

December 19, 2023

TOWN OF GRIFFITH TOWN COUNCIL MINUTES

Council President Rick Ryfa called the December 19, 2023, meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

POLICE OFFICERS KILLED IN THE LINE OF DUTY:

Police Officer Paul Tracey
Deputy Sheriff Paul Martin

ROLL CALL:

James Marker
Lawrence Ballah
Rick Ryfa
Tony Hobson
Melissa Robbins

ALSO ATTENDING:

Gina Smith- Clerk Treasurer
Greg Mance – Chief of Police - Absent
Steve McDermott – Building Commissioner
Alfredo Estrada – 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 December 14, 2023, as presented, seconded by Council Member Melissa Robbins, all in favor, Motion Carried.

APPROVAL OF CLAIMS: Various Funds \$\$2,600,676.24 and \$416,569.16, Council Member Jim Marker made a motion to approve both claims as presented, seconded by Council Member Larry Ballah, all in favor, Motion Carried.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

1. There will be a Redevelopment meeting on Tuesday, December 26, 2023, at 6:45 pm, there will be a study session at 6:30 pm before the meeting and one will follow, if necessary.
2. The next Town Council Meeting will be on Tuesday, January 16, 2024, at 7:00 pm. There will be a study session before the meeting at 6:30 pm, and one will follow if necessary.

COMMUNICATIONS: Technical issues with the live stream this evening

REPORTS:

- Public Works – No Report
- Police – No Report
- Fire – No Report
- Building Commissioner – No Report
- Finance Report – No Report

PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS:

Rob Bubala on behalf of the EMS Board, thank you to the Griffith and Highland Town Council and other members for helping with the new 2-year contract, will be beneficial to our Town, Rick Ryfa thanked Rob for his help and involvement.

BUSINESS FROM THE COUNCIL: NONE

OLD BUSINESS:

NEW BUSINESS:

1. **Ordinance 2023-43: 2024 Salary Ordinance:** Council Member Melissa Robbins stated this is a two percent increase, and also includes a new position of Chief Deputy Clerk, Council Member Melissa Robbins made a motion to suspend the rules, seconded by Council Member Tony Hobson, roll call taken, all in favor, rules are suspended, Council Member Melissa Robbins made a motion to pass Ordinance 2023-43, seconded by Council Member Tony Hobson, all in favor, Motion Carried.
2. **Resolution 2023-44:** Resolution to Transfer Funds, Council Member Tony Hobson read the Resolution and stated at the end of the year we tidy up, the transfers are from \$7.60 to \$230,000.00, total of \$1,361,353.95 there are four pages, Council Member Tony Hobson made a motion to adopt Resolution 2023-44, seconded by Council Member Melissa Robbins, Ryfa stated this is not new spending this is transferring to clean up the funds, all in favor, Motion Carried.
3. **Ambulance Contract:** Council Member Melissa Robbins read the new contract, the contract goes from January 1, 2024, to December 30, 2026. Council Member Melissa Robbins made a motion to allow Council President Rick Ryfa to sign this contract, seconded by Council Member Tony Hobson, all in favor, Motion Carried.
4. **Public Hearing:** Council President Rick Ryfa opened the Public Hearing at 7:15 pm, there were no comments and no Remonstrators, at 7:16 Council President Rick Ryfa closed the Public Hearing. Council President Rick Ryfa the Public Hearing is for the Tax Anticipation Warrant not to exceed \$3.5M, this will allow the Clerk Treasurer to pursue a Tax Anticipation Warrant which would be received early part of next year, all the proceeds would be paid back by December 31, 2024. At 7:17 pm Ryfa opened the Public Hearing, Kim Rusch asked when the last time there had been a Tax Anticipation Warrant was, Ryfa stated probably fifteen years ago, Rusch stated that is not something done all the time, Ryfa replied, no, Rusch asked something come up that we need to do this, Ryfa stated we had some issues going into the year, there was some Revenue issues, we actually received \$800 thousand dollars less than was anticipated that was told to us by the State, there were also appropriations spent. No other comments or Remonstrators, at 7:18 Ryfa closed the Public Hearing.
5. **Ordinance 2023-45:** Ordinance of the Griffith Town Council Authorizing Tax Anticipation Warrants for 2024: Council Member Jim Marker made a motion to suspend the rules seconded by Council Member Larry Ballah, roll call taken, all in favor rules suspended, Council Member Jim Marker made a motion to authorize the Town Council to sign Ordinance 2023-45 seconded by Council Member Larry Ballah, Ryfa stated the first Public Hearing was to create the additional appropriations to spend the money which was \$5.5 Million that was done a week or two ago, this now allows for a Tax Anticipation warrant up to \$3.5 Million to pursue, we don't believe we are going to go near that, but we will not be doing this till after the new year. We wanted to have the not to exceed in place and go as low as possible, all-in favor, Motion Carried.
6. **Board and Commissions Election of 2024 Officers:** Redevelopment Commission: consists of five members, 3 of which are appointed by the Town Council President, 2 of which are appointed by the Town Council: Council President Rick Ryfa appointed: Larry Ballah, Tony Hobson, and Rich Miller. Council Member Larry Ballah made a motion as a Council to nominate Mr. Ryfa and Melissa Robbins, nominations closed, Council Member Melissa Robbins made a motion to appoint, seconded by Council Member Larry Ballah, all in favor, Motion carried.

Election of Officers Town Council:

President:

Council Member Tony Hobson nominated Rick Ryfa as President; Council Member Larry Ballah moved the nominations be closed, all in favor, Motion Carried. Council Member Tony Hobson made a motion to appoint Rick Ryfa President, seconded by Council Member Larry Ballah, all in favor, Motion Carried.

Vice President:

Council Member Jim Marker nominated Larry Ballah seconded by Council Member Tony Hobson, no other nominations, nominations closed all in favor of Larry Ballah Vice President, all in favor, Motion Carried.

**Break For Water Board Meeting 7:24 pm
Resumed Town Council 7:26 pm**

Pending Items: NONE

Public Comment:

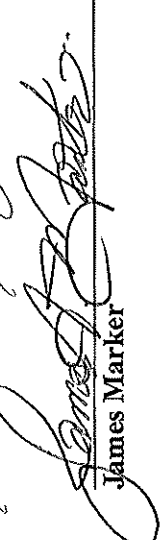
Kim Rausch asked about the Cady Ditch project to be completed, Traffic issues, metal box blocking view.


Jeff Csonka agenda online, Ordinances and resolutions on website

There being no further business to come before this Council, the meeting adjourned to 7:29 p.m.

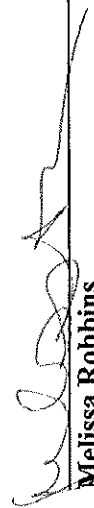
COUNCIL MEMBERS OF THE TOWN OF GRIFFITH, LAKE COUNTY, INDIANA


Rick Ryfa – President


James Marker


Lawrence Ballah – Vice President

Tony Hobson


Melissa Robbins


Attest: Gina Smith - Clerk Treasurer

