

May 12, 2020

TOWN OF GRIFFITH TOWN COUNCIL MINUTES

Council President Rick Ryfa called the May 12, 2020 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 the Police Officers killed in the line of duty:

- Lieutenant Glenn Dales Hutto, Jr.
- Deputy Sheriff John Andrew Rhoden
- Police Officer Michael S. Mosher
- Police Officer Kaia LaFay Grant
- Sergeant Ben Jenkins
- Commander Greg Carnicle

ROLL CALL:

James Marker
Lawrence Ballah
Rick Ryfa
Tony Hobson
Melissa Robbins

ALSO ATTENDING:

Gina Smith- Clerk Treasurer
Greg Mance – Chief of Police
Steve McDermott – Building Commissioner
Sheri Bradtke McNeil – Attorney for the Town - Absent
Roy Schoon – Fire Chief - Absent
Don Hill – Asst. Fire Chief - Absent
Rick Konopasek – Director of Public Works - Absent

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Council Member Tony Hobson made a motion to approve the minutes of the May 5, 2020 meeting as presented, seconded by Council Member Melissa Robbins Motion Carried

APPROVAL OF CLAIMS:

Claims No 28194-28290 \$332,133.82, Council Member James Marker made a motion to approve the claims as presented, seconded by Council Member Lawrence Ballah. Motion Carried

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

1. There will be a Redevelopment Commission Meeting On Tuesday, May 26, 2020 at 6:00 p.m.
2. The next Town Council meeting will be on Tuesday, June 2, 2020 at 7:00 p.m., there will be a study session before the meeting at 6:30 p.m., and one will follow if necessary.

COMMUNICATIONS:

1. Senior Center: Chief Mance spoke about assisiting along with Erica Rios and Joelle reaching out to over 800 seniors during the COVID-19, Joelle spoke about how special our seniors, and how pleased they were for them reaching out.
2. Reedy Financial Group: Tim Stricker, from Reedy Financial, spoke regarding the circuit breaker impacts, years ago they were asked to do an in depth circuit breaker analysis, this year there were impacts all over lake county, he gave a financial report for the Town of Griffith, he stated the Town of Griffith has done their due diligence for the last 10 years, excellent planning and paying down debts. Projections look good for the future years. He completed an overall impact of overall units that will be affected by the township; biggest impact will be the schools. The revenue impacts to the school. (See chart).
3. Letter from Lake Area United Way: Requesting support for the YMCA to move to Ready School.
4. Petition comments: Attached to minutes

5. Request for Twilight Parade for our Griffith high School Graduates on Sunday, June 7, 2020 at 7:00 p.m. Council Member Melissa Robbins made a motion to approve, seconded by Council Member Tony Hobson, Motion Carried.

REPORTS:

- Public Works – No Report
- Police – With the State gradually opening up, we will be taking gun permits by appointment only. Call between 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. . . . Also,. VIN checks, by appointment and pay by phone. National Police week. We would like to honor Officer Tex Minter passed in 1963, and an officer to suicide in 1976.
- Fire – No Report
- Building Commissioner – Steve McDermott spoke how busy we have been with being closed, 196 permits were issued.
- Finance - No Report

**PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS: NONE
BUSINESS FROM THE COUNCIL:**

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Findings of Fact 234 S. Lindberg, Griffith IN 46319:
Comes from the Griffith Board of Zoning Appeals, with a use of variance allowing Nerf Urban Dodge ball Entertainment. There was a public hearing on March 16, 2020 giving opportunity for public meeting, one negative comment. Board of Zoning Appeals was favorable. Council Member Lawrence Ballah made a motion to approve, seconded by Council Member James Marker, Motion Carried.
2. Letter of engagement Schwerd, Fryman, & Torrenga, LLP. The town is in need of legal counsel for the BZA and Planning Commission. Council Member Tony Hobson made a motion to approve the engagement, seconded by Council Member Melissa Robbins, Motion Carried.
3. Letter of engagement Barnses & Thornburg, LLP. Council Member Tony Hobson made a motion to approve the engagement for General Counsel, seconded by Council Member Melissa Robbins, Motion Carried.
4. Resolution 2020-10 Griffith Redevelopment Commission Determine need to Capture Incremental Assessed Valuation. Council Member James Marker made a motion to approve, seconded by Council Member Lawrence Ballah, Motion Carried.
5. Executive Appointment to the Lake County Convention and Visitors Bureau. Council Member Melissa Robbins made a motion to Re-appoint Andy Quinell to the Commission July 1, 2020 thru July 1, 2023. Seconded by Council Member Tony Hobson, Motion Carried.
6. Resolution 2020-11 Griffith Town Council urging The Griffith public Schools to take a pause before closing Ready Elementary School. Council Member Lawrence Ballah made a motion to adopt Resolution 2020-11, seconded by Council Member Melissa Robbins, One opposed, and Motion Carried. Council Member James Marker voiced his concerns regarding the Town Council getting involved with the Griffith School Board.
7. Statement by the Town Council regarding COVID-19 response: The Town has a safety committee, which met frequently; Council President Rick Ryfa praised the town workers for an excellent work flow during this time. Following guidelines will determine an opening date.

PENDING ITEMS:

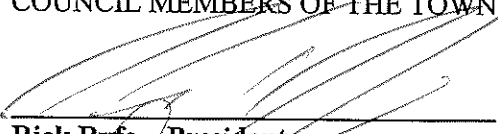
- Township:
- Golf Course: No report
- Water billing issues: working on


PUBLIC COMMENTS:

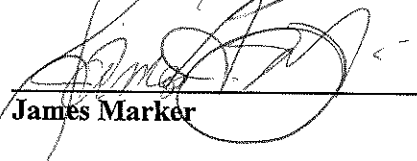
1. John Dudlicek, school board member, stated he appreciates the engagement in the schools and everyone in the community caring about the schools. We have a vacate issue we are working on and will address the issues and take them to heart and talk about what was voted on this evening, most of what has been talked about and will continue and appreciate the town caring about our schools.
2. Robert Rockwell: Thanked the Town Council for hearing the voice of the residents, concerned about homes being purchased near a certain school. Economy itself, values of homes. The school making a decision without the public's comments left a bad taste. Thank the council and school board member for stating he will look in to the matter.

There being no further business to come before this Council, the meeting was adjourned at 7:45p.m.

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

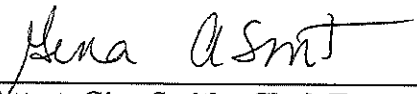

Rick Ryfa – President


Lawrence Ballah – Vice President


James Marker


Tony Hobson


Melissa Robbins


Attest: Gina Smith - Clerk Treasurer