

**TOWN OF MUNSTER**  
**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE TOWN COUNCIL**  
**JUNE 17, 2024**

A meeting of the Munster Town Council convened at 7:02 p.m. on Monday, June 3, 2024. Ordinance 1830 is the basis for holding electronic meetings. The announced meeting location was Munster Town Hall, 1005 Ridge Road, Munster, Indiana. Councilors, Staff, and the public had the option to participate via Zoom meeting technology.

Councilors George Shinkan, Joseph G. Hofferth, Chuck Gardiner, Jonathan Petersen, and David B. Nellans were physically present at Town Hall. Also present in Town Hall were Clerk-Treasurer Wendy Mis, Controller/Interim Town Manager Patricia Abbott, Police Chief Steve Scheckel, Police Lieutenant Dan Broelmann, Fire Chief Mark Hajduk, Town Attorney Dave Westland, Interim Director of Operations Chris Spolnik, Munster Representative to the Hammond Sanitary District Mike Hawkins. Representatives from the media were not present.

President Nellans presided and opened the meeting with a moment of silence, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

President Nellans shared a few words about a number of conversations going on around Town about traffic calming and Ridge Road. He stated they (traffic calming measures) are under study. They are not inexpensive to put in or to remove. The last council recommended but the current council has concerns as does the public. Councilor Gardiner asked if there would be a formal review and asked how would traffic calming be reviewed. President Nellans said it would be reviewed by Council, but the process has not been finalized. Councilor Gardiner followed up regarding the work to be done on Terrace Avenue. Councilor Nellans stated that the work will be re-reviewed. Councilor Petersen asked to return to the agenda.

**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](http://munster.org), that questions or comments about an item on the agenda were to be emailed to [wmis@munster.org](mailto:wmis@munster.org). All in person public comments are limited to two minutes and limited to a total of twenty minutes for the public comment section.

Mr. Mike Englert, 113 Beverly, thanked Council for listening. A subcommittee of select neighbors has been put together and they are hoping for reconstruction and funding.

Ms. Marie Eisenstein, 11 Beverly, they are interested in returning to a look that fits the neighborhood and that the neighbors are part of the process.

Mr. Greg Starcevich, 9501 Cottonwood, he has been before Council before. PD has been out but not effective in slowing drivers down. We need stop signs and speed bumps. Speed bumps work.

Mr. Tom Jurich, 1839 Magnolia, loves seeing the crowd at the Council meetings and is learning about the Town. We need to address issues in Town before we address Ridge Road.

Ms. Christine Fortney, 9128 White Oak Avenue, is the administrator for Munster Conservative Group and there is a referendum on not reducing Ridge Road.

Mr. Paul Rotatori, 8118 Kraay Avenue, with the renewed interest in slowing traffic, it is demonstrated that narrowing of roads slows traffic and makes roads safer. He encouraged the original Ridge Road plan to be adopted for a safer community and thriving business community.

Dr. Kenneth Schoon, 8010 Forest, town elections do not bring out the same numbers as national elections. 70% of Munster voters did not care enough to vote. The election was not a referendum on Ridge Road, it was not on the ballot.

Mr. Fred Miller, 107 Beverly, thanked Council for looking at Beverly and hopes that the Beverly area can be safer, and they can get funds to make the area better.

Mrs. Barbara Matz, 7929 Forest Avenue, make sure the Beverly gets funded so the area looks better.

Mrs. Marsh Horak, 1008 Azalea Drive, appreciates the speed bumps but they could have been made smaller. She does not like the chicanes. They make parking harder and you cannot have two-way traffic. They will cause problems with the snowplows.

Mr. Mike Dujmovic, 1833 Tulip Lane, asked for consideration of rumble strips on Fran Lin at the stop signs on Chestnut and White Oak. This might wake drivers up and they may actually stop.

Mr. Mitch Barloga, 1900 Bluebird Lane, reinforced the results of the election were not a referendum as Dr. Schoon stated earlier. The group Love of Munster sent a letter asking for a Town Council public forum to discuss Ridge Road. The project is federally funded for \$17 million. This should not be taken lightly. A lot of people in the For Love of Munster Facebook group are in favor of the Ridge Road project. There are more people, he believes, in favor of this project. The road is fast and dangerous and needs improvement with transformative change.

It was announced the next speaker would be the last speaker although three people were in line for the podium. The twenty-minute time was exceeded.

Ms. Alisa Bushmeier, 1814 Alta Vista, is in support of Ridge Road project and would like the project to eventually expand to west Ridge Road and address the buildings that regularly get hit by vehicles. There are other issues including drive-through lines that extend onto Ridge Road. She continued to discuss unprofessional behavior she observed at which time Council President Nellans requested she take a seat. Ms. Bushmeier did and remained for the remainder of the meeting.

The meeting was closed to further public comments.

Councilor Gardiner requested the final two members be allowed to present their public comments.

Clerk-Treasurer Mis shared 34 emails were submitted electronically. One email requesting a public forum to discuss the Re-Imagine Ridge Road project. Nineteen emails support the Re-Imagine Ridge Road project and two expressed opposition. One email asked if the Town would consider a splash pad. Two emails supported traffic calming throughout Town. One email supported the traffic calming as it currently is on Azalea. Eight emails addressed traffic calming on Forest Avenue (south of Ridge Road) with three emails desiring speed humps although one email stated five might be excessive and did not want chicanes with five emails supporting traffic calming without specifying the type. One email addressed the Beverly bioswale landscaping.

### **CONSENT AGENDA**

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Minutes of a regular meeting held on June 3, 2024

### **ACCOUNTS PAYABLE VOUCHER REGISTERS**

Confirmation of Voucher Register #24-4L dated 04/30/24 totaling \$98,260.50

Approval of Voucher Register #24-4M dated 04/30/24 totaling \$162,917.07

Confirmation of Voucher Register #24-6B dated 06/06/24 totaling \$536,669.36

Confirmation of Voucher Register #24-6C dated 06/10/24 totaling \$55,382.95  
Confirmation of Voucher Register #24-6D dated 06/10/24 totaling \$28,938.19  
Confirmation of Voucher Register #24-6E dated 06/10/24 totaling \$2,000.00  
Confirmation of Voucher Register #24-6F dated 06/13/24 totaling \$1,318,752.23  
Approval of Voucher Register #24-6G dated 06/17/24 totaling \$378,137.32  
Confirmation of Voucher Register #24-6H dated 06/14/24 totaling \$503,759.58

### **TREASURER'S REPORT**

The April 2024 Treasurer's Report was presented.

Councilor Shinkan moved, with a second by Councilor Petersen, to suspend the rules, waive the readings, and adopt the Consent Agenda as presented. Councilors Shinkan, Hofferth, Gardiner, Petersen, and Nellans voted in favor; none voted against. Motion passed.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

#### **ORDINANCE 1955: AMENDMENT TO MAPLE LEAF CROSSING PUD**

Proposed ORDINANCE 1955 is AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE MAPLE LEAF CROSSING PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT MODIFYING SIGNAGE DESIGN CRITERIA AT 9410 CALUMET AVENUE. The developer of the Maple Leaf Crossing PUD has requested modification of Section IV, Signage Design Criteria for Lot 1 at the development. Specifically, the request identifies black aluminum lettering, a total of sixteen signs, with eight on the north façade and eight on the south façade which allows for one sign for each of the individual suites in the building.

The Plan Commission voted by a majority to favorably recommend approval for the requested amendment under PC 24-005 on May 14, 2024. The Plan Commission also approved the Findings of Fact on June 11, 2024.

Councilor Petersen moved, with a second by Councilor Hofferth, to adopt Ordinance 1955 as presented. Councilors Shinkan, Hofferth, Gardiner, Petersen, and Nellans voted in favor; none voted against. Motion passed.

#### **ORDINANCES 1956, 1957, 1958, 1959: CODE ENFORCEMENT AND SCHEDULE A**

At the May 9, 2024, meeting, Council approved Ordinances 1942 through 1950 which clarified various sections of the Town Code, improved enforcement by Staff, and assisted residents in understanding the code. As Staff began implementation of these changes, there were issues with Odyssey, the filing system used by the Court system, and with Spillman, the centralized system for police calls in Lake County.

While working through this, it was discovered that many fines assessed for ordinance violations were not listed in the current Schedule A, and additional language is needed pertaining to eligible offenses for the Ordinance Violations Bureau. The Town Attorney has presented the following ordinances to address the situation.

1. Ordinance 1956 amends Chapter 54: Traffic and Vehicles
2. Ordinance 1957 amends Chapter 12: Weeds and Rank Vegetation
3. Ordinance 1958 amends Chapter 1: Ordinance Violations Bureau
4. Ordinance 1959 amends Schedule A

Councilor Shinkan moved, with a second by Councilor Hofferth, to hear Ordinance 1956, and Ordinance 1957, and Ordinance 1958, and Ordinance 1959, on first reading as presented and schedule second reading for July 1, 2024. Councilors Shinkan, Hofferth, Gardiner, Petersen, and Nellans voted in favor; none voted against. Motion carried.

### **ENGAGEMENT LETTER: WATER LOSS AUDIT**

A Water Loss Audit looks at operational and financial data of the entire Water Utility. The goal is to identify areas of water loss to conserve this resource and to determine areas to improve. In odd numbered years, the audit must be performed, validated, and submitted to the Indiana Finance Authority. If this is not done, the Town is not eligible to participate in the State Revolving Fund. This is the program the Town plans to use to issue the Water Revenue Bonds next year.

In prior years, the audit has been performed in-house and the validation has been performed in-house as well. The individual who was certified to perform the audit recently resigned. That portion of the audit work was not completed prior to the resignation.

To complete the work timely, Staff has secured an engagement letter from ME Simpson to complete the audit. ME Simpson is not only familiar with the Town of Munster Water Utility, but they also have certified water loss auditors and validators. The cost to perform the audit is \$15,000.00. The Controller/Interim Town Manager is certified to validate the audit but does not have the time to do this work. ME Simpson can do the validation for a cost of \$2,000.00. The work will be paid for by the Water Cash Operating Fund.

Councilor Gardiner questioned how we are monitoring water in the long and short term. Interim Town Manager shared we have an employee that will be taking the water operator test upon approval from IDEM.

Councilor Hofferth moved, with a second by Councilor Shinkan, to approve the engagement letter from M.E. Simpson Co., Inc. dated May 30, 2024, to perform and validate the 2023 Water Loss Audit for an amount not to exceed \$17,000.00. Councilors Shinkan, Hofferth, Gardiner, Petersen, and Nellans voted in favor; none voted against. Motion carried.

### **WATER DISTRIBUTION MODEL PROPOSAL**

In 2021, a skeleton water model was created for the Town of Munster. A comprehensive hydraulic model of the water distribution system has not been done for the Town of Munster. This project will give the Town a clear, detailed picture of how our water system works today and how it can be improved for tomorrow. It will ensure we are prepared to meet the water needs of our community, both now and in the future. This investment in our water infrastructure is essential for maintaining reliable and efficient water service for the residents.

SEH's proposal includes several key aspects that will benefit our community: (1) Hydraulic Model Development which involves creating a detailed simulation of our water system, including field and flow testing, to ensure the model accurately reflecting real-world conditions. This model will be calibrated and verified to confirm its accuracy. (2) Operational Simulation to simulate the current operations of our water system to help us identify potential issues during various scenarios such as average day, maximum day, and fire flow events, ensuring our system can handle all demands. (3) Flow Capacities and System Pressures that examine our system's operational flow capacities and pressures to ensure effective service delivery now and in the future. This will help us understand how our system performs under different conditions and demands. (4) Water Supply Analysis: SEH will conduct an

analysis to determine if our supply and treatment facilities can meet current and future water needs. This includes identifying any potential shortfalls and understanding how long water takes to travel through the system. (5) Baseline Understanding: The project will provide a thorough understanding of our current system operations and limitations. This baseline knowledge is crucial for identifying and implementing alternative solutions in the future. (6) Capacity Evaluations: The tasks include evaluating the capacities of our water supply and distribution systems, performing both steady-state and extended-period simulation analyses. This will help determine our water storage needs and identify any limitations in the current system.

In simple terms, this project will give a clear, detailed picture of how the water system works today and how it can be improved for tomorrow. It will ensure the Town can be prepared to meet the water needs of the Munster community, both now and in the future. Staff firmly believes that this investment in the Town's water infrastructure is essential for maintaining a reliable and efficient service for all residents.

Councilor Gardiner questioned the ability of our current staff to handle the project, understand and respond to the information and the timing of the proposal coming to council.

Councilor Hofferth moved, with a second by Councilor Shinkan, to approve the SEH proposal for the Water Distribution Model at a cost not to exceed \$48,900.00. Councilors Shinkan, Hofferth, Gardiner, Petersen, and Nellans voted in favor; none voted against. Motion carried.

#### **ENGAGEMENT LETTER: MS4 ASSISTANCE**

MS4 is a designation that stands for the entity that oversees the "municipal separate storm sewer system." It is the drainage system owned by the Town intended to carry only surface runoff (rainwater) to a receiving stream. For Munster, the ultimate receiving stream is the Little Calumet River.

For the past year, the Town engaged Butler, Fairman & Seufert as represented by Reggie Korthals to provide consulting and assistance with MS4 compliance. This service was critical for the audit performed by the Indiana Department of Environmental Management on March 14, 2024. There is still work to be done to meet the requirements and Staff wants to retain the services of Ms. Korthals.

Ms. Korthals is now with the firm OHM Advisors. The goal is to have Town Staff trained and able to manage the MS4 program on its own in about one year. An engagement letter has been presented which lists the various services that could be provided. Staff will request the assistance of Ms. Korthals throughout the year and will be billed at an hourly rate. The anticipated completion of the project is June 1, 2025, and the cost is not to exceed \$40,000.00. The work will be paid for by the Sewer Maintenance Fund.

Councilor Gardiner expressed concern that we need qualified personnel at Public Works, and we need expertise in the Department. We seem to be getting farther away from qualified staff. Council President Nellans stated we are hiring consultants and getting staff trained and recommended we move on.

Councilor Petersen moved, with a second by Councilor Shinkan, to approve the engagement letter from OHM Advisors for MS4 consulting services at a cost not to exceed \$40,000.00. Councilors Shinkan, Hofferth, Gardiner, Petersen, and Nellans voted in favor; none voted against. Motion carried.

### **AGREEMENT: CYBERSECURITY GRANT**

The State of Indiana, through the Department of Homeland Security, is offering state-of-the-art cybersecurity software to schools and units of local government for free. This will protect the Town's computers from viruses, malware, and similar threats. The program also offers 24/7 remote monitoring and response should a device be compromised.

Staff expressed interest in the program, and the Indiana Office of Technology created the electronic documents with the Interim Town Manager as the signatory.

Councilor Shinkan moved, with a second by Councilor Petersen, to authorize the Interim Town Manager to sign the documents necessary to participate in the CrowdStrike Falcon Complete cybersecurity program through the State and Local Cybersecurity Grant Program Grant Committee. Councilors Shinkan, Hofferth, Gardiner, Petersen, and Nellans voted in favor; none voted against. Motion carried.

### **AGREEMENT: AT&T FIRST NET**

The First Responder Network Authority, or the FirstNet Authority, is an independent agency within the U.S. Department of Commerce's National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) that oversees FirstNet, the nation's communications network dedicated to emergency responders and the public safety community. It was established in the wake of September 11, 2011, to create a single, nationwide broadband network specifically for first responders. The network is built for public safety with a dedicated network core that separates public safety traffic from non-public safety traffic.

Working with FirstNet offers the Town access to free and reduced cost equipment. Staff is requesting to create an account with AT&T in order to access the FirstNet portal. This will allow the Town to request free cell boosters. The Town may expand its use of FirstNet and its offerings in the future.

Councilor Shinkan moved, with a second by Councilor Hofferth, to authorize the Council President to sign the Participation Agreement with AT&T Enterprises, LLC to access FirstNet. Councilors Shinkan, Hofferth, Gardiner, Petersen, and Nellans voted in favor; none voted against. Motion carried.

### **PURCHASE OF PICK-UP TRUCK**

Public Works has been using the Park Department 2010 Chevy Colorado to water plants throughout Town. The Public Works Department would like to purchase a new Chevrolet Colorado Crew Cab 2WT and use the Park Department vehicle as a trade-in. The new vehicle is currently on the lot at Garber Chevrolet, Highland, Indiana.

2024 Chevy Colorado	\$31,393.00
Fees	230.25
Less Discount	750.00
Less Trade-in	<u>1,500.00</u>
Total	\$29,373.25

The purchase will come from the 2023 General Obligation Bond proceeds.

Councilor Petersen moved, with a second by Councilor Shinkan, to approve one 2024 Chevrolet Colorado 2WT purchase for a net price after Park Department's 2010 Colorado trade-in of \$29,373.25. Councilors Shinkan, Hofferth, Gardiner, Petersen, and Nellans voted in favor; none voted against. Motion carried.

### **ACCEPTANCE OF PROPOSAL: LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT**

Beverly Place between State Line Avenue and Hohman Avenue is a two-lane residential street with a wide median which was originally a concrete roadway overlaid with asphalt such that the curb and gutter was filled in and no longer functioning. The road's Pavement Surface Evaluation Rating (PASER) was 2 out of 10, indicating very poor condition. The street was earmarked for rehabilitation with Community Crossings Matching Grant (CCMG) funds. The work was performed in 2023.

In addition to pavement rehabilitation, Beverly Place was a part of a green infrastructure pilot program. Green infrastructure uses the natural environment as well as engineered systems to manage storm water. Examples of green infrastructure include permeable pavement, rain gardens, bioswales, and green roofs. These systems often use specialized landscaping and natural plant and soil system to store, infiltrate, or evapotranspiration stormwater, remove pollutants from stormwater runoff, and reduce flows to sewer systems and surface waters.

The redesign of Beverly Place included bioswales in the median to detain storm water runoff before it reaches the storm sewer system utilizing a five-to-ten-foot section of the median adjacent to the roadway to avoid conflicts with existing utilities running down the middle of the median.

An unknown mixture of general prairie grasses and wildflowers were planted throughout the area. The mixture has created an unkempt, overgrown environment which has impacted the sight lines of traffic and is not in keeping with the aesthetics of the neighborhood.

A discussion ensued which included the inclusion of discussion with the landscape architect and with the neighborhood committee. Several motions were presented, revised and discussed. The final motion is as follows: Councilor Shinkan moved, with a second by Councilor Petersen, to authorize the Council President to sign the Landscape Architectural Service Proposal from Planned Environment Associates for landscape assessment and design of the Beverly Place median, bioswales, and other areas within the Town's right-of-way between Hohman Avenue and State Line Road in the amount not to exceed \$10,000.00 which includes meeting with the neighborhood as necessary and authorizes the interim Director of Operations to act as the lead. Councilors Shinkan, Hofferth, Gardiner, Petersen, and Nellans voted in favor; none voted against. Motion passed.

### **NORTHCOTE TRAFFIC CALMING**

On April 26, 2024, quotes were received for the Northcote Traffic Calming project. The project includes installation of speed humps on Northcote Avenue between Ridge Road and South River Drive. The quotes were reviewed and tabulated by SEH. The Engineer's Estimate for the work was \$33,632.00.

Site Services	\$29,900.50
Rieth-Riley Construction, Inc.	\$29,989.80
Milestone Contractors North, LLC	\$42,700.00

The project will be paid from the Municipal Surtax Fund.

Councilor Shinkan moved, with a second by Councilor Hofferth, approve Site Services for a total cost of \$29,900.50.

Councilor Gardiner liked this project and questioned if we are reviewing traffic calming and why is this project moving forward without review of overall traffic calming. Council President Nellans stated Terrace and Forest had the additional element of whether Terrace should stay open at the State Line. Councilor Petersen questioned the speed team and feels the input of heads of Public Safety and Public Works need to be included. Discussion about the speed team, members of the speed team, traffic calming ensued. To reinforce that many residents feel speeding happens in front of their house, Council President Nellans shared he would like to see traffic calming on the street he lives on but understands it may not be real practical. Chief Scheckel stated a survey would be done within a week.

Councilor Petersen moved to table Item M, Northcote Traffic Calming, with a second by Councilor Shinkan. Councilors Shinkan, Hofferth, Gardiner, Petersen, and Nellans voted in favor; none voted against. Motion passed.

### **RIDGE ROAD**

Council named Infrastructure Engineering, Inc. (IEI) as their preferred consultant for the design of Ridge Road on May 15, 2023. IEI has prepared drawings that they believe are the bare minimum that the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) might accept. The drawings include the following features:

1. Two lanes in each direction of travel that are 10' wide
2. Striped medians only
3. 10' multi-use path on the south side that is offset from the road

IEI advises that adding additional safety elements will be necessary to increase the possibility that the design will be accepted. As discussed in Agenda Review, these elements include the following:

1. Improved and updated traffic signals (i.e. LED)
2. Backplates and retroreflective borders on traffic signals
3. Better defined crossing areas (i.e. hi-viz crosswalks)
4. Better defined turning movements

Council is asked to approve using the most recent set of drawings as the basis for the submittal to FHWA and to allow the additional safety elements to be included in the design.

Councilor Shinkan moved, with a second by Councilor Hofferth, to approve the drawings described in the memo to the Council dated June 17, 2024, as the basis for submittal to the Federal Highway Administration, and to allow IEI to use their professional judgment to include additional safety elements to the drawings, and to submit the updated drawings to the Town prior to submittal to the Federal Highway Administration, and to direct the Interim Town Manager to relay this action to IEI.

Councilor Gardiner shared his disappointment that we are submitting the bare minimum to get the grant instead of innovating as Munster has done in the past. This is not the final project we are submitting. Discussion ensued about the cost of the project.



Councilor Petersen disagrees and believes we are being very creative trying to meet the reasonable expectations of the community and retain the federal grant.

Councilor Petersen called to end the discussion with a second by Councilor Shinkan. Councilors Shinkan, Hofferth, Petersen, and Nellans voted in favor; Councilor Gardiner voted against. Motion passed 4 - 1.

Councilors Shinkan, Hofferth, Petersen, and Nellans voted in favor to approve the drawings described in the memo to the Council dated June 17, 2024, as the basis for submittal to the Federal Highway Administration, and to allow IEI to use their professional judgment to include additional safety elements to the drawings, and to submit the updated drawings to the Town prior to submittal to the Federal Highway Administration, and to direct the Interim Town Manager to relay this action to IEI; Councilor Gardiner voted against. Motion passed 4 - 1.

### **REPORTS**

Council reported that temporary, portable speed humps are to be purchased. The information presented was incomplete and tabled until it could be clearly presented.

### **PORTFOLIO REPORTS**

Councilor Gardiner shared that the Munster Civic Foundation would be hosting a Friday Night concert at Centennial Park on June 21<sup>st</sup> at 7 pm.

Councilor Shinkan shared the Parks Department Food Truck Fest on Saturday, June 22 at Centennial Park.

### **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, July 1, 2024. 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 Gardiner and seconded by Councilor Shinkan, the meeting adjourned at 8:38 p.m. by voice vote.

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**David B. Nellans, President**

**ATTEST:**

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**Wendy Mis, Clerk-Treasurer**