

The Regular Town Council Meeting of the Town of Schererville, IN was called to order by President Rob Guetzloff at 7:34 p.m. in the Schererville Town Hall, 10 E. Joliet Street Schererville, IN.

Attendance was taken with the following Council Members present: Caleb S. Johnson, Kevin Connelly, Robin Arvanitis, Thomas Schmitt and Rob Guetzloff. Staff members present: Attorney David Austgen, Fire Chief Robert Patterson, Deputy Fire Chief David Meyer, Police Chief Pete Sormaz, Deputy Police Chief Steve McNamara, Park Superintendent John Novacich, Public Works Director Andy Hansen, Director of Operations James Gorman, Town Manager Robert Volkmann, Clerk-Treasurer Michael Troxell and Recording Secretary Robin Thiel.

THEREUPON, Approval of the minutes. Mr. Johnson made a motion to approve the minutes of the July 14, 2021 Public Meeting, seconded Mr. Connelly. All in favor (5-0).

THEREUPON, Claims

- A. APV #97620 - APV #98140 on the General Docket, Totaling \$2,987,771.63
- B. APV #97620 - APV #98140 on the MVH Docket, Totaling \$127,350.51
- C. APV #97669 - APV #98119 on the Payroll Docket, Totaling \$1,145,746.25
- D. Various Funds, First National Bank of Omaha, July Credit Card Charges, \$10,330.65
- E. General Fund - Animal Control, Crossroads Animal Hospital, July Invoices, \$387.21
- F. General Fund - Animal Control, Hobart Animal Clinic, July Invoices, \$222.56
- G. Various Funds, Lithographic Communications, Invoice #154351, \$1,855.00
- H. Various Funds, Austgen Kuiper Jasaitis, July Legal, \$14,511.59
- I. Various Funds, Enterprise Fleet, Monthly Lease, \$3,346.64
- J. Various Funds, LWG CPAs, Invoice #34820, \$500.00
- K. General Fund - Police, Braman Insurance, VIPS Invoice #121212, \$1,557.00
- L. Various Funds, Napa, July Parts, \$149.12
- M. Various Funds, Great Lakes Landscaping, July-Town Mowing, \$5,225.00
- N. Park Bond 2018 Fund, DLZ LLC, Invoice #408497, \$12,204.50
- O. Various Funds, Braman Insurance, Various Invoices, \$156,464.00
- P. Cum Cap Development Fund, Peoples Bank, Principal and Interest Due, Ambulance, \$33,386.89
- Q. General Fund - Court, Hinckley Springs, Water, \$178.06
- R. Park Non-Reverting Fund, Leann Stutler, Schererville Market Entertainment, \$200.00
- S. Park Non-Reverting Fund, Premier Porta Potty, August Various Park Facilities, \$1,915.00
- T. Park Non-Reverting Fund, Szany Electric, Multiple Events, Labor and Materials, \$2,115.00
- U. Park Non-Reverting Fund, Mike Green, Market Entertainment, \$250.00
- V. Park Non-Reverting Fund, Minuteman Press, Banners and Flyers, \$2,050.00
- W. Park Non-Reverting, Ideal Transportation Services, Casino Trip Bus Transportation, \$837.00
- X. Promotion Fund, Lake Central School Corporation, Auditorium Reservation Agreement-Symphony, \$220.00
- Y. General Fund - Animal Control, Lowell Animal Hospital, July Invoice, \$55.00
- Z. Promotion Fund, The Times, 3 - Hall Of Fame Luncheon Attendees, \$150.00

Mr. Schmitt made a motion to approve the claims as presented, seconded by Mrs. Arvanitis. All in favor (5-0).

THEREUPON, Correspondence NONE

THEREUPON, Reports

Fire Chief Robert Patterson reported that for the month of July, the Schererville Fire Department responded to 284 EMS calls, 60 fire related calls for a total of 344 calls.

Police Chief Sormaz stated that next month will mark the twenty years for the 911 attacks and announced that the 911 committee is hosting a twenty anniversary commemoration ceremony on September 11, 2021 at 10:00 am next to the memorial towers.

Mr. Novacich stated that last month the Park Department had a series of events that they participated in or hosting at Redar Park, Rohrman Park and Schererville Scherwood Park. Mr. Novacich

stated that he would like to focus on the World Series Softball Tournament, because when they agreed to renovate that facility, they were looking to host those types of tournaments. He stated that the tournament committee was very impressed with our facility, staff and most impressed for the fact that the tournament was delayed for a downpour and they had the games back on in less than an hour. He stated that all 82 games got in and there were teams from 11 states. Mr. Novacich stated that they have a new event this month, the bike ride, our first annual night bike ride, August 28<sup>th</sup> from Rohrman Park to Centennial Park and back. He stated that they are partnering with the Town of Munster.

Mr. Volkmann reported that Elmer Doctor, who had served the Schererville Police Department as Police Officer and Police Chief back in the 1980's passed away this week. Mr. Volkmann asked that we take a moment of silence in memory of Elmer Doctor.

THEREUPON, Public Comments Regarding Agenda Items NONE

THEREUPON, Old Business NONE

THEREUPON, New Business

ITEM A. Ord. #1971, An Ordinance of the Town of Schererville, Lake County, Indiana, Concerning Removal of the Town Of Schererville Municipal Waterworks Utility from the Jurisdiction of the Indiana Utility Regulatory Commission, and all Matters Related Thereto (**First Reading Only**)

Mr. Volkmann stated that this was on the Water Board Agenda and they made the recommendation for approval of this Ordinance and it starts the Public process for considering removal of the Town of Schererville Water Utilities from the IURC.

Mr. Johnson made a motion to consider on 1<sup>st</sup> reading, Ordinance #1971, seconded by Mr. Connelly. All in favor (5-0).

ITEM B. PUBLIC HEARING

Mr. Troxell stated that we did advertise for the Public Hearing in two newspapers, the Hammond Times and the Post Tribune in the allotted amount of time that was necessary for this Public Hearing.

Ord. #1972, An Ordinance Providing for an Additional Appropriation in the Community Crossings Grant Fund and the Motor Vehicle Highway Restricted Fund of the Town of Schererville for Year 2021, and all Matters Related Thereto

Mr. Troxell stated that this additional appropriation comes to us with, where we have cash in certain funds, but they were not appropriated in our budget process for last year. He stated that additional miscellaneous revenues did come into these funds and the State states that we need to have the Town Council appropriate those funds in order to spend them. Those funds are from the Community Crossing Grant Fund and the Motor Vehicle Highway Restricted Fund. Mr. Troxell stated that the total that you will be appropriating tonight to spend is \$857,170.00.

OPEN TO THE FLOOR FOR PUBLIC COMMENT  
NO COMMENTS FROM THE FLOOR  
CLOSED TO THE FLOOR FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Schmitt made a motion to consider on 1<sup>st</sup> reading, Ordinance #1972, seconded by Mr. Connelly. All in favor (5-0).

Mr. Schmitt made a motion to adopt Ordinance #1972, seconded by Mr. Connelly. All in favor (5-0).

ITEM C. Consider Donation to Northwest Indiana Cancer Kids (NICKs) For "The Great Gold Rush Race 3.0" to be held September 12, 2021 at Redar Park (\$2,000.00).

Mr. Schmitt made a motion to donate \$2,000.00 to the Northwest Indiana Cancer Kids (NICKs), seconded by Mrs. Arvanitis.

Mr. Johnson asked Mr. Troxell where we will be paying this from. Mr. Troxell stated that this can come out of the promotion fund.

All in favor (5-0).

ITEM D. Consider Acceptance of Quit-Claim Deed from Springrose Heath Home Owners Association (Pennsy Greenway Trail)

Mr. Gorman stated that the Home Owners Association for Springrose Heath subdivision is in favor of deeding this property over to the Town so that we may continue with the Pennsy Phase IV Trail to Crown Point.

Mr. Johnson made a motion to accept the Quit-Claim Deed from the Springrose Heath subdivision for the Pennsy Greenway Trail expansion, seconded by Mr. Connelly. All in favor (5-0).

ITEM E. Consider Acceptance of Request of the Modifications to The Development Plan and Planned Unit Development

Plan Commission Case #21-8-14  
Location: 7095 Burr Street, Griffith, IN  
Petitioner(s): Olthof Homes  
Favorable Recommendation from Plan Commission (6-1)

Mr. Gorman stated that this is the subdivision at the Northeast Corner of Town, at the end of Burr Street. He stated that this is a revised development plan due to the density change. He stated that had to reduce the amount of units from 205 to 200 based on a Lake County Drainage Board meeting and they had to make the setbacks on the ditch. He stated the Developer requested thirty feet and the Drainage Board said you must have fifty feet. In doing so, they lost five lots in their subdivision and because this is a change to the density, they need to get approval from the Town Council again.

Mr. Recktenwall, of Olthof Homes, stated that this is a minor modification to the development plan to coincide with some of the reviews that they went through.

Mr. Johnson stated that he was at the Plan Commission Meeting when they reviewed this a couple of weeks ago, and there was talk about some changes to the cul-de-sacs. He stated he knows that was a concern for snow removal purposes and driveways, the amount of driveways on the cul-de-sacs, and asked Mr. Recktenwall if those have been changed.

Mr. Recktenwall stated that those engineering plans were revised today, and they were just re-submitted to the Town Engineer. He stated that those driveways have been adjusted to be on the straight portion of the cul-de-sac on the east end.

Mr. Johnson stated that he noted that there are two cul-de-sacs on the west side and asked what prevents us from avoiding those cul-de-sacs if they were such a concern. He asked if they could connect those two and make a horse shoe instead.

Mr. Recktenwall stated that they reduced the number of cul-de-sacs in the project down to three of them, and they feel that this is the best layout of the project at this point.

Mr. Johnson stated that he is looking at a plat and there is no mention of an extension to that trail that is in Prairie

Estates. He stated that he thought there was talk initially of a trail extension going through this subdivision.

Mr. Recktenwall stated that their engineering plans and concept plans show the trail, they are proposing an 8' wide trail that will connect from Prairie Rose, 65<sup>th</sup> and Burr Street and probably all the way through their community to the Foxwood Estates Park on the southeast corner. He stated that is part of the engineering that the Town has reviewed.

Mr. Recktenwall explained to Mr. Johnson what their landscaping plan is to do for the five houses they removed from the plan.

Mrs. Arvanitis asked Mr. Recktenwall if they are going to have benches along the trail. Mr. Recktenwall stated yes, the multi-use trail will have six fitness stations and seating areas.

Mr. Connelly asked, in terms of access points to the subdivision, how many are there. Mr. Recktenwall stated there are five. Three on Burr Street, one at Jaskula, one at Phillips and one at 65<sup>th</sup>. He stated that there are two connections at Foxwood Drive and Starling.

Mr. Johnson stated that he is still concerned about the five lots that were lost. He asked that if there is a big green open space right inside the main entrance, shouldn't we have something there, even if it is just set up for a small park, or a pavilion. He stated that everybody that comes in is going to see this area.

Mr. Recktenwall, stated that part of the approval from the Lake County Drainage Board required us not to build any structures within the 50' easement that is there, so they would have only 75' of green space there.

Mr. Johnson stated he would like to say that he still believes that this development is denser than it should be, that it should have all been traditional, eighty foot lots and developed as a single family residential development.

Mr. Schmitt made a motion to accept Plan Commission Case #21-8-14, seconded by Mrs. Arvanitis.

Roll call vote: Mr. Johnson - No; Mr. Connelly - No; Mrs. Arvanitis - Yes; Mr. Schmitt - Yes; Mr. Guetzloff - Yes. Motion carries 3-2.

#### ITEM F. Consider Approval of AccuMed Billing Service Agreement

Mr. Gorman stated that AccuMed does all of our billing for the Fire Department and this is a billing service agreement with AccuMed to allow customers to use the new ambulance rates that were passed at last month's meeting, and billing for fire services.

Mr. Schmitt made a motion to approve the Agreement with AccuMed Billing Service, seconded by Mr. Johnson. All in favor (5-0).

#### ITEM G. Consider Approval of Department of Natural Resources Game Management Proposal for Hoosier Prairie and Suspending Town Ordinance No. 418 and 438

Mr. Gorman stated that this is a Game Management Proposal from the Indiana Department of Natural Resources for the year 2021 for the Hoosier Prairie.

Mr. Johnson made a motion to approve the Department of Natural Resources Game Management Proposal for the Hoosier Prairie and suspending Town Ordinance No. 418 and 438, seconded by Mr. Connelly. All in favor (5-0).

ITEM H. Consider Approval of Donations - \$8,045.00

Mr. Troxell stated that there are quite a few donations for the month of July, so the list will be incorporated to the minutes.

Mr. Connelly made a motion to accept the donations, seconded by Mr. Johnson. All in favor (5-0).

Mr. Guetzloff stated that we are going to do the presentation (Item L) after we take Business from the Floor. He stated they will close the meeting and then have the presentation to the Scouts.

THEREUPON, Business from the floor

Mr. George Michels, 13939 Huseman Street, Cedar Lake, IN stated that he served 34 years on the Schererville Fire Department and it was the best things in his life. He stated as far as Chief Patterson, his opinion is he is doing a great job with what you got and hopefully tonight maybe we can open some eyes here and do a little better. Mr. Michels stated that the first thing he wants to address is comparison. He stated he is going to use Crown Point. Crown Point is very similar to Schererville as far as population and size. Crown Point has twelve full-time fireman on duty at all times, Schererville is supposed to have nine. He stated we have five sometimes, all night, all day, not acceptable. He stated that one of the things that happens is, he was there the other night, there was five guys working and if there is an ambulance call, two of them go out. So when the ambulance is out, if there is a structure fire and it's your house, your neighbor's house or any of the residents of Schererville, we are responding a fire truck with three people. Cardinal rule is two in, two out, so we don't go in. We wait for Mutual Aide to get there, while your house is burning, we're waiting because if we go in and we get hurt, it's our fault and we all want to go home in the morning. The Fireman behind me (in the room) and policeman help out all of the time also. Mr. Michels stated it is unacceptable to have the size of Schererville with five guys on duty running EMS and Ambulance. He stated that Crown Point has one station and their minimum is twelve. He stated that is the number one problem.

Mr. Michels stated another thing he wants to discuss is exit interviews. He stated he believes and he is going to make a suggestion to the Board that when there is an exit interview, somebody from the Town Council should be on that interview, and he believes there should be three or four civilians, because nobody hears why these people are leaving. He asked Councilman Johnson if he knows why any of our fireman are leaving. Mr. Johnson said "I don't". He asked Mr. Connelly, Mr. Connelly said "No". Mr. Michels stated that is a reason that should be presented to the Council and if there was a board with civilians, regular Schererville residents, plus one member of the Council, at least we will know why. Mr. Michels stated that Schererville Fire Department is the third highest paid department to start in Lake County. Why would a Captain leave, why would a Lieutenant leave and go to the bottom. Mr. Michels stated that he hopes some of the people behind him want to step up and talk too. Mr. Michels stated that in conclusion he would like to thank the Union. The Union guys stepped up this year, we have an Indiana Volunteer Firefighters Association that was started when the Schererville Fire Department started. Way back in the 1990 Chief Kaeser came up with a plan to put a certain amount, a low amount of money into a fund and when a fireman got twenty years, (not full-time, he is talking volunteers), they would get a monthly stipend. He said let me tell you what it is. For instance Billy Howe, his dad retired 40 some years, he got twelve dollars a month. He stated it was presented for four hundred dollars and whatever happened, not his concern, it wasn't getting Ok'd, so his union brother firemen came up and said we'll pay it. Mr. Michels stated now I guess with negotiations, according to the Clerk-Treasurer finding it, it will be taken care of, the union will get paid back. But for a very

minimal amount of money, four hundred dollars, when a fireman died he got a grave marker, he got a bible and he got a pastor, a priest, a deacon, a padre, somebody came to his funeral. He stated that is what the IVFA is about. Mr. Michels thanked the Council for their time.

Mr. Guetzloff thanked Mr. Michels for his comments and said they will be taken all into consideration.

Mr. Joseph Konicek, 7661 Morton Street, Merrillville, stated he is currently the president of the Schererville Professional Firefighters Association. He stated he believes all of the Council members should have received an email earlier this week regarding their official request of negotiations for a Labor Management Contract with the Town of Schererville. He stated that we talk about the reason why guys aren't staying here and the department guys are going to. He stated that we have lost several firefighters to Valparaiso, they have a contract in place, their hours worked, their benefits, their working conditions, staffing, overtime, shift coverage. Those are all covered in their contract. He stated that we don't have that here. He stated that we lose guys to Hammond, Hammond has a contract. Not only does Hammond's contract cover previously mentioned things, it also protects them in case of injury. We have gone round and round before about our Worker's Compensation policy with the Fire Department and the Town of Schererville. He stated that this is something that can be easily rectified through negotiations of a contract. He stated as George said, we expect to go home at the end of the day, they expect for their families to be taken care of, we expect to take care of our families. He stated that unless we want to continue to be a stepping stone for firefighters to come here, receive their paramedic training and leave within two to three years. He stated we have to do something different, we have to change. He stated we have to change the mindset of the Town, the Administration and how treat our firefighters. He said that is really what it comes down to, it comes down to respect. Right now, we have an accessibly large amount of part-time firefighters and we still cannot fill our shifts. The problem being is our part-time firefighters get to do what they want. They show up when they want, they schedule themselves when they want and there is no discipline when they don't show up on time. He stated that our firefighters right now regularly stay after work until the minimum staffing is met by part-timers coming from other jobs. The minimum staffing for the Schererville Fire Department everyday should be full-time staff, not part-time staff. The only way that is going to happen is if the Town Council makes a commitment to this department, and makes a commitment to the Town to make sure that it is adequately protected at all times. Mr. Konicek stated that reality is that their current minimal staffing of six is not enough. Our minimal staffing for a Town this size should probably 10-15 firefighters. He said they should be staffing three ambulances, a minimum of two engines at all times, every day.

Mr. Konicek stated that we offer our fill-time guys now, we're giving them a contract saying we're going to send you to paramedic school. He stated that that contract is a joke, because reality is that every one of our guys whose left this department, who signed that contract, received money back when they left. They didn't lose any money, they left here with money in their hand, and even after the refund of paramedic school was taken from their paychecks. Mr. Konicek stated that they want to keep guys here, they have to make sure they have the right staffing, we want to make sure we take care of our guys. They should know that when they show up for work the Town is going to do the right thing for them, so they can do the right thing for the Town. Mr. Konicek stated he hopes that in the near future they are going to be able to sit down at the table, and come up with a mutual beneficial contract with the Town and the members of the Fire Department. He stated we aren't going to see this revolving door anymore, we've lost ten guys in three years, where did they go, why did they leave. He thinks if we sit down and work on this contract we are

going to see that change. Mr. Konicek thanked the Council for listening and if they have any questions to let him know.

Mr. Hansen stated that Anna Mae Matusiak asked if any common walkway be created along Burr Street for residents to walk. She also asked if there is any thoughts for the road to be widened to create a turn lane at Jaskula.

Mr. Volkmann stated that there is some walking trails by 73<sup>rd</sup> and 75<sup>th</sup> Street. He stated that we have a road improvement plan for Burr Street, they have a study that is completed that calls for sidewalks to be installed, but there is no timeline.

Meeting adjourned.

Presentation - Recognition for Eagle Scout Project  
Mark Metz

Mr. Guetzloff stated that we are here to honor and give a certificate of recognition that acknowledges Mark Metz. He is being recognized from the Schererville Town Council for his outstanding achievement of his Eagle Scout project "Wall of Heroes".

Mr. Mark Metz stated that he was presented with this idea from one of his Scout Leaders. He saw that the old board was taking up some space that didn't need to be taken up and asked if he would like to make a new one. Mr. Metz stated he decided yes he would. He stated he came up with the plans with the help of his parents and his coach, and they made the board with the help of his fellow scouts. He stated that the board is here to honor the Veterans who have served.

Mr. Guetzloff presented Mr. Metz with a plaque from the Town Council members and thanked him for a fine job that he has done.

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ROB GUETZLOFF  
TOWN COUNCIL PRESIDENT

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MICHAEL A TROXELL, CMO  
TOWN CLERK-TREASURER

A TRUE COPY

<b>DONATIONS ACCEPTANCE - 7/31/2021</b>			
<b>DONATION FUND -PARK SUMMER PROGRAMS</b>			
	ACCESSIBLE ACCOUNTING - HOCUS POCUS CANDY		100.00
	BAKER'S SQUARE - HOCUS POCUS CANDY		100.00
	PETE'S RV CENTER - HOCUS POCUS		100.00
		TOTAL PARK SUMMER PROGRAMS	300.00
<b>DONATION FUND - NATIONAL NIGHT OUT</b>			
	PRO-BUILD CARPENTER CONSTRUCTORS		50.00
	REBECCA SHEPHERD		100.00
	PIT STOP SMOKE SHOP #1 LLC		100.00
	TOBACCO VALLEY CORP		50.00
	D & D NAPA INC		50.00
	REDFRUIT LLC DBA TOMATO BAR		100.00
	SCHERERVILLE PIZZA LLC		500.00
	WOODHALAPENOS INC		250.00
	DEANIKO INC		100.00
	H2O TANNING AND NAILS LLC		100.00
	SCHEPEL		200.00
	OSAGHAE & ASSOCIATES LTD.		100.00
	PRECISION MANAGEMENT		100.00
	TRUCARE MEDICAL CENTER		100.00
	CINIFAX INC /CORPORATE ACCOUNT		200.00
	SCHERERVILLE CIVIC FUND INC		200.00
	O'DROBINAK & NOWACZYK P.C.		100.00
	FOREVER YOUNG SPORTS CARDS INC		50.00
	ENTERPRISE NETWORK GROUP OF IN, LLC		50.00
	NANCIE LYONS		50.00
	PUNTILLO & CRANE		200.00
	YUH, INC - SCHERERVILLE CLEANERS		50.00
	JEFFREY BONA D.D.S.		100.00
	GRIMMER'S SERVICE INC		100.00
	PETER BATINIC		50.00
	MR & MRS. STEVE YERGOVICH		25.00
	TITO ENTERPRISES INC		100.00
	EON MANAGEMENT INC		200.00
	ALLEN LANDSCAPE CENTRE		50.00
	SECOND STREET DANCE STUDIO INC		50.00
	AMY ROKITA		25.00
	R & R INC		50.00
	JAYDIP INC DBA ROSEWOOD INN		50.00
	MICHAEL P HAM		50.00
	REGIION STRENGTH PERSONAL TRAINING		50.00
	360 FIT LLC		50.00
	CALEB S JOHNSON LAW LLC		100.00
	KENNETH/MAUREEN DECRESCENZO		50.00
	CHICAGO JAX WAX LLC		50.00
	BOTKIN INSURANCE AGENCY INC		100.00
	CAR TEKS LLC		100.00
	ABOUT YOUR VACATONS LLC		50.00
	FURNITURE DEPOT INC		100.00
	HEARING WORLD LLC		120.00
	CHETNIK MEMORIAL HALL		100.00
	CROWDER FAMILY CHIROPRACTIC		200.00
	PREMIER WINDOW SYSTEMS INC		200.00
	SUM HOSPITALITY INC DBA HAMPTON INN &		100.00
	TOTAL ROOFING & CONSTRUCTION SERVICES INC		200.00
	GAIA INC SALON.SPA		50.00
	ST JOHN TOWNSHIP TRUSTEE/LAKE COUNTY		250.00
	OGDEN WELDING SYSTEMS INC		50.00
	GRIT FITNESS/SCHERERVILLE		100.00
	MUNSTER ORTHOPAEDIC INSTITUTE		100.00



	ACCURATE AUTO BODY INC		100.00
	SC PROPERTY MANAGEMENT LLC		100.00
	DEMING MARKETING GROUP		200.00
	DUNKIN DONUTS/AUMSHIV INC		100.00
	FRANCISCAN ALLIANCE		100.00
	STACEY AND SCOTT LANE		100.00
	NWI HIIT DBA F45 TRAINING SCHERERVILLE		100.00
	CROSSROADS FAMILY DENTAL LLC		100.00
	COATING CONCEPTS LLC		100.00
	EDWARD JONES		25.00
	DEMARA INC		500.00
	CONVENTION CENTER DRIVE LLC		100.00
	AQUA TOTS SWIM SCHOOLS		250.00
	RIG HOOKAH INC		100.00
		TOTAL NATIONAL NIGHT OUT DONAT.	7,745.00
		GRAND TOTAL DONATIONS	8,045.00