

October 3, 2017

TOWN OF GRIFFITH TOWN COUNCIL MINUTES

Council President Rick Ryfa called the October 3, 2017 meeting to order at 7:02pm

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:
Detective Kristen Hearne, Polk County Police Department, GA
Corporal Michael Paul Middlebrook, Lafayette Police Department, LA

ROLL CALL:

James Marker
Lawrence 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
Roy Schoon – Fire Chief - Absent
Don Hill – Asst. Fire Chief
Rick Konopasek – Director of Public Works

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

1. Council Member Melissa Robbins moved to adopt the minutes of the September 19, 2017 meeting as presented, seconded by Council Member Tony Hobson.
Motion Carried.

APPROVAL OF CLAIMS:

1. Claims No. 14228 – 14412 \$1,520,402.60 (One million, five hundred twenty thousand, four hundred and two dollars and sixty cents.) Council Member James Marker made a motion to approve the claims as read, seconded by Council Member Lawrence Ballah.
Motion Carried.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

1. The next Council meeting will be Tuesday, October 17, 2017 at 7:00pm. A Study Session will be held at 6:30pm before the meeting and one will follow if necessary. There will be a study session on Tuesday, October 10, 2017 at 6:00pm in Town Hall.
2. Council President Rick Ryfa announced that Oktoberfest will be October 6, 7 and 8, 2017 in Central Park.
3. Council Member James Marker announced that there will be a Grand Opening of the new Central Park Playground on Friday, October 6, 2017 at 5:00pm.

COMMUNICATIONS:

1. Director of Public Works Rick Konopasek made the following announcements.
 - a. There will be a road closure on Thursday, October 5, 2017 on west Main St. between South Lillian and Kennedy Ave. from 7:00am to 3:00pm.
 - b. Hydrant flushing began on Tuesday, October 3, 2017 on the north end of Town.
 - c. There will be a road closure on 45th Ave. between Colfax and Calhoun starting Monday, October 9, 2017 starting at 6:00am and will remain closed for 30 days, weather permitting.

REPORTS:

Public Works – No Report

Police – No Report

Fire – Assistant Fire Chief Don Hill announced that the Fire Prevention Open House on Sunday October 15, 2017 from 2:00pm to 4:00pm at the Fire Station behind Town Hall.

Finance – No Report

PENDING ITEMS:

1. **TOWNSHIP ISSUES:**

- a. Calumet Township Secession update: Council President Rick Ryfa gave the following update. The 2017 Township Assistance Rate for Calumet Township is greater than 12 (twelve) times the 2016 Statewide Average Township Assistance Tax Rate. This means that the Town can proceed with a petition to call for a referendum vote to secede from Calumet Township. Petitions will be made available to all those who are interested in participating.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS: None

BUSINESS FROM THE COUNCIL:

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

- a. Council Member Melissa Robbins made a motion to approve Ordinance 2017-49 an ordinance rezoning 115 S Lafayette from R1 and R2, Single Family Residential, to R3, Single to Four-Family Residential, seconded by Council Member James Marker. Motion Carried.

NEW BUSINESS:

- a. Council Member Lawrence Ballah gave a 1st reading of Ordinance 2017-50, an ordinance approving the Clerk Treasurer of the Town of Griffith to accept credit/debit cards for the various payments to the Town.
- b. Council Member James Marker made a motion to allow the Town Council President to sign an agreement with MUNICODE to develop a new Town Website, seconded by Council Member Tony Hobson. Motion Carried.
- c. Clerk Treasurer John Volkmann announced that the "2018 Notice to Taxpayers" is available at www.budgetnotices.in.gov or by calling (888)739-9826. He also stated that the 2018 Budget Hearing will be Tuesday, October 17, 2017 at 7:00pm and the Adoption Meeting will be Monday, October 30, 2017 at 6:00pm, both meetings will be in the Griffith Town Hall.
- d. Council Member Tony Hobson read a letter from the Griffith EMS board outlining the advantages and disadvantages of the four (4) bids received for EMS services for the Town of Griffith. He made a motion to allow the Town to enter contract negotiations with Superior Ambulance Service for EMS services for the Town, seconded by Council Member Melissa Robbins. Motion Carried.
- e. Council Member Tony Hobson made a motion to allow the Town Council President to sign an Inter-local agreement with the Little Calumet River Basin Development Commission, Seconded by Council Member Lawrence Ballah. Motion Carried.
- f. Council Member announced that four (4) new businesses have recently opened in Griffith, SiFi Donuts, Goodwill, Zuchez and Bio-Blood Plasma Center. This makes the 100S, 100N and 200N Blocks of Broad St. 100% occupied.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

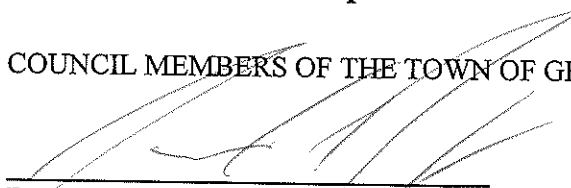
- a. Kathy Ruesken asked about the 2020 tax cap impact. Council President Rick Ryfa explained the impact and the affect it would have on taxpayers. She also asked about forming our own township, Council President Rick Ryfa explained that we would not be allowed to do that under current laws.
- b. Gabriel Missal asked about installing a sidewalk in front of his house in the 800 block of Colfax. Council President Rick Ryfa advised that the feasibility of installing a sidewalk would be looked into.
- c. Rose Johnson asked about the Township petition and how many signatures were needed. Council President explained how the petition process works and how many signatures were needed. He also told her she could solicit signatures herself and that the proper petitions forms could be provided.
- d. Mike Reese asked who owns the business at the southeast corner of Ridge Road and Cline Ave. because they are not maintaining the property and Code Enforcement should

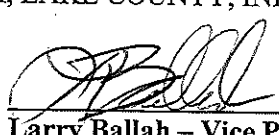
do something about it. He also read a list of vacant businesses on the north side of Town and urged the Council to do something about the vacancies. Council President Rick Ryfa advised that the Town was actively working with local businesses to try and attract new business to Town but that there was no way to force the property owners to rent the property. Mr. Reese was very critical of the Council and their efforts to revitalize the North side of Town. He was advised that the Town has done everything they can legally do to stimulate development on the North side of Town.

- e. Theresa Revis expressed a need for a park on the North side of Town. Council President Rick Ryfa explained that a recent grant proposal for a park near the North Fire Station was rejected but that it would be looked at again next year. She was also advised to contact Tim Diamond, Park Board President about the issue.
- f. Belinda (no last name) complained about the train horn at Wiggs and Main. She was advised that this is not an area covered by the "no train horn" rule.
- g. Lee Olson, lives in Westfield Court inquired about the storm drain work being done in the area and asked if it could be extended into his property. He was advised by Public Works Director Rick Konopasek that this is actually sanitary system work and not storm drain.
- h. Tom Jackson inquired about the steel plates on Pine St. at the NIPSCO project. He was advised that some additional engineering was required for the project and it would take approximately 3 more weeks before all the engineering was done.
- i. Kyle Rassel inquired if there were any projects that the Scouts could get involved in. Tim Diamond, Park Board President, happened to be in the audience and stated that the Scouts could possibly be involved with the Park Bench Project and that he would work with them to see what they could come up with.


There being no further business to come before this Council, the meeting was adjourned at 7:52pm.

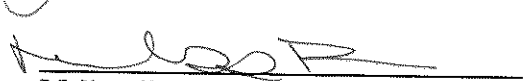
COUNCIL MEMBERS OF THE TOWN OF GRIFFITH, LAKE COUNTY, INDIANA



Rick Ryfa – President


Larry Ballah – Vice President


James Marker


Tony Hobson


Melissa Robbins


Attest: John C. Volkmann
Clerk Treasurer