

TOWN OF MUNSTER
MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE TOWN COUNCIL
JUNE 16, 2025

A meeting of the Munster Town Council convened at 6:31 p.m. on Monday, June 16, 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.

Councilors George Shinkan, Joseph G. Hofferth, Chuck Gardiner, and David B. Nellans, and were physically present in Town Hall. Also present in Town Hall were Clerk-Treasurer Wendy Mis, Town Manager Jim Marino, Controller Patricia Abbott, Fire Chief Mark Hajduk, Director of Operations Bob Valois, Hammond Sanitary District representative Mike Hawkins, and Town Attorney Dave Westland. Councilor Jonathan Petersen participated virtually. The news media was not represented.

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

Councilor Petersen announced he was participating virtually due to a health issue.

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. Chris Hanson, 8312 Columbia Avenue, shared concerns about single family homes becoming multi-family units. He had a house in his neighborhood that was an issue and he sees the home on Ridge and Kooy advertising rooms for rent. He wants to Council to focus on preventing this.

Mr. Cavin McNulty, 8202 Jackson Avenue, recently returned from Madison WI and told the Council about the lovely greenspace and bike lanes there. Residents want to make a difference and have a positive impact on our community.

Ms. Alisa Buchmeier, 1814 Alta Vista, as a resident and small business owner in Town, she shared how important sustainability is and making green choices. This is more than just the environment it is about our health, reputation and will add value to our community.

Ms. Amanda Ernst, 2133 Inner Circle, she bought her home because of our schools and encouraged to Council to vote yes for the sustainability committee to protect our natural resources and give our kids the best start for the future.

No one else rose to claim the floor.

CONSENT AGENDA

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Minutes of a regular meeting held on June 2, 2025

ACCOUNTS PAYABLE VOUCHER REGISTERS

Confirmation of Voucher Register #25-6B dated 06/05/2025 totaling \$176,849.04

Confirmation of Voucher Register #25-6C dated 06/10/2025 totaling \$59,572.01

Confirmation of Voucher Register #25-6D dated 06/10/2025 totaling \$41,215.72

Confirmation of Voucher Register #25-6E dated 06/12/2025 totaling \$380,946.84

Approval of Voucher Register #25-6F dated 06/16/2025 totaling \$442,475.21

Confirmation of Voucher Register #25-6G dated 06/13/2025 totaling \$616,473.46

WATER LEAK ADJUSTMENTS 2025-26 THROUGH 2025-28

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
2025-26	4,000	20,000	1 month	\$ 151.78	\$ 119.64	\$ 32.14
2025-27	2,000	76,000	2 months	\$ 557.47	\$ 509.77	\$ 47.70
2025-28	5,000	26,000	2 months	\$ 201.91	\$ 76.19	\$ 125.72

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

NEW BUSINESS

BID AWARD: COMMUNITY CROSSINGS MATCHING GRANT (CCMG) 2025-1

Public Works staff opened bids on June 12, 2025 for the CCMG 2025-1 Paving and Watermain Improvements. The project includes watermain installation, pavement milling, subbase repair, concrete curb replacement, sidewalk and curb ramp removal and replacement, asphalt paving and striping. Roads to be repaved include Harrison Avenue, Lilac Lane, Timberwood Lane, Somerset Drive, Cobblestone Road, Westminster Lane, and Cornwallis Lane. Bids were received as follows.

Milestone Contractors, L.P.	\$2,621,704.00
Rieth-Riley Construction Co., Inc.	\$2,855,300.95

The total eligible CCMG work is \$2,469,204.00. CCMG funds will cover half of these costs up to the total grant amount of \$1,500,000.00. Staff and SEH recommend awarding the bid to Milestone. At their bid price, only \$1,234,602.00 of the grant funds will be used. The Town portion of the project would be \$1,387,102.00 with \$152,500.00 coming from Water Funds and the balance from G.O. Bond Proceeds.

Staff will apply for additional CCMG funds in the next round of funding to capture the \$265,398 difference between the 2025-1 awarded amount and the amount eligible items based on this bid.

Councilor Gardiner moved, with a second by Councilor Nellans to award the bid to Milestone Contractors, LP for a total cost of \$2,621,704.00 for the CCMG 2025-1 Bid Award as recommended by SEH. Councilors Hofferth, Gardiner, Nellans, Petersen, and Shinkan voted in favor; none voted against. Motion passed.

ENGAGEMENT LETTER: 2025 G.O. BOND

The Town has long issued bonds on a rolling basis for the purposes of road resurfacing, vehicle and equipment replacement, and completion of necessary capital projects. Each bond had a four-year term with one bond being issued and another bond being retired each year. This has allowed the Town to maintain a fairly steady tax levy while keeping up with necessary infrastructure work.

Senate Enrolled Act 1 makes numerous changes to property taxes and tax levies. One of the changes relates to the tax levy rate for debt service. The Town needs to consider the tax rate when issuing the bond(s). There is now a threshold which, if exceeded, leads to additional steps and potentially a referendum which can only be held in certain years. To address these changes, keep a steady tax rate, and continue to accomplish the work needed in Town, Staff recommends working with Financial Advisor Baker Tilly for the structuring of the 2025 bond issue(s).

Baker Tilly has presented an engagement letter to provide these services. The cost will be billed hourly with a not-to-exceed amount of \$20,000.00 and will be paid from the bond proceeds. Staff anticipates issuing the bond(s) on the same timeline as in the past which leads to closing by mid-November.

Councilor Nellans moved, with a second by Councilor Hofferth to approve the letter of engagement with Baker Tilly for the issuance of the 2025 General Obligation Bond. Councilors Hofferth, Gardiner, Nellans, Petersen, and Shinkan voted in favor; none voted against. Motion passed.

RESOLUTION #2154: SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE AND PLAN

Proposed RESOLUTION 2154 is A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF MUNSTER, INDIANA APPROVING AND ADOPTING THE MUNSTER COMMUNITY SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE AND PLAN. In February, three students at Munster High School wrote separate letters to the Town Council requesting establishment of a Sustainability Committee. Members of Council and residents met with students on three occasions over the past few months to clarify the purpose and goals of this committee. The proposed resolution is the result of these meetings and discussion among this group. The purpose and goals of the committee have been provided to the School Town of Munster and the Munster Chamber of Commerce, and they will be reviewing their own resolutions at upcoming meetings.

The purpose of the committed is to assist the Munster community in researching, educating, and implementing environmentally sustainable solutions that will benefit current and future Munster residents. To do this, the discussions have centered around the following.

- Promotion of existing services, programs, events, and efforts that promote the health and sustainability of residents
- Assistance in researching programs, services, events, and/or grants to implement sustainable practices that the community can embrace

- Education of the community about sustainable ideas and opportunities and partnering with schools, businesses, homeowners' associations, and other organizations to advance sustainable initiatives

Councilor Nellans moved, with a second by Councilor Gardiner, to approve Resolution 2154 as presented. Councilor Petersen initiated a discussion about community buy in, public safety and cost when we explore new committess. Councilors Hofferth, Gardiner, Nellans, Petersen, and Shinkan voted in favor; none voted against. Motion passed.

CONTRACT APPROVAL: ROBSON FORENSICS

As part of an on-going litigation case, the Town anticipates the need to engage an expert witness. Eichhorn & Eichhorn represents the Town in this matter and has recommended Robson Forensics for this matter. A retainer of \$3,000.00 will be provided by the Town which will be applied to the first invoice(s) until exhausted. Once exhausted, a subsequent retainer might be required.

The work will be performed on a time-and-expense basis based on the work performed. This work will be paid from the Self-Funded Liability Insurance Fund.

Councilor Gardiner moved, with a second by Councilor Nellans, to approve engagement letter with Robson Forensics, Inc. for expert witness services on time-and expense basis and the payment of a \$3,000.00 retainer. Councilors Hofferth, Gardiner, Nellans, Petersen, and Shinkan voted in favor; none voted against. Motion passed.

CONTRACT APPROVAL: AXON BODY CAMERAS

December 2, 2020, Council approved a six-year contract with AXON Enterprise to institute a body camera program for the Police Department. AXON currently provides the Police Department with body cameras, squad car cameras, tasers, and digital evidence management. The time has come to renew this contract. Staff has been pleased with the services and products of AXON and believes they are the best fit for the agency now and in the future. As a result, Police Staff has negotiated a new ten-year contract which will upgrade the current equipment and software that acts as a virtual real time crime center called FUSUS.

The ten-year contract allows MPD to cap the cost at 4.00% inflation annually. In addition, there are bundles and special pricing that will provide artificial intelligence (AI), the newest taser, virtual reality training, FUSUS, interview room setup with a mobile interview room option as well as regular equipment and software updates throughout the life of the contract. The AI component includes real-time language translation, transcription of body cameras, report writing and the ability to group multiple body camera footage and transcriptions into one case with a brief over all of the information. Any improvements made to the AI over the next ten years are included in the package.

The total contract cost is \$4,099,496.57 with \$442,348.55 due the first year and \$406,349.78 in each of the remaining nine years. The additional cost in Year One is for a true-up of the existing contracts. The contract will be paid primarily from the LIT-Public Safety Fund with a portion coming from the Cumulative Capital Development Fund.

Councilor Nellans moved, with a second by Councilor Hofferth, to authorize the Town of Munster to enter into a contract with Axon Enterprises for the OSP10+ with AI 10 Year Bundle for \$4,099,796.57. Councilors Hofferth, Gardiner, Nellans, Petersen, and Shinkan voted in favor; none voted against. Motion passed.

PORTFOLIO REPORTS

Clerk-Treasurer Mis shared two Board of Safety members and two Park board members joined her at the Boards and Commission dinner on May 29th for the Shared Ethics Advisory Commission.

Councilor Gardiner shared the summer concerts will be on Tuesday night and the Parks Board will be meeting on June 16, 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, July 7, 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 Nellans and seconded by Councilor Hofferth, the meeting adjourned at 7:13 p.m. by voice vote.

George Shinkan, President

ATTEST:

Wendy Mis, Clerk-Treasurer