

# **MAY 2, 2017**

## **TOWN OF GRIFFITH TOWN COUNCIL MINUTES**

Council President Rick Ryfa called the May 2, 2017 meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

### **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

### **POLICE OFFICERS KILLED IN THE LINE OF DUTY**

Council Member James Marker read the names of Police Officers killed in the line of duty:  
Agent Benjamin De Los Santos-Barbosa, Puerto Rico Police Department, PR  
Corporal Stephen J. Ballard, Delaware State Police, DE  
Sergeant Meggan Lee Callahan, North Carolina Department of Public Safety, NC  
Deputy Sheriff Mark Burbridge, Pottawattamie County Sheriff's Office, IA

### **ROLL CALL:**

James Marker  
Larry Ballah  
Rick Ryfa  
Tony Hobson  
Melissa Robbins

### **ALSO ATTENDING:**

John C. Volkmann- Clerk Treasurer  
Greg Mance – Chief of Police  
Steve McDermott – Building Commissioner  
Robert Schwerd– Attorney for the Town - absent  
Roy Schoon – Fire Chief - absent  
Don Hill – Asst. Fire Chief -  
Rick Konopasek – Director of Public Works  
Sheri Bradke-McNeil - Attorney

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

1. Council Member Tony Hobson moved to adopt the minutes of the April 18, 2017 meeting as presented, seconded by Council Member Larry Ballah. MOTION CARRIED.

### **APPROVAL OF CLAIMS:**

1. Claims No.11719 – 11907, in the amount of \$947,364.66 (Nine hundred, forty-seven thousand, three hundred, sixty-four dollars and sixty-six cents). A motion was made by Council Member Tony Hobson to approve the claims as read, seconded by Council Member Melissa Robbins. Motion Carried.

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

1. The next Council meeting will be Tuesday, May 2, 2017 at 7:00pm. A Study Session will be held at 6:30pm before the meeting and one will follow if necessary. There will not be a study session on Tuesday April 25, 2017 at 6:00pm.

### **2. COMMUNICATIONS:**

- a. Council President Rick Ryfa gave a summary of the Togetherhood Initiative that will take place on Saturday May 13 from 8:00am to 12:00pm. The Town and the YMCA are looking for volunteers to do a variety of clean-up projects throughout the Town.
- b. Council Member James Marker read a request by Imagine Griffith to paint a mural on a building in Panther Park. The mural will depict events and happenings in the Town. A motion was made by Council Member Larry Ballah and seconded by Council Member Tony Hobson to approve the request. Motion Carried.
- c. Council President Rick Ryfa announced that the Griffith Central Market will open on Friday May 12, 2017 from 4 to 10 PM. The Central Market will be on most Fridays throughout the summer.
- d. Council Member Melissa Robbins read letters from A Park Full of Art requesting permission to place banners about the event and requesting a donation from the town. A Park Full of Art will take place on July 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> 2017. Council Member Melissa Robbins made a motion to allow A Park Full of Art to place banners in town and to provide up to \$500.00 (Five hundred dollars) for the event. Seconded by Council Member Larry Ballah. Motion Carried.

**REPORTS:**

1. Public Works – Public Works Director Rick Konopasek announced that the drainage work on Industrial Drive will start this week weather permitting. The Connector Project for the Oak Savannah Trail will start soon and May 11 is the large item pick up day .
2. Police - No Report
3. Fire – No Report

**PENDING ITEMS:**

1. Calumet Township Secession update: Council President Rick Ryfa announced that the lawsuit filed by the Township has been moved to the Indiana Tax Court and the Tax Court has accepted the case. There will be a telephonic attorney conference at 10:00am (Indianapolis time) on Wednesday, May 10, 2017.
2. FOP contract update: Sheri Bradke-McNeil, attorney for the Safety Board, stated the Town of Griffith Safety Board has reviewed the proposed contract with the FOP and the Town of Griffith and recommends the Town Council approves the Contract. A motion to approve the Contract with the FOP was made by Council Member James Marker and seconded by Council Member Tony Hobson. Motion Carried.

**PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS:**

- a. Heather C. Ennis, President & CEO of the Northwest Indiana Forum spoke in favor of the West Lake Corridor Expansion of the South Shore Commuter Rail Line. She stated that it would create 1,000 construction jobs, 2,500 permanent jobs, 8,000 new residents to Northwest Indiana and \$35 million dollars of annual personal income impact to the town of Griffith at the 20<sup>th</sup> year.
- b. Bill James of Local 150, Operating Engineers, spoke in favor of the Double Tracking of the South Shore Commuter Rail Line.

**BUSINESS FROM THE COUNCIL:****UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

1. South Shore Update – Council President Rick Ryfa announced that comments received from the citizens of Griffith are overwhelmingly against using Town funds to support the expansion of the South Shore Rail but there are a few that are in favor of the expansion. Council President Rick Ryfa read the following statement of the Town Council position on the South Shore Expansion: The Town Council is concerned that signing the Interlocal agreement in its current form subjects it to the associated laws SB528 would now bring with it. While it has been reported that SB528 simply requires a participating community to pay their pledge, what is not being said is that SB528 subrogates every municipal fund that gets distributed to a city or town from the state. By Signing the Interlocal agreement, and this being subject to SB528, we would essentially be pledging many other revenue sources to meet the requirements of the Interlocal agreement. While these revenues may never be used, this could create issues when future municipal bonding takes place as distributions such LRS, MVH or the general fund could be intercepted by the state to make our payment obligations. The funds pledged, per the agreement, are from the Local Option Income Tax. If those funds are reduced because overall personal income falls in the future, the state is mandated to intercept other funds if they are needed to meet the payment obligations. We are not in agreement to having funds other than CEDIT dollars being part of the Interlocal agreement. More importantly, on two separate occasions over three years, we asked for input from Griffith citizens. We have received extensive feedback that is overwhelmingly opposed to the town contributing any funds to the South Shore Expansion project. We were elected to represent our citizens and manage THEIR money. The Town Council has heard them and we have listened. Council Member Larry Ballah made a motion to decline to contribute or commit any Town funds to the South Shore Commuter Rail Expansion project. Seconded by Council Member Tony Hobson. Motion Carried.

2. Council Member Tony Hobson made a motion to approve Ordinance 2017-30 (2<sup>nd</sup> reading) an ordinance amending Chapter 46, offenses and miscellaneous provisions, by the addition of a new Article IV, filming on public property and public right-of-ways, seconded by Council Member Larry Ballah. Motion Carried.
3. Council Member Larry Ballah made a motion to approve Resolution 2017-32, a resolution transferring monies from various funds to the Local Roads and Bridges Fund, also known as the Community Crossings Grant, in the amount of \$800,000.00, seconded by Council Member Tony Hobson. Motion Carried.
4. Council Member James Marker made a motion to re-affirm the Public Works Director's authority to sign an agreement with Allen Landscaping for mitigation work on the North Side of Cady Marsh Ditch, seconded by Council Member Tony Hobson. Motion Carried.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

- a. Council Member Melissa Robbins made a motion to approve Resolution 2017-33, a resolution to transfer appropriations in the budgets of various departments, seconded by Council Member Larry Ballah. Motion Carried.
- b. Council Member Melissa Robbins made a motion to approve Resolution 2017-34, a resolution to transfer appropriations within the General Fund, seconded by Council Member James Marker. Motion Carried.
- c. Council Member Tony Hobson announced that the financing for the new Interlocal SWAT command vehicle has been awarded to American Capital for 7 (seven) years at 2.96% (two point nine, six percent) interest with annual payments of \$28,838.48 (Twenty-eight thousand, eight hundred thirty-eight dollars and forty-eight cents). The cost of this will be borne by the Town of Griffith and the 8 (eight) other communities that are part of the Interlocal SWAT.
- d. Council Member Larry Ballah opened the RFP's for the engineering on the Interceptor Project. RFP's were received from the following: Robinson Engineering, Nies Engineering, Christopher Burke Engineering, Commonwealth Engineering, Wessler Engineering and Lawson-Fisher Engineering. A motion was made by Council Member Larry Ballah to forward the RFP's to the Director of Public Works and the Town Attorney for review and recommendation, seconded by Council Member Tony Hobson. Motion Carried.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

- a. Michael Riese, 1912 Indiana, Griffith, IN: Complained about the lousy CN trains that block the various intersections in town. He claims that it is getting worse and more frequent and we should not have to deal with it. Council President Rick Ryfa stated that the Town does notify the CN when the delays are excessive. Police Chief Greg Mance also stated that some of the longer delay are related to mechanical breakdowns and that there is no way to control that.
- b. Marylyn Gliniski, 1187 Sawgrass, Griffith, IN: Stated that there was a problem with the repaving of Fairbanks St. and some residents had to wait 15 to 20 minutes because of the repaving. She also stated that there is not enough room at the emergency exit to get out of the subdivision. Council President Rick Ryfa said that the Building Commissioner and Fire Department will look into the situation and make a recommendation.
- c. Dee Maxwell, 1244 N Colfax, Griffith, IN: Stated that between the Cady Marsh Ditch and 40<sup>th</sup> Place on Colfax there are no storm sewers and this is causing water problems on his property. He also stated that there is a pot hole in the middle of Colfax near 41<sup>st</sup> Place. Council President Rick Ryfa asked Mr. Maxwell if there were storm sewers on Colfax when he moved there over 30 years ago. Mr. Maxwell replied that there were none when he moved there.

**There being no further business to come before this Council, the meeting was adjourned at 7:39 p.m.**

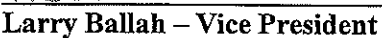
COUNCIL MEMBERS OF THE TOWN OF GRIFFITH, LAKE COUNTY, INDIANA

  
Rick Ryfa – President


  
James Marker

  
Melissa Robbins

ABSENT

  
Larry Ballah – Vice President

  
Tony Hobson

  
Attest: John C. Volkmann  
Clerk Treasurer