



1005 Ridge Road, Munster, Indiana

# NEWS YOU CAN USE

February 2022

Edited by E. Payne



## Utility Rates Increasing In 2022

The Town of Munster maintains three underground utilities. We are a wholesale customer of water from the Hammond Water Works Department. This means we own and operate the distribution system for water. Additionally, we are a member of the Hammond Sanitary District. The District owns and maintains all the pump stations, pressurized mains, retention basins, and the sanitary sewage treatment plant. The Town owns and maintains the gravity drains. Finally, we own and maintain our stormwater system, which manages over-land water from rain and snow melt.

Each of these different utilities should be looked at as an enterprise that we are all stakeholders in.

At their December 20<sup>th</sup> meeting, Council received a presentation by a utility rate consultant. This presentation went through the current costs of maintaining our utility enterprises.

These utility enterprises have significant maintenance needs, particularly in our water utility. Munster has experienced over 30 water main breaks a year for the past three years. This is not normal for a system of our size, or sustainable. Additionally, all seven of our water towers are due to be reconditioned. If this necessary maintenance is deferred, it places in question not only the reliability of our water pressure but our ability to continue to deliver this resource safely and consistently.

The situation we find ourselves in is a result of the Town having under-charged for the cost of service for decades. This is understandably a very common practice. Many cities and towns do not want to charge their residents the actual cost of providing the service and therefore either subsidize their utilities from other sources or simply lower their service expectations until a catastrophic failure that will end up costing more than gradual rate increases for routine maintenance.

It is no secret that street flooding is an issue during intense rain events. These intense rain events are happening at increasingly frequent intervals. Our stormwater system was constructed with the assumption that the weather we experienced when the system was designed would be the weather that we would experience indefinitely.

As it happens, that is not the case. To effectively address street flooding and other stormwater challenges, we must recalculate our stormwater fee. As it is, the current stormwater fee supplements the sewer user fees we receive from the Hamond Sanitary District to maintain our sanitary sewer collection system. If a new fee is adopted, the Town will have the capacity to improve stormwater capacity and drainage.

These rates will be further discussed at the Town Council meetings in February and March. We have the rate consultant's presentation on the Town's website. I would encourage you to review these documents and participate in the conversation on how best to steward our resources.



## **CHOOSING TO PARTICIPATE**

The Power of Civic Engagement

## Boards and Commissions

Munster Residents make this town a great place to live, work and play. One of the many ways that you assist the town is by serving on various boards and commissions. Currently there are over 40 residents serving on the various boards and commissions throughout the Town. Over the next month the Town will be looking to fill open positions on the Board of Safety, Park Board and the Board of Zoning Appeals. Also we will be looking for residents input as we update the Town Comprehensive Plan (additional information will be forthcoming in future months). If you are interested in serving on these or any boards within the Town, please complete the application that is found on the website at [www.munster.org](http://www.munster.org). If you have any questions please reach out to any of the Council Members. Their contact information is listed on the back of the News You Can Use.

## Special Event Summit

The Town of Munster has been very fortunate to have so many community organizations, schools, service clubs, and churches offer their time and talent to make 'Munster a Better Place to Live'. Whether it is a fund-raising event, volunteering or running a special event, the Town of Munster and its residents has reaped the reward of the hard work of these groups that in their own special way bring our community closer.

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## Special Events Summit (continued)

Recently, at a Munster Civic Foundation Meeting, it was suggested that the Town host a Community Wide Meeting that invites all organizations together to discuss their upcoming schedules and ideas. The purpose of the meeting would be to...

1. Generate an overall town wide schedule of activities, special events
2. Potentially facilitate the interaction of some groups that may be looking to work with other groups in town to either start a new event or improve their event in one way or another.
3. Create a connection between the Town, community organizations, etc.

The Meeting will be held on Wednesday, Feb 23rd at Town Hall from 7:00 p.m.– 8:00pm. All Groups are invited to attend, we only ask that you register your attendance by emailing Chuck Gardiner, Munster Town Council President, at [cgardiner@munster.org](mailto:cgardiner@munster.org).



## THE CLERK-TREASURER IN FEBRUARY

The Clerk-Treasurer's Office has distributed the appropriate year-end forms to employees and vendors.

We have processed hundreds of business registrations and sold well over three hundred pet tags. We have been diligently closing out 2021 and preparing our Annual Financial Report, which is due at the end of this month. We are doing all of this while remaining available to answer your Town of Munster utility questions, address problems, AND process your Town utility payments. We are extra busy the first few months of each year for sure!

The Utility billing department can be reached at [waterbilling@munster.org](mailto:waterbilling@munster.org) or by calling (219)836-6948. We can accept utility payments in the Clerk-Treasurer's office in Munster Town Hall, in the red drop box in the Town Hall parking lot, through ACH withdrawals, and online. Our office is open from 7:30 a.m.– 4:30 p.m.

The state legislature is currently in session, and we follow what is happening down in Indianapolis closely. We look for items that could have an impact on our Town revenue and our procedures. The final rule from the Department of Treasury on American Rescue Plan was released in January. We have begun to read through this 437 page document and making notes to help us determine how Munster can best use the remaining funds.

At your service,  
*Wendy Mis, Clerk-Treasurer*  
[wmis@munster.org](mailto:wmis@munster.org)  
(219)836-6945

## Munster Town Hall Collection Site

Munster Town Hall supports recycling. The Town Hall campus at 1005 Ridge Road has receptacles for various small recyclables. Town Hall is open from 7:30 a.m. - 4:30 pm. **Do not leave any items outside of the buildings or outside of the appropriate collection bins, as disregard for this may cause the discontinuation of collection availability.**



### Town Hall Main Building Front Vestibule Lake County Solid Waste

LCSW has resumed pick up of household batteries from Munster Town Hall. Receptacles are provided. We encourage you to remove the batteries from bags and only put the batteries in the containers. If the containers are full, please inform personnel in the Clerk-Treasurer's Office.



### Project Gee

Project Gee collects pop tabs for the Chicago Ronald McDonald House. Aluminum pop tabs only.



### Munster Lions Club

Munster Lions have long collected eyeglasses and hearing aids. They ask that you do not deposit any of the glasses cases as they are unable to use them.



### Munster Town Hall Parking Lot Munster Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 2697

Unserviceable (ripped, torn, faded or unwanted) American flags are collected in the "Flag Drop Box" located in the Munster Town Hall parking lot. No sticks or metal poles are accepted. The flags are burned in accordance with the American league regulations and guidelines.



### Munster Police Lobby Munster Police Department

To safely dispose of unused or expired medications (no sharps), the Munster Police Department has a collection box in their main lobby and is open to the public 24 hrs./7 days a week.

# FEBRUARY

2/5	Daddy Daughter Date Night
2/7	Cupcakes and Competition
2/7	Baller Basics Basketball
2/8	Mark O's Cornhole Cup
2/8	Excel in a Day
2/9	Love Box Creation
2/9	First Down Flag Football
2/10	Valentine's Day BINGO
2/10	First Base Baseball
2/11	Premier World Discovery Travel Show
2/13	Cuban Salsa Dance
2/16	Henna Art
2/19	Super Smash Brothers - Ultimate Sports Tournament
2/20	Semi-Private Swim Lessons
2/20	Private Swim Lessons
2/22	Koolaid and Kanvas
2/23	Mosaic & Mimosa's
2/24	Chicago Crime & Mob Tour Van Trip
2/25	Craft in a Box Deadline - St. Patrick's Day Terra Pot Leprechaun
2/25	Spring Soccer Early-Bird Deadline
2/27	Preschool Swim Lessons
2/27	Youth Swim Lessons
2/27	Parent/Tot Swim Lessons



Is your child between the ages of 4-13 and interested in learning soccer? If so, **Spring Soccer** is the perfect choice! They will learn and reinforce skills and fundamentals in league play with occasional practices.

Volunteer coaches ALWAYS NEEDED. Contact Skyler for more information at (219)836-6922. Early-bird deadline is Friday, February 25th.



**Cuban Salsa Dance Class** stems from a very strong and deeply rooted culture. Merge your body and soul while you learn and grasp the Cuban rhythm. The best part? **NO PARTNERS NEEDED!** Ages: 18+. Next session begins Sunday, 2/13 from 12:30 p.m.- 2:00 p.m. at the Social Center.



**Adult Open Basketball** is ongoing until May 24th. Open gym takes place each Tuesday from 7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m. at Elliott Elementary School, entrance C. Pay \$5/each at the door upon entry. Ages: 18+ are welcome to participate.



We are excited to offer a **Super Smash Brothers ultimate esports tournament** on Saturday, 2/19 from 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. This is a double elimination tourney that will kick off with pool play to determine seeding. Questions about the tourney? Contact Skyler at (219)836-6922.



Interested in starting or furthering your career in the medical field? Let us help. Now taking a waitlist for in-class Clinical Medical Assistant and EKG Technician programs beginning April 4. Four students are required for a class to run. To be added to the waitlist, contact Jill at (219)836-6926. Interested in

taking a class at your own pace and online? We have those options too: Dental Assistant, Clinical Medical Asst., Dialysis Technician, Phlebotomy Technician, Medical Administrative Asst., Medical Billing and Coding and more!



Ashley from Skin Colour Events will walk you step-by-step through the work of **Henna Art**. She will break down the design elements that make up traditional Henna designs so that you can create your own body art. All supplies and instruction included. Each participant will receive one henna cone, multiple practice sheets and one lotion cone. Open to ages: 12+ - Next class Wednesday, 2/16 from 6:30 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. at the Social Center.

## DEADLINE REMINDER

- 2/25 **Craft in a Box**
- 2/25 **Spring Soccer Early-Bird Signup**



**KEENAGERS CLUB**

- We are still taking 2022 Keen-Ager Memberships. This membership is valid for adults 50+ individual and couple fees charged.
- After registration - program and trip discounts are given, newsletters will be mailed to you and daily activities are offered Monday - Thursday.
- All memberships are taken in person at the Park Office.

