

December 29, 2020

TOWN OF GRIFFITH TOWN COUNCIL MINUTES

Council President Rick Ryfa called the December 29, 2020 meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

POLICE OFFICERS KILLED IN THE LINE OF DUTY:

ROLL CALL:

James Marker
Lawrence Ballah - Absent
Rick Ryfa
Tony Hobson
Melissa Robbins

ALSO ATTENDING:

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Council Member Tony Hobson made a motion to approve the minutes of the December 15, 2020 as presented, seconded by Council Member Melissa Robbins, Motion Carried.

APPROVAL OF CLAIMS:

Claims No. 31364-31581 \$2,011,618.78, Council Member Jim Marker made a motion to approve the claims seconded by Council Member Tony Hobson, Motion Carried.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

1. The next Town Council meeting will be on Tuesday, January 5, 2021, 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: Council Member Tony Hobson read a portion of a letter from Republic Services, we are in negotiations, and we are in a dispute with Republic. "Republic must reiterate that it will terminate provision of all services to Griffith as of January 31, 2021 if an agreement is not reached in the interim. Republic cannot indefinitely continue to unilaterally should the increased cost of providing collection services to Griffith". Council President Rick Ryfa stated what this stems from is our contract called for an automatic renew every 3 years, the contract was signed in 2016 renewal in December, 2019, Griffith chose to let the contract automatically renew, we have several attorneys that have reviewed our contract and firmly believe this contract did renew. Republic has rejected this and are trying to get an increase in rates from us in the last year plus. We are willing to sit down and negotiate; we have had a good relationship with Republic. Our thoughts the market has changed but that should not force us to pay a higher rate. We have reached out to schedule a meeting and we will not be without service.

REPORTS:

- Public Works – Snow plows are out
- Police – No Report
- Fire – No Report
- Building Commissioner - No Report

PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS: NONE

BUSINESS FROM THE COUNCIL:

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: NONE

NEW BUSINESS:

1. 2021-01 Ordinance Rezoning Certain Real Estate Within the Town of Griffith, Lake County, Indiana, From R2 Single Family Residential TO R3, Single to Four-Family Residential and Amending the Town of Griffith Zoning Ordinances and Zoning Map. Council Member Melissa Robbins made a motion to approve Ordinance 2021-01 seconded by Council Member Tony Hobson, Motion Carried. Council President Rick Ryfa stated this is an empty lot on the corner of Elm and Colfax, empty lot, use to be a house where there were problems, the Town had to proceed to condemn the property, there had been a fire, vacant ever since. Cottage homes will be built approximately 200K, increase assessed values, they will not be rented.
2. 2021-02 Resolution of the Town Council of the Town of Griffith, Indiana, approving amendments to the Declaratory Resolution and Development Plan for the Consolidated Griffith Economic Development Area (Expansion of the Downtown Allocation Area), Council Member Tony Hobson a motion to approve Resolution 2021-02, seconded by Council Member Jim Marker, Motion Carried.
3. Park Board Vacancy: Council Member Jim Marker made a motion to appoint Sue Hoeser as a new member, seconded by Council Member Melissa Robbins, Motion Carried. Council President Rick Ryfa stated Sue had been on the Park Board previously and did very well.

Pending Items: (Nothing to take Action this evening)

1. **Sidewalk Replacement Program:** Proceeding forward, firm cost 10M plus. Start the first big portion of town, we should be able to present at our January meeting for our residents. This needs to be done, sidewalks need replaced, most are not repairable.
2. **Hammond Water Works Matter:** We have some court dates assigned, going through the discovery process now with the other party, we just had a ruling we do not have to post a bond, learning more before the next set.
3. **Public Works Director Position:** We have created a description that we will post on our website. No Comments from the council, Council President Rick Ryfa entertained a motion to approve the job description, Council Member Jim Marker made a motion to approve the job description and leave open for 30 days, seconded by Council Member Melissa Robbins, Motion Carried.

Public Comment:

Bob McGinnis (Mobile Home Park) spoke regarding the State will not issue a license, requesting to propose to the Town of Griffith, possibly working with him and if he can get the State of lay off would it be possible to do it under the Ordinance for Multi family. Council President Rick Ryfa stated we could re-look at things.

There being no further business to come before this Council, the meeting was adjourned at 7:17p.m.

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

PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS: NONE

BUSINESS FROM THE COUNCIL:

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: NONE

NEW BUSINESS:

1. 2020-14 Resolution to transfer appropriations within the General Fund. Council Member Tony Hobson made a motion to approve resolution 2020-14 seconded by Council Member Melissa Robbins, Motion Carried
2. 2020-24 Salary Ordinance Amendment, Council Member James Marker read the first reading. Council President Rick Ryfa made a motion to suspend the rules, we need a super majority and with 80% we are good, roll call all in favor, Motion Carried, Council Member James Marker made a motion to approve Ordinance 2020-24, seconded by Council Member Melissa Robbins, Motion Carried.
3. 2020-25 Resolution to Transfer Appropriations Council Member Melissa Robbins made a motion to approve Resolution 2020-25, seconded by Council Member Tony Hobson, Motion Carried.

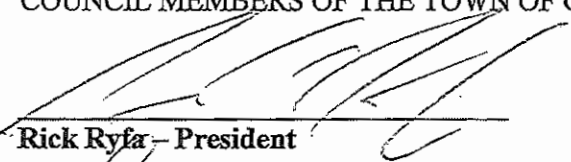
Pending Items:

Public Comment:

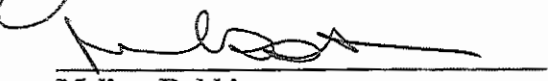
Chrissy Braun spoke regarding the potential flooding with the snow and rain. She stated with all the water in her garage causing damage and very costly to repair. Rick Konopasek stated he had left a message with Christopher Burke and has not heard back. Rick Konopasek has Chrissy's address and will follow up. Neighbor to Miss Braun spoke and had addressed this in July.

There being no further business to come before this Council, the meeting was adjourned at 7:14p.m.

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

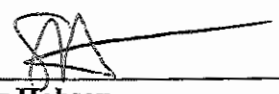

Rick Ryfa – President


James Marker


Melissa Robbins

ABsent

Lawrence Ballah – Vice President



Tony Hobson



Attest: Gina Smith - Clerk Treasurer