

The Regular Town Council Meeting of the Town of Schererville, IN was called to order by President Robin Arvanitis at 7:11 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, Thomas Schmitt and Robin Arvanitis. Councilman absent: 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, IT Robbie Hansen, Director of Public Works Andy Hansen, Director of Operations Jim Gorman, Town Manager Robert Volkmann, Clerk-Treasurer Michael Troxell and Recording Secretary Robin Thiel.

THEREUPON, Approval of the minutes. Mr. Connelly made a motion to approve the minutes of the March 9, 2022 Public Meeting, seconded by Mr. Johnson. All in favor (4-0).

THEREUPON, Claims

- A. APV #101569 - APV #102161 on the General Docket, Totaling \$2,374,259.22
- B. APV #101582 - APV #102153 on the MVH Docket, Totaling \$192,600.47
- C. APV #101592 - APV #102137 on the Payroll Docket, Totaling \$1,648,830.00
- D. Various Funds, First National Bank of Omaha, Credit Card Charges, \$10,039.47
- E. Various Funds, Austgen Kuiper Jasaitis, March Legal, \$11,165.44
- F. Various Funds, A. E. Boyce Company, Inc., Yearly Support Fees, \$15,655.00
- G. Cum Cap Development Fund, Bank of America, Invoice #R97885 - Principal & Interest Due, \$166,358.82
- H. Cum Cap Development Fund, Fire Services, Inc., 2022 Fire Truck, \$562,021.00
- I. Park Non-Reverting Fund, Strack & Van Til, Program Supplies, \$344.76
- J. Cable TV Fund, Dogwood Hills Tree Farm, Trees, \$13,516.00
- K. Various Funds, Menards, Parts, \$2,517.24
- L. Various Funds, Tractor Supply, Parts, \$49.99
- M. Park Bond 2018 Fund, Qualite Sports Lighting, Final Field Audit - Rohrman Softball Fields, Pay App #3, \$2,500.00
- N. Cumulative Capital Improvement Fund, Chester Inc., Annual Email Archiver Contract, \$3,480.00

Mr. Troxell stated he has a claim to add to the agenda.  
O. A-1 Portable Signs, Park LED Sign at Park Community Center, \$33,289.00

Mr. Johnson made a motion to add the additional claim to the agenda, seconded by Mr. Schmitt. All in favor (4-0)

Mr. Johnson made a motion to accept the claims as presented, seconded by Mr. Connelly. All in favor (4-0)

THEREUPON, Correspondence NONE

THEREUPON, Reports

Fire Chief Patterson reported that for the month of March they responded to 267 EMS related calls and 40 Fire related calls, for a total of 307 calls.

Chief Patterson stated that he just got notification that we should take possession of our new Fire Engine on April 21<sup>st</sup>.

Deputy Chief McNamara announced a Save the Date for the Police Memorial on May 20<sup>th</sup>, which will take place at the Schererville Police Department.

Mr. Novacich stated that their Party in the Park Series starts Friday, May 6<sup>th</sup> at Redar Park from 5:00 - 9:00 PM.

THEREUPON, Public Comments Regarding Agenda Items NONE

THEREUPON, Old Business NONE

THEREUPON, New Business

ITEM A. Ord. #1975A, An Ordinance Amending Town 2022 Salary Ordinance No. 1975 regarding the Sales and Wages For Officials and Employees of the Town of Schererville Lake County, Indiana, and Repealing all Town Ordinances Or Parts Thereof, in Conflict Herewith

Mr. Gorman stated that this is an amendment to the 2022 Salary Ordinance regarding wages of seasonal workers as well as entry level positions.

Mr. Schmitt made a motion to consider on 1<sup>st</sup> reading, Ordinance #1975A, seconded by Mr. Connelly.

Mr. Johnson asked Mr. Gorman if this also adds additional positions to the seasonal employees, such as Level 1 and Level 2.

Mr. Gorman stated that if a seasonal worker comes back next year and if the supervisor is happy with their performance from the previous year, then that supervisor can then put them in that position.

All in favor on the motion (4-0).

Mr. Schmitt made a motion to adopt Ordinance #1975A, seconded by Mr. Connelly. All in favor (4-0).

ITEM B. Ord. #1975B, An Ordinance Amending Town 2022 Salary Ordinance No. 1975 regarding the Sales and Wages For Officials and Employees of the Town of Schererville Lake County, Indiana, and Repealing all Town Ordinances Or Parts Thereof, in Conflict Herewith

Mr. Gorman stated that this is another amendment to the current Salary Ordinance that is providing Premium Pay to all current full-time and part-time employees who worked during the COVID 19 Pandemic. He stated that Premium Pay consist of one dollar for every hour that an employee worked in the year 2021. Mr. Gorman stated that there is a cap of \$2,000.00. He stated that exempt from Premium Pay are Elected Officials and seasonal workers.

Mr. Schmitt made a motion to consider on 1<sup>st</sup> reading, Ordinance #1975B, seconded by Mr. Johnson.

Mr. Connelly stated that this decision was made by a committee that consisted of Councilman Caleb Johnson, Councilman Tom Schmitt, Town Manager Bob Volkmann, Director of Operations Jim Gorman and Clerk-Treasurer Mike Troxell.

All in favor on the motion (4-0).

Mr. Schmitt made a motion to adopt Ordinance #1975B, seconded by Mr. Johnson. All in favor (4-0).

ITEM C. **PUBLIC HEARING**

Attorney Austgen stated he has reviewed the Proofs of Publications and find them to be in order.

Res. #2202-04 A Resolution of the Schererville Town Council to Approve a Fiscal Plan and Policy for Proposed Annexation of a Parcel of Real Property to the Town of Schererville, Lake County, Indiana

Petitioner(s): Brian Lantz  
Location: 12010 W. 85<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
10300 W. 85<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Part of 10304 W. 85<sup>th</sup> Avenue

Mr. Gorman stated that this is a voluntary annexation from developer Brian Lantz. This property is located just east of Amber

Fields, right off of 85<sup>th</sup> Avenue. He stated that this consist of a twenty one lot subdivision.

Mr. Johnson asked Mr. Gorman if we have facilities to service this area. Mr. Gorman advised yes we do. Mr. Johnson asked if there is a plan to improve the roadway to accommodate this. Mr. Gorman stated that 85<sup>th</sup> is not going to be the access point to this subdivision, it will be Buckingham, inside the Pine Hill Subdivision.

Mr. Schmitt asked Mr. Gorman if these are all single family homes. Mr. Gorman stated that is correct.

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 adopt Resolution #2022-4, seconded by Mr. Johnson.

Mr. Johnson stated he has not seen a plan for this, is this a development that is drawn at all. Mr. Gorman stated no, not at all. Mr. Johnson stated that if we are annexing this in as R-1, so any sort of zoning change would require BZA Approval and then Town Council approval.

Mr. Volkmann stated that the Zoning request would go to the Plan Commission with recommendation to the Town Council.

Mr. Johnson asked that, by Ordinance or by statute, when we adopt this Ordinance of annexation and fiscal plan, it's going to come in as R-1 residential and that is the way it is going to stay until the Plan Commission makes a recommendation and then the Town Council ultimately approve the zoning change.

All in favor (4-0).

Attorney Austgen stated that this should be an agenda item for the May Public Meeting for second reading and adoption of the Ordinance.

ITEM D. Res. #2022-5, A Resolution of the Town of Schererville, Lake County, Indiana, Declaring an Official Intent to Reimburse Expenditures which may be incurred with Respect to Certain Projects, and all Matters Related Thereto

Mr. Gorman stated that this is a Resolution to pay back funds that we borrowed from the TIF District for the improvements we made to public safety building, Fire Station 3.

Mr. Schmitt made a motion to adopt Resolution #2022-5, seconded by Mr. Connelly.

Attorney Austgen stated the reimbursement is intended to cover capital improvements to public safety in the Community going forward. Mr. Johnson asked Attorney Austgen if this is indefinite then, is this Resolution written to the extent it applies indefinitely or is it written for this fiscal year. Attorney Austgen stated that it is limited by use.

Mr. Schmitt amended his motion to include Mr. Austgen's comments, seconded by Mr. Connelly.

Mr. Johnson stated that he is hesitant to adopt a Resolution to just blanket authorizing the Town to reimburse ourselves from the use of the TIF District Funds. He stated he is hesitant because he doesn't want there to be abuse going forward.

Attorney Austgen stated that it is his understanding in review with the staff, with the Town's advisor's and consultants

that foreseeably the items for which reimbursement would occur are eminent.

Mr. Johnson stated that we have certain projects and this is what we referenced previously about the HVAC on the Police Department Building, that's what we are talking about.

Mr. Volkmann stated that is correct, we included Public Safety buildings in the Ordinance in the recapture because we have some improvements we have to make at the Police Department. He stated that more importantly, when we started with the additions and renovations of Fire Station 3 on Burr Street, originally when we authorized the use of TIF Funds for that project, it was with the understanding that those would be reimbursed to the TIF District at some later date as we plan for a Central Station and the cost associated with that, we would roll that all into a Building Corp and develop a Building Corporation Bond to reimburse the Town TIF District for the funds we borrowed from it.

Mr. Johnson stated that what we are anticipating is that when the Central Station is bonded and created then we will pay everything back. Mr. Volkmann stated that the plan is that as soon as he has a budget number for the Central Fire Station, is to develop that budget and compile it with what we just spent on Station 3, the HVAC System for the Police Department and Court Facility, and then get a total number, that would be our Bond Issue for the Building Corporation.

All in favor (4-0).

ITEM E. Consider Various of Use to Allow a Used Car Sales Lot  
To be Operated within the U.S. 41 Commercial Corridor

Board of Zoning Appeal Case #22-3-7  
Petitioner(s)- Dealer's Choice Cars Two (Chris and Elizabeth  
Engelbrecht)  
Address - 2238 U.S.41  
BZA Recommendation - **No Recommendation to the Town Council**  
**(3-0)**

Mr. Gorman stated that this is the old Hjertquist Used Car Motor Sales on the west side of US 41 by Sunset Drive. He stated that this is a family from Highland that currently has a car dealership that the property owner is doing something else with that property so they were asked to leave, so they are looking at this property. He stated that they went in front of the BZA, there was a member that was out of Town and another member that had other commitments, so they didn't come to a resolution on how the vote went, that is why it is coming to the Council as no recommendation.

Lisa Stephan, 9828 Erie Street in Highland. She stated that her family has run Dealer's Choice Cars for thirty years in Northwest Indiana. She stated that they have an A+ rating with the Better Business Bureau. She stated that they have been in contact with Sheri Vanhouke, she is the Field representative for the Secretary of State's office, the auto division. She has given them clearance to move forward and transfer their license over to this new location, if approved.

Lisa stated that their intentions are to get in and clean up the property a little bit, it needs a little bit of cosmetic update. She stated they have an estimate on a new sign, replace the awning that will go across the front of the building, she stated that the awning is falling down, so they have an estimate of \$4,000.00. She stated that they deal with older model vehicles, on average right now 2012 to 2014 is what they have. The cost average is \$10,000.00. Lisa stated they want to come in and continue the family business that they have had and become a member of the Town of Schererville.

Mr. Schmitt asked Ms. Stephan to explain the building that is behind them. Ms. Stephan stated that the owners of that building

are here this evening also, Quest Automotive. She stated that they rented their business for over a dozen years and just in 2021 they purchased the entire property where their business is. She stated that they purchased that property with the intention of having a Use Car Business there.

Mr. Johnson asked Ms. Stephan, at their current location in Highland, how many cars are on the lot on an average. Ms. Stephan stated that at any given time they hold roughly 35 cars, so they will be downsizing. Mr. Johnson asked Ms. Stephan how many cars they will maintain at this lot. She stated twenty. Mr. Johnson asked how twenty cars will fit. Ms. Stephan stated that to the north of the property, the side of the house, would fit a row of five and then another row of five in front of that, making that 10. She stated that there is an ingress egress that they would keep open to flow from the other neighboring business. She stated that the front row on Indianapolis Boulevard would fit 7 cars, making that 17. Then there is a spot for three more in front of the deck, which is on the front of the house. She stated that regarding customer parking, there is a thirty foot driveway that goes along the side, access to the business in the back, Quest Automotive and that is where they would put customer parking.

Mr. Johnson stated that the agreement that you are tentatively working on with Quest Automotive, are they planning to utilize any of that parking space. Mr. Johnson stated that he doesn't want it to be a cramped space. Mr. Johnson stated that one of the things he has a difficult time grasping here, he recognize that you (Ms. Stephan) are having a hardship because your business is suffering from being displaced. But, from the owner's perspective, what is the hardship to get this leased or rented out to a business that complies with our comprehensive plan.

Ms. Petrovich, stated she is one of the owners of Quest Auto Service. She stated that she and her husband have been operating Quest Auto since 2010. She stated that they were renting the property from the owners since 2010 and they were fortunate to purchase it in 2021. She stated that they had to purchase the entire property, not just the property they have their business in. She stated that when Ms. Stephan came to her with their business, they saw that it's a reputable business and it would be a great opportunity to all of them, to rent to someone who has been in business for thirty years. Ms. Petrovich stated that there will be no space issues, it's just that Ms. Stephan will turn over her cars faster.

Mr. Connelly asked Ms. Stephan what is the price range of the cars you are selling. Ms. Stephan stated at the very cheapest \$5,000.00, the most expensive is \$13,900.00. Mr. Johnson asked how long do cars sit on the average. Ms. Stephan stated sometimes an hour and sometimes six months. Mr. Johnson asked Ms. Johnson if they provide oil changes or repairs. She stated no, none at all.

Mr. Johnson stated that what he would like to see them represent to the Council today is just the level of improvement to the building and to the façade. Ms. Stephan stated that the seal coating on the lot is pretty good shape, a few weeds they have to spray. She stated they intend to repaint all of the chips that are on the building, new lighting will go on the awning, and they also plan on putting some huge planters of flowers. She stated that the cars are going to make it, every car is detailed before it is on the lot. Mr. Johnson stated that he wants to make sure that the premises look to the public.

Ms. Stephan stated that right in front of the vehicles is some grass. They will maintain the grass, beautifying the building with a fresh coat of paint, adding flowers to it, a new awning that would make it a lot more attractive than it currently is.

Mr. Johnson made a motion to grant the Variance of Use to allow a Used Car Lot to be operated in the US 41 commercial corridor, with the caveat that we make sure we follow up with the

recommendations they made as far as improvements, and to add any condition of approval that will include the meeting minutes of this meeting, where these commitments were made on public record, and that this use is granted to this user only, seconded by Mr. Schmitt. All in favor (5-0).

ITEM F. Consider Acceptance of Conveyance of Property Listed  
Below to the Town of Schererville

8755 Calhoun Place	\$3,623.00
8753 Calhoun Place	\$3,623.00
8771 Calhoun Place	\$4,623.00
8779 Calhoun Place	\$4,623.00
8795 Calhoun Place	\$2,044.00

Mr. Gorman stated that when our engineer was out preparing the site for construction limits, they were receiving some calls from resident asking what they were doing on their property. Mr. Gorman stated that after further investigation, we pulled out our surveys and the residents pulled out their surveys and we both own the same property. Mr. Gorman stated that they worked with the property owners and they were able to come to a resolution to make them an offer on that property based on what the land was worth. Mr. Gorman stated that right now we have five of eight properties that we need.

Mr. Connelly made a motion to approve, seconded by Mr. Johnson. All in favor (4-0).

ITEM G. Consider Acceptance of Right-Of-Way Dedication Easement Agreement between the Fred & Josh Properties, LLC and the Town of Schererville (Service Road Commonly known as 344 and 324 Indianapolis Boulevard)

Mr. Gorman stated that this is the service road that is behind Buona Beef and McCallister's. Fred and Josh Halpern own those properties and the property line goes to the middle of the road. Mr. Gorman stated that we ask that they dedicate the right-of-way, so that we can use that road. It will then be in our inventory and we will maintain the road.

Mr. Schmitt made a motion to approve, seconded by Mr. Connelly. All n favor (4-0).

ITEM H. Proclaim the Week of April 10 - April 16, 2022 as National Public Safety Telecommunicators week.

Mrs. Arvanitis read the proclamation in its entirety. Mr. Johnson made a motion to Proclaim the week of April 10 - 16, 2022 as Public Safety Telecommunicators Week, seconded by Mr. Connelly. All in favor (4-0).

ITEM I. Consider Donation to Lake Central Education Foundation, Inc.

Mr. Gorman stated that we made the donation to this Foundation last year.

Louise Tallent, stated she is here to represent the Lake Central Education Foundation. She explained what the donation will be used for, and spoke about the matching grants.

Mr. Johnson made a motion to donate \$1,000.00 to the Lake Central Education Foundation Inc., seconded by Mr. Schmitt. All in favor (4-0)

ITEM J. Consider Donation to Lake Central School Corporation for The Emergency Bucket Project.

Mr. Gorman stated that Corporal Brian Kissinger is here this evening to explain the Emergency Bucket Project. Cpl. Kissinger stated that in September 2021, Lake Central High School students

were forced into a lockdown situation for more than five hours following threats of an active shooter in the building.

Cpl. Kissinger stated although the threat was unfounded, it took a significant period of time for school resource officers and officers from surrounding police departments to search the building. Following the incident, the corporation's school resource officers met and discussed what they could do better. One of the main concerns was the lack of help they could provide to students and staff in lockdown. He stated that from there came the idea of emergency buckets. Cpl. Kissinger named some of the items that would be included in the buckets. He stated that emergency buckets can be used for multiple types of crises, such as active shooter situations, but also natural disasters like tornadoes. Currently the plan is to put a bucket at every lockdown location in the corporation.

Cpl. Kissinger stated that the corporation is still in the fundraising phase for the buckets. The project recently received a matching grant from Lake Central Education Foundation of \$10,000.00. He stated through community donations, they have matched the \$10,000.00.

Mr. Schmitt made a motion to donate \$2,500.00 to the Emergency Bucket project, Mr. Johnson seconded the motion with the caveat that we challenge our Police Department and Fire Department to match us. All in favor (4-0).

ITEM K. Consider Donation to Lake County Park & Recreation for Financial Support for the Acquisition of Property for Potential Lake Hills County Park Site - Sarros Property

Mr. Gorman stated that this is a piece of property just off of 85<sup>th</sup> and 77<sup>th</sup>. It is about a 100 acre parcel. He stated that we heard from Craig Zandstra, from Lake County Parks Department, on several occasions. Mr. Gorman stated that Mr. Zandstra came to the Town and they are looking for a donation.

Mr. Schmitt asked Mr. Gorman if this will be a Lake County Park and will it be maintained by Lake County. Mr. Gorman stated that is correct.

After discussion, Mr. Johnson made a motion to donate on behalf of the Town Council \$100,000.00 to the proposed Lake Hills County Park, and I am asking that the Park Board, if they can legally do so, match that donation to come up with a \$200,000.00 total donation from the Town of Schererville, seconded by Mr. Connelly. All in favor (4-0).

ITEM L. Consider Acceptance of Donations - \$15,876.47

Mr. Troxell read the list of donations into the record. Mr. Johnson made a motion to accept the donations as read, seconded by Mr. Schmitt. All in favor (4-0).

THEREUPON, Business from the floor

Meeting adjourned.

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ROBIN ARVANITIS  
TOWN COUNCIL PRESIDENT

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MICHAEL A TROXELL, CMO  
TOWN CLERK-TREASURER

A TRUE COPY