

TOWN OF MUNSTER
MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE TOWN COUNCIL
JULY 15, 2024

A meeting of the Munster Town Council convened at 7:00 p.m. on Monday, July 15, 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, Fire Chief Mark Hajduk, Town Attorney Dave Westland, and Interim Director of Operations Chris Spolnik. Representatives from the media were present.

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

PROCLAMATION: NATIONAL NIGHT OUT AGAINST CRIME

Councilor Hofferth read the proclamation recognizing August 6, 2024, as National Night Out Against Crime in the Town of Munster.

Councilor Gardiner moved, with a second by Councilor Shinkan, to adopt the “National Night Out Against Crime Proclamation as presented.” Councilors Shinkan, Hofferth, Gardiner, Petersen, and Nellans voted in favor; none voted against. Motion carried, and the proclamation was adopted.

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 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.

Ms. Kristin Curtin, 1045 Azalea Drive, requested the removal of the Azalea Avenue chicanes and is pleased to see it is on today’s agenda.

Mr. Mike Englert, 113 Beverly Place, shared the committee and went door to door to collect surveys and talked with the neighbors about the area beautification.

Mr. Tom Jurich, 1839 Magnolia, does not want the Ridge Road project and proceeded to discuss a resident, his place of employment and that relationship to the Ridge Road project.

Ms. Julia Rack, 9542 Greenwood Avenue, requested a raised crosswalk near Frank H Hammond School on Fran Lin and Greenwood or Elmwood.

Mr. Scott Mason, 8639 Hohman Avenue, questioned the process of installing and removal of chicanes and the related costs.

Mr. Ed Lehnerer, 18403 Maple, Lansing, IL, supported the closure to Terrace Avenue and has noticed decreased traffic and reduced speed.

Mr. Mitch Barloga, 1900 Bluebird, stated that while an employee of NIRPC, he is speaking as a private citizen in favor of the Re-Imagine Ridge Road project and Munster resident. He was taken aback by the personal attack on him and his employer. He stressed the Re-Imagine Ridge Road project is a federal grant.

Mr. Bruce Caruso, 8560 Forest Avenue, would like Terrace Avenue to remain closed and is opposed to a chicane on Terrace Avenue.

Mr. Chris Ylo, 46 Timrick, shared the positive impact the Terrace Avenue Road closure has had on the neighborhood especially since there is a park and young families in the area.

Clerk-Treasurer Mis shared a summary of emails were submitted electronically. Forty-four emails were no to Ridge Road and twenty-five were in favor. One request to share Re-Imagine Ridge Road documents online. One email supported Beverly Place improvements and one email wants the Town not to purchase the Center for Visual and Performing Arts. One email does not want any future chicanes, one email felt the chicanes are working and three emails stated no chicanes. One email loves the crosswalk at Fran Lin and Oriole and one email requested the removal of crosswalk at Oriole. One email wanted the road at Terrace to be opened and two emails requested the road remain closed.

Councilor Gardiner followed up about an electronic comment made previously regarding Resolution 1958 and the improper use of the bike paths, e-bikes, electronic scooters, and minibikes. Clerk-Treasurer Mis shared they are allowed on both sidewalks and bike paths.

CONSENT AGENDA

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Minutes of a regular meeting held on July 1, 2024

ACCOUNTS PAYABLE VOUCHER REGISTERS

Confirmation of Voucher Register #24-7B dated 07/03/24 totaling \$375,605.34

Confirmation of Voucher Register #24-7C dated 07/03/24 totaling \$42,740.99

Confirmation of Voucher Register #24-7D dated 07/10/24 totaling \$57,956.99

Confirmation of Voucher Register #24-7E dated 07/10/24 totaling \$334,859.95

Approval of Voucher Register #24-7F dated 07/11/24 totaling \$349,306.73

Confirmation of Voucher Register #24-7G dated 07/12/24 totaling \$679,891.76

WATER LEAK ADJUSTMENTS 2024-35 THROUGH 2024-37

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

Adjustment Number	Average Usage	Actual Usage	Length of Time	Original Bill	Requested Adjustment Amount	Adjusted Bill
2024-35	23,000	126,000	1 month	\$ 746.26	\$ 593.86	\$ 152.40
2024-36	17,000	44,000	1 month	\$ 280.61	\$ 165.83	\$ 114.78
2024-37	4,000	63,000	2 months	\$ 403.98	\$ 347.40	\$ 56.58

Councilor Shinkan moved, with a second by Councilor Hofferth, 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

ENGAGEMENT LETTER: EXECUTIVE SEARCH

An Interim Town Manager was named for a six-month period in February 2024. The appointment is set to expire next month. At the time of the appointment, Staff vetted three different organizations that perform executive searches for the position of permanent Town Manager. Of the three proposals, Baker Tilly stood out as the best option. Staff has confirmed that their proposal is still valid.

Baker Tilly has a thoughtful process that includes working with Council to identify what is wanted in the role, advertising nationally to find quality, professional candidates, vetting those candidates, developing interview questions, assisting Council throughout the interview process, and facilitating negotiations for the desired candidate once selected.

The role of Town Manager is critical to the Town of Munster. This person is the conduit from Council to Staff and must be knowledgeable on a wide variety of topics and will be looked at to move the Town forward. It is vital that a solid, professional candidate be identified. Staff is confident that Baker Tilly can perform the search to find the professional candidate the Town of Munster needs.

Councilor Gardiner moved, with a second by Councilor Hofferth, approve the letter of engagement from Baker Tilly dated February 2, 2024, to perform an executive search for the next Town Manager at a cost not to exceed \$28,600.00. Councilors Shinkan, Hofferth, Gardiner, Petersen, and Nellans voted in favor; none voted against, Councilor Petersen voted present. Motion carried.

RESOLUTION 2135: AUTHORIZING AN INTERIM TOWN MANAGER

Proposed RESOLUTION 2135 is A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING AN INTERIM TOWN MANAGER. Earlier in the meeting, Council was asked to approve a letter of engagement with Baker Tilly to perform an executive search for a new Town Manager. This process will not be completed prior to the expiration of the current arrangement for an Interim Town Manager.

To maintain continuity, Resolution 2135 has been drafted to extend the current arrangement that was outlined in Resolutions 2126 and 2127. The arrangement is similar to the current one with an acknowledgement that Ms. Abbott will be increasingly focused on her Controller duties in the coming months in order to prepare and submit the 2025 budget.

Councilor Hofferth moved, with a second by Councilor Shinkan, to adopt Resolution 2135 as presented. Councilors Shinkan, Hofferth, Gardiner, Petersen, and Nellans voted in favor of Resolution 2135. Motion carried.

RESOLUTION 2136: AGREEMENT FOR CDBG PARTICIPATION

Proposed RESOLUTION 2136 is A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE TOWN OF MUNSTER, INDIANA TO ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT WITH THE COUNTY OF LAKE, INDIANA IN UNDERTAKING COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES. The Community Development Block Grant funding formula is dependent on the Federal budget process and timeline. These funds are administered through the Lake County Community Economic Development Department (LCCEDD). The LCCEDD allots \$715,000.00 to CDBG Community and County Projects and this level of funding has remained at this level for over six years. Allotments are determined by population size and a minimum base rate for all participants.

Communities receive funding every other year, and the allotment for Munster has been around \$100,000.00. Projects are based on Census tract data and Munster has used its allotment for alley repaving in the Northwest section of Town. At this time, all communities are asked to make a statement of intent to either participate in the FY2025-2027 CDBG Program or to opt-out.

Staff recommends adopting Resolution 2136 as drafted by LCCEDD which will make the statement that the Town intends to continue its partnership with Lake County through August 2028 and to authorize the Council President to execute the required agreement.

Councilor Petersen moved, with a second by Councilor Shinkan, to adopt Resolution 2136 to extend the partnership and authorize the council President to execute the agreement with Lake County for the Fiscal Year 2026-2028 Community Development Block Grant Program. Councilors Shinkan, Hofferth, Gardiner, Petersen, and Nellans voted in favor of Resolution 2136. Motion carried.

CHANGE ORDER: 2024 CDBG ALLEY PAVING

On March 4, 2024, Town Council awarded Site Services the Community Development Block Grant project for alley repaving north of Beacon Place and south of Beverly Place and east of Manor Avenue. The work consisted of pavement removal, installation of HMA pavement, sidewalk and curb reconstruction, driveway restoration, and all surface restoration. Site Services had the winning bid of \$96,321.00 for the project. The next closest bid was from Rieth-Riley at \$109,018.00.

A change order has been created for the 2024 Community Development Block Grant project for an increased alley paving width to ensure the edge of new pavement would meet the edge of the existing driveways along the alley. Also, the concrete apron was thickened to allow for garbage truck access. The amount of the change order is \$11,441.15. The new contract price of the project is \$107,762.15. Pay Application #1 has been received in the amount of \$96,321.00 which includes a 10% retainage for the work completed to June 20, 2024. Lake County Community Economic Development Department will be requested to pay the invoice for \$86,688.90.

Councilor Shinkan moved, with a second by Councilor Hofferth, approve the change order in the amount of \$11,441.15 for a new total cost of the alley repaving at \$107,762.15 and approve Pay Application #1 to Site Services in the amount of \$86,688.90 with Munster paying a total of \$7,762.15. Councilors Shinkan, Hofferth, Gardiner, Petersen, and Nellans voted in favor; none voted against. Motion carried.

CHANGE ORDER: CCMG 2023-1 TRAFFIC CALMING

On July 17, 2023, Council awarded the construction contract for the CCMG 2023-1 paving and water main project to Milestone Contractors North, Inc. The work includes paving and water main installation on Thicket Lane, Tamarack Place, and Pasturegate Lane which was completed last fall. Additional paving was to begin this spring on Treadway Road and Tudor Court.

On January 8, 2024, a design change order was approved for SEH to prepare the design for the bike path extension that was the construction of Treadway Road west of Calumet Avenue by the Community Foundation of Northwest Indiana including sidewalk on the south side and a multi-use trail on the north side of the Treadway Road extension.

Traffic calming on Treadway Road was modified from the existing plan. The curb bump outs near the intersections of Treadway and Sutton, Windsor and Oxford will not be installed, instead raised crosswalks will be installed at these intersections. Additionally, the raised crosswalk at the intersection of Treadway and Tudor will not be installed and instead a speed hump at the west limit of the park will be installed. These design modifications from the original design required multiple meetings with the Town and SEH. These scope expansions required additional time of on-site representation. SEH completed the INDOT closeout of the project resulting in additional costs as well.

Councilor Gardiner moved, with a second by Councilor Hofferth, to approve the amendment for SEH additional costs incurred for the CCMG 2023-1 project totaling \$14,700.00. Councilor Petersen moved to table in order to establish traffic calming guidelines and withdrew his motion after additional discussion. Councilors Shinkan, Hofferth, Gardiner, Petersen, and Nellans voted in favor; none voted against. Motion carried.

CHANGE ORDER: 2024 PAVING AND WATERMAIN

This change order is for Rieth-Riley Construction Co., Inc to hydro-excavate approximately 433 linear feet of curb along Fran-Lin Parkway to expose the existing fiber optic line to continue curb removals.

After an on-site meeting on June 28, 2024, in order to keep the project moving it was determined to hydro-excavate approximately 433 linear feet on Fran-Lin Parkway. This is an additional cost of \$27,300.00 to the project. To keep the project moving forward and on schedule, the Interim Town Manager signed the change order as it is within her signing authority limit.

Councilor Gardiner moved, with a second by Councilor Shinkan, moved to confirm the change order from Rieth-Riley Construction, Co., Inc in the amount of \$27,300.00 to hydro-excavate along Fran-Lin Parkway for a new total job cost of \$5,224,379.33. Councilors Shinkan, Hofferth, Gardiner, Petersen, and Nellans voted in favor; none voted against. Motion carried.

CHANGE ORDER: RIVER BEND WATER TANK FENCE

On May 9, 2024, Town Council approved the gate opener, gate and fence at the River Bend water storage tank facility in the amount of \$15,532.00 from Oak Ridge Fence and Gate, Inc. After the quote was approved, it was determined to add the installation of a gooseneck keypad and loop for \$1,400.00. and a keypad and loop detector for \$1,200.00. For a total increase from the quoted price of \$2,600.00. The current invoice is in the amount of \$18,132.00.

Councilor Hofferth moved, with a second by Councilor Shinkan, to approve the additional items totaling \$2,600.00 to Oak Ridge Fence and Gate for a new invoice total of \$18,132.00. Councilors Shinkan, Hofferth, Gardiner, Petersen, and Nellans voted in favor; none voted against. Motion carried.

BID AWARD: CCMG 2024-1 PAVING

On June 26, 2024, bids were received for the paving and traffic calming improvements for the CCMG 2024-1 project. The project includes installation of traffic calming on Meadow Lane and Highland Place, roadway reconstruction on Meadow Lane, Highland Place and Linden Avenue and roadway resurfacing on Independence Drive.

Two quotes were received for the project: \$1,099,982.10 from Milestone Contractors L.P. and \$1,261,227.50 from Rieth-Riley Construction Co, Inc. The Engineer's estimate was \$1,177,884.00. SEH's recommendation is to award the project to Milestone Contractors North, Inc. for a total of \$1,099,982.10. The current design and bid specs include speed humps on both Highland Place and Meadow Lanes which are being treated as alternates. Council and Staff will review the proposed speed humps to determine if they will be installed.

The eligible CCMG items total \$1,099,982.10. CCMG funds will pay for half of these costs, up to the grant amount of \$843,479.50. The Town's projected total cost for the project is \$549,991.05.

Councilor Hofferth moved, with a second by Councilor Shinkan, to approve Milestone Contractors North, Inc., for a total cost of \$1,099,982.10 for the CCMG 2024-1 Bid Award as recommended by SHE. Councilor Petersen amended the motion to include with the installation of speed humps or other traffic calming measures being reviewed prior to installation, with a second by Councilor Shinkan. Councilors Shinkan, Hofferth, Gardiner, Petersen, and Nellans voted in favor of the amended motion; none voted against. Motion carried. Councilors Shinkan, Hofferth, Gardiner, Petersen, and Nellans voted in favor of the original motion; none voted against. Motion carried.

ENGAGEMENT LETTER: CCMG 2024-2 ENGINEERING SERVICES

The Town of Munster intends to apply for the Community Crossing Matching Grant (CCMG) funds from INDOT during the second call for funding in 2024. The Town would like to engage SEH of Indiana, LLC to complete topographic survey, prepare engineering plans and specifications, provide bid services, and provide RPR services to rehabilitate the streets.

The proposed streets included in the CCMG 2024-2 project are Cardinal Drive, Heather Drive and Oakwood Court and includes repaving of the streets which are in poor condition. Proposed work on Woodlawn Avenue includes replacement of the water main and repaving of the street. The grant is a 50/50 grant with Munster providing 50% of the funds to repave or reconstruct streets in poor condition. Task 1.1 topographical survey, Task 1.2 project plan sheets, Task 1.3 project contract documents and Task 1.4 bid phase services. These Task 1 services will be completed by SEH for a lump sum fee of \$65,600.00. Task 2 is for Resident Project Representative (RPR) services during the construction phase. Task 2 will be at an hourly basis not to exceed \$49,400.00.

Councilor Shinkan moved, with a second by Councilor Hofferth, to approve engineering services to SEH for the CCMG 2024-2 project to include Cardinal Drive, Oakwood Court, Heather Drive and Woodlawn Avenue in the amount of \$115,000.00. Councilors Shinkan, Hofferth, Gardiner, Petersen, and Nellans voted in favor; none voted against. Motion carried.

ENGAGEMENT LETTER: EMPLOYMENT SEARCH

An Interim Director of Operations has been in place for about six months, and the time has come to find a permanent Director. At the May 20, 2024, meeting, Council approved Organizational Development Solutions, Inc. (ODS) to perform a salary and benefit study. ODS also performs recruitment services, and Staff requested a proposal for this work.

The proposed scope of work includes working with Council/Search Committee to do the following.

1. Develop a timeline
2. Identify salary range and benefits
3. Update the job description
4. Write the job posting and place in local and national organization listings, Indeed, and social media
5. Screen applicants for education, qualifications and overall fit within the organization

6. Conduct phone and in-person interviews to narrow the field.
7. Conduct second interviews with candidates and Interim Town Manager to determine candidates to be interviewed by Council
8. Facilitate interviews between final candidates and Council

The project will be billed at \$125.00/hour plus posting expenses. The anticipated cost is between \$5,500.00 and \$7,500.00. Because they concentrate on Northwest Indiana for all its work, ODS has an in-depth knowledge of the area. Staff believes ODS is the best option for identifying Munster's next Director of Operations. If the proposal is approved, work would begin immediately and it is anticipated that the successful candidate would be in place by the end of October.

Councilor Hofferth moved, with a second by Councilor Shinkan, to approve the proposal from ODS dated July 9, 2024, to perform the search for the next Director of Operations at a cost not to exceed \$7,500.00. Councilors Shinkan, Hofferth, Gardiner, Petersen, and Nellans voted in favor; none voted against. Motion carried.

ENGAGEMENT LETTER: DEBT ANALYSIS

There is a need to create a multi-year plan for Public Works infrastructure projects for roads, sewers, and water. With any capital plan, it is necessary to identify funding sources and opportunities. Traditionally, the Town has issued debt for these projects. With a multi-year plan, it is prudent to review the current debt position and plan for the anticipated future infrastructure projects.

Financial Advisor Baker Tilly has provided an engagement letter to perform the following work.

1. Develop preliminary estimates of potential project cost budgets
2. Estimate and identify various debt service structures
3. Estimate total debt service, potential repayment sources and potential impact on the debt service tax rate
4. Summarize existing and estimate future assessed values
5. Provide debt service structure options, estimate interest rates, estimate debt service tax rates and estimate impacts on taxpayers

This work is in addition to and complementary to the Comprehensive Financial Plan update currently being performed by Baker Tilly. The cost is not to exceed \$15,000.00.

Councilor Shinkan moved, with a second by Councilor Hofferth, to approve the engagement letter with Baker Tilly for debt analysis at a cost not to exceed \$15,000.00, as presented. Councilors Shinkan, Hofferth, Gardiner, Petersen, and Nellans voted in favor; none voted against. Motion carried.

ENGAGEMENT LETTER: EXPLICO

As part of an on-going litigation case, the Town anticipates the need to engage an expert crash reconstructionist. Eichhorn & Eichhorn represents the Town in this matter and has recommended Explico for this matter. The work would be performed on a time-and-expense basis and the rate of \$400.00/hour and \$550.00/hour for testimony. This work will be paid from the Self-Funded Liability Insurance Fund.

Councilor Gardiner moved, with a second by Councilor Hofferth, to approve the engagement letter with Explico for expert reconstructionist services on a time-and-expense basis. Councilors Shinkan, Hofferth, Gardiner, Petersen, and Nellans voted in favor; none voted against. Motion carried.

TRAFFIC CALMING ON AZALEA DRIVE

As part of the roadwork being done on Azalea Drive speed humps, raised crosswalks, and chicanes were installed. Each of these devices are designed to control speeding. Once installed, Councilors and Staff have received numerous phone calls and emails from those living in this area strongly opposed to the chicanes. Residents have also spoken during the Public Comment portion of recent Council meetings.

The issue and traffic calming in general has been discussed at numerous Agenda Review meetings and among Staff. There is general consensus from residents, Staff, the Speed Team, and Council that the use of chicanes is problematic. Chicanes cause parking issues for the homes closest to the structures. Public Works will have problems plowing and performing other maintenance on the road.

Milestone is the contractor performing the roadwork for this project and has provided a cost of \$27,214.00 to remove them and patch the area. They estimate it will take about two weeks to get on the schedule to perform the work.

After numerous discussions, Staff and the Speed Team recommend the removal of the chicanes on Azalea Drive.

Councilor Shinkan moved, with a second by Councilor Hofferth, to authorize Milestone Contractors North to remove the chicanes on Azalea Drive at a cost not to exceed \$27,217.00. Councilors Shinkan, Hofferth, Gardiner, Petersen, and Nellans voted in favor; none voted against. Motion carried.

DISPOSAL OF SURPLUS EQUIPMENT

The following list of equipment is no longer serviceable or viable to the Police Department, and they request the Town Council declare it surplus and allow for its disposal. The list is as follows:

- Lenovo ThinkCentre M73 Computer (Quantity Two (2), Serial #s MJO19MUV, MJ03F5RA)
- HP ProDesk 400 G3 Mini (Serial # 8CG73906RT)

- Acer Tablet (Serial# W0I01304E36B74817211)
- Acer Aspire Laptop (Serial# NXGNVAA0027441272F7600)
- Fujitsu Tablet (Quantity Three (3) Serial #'s R8300039, R6X01410, R830041)
- Acer Tablet (Quantity Three (3), Serial #'s NTL0RAA0053119A7F1601, NTL0RAA0053170B3361601, NTL0RAA00531506EB21601)
- ID Printer 10000471914 (no longer viable)
- Ikey Keyboard SB87TPMUSB (Serial # 81419036467 no longer functioning)
- Fujitsu Tablets R830041 & R6X01410 (no longer functioning)
- Brother Squad Printer (Serial # U62863-A1G543883)
- Lenovo Desktop MJ019MUV, 8CG73906RT & R8300039 (no longer functioning)
- Acer Tablet OI101304E436B74817211 (no longer functioning)

Councilor Gardiner moved, with a second by Councilor Shinkan, to declare as surplus and authorize the Police Department to destroy listed property and remove same from the current inventory. Councilors Shinkan, Hofferth, Gardiner, Petersen, and Nellans voted in favor; none voted against. Motion carried.

PORTFOLIO REPORTS

Clerk-Treasurer Mis reported three NIRPC and Town of Munster projects, Main Street, Hart and Schoon Ditch bridges and emergency vehicle preemptive signals, are moving as scheduled. Clerk-Treasurer Mis was appointed to the AIM Medical Trust Board of Directors. The Munster Community Garden is hosting a Ribbon Cutting on Friday, August 2nd at 6:00 pm.

Councilor Gardiner shared Munster Civic Foundation will be having committee meetings on July 16th.

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, August 5, 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 Shinkan and seconded by Councilor Hofferth, the meeting adjourned at 8:04 p.m. by voice vote.

David B. Nellans, President

ATTEST:

Wendy Mis, Clerk-Treasurer

DRAFT