

Minutes of Regular Meeting, March 16, 2020

The Town Council of the Town of Warren met Monday, March 16, 2020 in a Regular Meeting at Assembly Hall, Council Meeting Room, 131 N. Wayne Street, in accordance with rules of Council and applicable law.

Those present were: Town Council, Ethan Stivers, Carrie Miller, Tavis Surfus, Steve Buzzard; Clerk-Treasurer, Marilyn Morrison; Employees, Lee Poulson, Ty Surfus, Dennis Spittler, Jason Caley, and others.

President Stivers announced the opening of the meeting at 6:00 by introducing Mike Kleinpeter, Consultant for the OCRA (Water System) Grant Application Process who opened a scheduled Public Hearing. After giving a summary of the project and the process, Kleinpeter took comments from those citizens present in regard to the project. Following comments, the public hearing was closed. Submitted for review was "The Agreement for Professional Grant Administration Services" officially naming Kleinpeter as the Grant Consultant. Buzzard moved, seconded by Surfus, signing of the agreement. The motion was approved unanimously.

President Stivers introduced Mayor Strick of the City of Huntington who spoke on the procedure to file for a county wide designation as a Stellar Community. The program planning and application would involve all communities within the County with the award of \$10,000,000. Miller moved, seconded by Buzzard, to join in the process. The motion was approved unanimously and Morrison was named as the contact person.

Minutes of the Regular Meeting of February 14<sup>th</sup>, Executive Session of February 24<sup>th</sup> and Special Meeting of February 24<sup>th</sup> were approved as submitted.

Introduced were leaders of the local Scouting Program who were in attendance to support the Town in the efforts to save the Scout Cabin. Due to the current owner of the land determining that the Cabin is his to sell, meetings have been held with Scout Leaders and interested parties on how to move forward. As the Cabin is listed as a Municipal Building and has been a part of the Park System for many years, the Council will meet in Executive Session on March 23<sup>rd</sup> to consider taking legal action. That meeting will be closed to the public as required by State Law but general information will be made public as is possible.

As the demolition order on the property at 313 Matilda has expired without the owner making significant improvements, Miller moved, seconded by Buzzard, to authorize the Department of Community Development to start the process again. The motion was approved unanimously.

Morrison reviewed the Water Rate Study prepared by Financial Solutions in regard to needed action to meet the local match monies for the OCRA Grant – Water Tower. Indicated increases would be 12% with the grant and a loan from the State Revolving Loan Fund or 24% without the Grant. Final decisions will not be made until the project is finalized.

By concurrence and based on availability of the Township Trustee and Advisory Board, a meeting was set for 7:00 on March 23<sup>rd</sup> for discussion regarding operations of the Fire Department.

Morrison summarized an Infectious Disease Outbreak Policy. The document outlines plans to protect employees, steps to provide services to citizens during the crisis, and provision for employees in case of contamination. Following discussion, Buzzard moved, seconded by Miller, to adopt the policy. The motion was unanimous. Morrison noted that the policy follows guidelines from the State and Federal Government and as such may need to be reviewed and amended as the situation changes.

Submitted was a contract from Jackson Township, Wells County, to renew the agreement for the Warren Volunteer Fire Department to provide mutual aid. The base of the contract is \$5500 with an additional \$500 for every run over five. Council deferred action pending further discussion.

Jeff Souder, Warren Area Chamber of Commerce, reported that entertainment had been scheduled for the series of Last Friday concerts at Riverside Park during each of the summer months and noted that the current situation with virus might impact the program. In addition, mowing and electric service were discussed as the Town is currently providing those services to the Park which is leased to the Chamber. Continued discussion will be held.

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Morrison reported that citizens had cooperated with the posted instructions on the door for most part and expressed that so far the system was working well as Town Hall has been closed to the public. Staff in the office are following usual work schedules as deadlines have to be met and usual office business must be done with or without public access. The upgrade to the software programs cannot be completed due to the consultant halting on site work. However, systems are operational although certain month end processes cannot be completed within the accounting (Fund) program. The utility and payroll systems are not affected.

Marshal Spitler submitted the monthly activity report. Trapping of feral cats is limited to two per day due to the veterinarian's schedule. Council determined that public access would not be allowed to the Police Station. Discussion of an animal control ordinance was moved to the next meeting agenda.

Poulson, as Fire Chief, submitted the February Activity Report. Reporting on the County Wide Radio System Upgrade, Poulson estimated that the Town's portion of the grant application would be approximately \$110,000. Poulson announced that a forty year member of the department, Mike Bolinger, had retired. Bolinger was commended for his contribution to the Community.

Poulson, as Utility Manager, submitted the February Activity Report. Submitting a list of transformers to repair or to take out of service resulted in discussion of the two largest of the transformers. Determined by consensus of Council was that estimated repair cost of each of the larger transformers made it feasible to buy new at the cost of approximately \$10,000 for each. All of the listed transformers will then be scrapped. In discussion of paving for 2020 it was determined by Council that none would be planned and an application would be made for INDOT Community Grant and those dollars would be used for the match. Provided was a copy of the Annual Well and Pump Testing report. No action needed. Submitted for Council review were updated copies of the Hazard Communication Program, Lock Out/Tag Out Program, Emergency Action Plan, and Emergency Plan. No action taken and moved to the next meeting agenda giving time for Council review.

Morrison and Poulson reported that application to the Huntington County Department of Development for construction of new park pavilion had been submitted but had been put on hold as the plan must also be submitted to the Department of Homeland Security to determine if a development plan is needed. The construction of the pavilion is to replace the large pavilion already located in Tower Park.

An Executive Session of Council was scheduled for April 6<sup>th</sup> to review applications for the position of Operations Manager for the Utility/Street Departments.

The next regularly scheduled of Council is April 14<sup>th</sup>.

The Accounts Payable Register was approved as submitted.

General discussion was held.

There being no further business to come before Council, the meeting was adjourned.

Submitted \_\_\_\_\_ Clerk-Treasurer  
Marilyn Morrison

Town Council:

As \_\_\_\_\_ President As \_\_\_\_\_ Member  
Ethan Stivers Steve Buzzard (Absent)

As \_\_\_\_\_ Member As \_\_\_\_\_ Member  
Carrie Miller Tavis Surfus.