

TOWN OF MUNSTER
MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE TOWN COUNCIL
FEBRUARY 17, 2025

A meeting of the Munster Town Council convened at 6:30 p.m. on Monday, February 17, 2025. 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. The meeting was not recorded although a meeting transcript was electronically generated by Zoom.

Councilors George Shinkan, Joseph G. Hofferth, Chuck Gardiner, David B. Nellans, and Jonathan Petersen, and were physically present at Town Hall. Also present in Town Hall were Clerk-Treasurer Wendy Mis, Controller/Interim Town Manager Patricia Abbott, Police Chief Stephen Scheckel, Chief Mark Hajduk, Town Attorney Dave Westland, and Director of Operations Bob Valois. Representatives from the media were present.

President Shinkan 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 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. Cavin McNulty, 8202 Jackson, sent emails to Councilors and Clerk-Treasurer Mis stressing the importance of Munster for future generations and the importance of a sustainability commission in Munster. Councilor President Shinkan asked for a plan and will have a follow up meeting to discuss.

Mr. Paul Nelson, 8026, Harrison, of the Munster Sustainable and Green hosts one of the best organized Earth Day events in the Region. Mr. Nelson shared they collected enough plastic bags to make a park bench for the community garden and over 13,000 plastic bread tags. They have partnered with Humane Indiana and collected Christmas lights. He supports the Council to organize a sustainability commission.

CONSENT AGENDA

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Minutes of a regular meeting held on February 3, 2025

ACCOUNTS PAYABLE VOUCHER REGISTERS

Confirmation of Voucher Register #24-2B dated 02/06/24 totaling \$561,960.43
Confirmation of Voucher Register #24-2C dated 02/07/24 totaling \$643,068.29
Confirmation of Voucher Register #25-2D dated 02/10/25 totaling \$59,572.01
Confirmation of Voucher Register #25-2E dated 02/10/25 totaling \$119,673.52
Confirmation of Voucher Register #25-2F dated 02/13/25 totaling \$51,569.17
Approval of Voucher Register #25-2G dated 02/17/25 totaling \$535,756.07

WATER LEAK ADJUSTMENTS 2025-4 AND 2025-5

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
2025-4	6,000	260,000	1 month	\$ 1,449.21	\$ 1,393.88	\$ 55.33
2025-5	3,000	75,000	2 months	\$ 484.71	\$ 442.73	\$ 41.98

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

OLD BUSINESS

ORDINANCE 1976: AMENDMENT #1: 2025 SALARY ORDINANCE

Introduced ORDINANCE 1976 is AMENDMENT #1 TO THE 2025 SALARY ORDINANCE. Ordinance 1972 established the 2025 Salary Ordinance and was adopted December 2, 2024. The Council held first reading on this matter at the February 3, 2025, meeting. The proposed changes include increasing the number of maintenance employees in Public Works, the creation of an Economic Development Director position, reclassification of the Civilian Accreditation/Public Records Manager to PD Technical Support Specialist, stipends for various certifications, and clerical corrections.

Since the first reading, a few changes have been made. The distribution of Maintenance employees across the Grades has been changed but the overall number of Maintenance employees has remained unchanged from first reading. The stipend amounts have been updated by including other departments and put into a separate exhibit (Exhibit G). Fund distributions have been updated on Exhibit D.

Councilor Gardiner moved, with a second by Councilor Hofferth, to adopt Ordinance 1976 on second reading, as amended. Councilor Gardiner received clarification that the certification stipends are only for the specific departments as designated. Councilors Hofferth, Gardiner, Nellans, Petersen, and Shinkan voted in favor; none voted against. Motion passed.

NEW BUSINESS

ORDINANCE 1978: ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATIONS (1)

Proposed ORDINANCE 1978 is AN ORDINANCE FOR THE ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATION OF FUNDS FOR THE YEAR 2025 (1). There are six funds in need of additional appropriations.

The addition of Maintenance personnel under Ordinance 1976 created the need for additional appropriations in the corresponding funds. The total appropriation requests are as follows: Motor Vehicle Highway: \$80,000.00 Sewer Maintenance: \$160,000.00 Water Cash Operating: \$160,000.00

The Local Road & Street Fund requests appropriations in the amount of \$127,000.00. \$15,000.00 of this will ensure our Traffic Signal Maintenance Service is funded. Our Street Resurfacing Project that

used CCMG 2024-1 Grant funds totaled less than the amount we were given. The \$112,000.00 in Capital Outlay must be refunded back to the state.

When ARPA funds were allocated, it was determined this fund could be used for Water Improvements as this impacts all residents in a positive way. An additional appropriation of \$236,766.00 will be used towards our water tank rehabilitation capital project. This will be the final project using ARPA dollars.

The LIT Economic Development Fund needs \$210,000.00 in additional appropriations to continue to fund the engineering for the Bridges Over Ditches Project, attorney fees for the Zoning Rollback project, and HWC on-call services related to the Community Development as a result of the Zoning Rollback.

The procedure for securing additional appropriations requires a public hearing, scheduled for March 3, 2025, and the adoption of an ordinance by the Town Council. The Local Road and Street and Motor Vehicle Highway Funds are controlled funds. Once the ordinance is adopted, the request will be submitted to the Department of Local Government Finance which will issue its determination within ten days. The others are considered reporting only funds, and the appropriations will go into effect upon passage of the ordinance.

Councilor Nellans moved, with a second by Councilor Gardiner, to hear proposed Ordinance 1978 for additional appropriations on first reading and schedule a public hearing and second reading for March 3, 2025. Councilors Hofferth, Gardiner, Nellans, Petersen, and Shinkan voted in favor; none voted against. Councilor Petersen questioned the attorney fees before he cast his vote and a brief discussion ensued. Motion passed.

ENGAGEMENT LETTER FOR ON-CALL PLANNING SERVICES

The Community Development Department has requested approval of an engagement letter with HWC to perform on-call planning services through December 31, 2025, at a cost not to exceed \$57,470.00. The on-call work will include an update to the Munster Zoning Map, compatible with Town software and in support of amendments to the Munster Zoning Code. The scope of work includes a separate item to update the Rules and Regulations of the Munster Board of Zoning Appeals and Munster Plan Commission for a lump sum fee of \$2,530.00. The total cost would not exceed \$60,000.00 and would be paid from the LIT-Economic Development Fund.

Councilor Hofferth moved, with a second by Councilor Nellans to approve the Agreement to Provide Services dated February 4, 2025, to provide on-call planning services and update of the Rules and Regulations of the Munster Board of Zoning Appeals and Munster Plan Commission, for an amount not to exceed \$60,000.00 to be paid from the LIT-Economic Development Fund. Councilors Hofferth, Gardiner, Nellans, Petersen, and Shinkan voted in favor; none voted against. Motion passed.

ENGAGEMENT LETTER: EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK UPDATE

The Employee Handbook was last updated in 2018. This document is designed to protect the Town and to communicate the rules, benefits, expectations, and basic information employees need. While there have been modifications approved by the Council over the past seven years, there are positions, practices, and policies that have been modified or eliminated. The overall document does not reflect this and needs to be reviewed and updated.

Organizational Development Solutions, Inc. (ODS) performed the compensation study and job description review for the Town in 2024. ODS has presented an engagement letter to review and update the

handbook. This will include comparing what is in the handbook to what is happening in practice, updates to comply with current law, and the creation of up to twenty SOPs. Staff will be given the opportunity to provide input during the process.

Once ODS completes their work, it will be given to the Town Attorney for legal review and appropriate modifications will be made. ODS will perform an in-service session with Staff to go through the new handbook. The overall format will be changed as well to allow for easier use and understanding.

The cost of performing the outlined work is \$7,500.00 with additional policy creation at an hourly rate of \$125.00

Councilor Gardiner moved, with a second by Councilor Nellans, to approve the agreement with ODS to update the Employee Handbook as outlined in the February 2025 Letter of Engagement from ODS at a cost not to exceed \$7,500.00. Councilors Hofferth, Gardiner, Nellans, Petersen, and Shinkan voted in favor; none voted against. Motion passed.

BID AWARD: CCMG 2024-2

On February 14, 2025, bids were received for Community Crossing Matching Grant (CCMG) 2024-2 Paving and Watermain Project. The project includes watermain installation, storm sewer improvements, sanitary sewer improvements, pavement milling, subbase repair, concrete curb replacement, sidewalk and curb ramp removal and replacement, asphalt paving and striping as needed on Cardinal Drive, Heather Drive, Oakwood Court, Broadmoor Avenue, and Woodlawn Avenue. The Engineer's Estimate for the work was \$3,884,053.50 and bids were received as follows.

Milestone Contractors, LP	\$3,276,740.00
Gary Material Supply, LLC	\$3,461,448.15*
Gatlin Plumbing & Heating	\$3,600,000.00
Reith-Riley Construction Co., Inc.	\$3,627,191.88*
Grimmer Construction	\$3,989,641.19
Dyer Construction Company, Inc.	\$3,884,053.50

Both Gary Material Supply and Reith-Riley had discrepancies between their bid submittal and the bid tabulation performed by SEH. The amounts did not impact the bid results and are identified on the Bid Tabulation presented to Council.

The total amount of CCMG-eligible items is \$1,835,861.31, but the CCMG award total is \$660,442.49. Because Munster received \$549,991.05 in CCMG 2024-1, the Town was restricted in how much it could receive in the second round of funding. Munster received the full amount applied for in the CCMG 2024-2 application. Munster will be responsible for \$2,616,297.51 of this project.

Councilor Nellans moved, with a second by Councilor Gardiner to approve Milestone Contractors L.P. for a total cost of \$3,276,740.00 for the CCMG 2024-2 Bid Award as recommended by SEH. Councilors Hofferth, Gardiner, Nellans, Petersen, and Shinkan voted in favor; none voted against. Motion passed.

REPORTS

No reports were given.

PORTFOLIO REPORTS

Councilor Gardiner reported the Munster Civic Foundation meet on February 10, 2025 with 16 of 18 of the executive members present. The 2024 year end fundraising letter was successful and 2025 looks to be a great year for the organization with numerous projects for the engagement of Munster in the works. Councilor Gardiner continued that TDD meet the prior week and the Park Board would be meeting on February 18, 2025.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

(Unless stated otherwise, all meetings of the Town Council begin at 6:30 p.m. at Munster Town Hall.)

The Town Council will hold a regular meeting on Monday, March 3, 2025. The Redevelopment Commission will hold a regular meeting immediately following. An Executive Session will immediately follow the Redevelopment Commission meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Council, and upon a motion by Councilor Nellans and seconded by Councilor Gardiner, the meeting adjourned at 6:57 p.m. by voice vote.

George Shinkan, President

ATTEST:

Wendy Mis, Clerk-Treasurer