amended so that the Clerk-Treasurer receives a bonus of \$100.00 as originally fixed for 2023; all other eligible employees will receive a bonus of \$225.00.

Councilor Tulowitzki moved, with a second by Councilor Mellon, to hear Ordinance 1922 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.

2024 ANNUAL MEDICAL, DENTAL, AND VISION RATE RENEWAL

The Town became members of the AIM Medical Trust effective January 1, 2016, for medical insurance. The structure of the Trust allows it to allocate reserves to decrease premiums in some circumstances. For 2024, if a community had a loss ratio below the actuarially projected ratio for three consecutive years, that community received a significant rate discount. Munster was one of two communities to meet this standard. As a result, the renewal rate for the 2024 plan year is a decrease of 13.6%.

The rates presented for Council approval include a 1.25% increase beyond the rate from AIM to account for the rising administrative costs of providing long-term disability insurance, the Section 125 Flexible Spending Arrangement, and the employee assistance program.

Last year, the Town switched from being self-insured for dental coverage through Delta Dental to joining with the AIM Medical Trust for the same coverage at a reduced rate. These premiums remain unchanged from 2023. Vision insurance is also through the AIM Medical Trust with the cost unchanged for next year.

Last year, Council decreased the portion employees pay towards premiums to 10%. This change has been absorbed by the budget, well received by the employees, and is recommended to continue into 2024.

The recommended monthly premiums are as follows for the current medical, dental, and vision insurance plans.

PPO Plan B

Tier	2024 Rates	Town Monthly Share 90%	Employee Monthly Share 10%
Employee Only	\$ 877.10	\$ 789.39	\$ 87.71
Employee & Spouse	\$ 1,797.77	\$ 1,617.99	\$ 179.78
Employee & Child(ren)	\$ 1,622.03	\$ 1,459.83	\$ 162.20
Employee & Family	\$ 2,542.69	\$ 2,288.42	\$ 254.27

HDHP Plan F

Tier	2024 Rates	Town Monthly Share 90%	Employee Monthly Share 10%
Employee Only	\$ 822.28	\$ 740.05	\$ 82.23
Employee & Spouse	\$ 1,685.39	\$ 1,516.85	\$ 168.54
Employee & Child(ren)	\$ 1,520.66	\$ 1,368.59	\$ 152.07
Employee & Family	\$ 2,383.77	\$ 2,145.39	\$ 238.38

Dental Insurance

This is the same plan currently in force. The Town pays 100% of the premiums for the employee and the employee pays all of the cost for elected dependent coverage.

Tier	2024 Rates	Monthly Town Share	Monthly Employee Share
Employee Only	\$ 26.32	\$ 26.32	\$ -
Employee & Spouse	\$ 52.66	\$ 26.32	\$ 26.34
Employee & Child(ren)	\$ 71.12	\$ 26.32	\$ 44.80
Employee & Family	\$ 106.88	\$ 26.32	\$ 80.56

Vision Insurance

This is the same plan currently in force. The Town pays 100% of the premiums for the employee regardless of the coverage level chosen.

Tier	2024 Monthly Rates
Employee Only	\$ 4.59
Employee & Spouse	\$ 9.20
Employee & Child(ren)	\$ 9.82
Employee & Family	\$ 15.70

Councilor Mellon moved, with a second by Councilor Koultourides, to authorize the Town Manager to adopt the health, dental, and vision rates for the Town of Munster as presented. Councilors Schoon, Mellon, Tulowitzki, Koultourides, and Gardiner voted in favor; none voted against.

LETTER OF ENGAGEMENT: FOOD AND BEVERAGE QUANTIFICATION

The most recent session of the Indiana General Assembly provided a framework for municipalities to seek approval for a food and beverage tax in IC 6-9-12-1. Council is exploring the opportunities for this in Munster. Policy Analytics LLC has presented an engagement letter for an analysis of the food and beverage tax base and projections of revenue for Munster. The scope will include estimates of the size of the tax base in keeping with the statute, revenue projections based on likely tax rates which Munster would need to pass, and briefing materials explaining the analysis and projections.

The engagement would begin November 10, 2023 and continue through April 30, 2024 with a total not-to-exceed amount of \$10,850.00. Direct expenses will be billed at actual cost after approval by the Town and with valid documentation. It is anticipated this will be paid from the LIT Economic Development Fund.

Councilor Koultourides asked how long to receive the data. Staff responded fourteen days and that it would be ready for the next meeting.

Councilor Tulowitzki expressed his opposition to the matter citing various economic factors including inflation, increase water rates, and the tax referendum of the School Town of Munster.

Councilor Schoon asked about the rate and Staff responded that .50% and 1.00% are being analyzed. Councilor Schoon observed that the water rates were increased prior to the inflation problems and that the Town is incurring costs to operate which must be met.

President Gardiner stated the importance of looking at all possibilities for capital projects.

Councilor Mellon moved, with a second by Councilor Schoon, to authorize the Town Manager to execute the letter of engagement with Policy Analytics LLC to project potential Town revenues from a local food and beverage tax for a cost not to exceed \$10,850.00. Councilors Schoon, Mellon, Koulourides, and Gardiner voted in favor; Councilor Tulowitzki voted against. Motion carried.

PORTFOLIO REPORTS

Clerk-Treasurer Mis thanked Public Works for addressing the ventilation issues in the Main Meeting Room and announced the 3rd Annual Light the Night event at Town Hall will be from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m., Friday, December 1, 2023.

No other 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, November 20, 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 Koulourides, the meeting adjourned at 7:40 p.m. by voice vote.

ATTEST:

Chuck Gardiner, President

Wendy Mis, Clerk-Treasurer