

**TOWN OF MUNSTER  
MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE TOWN COUNCIL  
JANUARY 18, 2021**

A regular meeting of the Munster Town Council convened at 7:00 p.m. on Monday, January 18, 2021. At the time of this meeting, the country was facing a pandemic outbreak of the Coronavirus. In response, Indiana Governor Holcomb issued a series of Executive Orders which, among other things, declared a public health emergency and suspended various statutes. Executive Order 20-04 specifically addressed public meetings and the Open-Door Law. This Executive Order, along with the opinion of the Indiana Public Access Counselor, allows for meetings to be held in a virtual environment. Subsequent Executive Orders have extended this practice.

The announced meeting location was Munster Town Hall. Executive Order 20-43 requires adherence to Centers for Disease Control guidelines regarding the number of people gathering in one location and maintaining a distance of at least six feet from another person. As a result, Councilors, Staff, and the public had the option to participate via Zoom meeting technology. Councilors Chuck Gardiner and Andy Koultourides were physically present at Town Hall. Councilors Ken Schoon, Lee Ann Mellon (arrived late), and Steven Tulowitzki were present in the virtual setting. It is believed each was in a different physical location. President Koultourides presided.

Also present in Town Hall were Clerk-Treasurer Wendy Mis, Controller Patricia Abbott, Town Manager Dustin Anderson, Police Chief Stephen F. Scheckel, Town Attorney David W. Westland, Planning Director Thomas Vander Woude, Superintendent of Operations Chris Spolnik, and Munster Representative to the Hammond Sanitary District Mike Hawkins. The news media were not represented. The public was given the information needed to access the meeting virtually, and some took advantage of it.

The Town Council has sought legal counsel and has performed its due diligence to the best of its ability in a continually changing situation. The Town Council believes it is acting in accordance with Indiana State law, the Governor's Executive Orders, and the interpretations and directives of other State agencies.

President Koultourides opened the meeting with a moment of silence followed by the pledge of allegiance.

**45<sup>th</sup> STREET CONSTRUCTION UPDATE**

DLZ representative Lee Randell was present in the virtual setting. Mr. Randell reported that work continues on the lift station, the alley of Camellia Drive, and the water main installation at Centennial Village. There are no new estimates on the final acceleration cost. The estimate remains at \$300,000.00.

Councilor Tulowitzki asked about the light pole that was damaged at the site in an accident. Mr. Randell answered that Hawk Electric is working on it, but it could take up to three months for the new pole to be delivered.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

Because of the unique nature of this meeting, the Town of Munster accepted public comment 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 [danderson@munster.org](mailto:danderson@munster.org). Mr. Anderson reported that none were received.

Clerk-Treasurer Mis shared a note received in a water bill thanking the Town for the holiday light display at Town Hall.

No one rose to claim the floor.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Approval of the minutes of the special meeting held on January 7, 2021

**ACCOUNTS PAYABLE VOUCHER REGISTERS**

Confirmation of Voucher Register #20-12W dated 12/15/20 totaling \$28,856.69  
Confirmation of Voucher Register #20-12X dated 12/22/21 totaling \$79.28  
Confirmation of Voucher Register #21-1B dated 01/07/21 totaling \$781,654.31  
Confirmation of Voucher Register #21-1C dated 01/04/21 totaling \$15.00  
Confirmation of Voucher Register #21-1D dated 01/04/21 totaling \$33.40  
Confirmation of Voucher Register #21-1E dated 01/11/21 totaling \$122,166.56  
Confirmation of Voucher Register #21-1F dated 01/11/21 totaling \$84,655.49  
Confirmation of Voucher Register #21-1G dated 01/08/21 totaling \$1,068.85  
Confirmation of Voucher Register #21-1H dated 01/12/21 totaling \$65.88  
Confirmation of Voucher Register #21-1I dated 01/18/21 totaling \$194,040.13  
Confirmation of Voucher Register #21-1J dated 01/14/21 totaling \$30.00  
Confirmation of Voucher Register #21-1K dated 01/14/21 totaling \$682,146.30  
Confirmation of Voucher Register #21-1L dated 01/15/21 totaling \$421,205.47  
Confirmation of Voucher Register #21-1M dated 01/15/21 totaling \$393,714.94

**WATER BILL ADJUSTMENTS 2021-02**

Staff received a request for adjustment under the leak adjustment policy adopted by the Town Council on April 8, 2013. The customer has completed the required form, and the request meets all the criteria for adjustments as follows:

<u>Adjustment Number</u>	<u>Average Usage</u>	<u>Actual Usage</u>	<u>Length of Time</u>	<u>Original Bill</u>	<u>Requested Adjustment Amount</u>	<u>Adjusted Bill</u>
2021-02	21,000	134,000	2 months	\$ 385.91	\$ 254.45	\$ 131.46

Councilor Mellon arrived in the virtual setting.

Councilor Tulowitzki asked about the payment to AJ Gallagher. Mr. Anderson explained it was for the liability insurance coverage previously approved by Council.

Councilor Gardiner moved, with a second by Councilor Schoon, to accept the Consent Agenda as presented. Councilors Schoon, Mellon, Gardiner, Tulowitzki and Koultourides voted in favor; none voted against. Motion carried.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**CHANGE ORDER #021: GRADE SEPARATION REBAR ESCALATION COST**

This item was moved up the agenda as a courtesy to Mr. Randell.

In order to complete Wall 4 and move the railroad tracks onto their permanent alignment, a specialized crew from the railroad had to be scheduled. These crews have tight availability and missing the scheduled date would put the entire project on an indefinite delay.

Two areas needed to be backfilled prior to the scheduled CN crew arriving on site. The original backfill material was not available soon enough to complete the required work. An alternate material was agreed upon. The alternate was an additional \$3.12/ton for a total additional cost of \$28,233.82.

The TIF Allocation Fund 471 will be used to pay the invoice.

Councilor Tulowitzki commented on the extensive documentation provided.

Councilor Gardiner clarified that the difference between the price estimated and the final price was due to actual quantities used.

Councilor Tulowitzki moved, with a second by Councilor Gardiner, to approve Change Order # 021 for INDOT Contract B-36229 in the amount of \$28,233.82. Councilors Schoon, Mellon, Gardiner, Tulowitzki, and Koultourides voted in favor; none voted against.

### **APPOINTMENTS AND PORTFOLIO ASSIGNMENTS**

President Koultourides announced assignments of the Councilors to the various boards and commissions as members and liaisons. By general consent, the assignments were accepted. A copy of the assignments is made part of these minutes.

Councilor Gardiner moved, with a second by Councilor Mellon, to appoint Wendy Mis as the Town representative on the Northwest Indiana Regional Planning Commission (NIRPC). Councilors Schoon, Mellon, Gardiner, Tulowitzki, and Koultourides voted in favor; none voted against.

President Koultourides appointed Mellon, Schoon, and Tulowitzki to the Redevelopment Commission each for a term to expire December 31, 2021.

Councilor Mellon moved, with a second by Councilor Tulowitzki, to nominate Gardiner and Koultourides to the Redevelopment Commission each for a term to expire December 31, 2021. Motion carried viva voce.

### **FEDERALLY MANDATED RISK AND RESILIENCE WATER ASSESSMENT**

America's Water Infrastructure Act (AWIA) requires drinking water systems that serve more than 3,300 people to develop a risk assessment and emergency response plan. This risk assessment is due June 30, 2021 and the emergency response plan must be updated and certified by December 31, 2021. These will need to be updated again in 2026.

SEH has submitted a proposal including three tasks to complete this work. Task 1 is for Project Initialization and Data Collection; Task 2 performs the Risk and Resilience Assessment, and Task 3 develops the Emergency Response Plan. All three tasks will be completed for a total cost not to exceed \$20,000.00. The project will be paid from the Water Cash Operating Fund 601.

In response to questions from Councilor Tulowitzki, Mr. Anderson explained that this work will not replace a needs study of the water system.

Councilor Tulowitzki moved, with a second by Councilor Mellon, to authorize the Town Manager to enter into an agreement with SEH of Indiana to comply with the American Water Infrastructure Act at a cost not to exceed \$20,000.00. Councilors Schoon, Mellon, Gardiner, Tulowitzki, and Koultourides voted in favor; none voted against.

**AMERICA IN BLOOM/CN “ECOCONNEXIONS  
FROM THE GROUND UP” GRANT AGREEMENT**

The Town has secured a grant and is seeking approval to enter into an agreement for the America in Bloom grant. The grant amount is \$25,000.00 and the funds will be used to install landscaping along the Pennsy Greenway trail between Centennial Village and the Canadian National railroad tracks.

The total project cost is \$50,000.00. The grant requires a 50% local match. Centennial Village LLC has agreed to provide half of the match and the Town would provide the remaining \$12,250.00. The project will be completed in 2021.

Councilor Gardiner clarified the location of the project and the current state of the site.

Councilor Tulowitzki moved, with a second by Councilor Gardiner, to authorize the Town Manager to execute an agreement with American in Bloom to receive a \$25,000.00 CN “EcoConnexions From the Ground Up” grant. Councilors Schoon, Mellon, Gardiner, Tulowitzki, and Koultourides voted in favor; none voted against.

**REPORTS**

**PORTFOLIO REPORTS**

This portion of the meeting has been added to give elected officials an opportunity to share news about the various boards and commission on which they serve as liaison.

Councilor Gardiner announced the Board of Safety meeting scheduled for Thursday, January 21, 2021. In response to a question from Councilor Tulowitzki, Councilor Gardiner stated that a status update on the body camera project will be made at the next Board of Safety meeting.

No other Councilors gave a report.

Clerk-Treasurer Mis announced an upcoming Shared Ethics Advisory Committee summit.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

(Unless stated otherwise, all meetings of the Town Council begin at 7:00 p.m. at the Munster Town Hall.)  
The number of residents able to participate in person will be limited based on the Governor’s Executive Order(s) in effect at that time.

The Town Council will hold regular meetings on Monday, February 1, 15, and March 1, 2021. The Redevelopment Commission will hold regular meetings immediately following the Town Council meetings.

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to come before the Council, Councilor Gardiner moved with a second by Councilor Mellon, to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 7:31 p.m. by voice vote.

**ATTEST:**

**Andy Koultourides, President**

**Wendy Mis, Clerk-Treasurer**