

TOWN OF MUNSTER
MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE TOWN COUNCIL
APRIL 21, 2025

A meeting of the Munster Town Council convened at 6:30 p.m. on Monday, April 21, 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, Jonathan Petersen, and David B. Nellans, and were physically present in Town Hall. Also present in Town Hall were Clerk-Treasurer Wendy Mis, Controller/Interim Town Manager Patricia Abbott, Police Chief Stephen Scheckel, Fire Chief Mark Hajduk, and Town Attorney Dave Westland. The news media was represented.

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

PUBLIC HEARING: ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATIONS (2)

The first reading on the ordinance was held at the April 7, 2025, meeting. Additional appropriations were sought in four funds: TIF, Technology, Sewer Maintenance, and MVH-Restricted.

The procedure for securing additional appropriations requires a public hearing, scheduled for this evening, and the adoption of an ordinance by the Town Council. Upon passage of the ordinance, the appropriations for the above funds will be in effect and reported to the Department of Local Government Finance (DLGF).

President Shinkan opened the public hearing.

No member of the public came forward to speak, and the public hearing was closed.

PUBLIC HEARING: COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT

Each spring, the Lake County Community Economic Development Department applies to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for new funding through the Community Development Block Grant program (CDBG).

One of the application requirements is to hold public hearings in the communities where CDBG funding is allocated in order to obtain input from the local citizens on the proposed use(s) of the new funding. For FY2025, the Town of Munster CDBG allocation is approximately \$102,997.00.

The most common use of CDBG funds is for infrastructure, including street reconstruction, sanitary sewers, water line extensions, storm drainage improvements, sidewalks, and projects to remove architectural barriers (handicapped access), such as curb cuts and wheelchair ramps. CDBG funds may also be used to eliminate slums and blight through demolition of unsafe buildings or other clearance activities.

CDBG funded infrastructure projects may only be done in areas where the neighborhood is at least 42% low/moderate income according to HUD guidelines. In most cases, an income survey must be done to qualify the area for funding eligibility. The income information taken by the survey is strictly confidential and is used solely for the purpose of determining the area's eligibility for CDBG funding.

Handicapped access projects and demolition may be done anywhere in a community, without the need for area income determinations.

The public hearing is just the start of the application process for Lake County. There are a series of legal advertisements and comment periods that take place during the summer, prior to final grant approval from HUD in late August. New CDBG funding is released to the County and its entitlement communities on or around September 1st and needs to be expended by June 15th of the following year.

After public comment tonight, three documents need to be read and adopted: the Affirmative Action Program, Section 3 Understanding, and a Resolution authorizing the City/Town Executive to submit a project proposal for CDBG funding.

Finally, project applications, and supporting documentation, need to be submitted no later than May 5, 2025, for review by Lake County.

The floor was opened for comments.

No one rose to claim the floor and the public hearing 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 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. Tom Jurich, 1839 Magnolia, expressed concern about Fran-Lin and the speeding especially considering the reduced lanes on 45th. He sees the raised crosswalks are effective in slowing down traffic.

No one else rose to claim the floor.

CONSENT AGENDA

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Minutes of a regular meeting held on April 7, 2025

ACCOUNTS PAYABLE VOUCHER REGISTERS

Confirmation of Voucher Register #25-4D dated 04/10/2025 totaling \$59,572.01
Confirmation of Voucher Register #25-4E dated 04/10/2025 totaling \$45,652.10
Confirmation of Voucher Register #25-4F dated 04/10/2025 totaling \$389,800.61
Confirmation of Voucher Register #25-4G dated 04/18/2025 totaling \$527,815.78
Confirmation of Voucher Register #25-4H dated 04/17/2025 totaling \$103,596.91
Approval of Voucher Register #25-4I dated 04/21/2025 totaling \$387,837.16

WATER LEAK ADJUSTMENTS 2025-14* THROUGH 2025-17

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:

<u>Number</u>	<u>Usage</u>	<u>Usage</u>	<u>of Time</u>	<u>Bill</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Bill</u>
2025-14*	14,000	40,000	1 month	\$ 290.99	\$ 182.74	\$ 108.25
2025-16	8,000	48,000	2 months	\$ 317.34	\$ 206.48	\$ 110.86
2025-17	1,000	17,000	1 month	\$ 130.40	\$ 106.55	\$ 23.85

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 1980: ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATIONS (2)

Introduced ORDINANCE 1980 is AN ORDINANCE FOR THE ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATION OF FUNDS FOR THE YEAR 2025 (2). This matter was the subject of a public hearing earlier this evening. Upon passage of the ordinance, the appropriations will be in effect and reported to the Department of Local Government Finance.

Councilor Gardiner moved, with a second by Councilor Nellans, to adopt Ordinance 1980, as presented. Councilors Hofferth, Gardiner, Nellans, Petersen, and Shinkan voted in favor; none voted against. Motion passed.

NEW BUSINESS

APPROVAL OF TOWN MANAGER AGREEMENT

The Town has gone through an executive search firm to identify a permanent Town Manager. Terms have been negotiated, and an agreement has gone through legal review.

Councilor Nellans moved, with a second by Councilor Hofferth, to approve the agreement with Jim Marino to serve as the Munster Town Manager, as presented. Councilors Hofferth, Gardiner, Nellans, Petersen, and Shinkan voted in favor; none voted against. Motion passed.

RESOLUTION 2150: 2025 NATIONAL NIGHT OUT BLOCK PARTY REQUEST

Proposed RESOLUTION 2150 is A RESOLUTION FOR THE WAIVER OF FEES FOR THE 2025 NATIONAL NIGHT OUT EVENTS. This year the Munster Police Department and the Choice Community Council will hold the 30th Annual National Night Out Event on August 5, 2025. This event has grown every year, and this year the organizers are encouraging residents to hold block parties on the Saturday preceding the event.

Under Town Code, a block party requires an application, a damage deposit of \$250.00, and a fee of \$100.00 for Public Works employees to deliver traffic barricades. Residents have the option to collect and return the barricades themselves for no charge.

In order to encourage and facilitate the block parties, it has been requested that both of these fees be waived. The application process is the same, and Public Works staff will still deliver the barricades.

Resolution 2150 has been drafted for this purpose.

Councilor Hofferth moved, with a second by Councilor Nellans, to adopt Resolution 2150 as presented. Councilors Hofferth, Gardiner, Nellans, Petersen, and Shinkan voted in favor; none voted against. Motion passed.

RESOLUTION 2151: CDBG PROPOSAL

Proposed Resolution 2151 is A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING AND DIRECTING THE TOWN COUNCIL PRESIDENT OF THE TOWN OF MUNSTER TO SUBMIT A PROJECT PROPOSAL FOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT FUNDS FOR FEDERAL FISCAL YEAR 2025. Munster is eligible for \$102,997.00 in Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds for FY2025. This is federal funding which is distributed through the Lake County Community Economic Development Office. This is not a grant. It is an allocation of federal funds based on demographic factors, federal appropriations and other housing variables. There is a set process to receive the funds which involves going through the application process in one year then doing the project and receiving the funds in the next year. This is an application year for Munster.

Staff prepared the necessary documents and completed the application form. Earlier this evening, Council conducted the required public hearing and read the documents as required for the CDBG program. Resolution 2151 has been prepared and is scheduled for adoption this evening as the next step in the process. Once completed, the documents will be forwarded to the County by the May 5, 2025 deadline.

Councilor Hofferth moved, with a second by Councilor Nellans to approve Resolution 2151 as presented. Councilors Hofferth, Gardiner, Nellans, Petersen, and Shinkan voted in favor; none voted against. Motion passed.

RESOLUTION 2152: EXTENSION OF RESOLUTION 2147

Proposed RESOLUTION 2152 is A RESOLUTION EXTENDING RESOLUTION 2147: AUTHORIZING AN INTERIM TOWN MANAGER. Resolution 2147 was approved by Council at their December 16, 2024, meeting to authorize the Interim Town Manager to continue through May 23, 2025, or until a permanent manager was identified. Jim Marino has been selected as the new Town Manager, and the agreement for his services was approved earlier this evening.

Mr. Marino is scheduled to begin April 22, 2025, and a transition period is beneficial to allow him to be brought up to speed on the many projects and matters of Town business. To aid in this transition, it will be beneficial to extend the services of the Interim Town Manager through May 23, 2025, as originally contemplated in Resolution 2147. Resolution 2152 has been drafted for this purpose.

Councilor Gardiner moved, with a second by Councilor Nellans to approve Resolution 2152 as presented. Councilors Hofferth, Gardiner, Nellans, Petersen, and Shinkan voted in favor; none voted against. Motion passed.

LIGHTNING DETECTION SYSTEM

Munster has utilized the Thor Guard Lightning Detection System for over twenty-four years. The system gives warnings of lightning in the area. Over time, repairs have been made, and some units have been replaced. The current system is antiquated and no longer supported by Thor Guard.

The current Thor Guard TC360 is the newest model which warns of lightning in the area and predicts lightning. The main units are integrated with David weather stations. This will allow Munst to have real time weather data for all sections of Town. The cost to refit all existing locations with the new system is \$172,755.00 which includes one year of software maintenance for each sensor. There will be a \$2,500.00 trade-in for the old system.

General Obligation Bond Proceeds will cover \$90,000.00 of the cost and the balance will be paid from Cumulative Capital Development.

Councilor Nellans moved, with a second by Councilor Hofferth to allow Fire Chief and EMA Director Mark Hajduk to sign the quote dated March 7, 2025, from Thor Guard in the amount of \$172,755.00 to be paid from GO Bond and CCD Funds. Councilors Hofferth, Gardiner, Nellans, Petersen, and Shinkan voted in favor; none voted against. Motion passed.

CONSTRUCTION INSPECTION: PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE PROJECT

The Town went through the INDOT prescribed process to select a firm to perform the construction engineering on the Bridges Over Ditches Project which will construct a pedestrian bridge over Hart Ditch and Cady Marsh Ditch. This process was completed in November 2024. The selection committee chose SEH to perform this work, and INDOT approved the determination.

Since that time there were a few items that needed final approval. Those have been secured, and the LPA Consulting Contract can be executed. This must be approved and submitted to INDOT by May 1, 2025, to retain the funding in this fiscal year.

The earliest construction can begin is July 2025 with completion in May 2026. The schedule is based on the lead time needed to secure the prefabricated bridge. It is expected to take six to eight months to be delivered once ordered. Letting for the project is scheduled for next month. SEH will work with the contractor on the final schedule once the lead time is established by the bridge manufacturer.

The total fee is hourly based with a not to exceed amount of \$253,300. This amount accounts for anticipated delays. This is part of the NIRPC funding for the project. Munster's portion will be paid from the LIT-Economic Development Fund. Construction will come from the 2024 General Obligation Bond.

Councilor Nellans moved, with a second by Councilor Hofferth to approve the LPA Consulting Contract with SEH for Construction Inspection of the Bike and Pedestrian Facilities on the trail over Hart Ditch and Cady Marsh Ditch in the Town of Munster, Des. No. 1173597. Councilors Hofferth, Gardiner, Nellans, Petersen, and Shinkan voted in favor; none voted against. Motion passed.

SUPPLEMENTAL AGREEMENT: MAIN STREET

At the March 7, 2022, meeting, Council approved a contract with DLZ Indiana, LLC for Phase I design of the Main Street Complete Street Redesign and Reconstruction Project at an amount not to exceed \$751,840.00. At the October 7, 2024, meeting, Council approved Supplemental Agreement #1 bringing the contract total to \$898,440.00. This was due to changes in how Council wanted the road designed.

The north side of main Street includes a multi-use path. Staff have been approached by the Town of Dyer requesting the project include the installation of sidewalks on the south side of Main Street, and they are willing to pay for this portion of the work. In order to accomplish this, DLZ needs to update the project scope to address the following.

1. Addition of 5' concrete sidewalk on south side of Main Street from Columbia/Sheffield Avenue to Calumet Avenue and Wellington Drive to Shannon Bridge.
2. Hydraulic design and hydraulic variance document updates related to additional impervious area of the sidewalk.
3. Documentation and coordination with Army Corp related to the presumed isolated wetlands within the project limits.
4. Additional management and utility coordination related to the addition of the sidewalk.

Under the terms of the agreement, the cost will increase by \$49,700.00 for a total contract amount of \$948,140.00, the letting date extended from July 2027 to October 2027. The Town will apply with NIRPC for additional funding to partially cover this cost. Dyer has agreed in principle to cover the costs associated with installing the sidewalks, and we can anticipate a more formal statement of this agreement.

Councilor Gardiner moved, with a second by Councilor Nellans, to approve the Supplemental Letter Agreement No. 2 from DLZ for a new contract total of \$948,140.00. Councilors Hofferth, Gardiner, Nellans, Petersen, and Shinkan voted in favor; none voted against. Motion passed.

LICENSE AGREEMENT: TOWN OF HIGHLAND

At the August 5, 2024, meeting, Council approved the purchase of Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) equipment. This allows meters to be read with a meter driving every street in Town each month. The meters currently in Munster homes are AMI-ready.

Utility Supply Company (USC) has done a propagation study to identify the optimal number of locators and best location for their installation. A total of four collectors are recommended to provide sufficient coverage and redundancy. One would be mounted on each of the White Oak Avenue, Superior Avenue, Ridge Road water towers. The fourth location would require a pole be erected in the Burlwood Park area. Staff has worked with the Town of Highland to mount a collector on their water tower located near Indianapolis Boulevard by Meijer. The propagation study shows this would provide Munster the needed coverage.

The Water Board of Highland approved a license agreement at their March 27, 2025, meeting to allow the equipment to be placed on the tower. The agreement has a 25-year term with an annual payment to Highland of \$100.00 to cover the cost of the electricity that will be used and administrative costs for Highland. Munster will also pay for the cost to inspect the work once completed and for the legal costs incurred by Highland to get the agreement in place.

Councilor Nellans moved, with a second by Councilor Hofferth, to approve the license agreement with the Town of Highland dated March 27, 2025, for the installation of AMI equipment. Council expressed appreciation to the Town of Highland for their cooperation. Councilors Hofferth, Gardiner, Nellans, Petersen, and Shinkan voted in favor; none voted against. Motion passed.

LANDFILL IMPROVEMENTS

The Town works with various professional consultants to maintain the landfill including Cabeno Environmental Field Services for tuning and maintenance of the well field, Clarke Energy who focus on the generator, and Andrews Engineering who coordinates with the consultants and IDEM. Each organization has deep knowledge of the landfill.

As part of the Pro Shop and Golf Cart Facility work, the gas header line of the well field was broken. Cabeno happened to be on-site when this happened and the line was capped at each end. The intention was to come back and complete the repair once construction was finished. Cabeno has submitted a quote to perform the work at a cost of \$27,700.00.

Council approved repairs to the leachate disposal system at the April 15, 2024, meeting. At the time of that approval, Staff expected to have a better understanding of what else would be needed for the lift stations related to that system. In 2024, the focus was on the underground storage tanks which were replaced. The focus for 2025 with the leachate system is to get each sump system evaluated and working properly.

There are five separate panels, and it is now known that most of the collection sump system were either powered off or not functioning. All five need replacement. This will allow the system to function as designed and remove the leachate from the landfill to maintain IDEM compliance. HD Mechanical submitted a quote for \$183,142.40 to perform the work. Staff recommend adding a 10% contingency to this for a total authorization of \$200,000.00.

The costs will be covered by bond proceeds and the Solid Waste Management Fund.

Councilor Gardiner moved, with a second by Councilor Nellans to approve the well field repair work as outlined in the Scope of Work dated December 2, 2024, from Cabeno Environmental Field Services, LLC in the amount of \$27,700.00, and approve the replacement of five panels for the leachate collection system as outlined in the quote from HD Mechanical dated March 20, 2025, at an amount not to exceed \$200,000.00. Councilors Hofferth, Gardiner, Nellans, Petersen, and Shinkan voted in favor; none voted against. Motion passed.

REPORTS

The Munster Civic Foundation is sponsoring a new program called *Electrifying Munster – Beauty and the Box*. Artwork would be placed on the utility boxes at intersections with traffic lights. The project will be ongoing, and it is projected 10 – 12 boxes will be wrapped in 2025.

PORTFOLIO REPORTS

Councilor Gardiner reported the Munster Civic Foundation's next public art project will be wrapping electrical/traffic boxes throughout town with artistic vinyl decals. The project will be ongoing and it is projected 10 – 12 boxes will be wrapped in 2025.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

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

There will be a Community Workshop as part of the Strategic Planning Project on Tuesday, April 22, 2025, beginning at 6:00 p.m.

The Town Council will hold a work study on Wednesday, April 23, 2025, at 3:00 p.m. as part of the Strategic Planning Project.

The Town Council will hold a regular meeting on Monday, May 5, 2025. 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 Hofferth, the meeting adjourned at 7:04 p.m. by voice vote.

George Shinkan, President

ATTEST:

Wendy Mis, Clerk-Treasurer