

July 19, 2022

TOWN OF GRIFFITH TOWN COUNCIL MINUTES

Council President Rick Ryfa called the July 19, 2022, meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

POLICE OFFICERS KILLED IN THE LINE OF DUTY:

Deputy Sheriff Austin Derek Aldridge
Detention Officer Jeremiah James Story
Sergeant Richard Lopez
Reserve Officer Jeffrey Richardson
Deputy Sheriff Bradley Steven Henry Johnson
Captain Ralph Harlow Frasure
Deputy Sheriff William Edward Petry
Police Officer Jacob Russell Chaffins
Police Officer Loren Michael Courts

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
Roy Schoon – Fire Chief
Andy Raab – Director of Public Works

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Council Member Tony Hobson made a motion to approve the minutes of the June 21, 2022, as presented, seconded by Council Member Melissa Robbins, Motion Carried.

APPROVAL OF CLAIMS:

Claims \$3,673,187.49 (Various funds) Council Member Jim Marker made a motion to approve the claims as presented, seconded by Council Member Larry Ballah, Motion Carried.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

1. The next Town Council meeting will be on Tuesday, August 2, 2022, 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.
2. The EMS Board meeting scheduled for tomorrow, July 20th, has been cancelled.
3. There will be a Storm Water Board meeting on Thursday, July 21, 2022, at 1:15pm.
4. There will be a Sanitary Board meeting on Thursday, July 21, 2022, at 1:30pm.
5. Notice of Public Hearing – August 2, 2022, Community Development Block Grant
6. Notice of Public Hearing – Water Rate Increase on August 2nd at 7:00 pm.
7. There will be a Re-Development meeting on July 26, 2022, at 6:30pm, study session at 6:15 pm.

COMMUNICATIONS:

1. Request from Rockopelli to hang banners at the corner of Broad & Ridge on the bike path and Franklin School, Council Member Melissa Robbins made a motion that we

allow them to hang their banners for this weekends Rockopelli, seconded by Council Member Tony Hobson, Motion Carried.

REPORTS:

- **Director of Public Works** – No Report
- **Police** – No Report
- **Fire** – No Report
- **Building Commissioner** – No Report
- **Finance Report** – No Report

PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS: NONE

BUSINESS FROM THE COUNCIL:

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: NONE

NEW BUSINESS:

1. **Water Rate Increase Presentation – Reedy Financial:** Katelyn Shafer did a presentation regarding the Water rate increase. She explained the need for the increase due to Hammond water rate increase.
2. **Legal Representation: Alfredo Estrada:** We are looking to engage in services to help create new procedures for blighted and nuisance properties that will help us deal with these properties quicker and more efficiently. Council Member Tony Hobson made a motion that we allow Rick Ryfa to sign this engagement letter, seconded by Council Member Melissa Robbins, Motion Carried.
3. **Advertisement to Bid: Central Park Phase 2:** Proposals are to be received as for construction and design improvements for Central Park including existing pavilion, new storage building, new patio space ADA accessible ramp, concrete and paver path, ornamental fencing with brick columns, earthwork, drainage improvements, electrical expansions, and site lighting. Preview meetings for those bidding will be August 17th at 10:00 am at Town Hall located at 111 N Broad St. Council Member Jim Marker made a motion to authorize Council President Rick Ryfa to sign the advertisement to bid, seconded by Council Member Larry Ballah, Motion Carried.
4. **Reder Road Water Main-Change Order No. 2:** List of eight changes total of \$18,393.77 decrease. Council Member Melissa Robbins made a motion to approve this Change Order, seconded by Council Member Tony Hobson, Motion Carried.
5. **Erie Lackawanna Trail: Broad St. Trailhead-Change Order No. 3:** Change Order from Rieth-Riley totally \$66,854.71 increase. Council Member Tony Hobson made a motion to approve the Change Order No. 3 in the amount of \$66,854.71 seconded by Council Member Melissa Robbins, Motion Carried.
6. **Erie Lackawanna Trail-Broad St. Trailhead – Change Order No. 4:** Change Order from Rieth-Riley totally \$10,581.48, Council Member Tony Hobson made a motion to approve Change Order No. 4, seconded by Council Member Melissa Robbins, Motion Carried.
7. **Supplemental Agreement No 1-Paser Pavement Re-Analysis and MVH review:** This is an analysis of our Towns alleyway, which will be conducted utilizing the GIS, each alley will be inspected and rated. Council Member Jim Marker made a motion to authorize Council President to sign the agreement, seconded by Council Member Larry Ballah, Motion Carried.
8. **Resolution No. 2022-26 Interlocal Governmental Agreement-Utilization of a Social Worker :** This is for improving an inter-local governmental agreement between the Town

of Griffith and the Griffith Public Schools for the utilization of a social worker, which will be an employee of the Town of Griffith and will work 260 days a year minus holidays, personal days, and the Griffith Public Schools will reimburse the Town of Griffith for roughly 41% of the employees wages and benefit package during the duration of the Interlocal Agreement. Council Member Larry Ballah made a motion to adopt Resolution 2022-26, seconded by Council Member Jim Marker, Motion Carried.

9. **Resolution 2022-27 Transfer Appropriations:** Whereas, in the appropriations of funds in the budgets of various departments of the Town of Griffith there is a need to transfer fund appropriations, transferring \$10,000.00 from the General Fund to the General FD fund, Council Member Melissa Robbins made a motion to approve Resolution No 2022-27, seconded by Council Member Tony Hobson, Motion Carried.

10. **Planning Commission Finding of Facts-Matt Murphy Rezone:** Changing the zoning for property located at 540 N Broad St, from PB to R2, On June 20th a public hearing on petition number 2022-04 filed by petitioner Mr. Murphy, the owner of the property, requesting to be rezoned. This received a favorable approval from the Planning Commission. Council Member Jim Marker made a motion to approve the Finding of Facts seconded by Council Member Larry Ballah, Motion Carried.

11. **Planning Commission Finding of Facts-Griffith Public Schools Rezone:** From the Planning Commission a request by petitioner of the Griffith Public Schools located at 600 N. Jay Ave., Griffith IN for a change in zoning from R2/open space to all R2. The finding of facts from our attorney that there was one remonstrator who made some comments but had nothing to do with the zoning, Council Member Larry Ballah made a motion to accept the Findings of facts, seconded by Council Member Jim Marker, Motion Carried.

12. **Ordinance No. 2022-28-Rezoning 540 N Broad St. from PB to R2:** Approving of the rezoning of 540 North Broad St. Council Member Larry Ballah made a motion to suspend the rules, seconded by Council Member Jim Marker, Roll Call, all in favor, rules suspended, Council Member Larry Ballah made a motion to adopt Ordinance No 2022-28, regarding the property located at 540 N Broad St., seconded by Council Member Jim Marker, Motion Carried.

13. **Permission to rebuild property on Reder Road:** A gentleman that owns the property located at 1043 Reder Road has requested us to write a letter, from time to time a bank or financial institution needs a letter just stating that if more than 50% of the residential is damaged that the Town would allow them to rebuild as a residential property. Council Member Tony Hobson made a motion that Council President Rick Ryfa write the letter, seconded by Council Member Melissa Robbins, Motion Carried.

14. **Ordinance No. 2022-29 – Rezoning 600 N. Jay Ave.:** An Ordinance rezoning 600 N. Jay Ave from open space to R2. Council Member Melissa Robbins made a motion to suspend the rules, seconded by Council Member Tony Hobson, Roll Call, all in favor, rules suspended, Council Member Melissa Robbins made a motion to allow the rezoning of 600 N Jay Ave from open space to R2, seconded by Council Member Tony Hobson, Motion Carried.

Council Member Tony Hobson stated he has been on the Council going on 8 years and the whole Town Council as a group has continuously worked to not raise the water rates and we have been suggested by 20 different professionals, Clerk Treasurers previous Council, have told us to increase water rates and we have not, the situation we have now we are forced to increase water rates, he stated he has done the math and the first 3 years its about \$3.00 a month for the average household, with everything going on with inflation this is not a big ask and just as long as I am on the Council and I feel like I can speak for we will do our best to make sure that we can keep the increases as small as possible.

PENDING ITEMS:

1. **Sidewalk replacement program:** Moving along as anticipated, regarding the weeds appears to be a lot of stuff floating around, once the weather cools down, we will be back to work on it. Contract A 30% complete, Contract B 45% complete.

- a. Construction Update:
- b. Restoration:

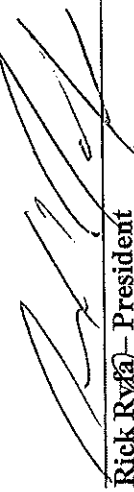
2. **PD/Town Hall Construction:** Struggling with inflation, looking for options, have not committed to anything yet.
3. **Water meter replacement program:** As of end of last week we have replaced 4,230 meters, Zone 1- 97% complete Zone 2- 83%, Zone 3- 43% (which we just started. Moving along, Zone 1 we have thirty-two houses that we just have not been able to get them to schedule. We have sent out certified letters. If no response at some point, we will have no choice but to shut off the water to get the meter changed because once the contractor leaves, we cannot have the old meters in place we will be unable to read those meters.

Public Comment:

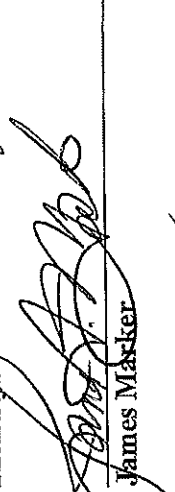
- Resident: water estimated over 3 years has a \$400.00 bill. Town has communicated with residents to call in readings.
- Resident: weeds, watered twice a day, started to get grass, sidewalk lowered about a foot will meet with Andy
- Leah: happy with sidewalks, kids running and happy
- Kathy: some people object riding bikes on sidewalks, state code for bicycles
- Resident: yard got hacked to make ADA compliant
- Don: 430 N Broad for #10 agenda
- Resident: asked to see change orders

There being no further business to come before this Council, the meeting was adjourned at 7:56 p.m.

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

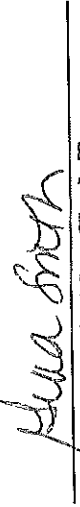

Rick Ryan – President


Lawrence Ballah – Vice President


James Masker


Tony Hobson


Melissa Robbins


Attest: Gina Smith - Clerk Treasurer