

Minutes of Regular Meeting, February 8, 2021

No meeting in January, 2021

The Town Council of the Town of Warren met Monday, February 8, 2021 in a Regular Meeting at Assembly Hall, Council Meeting Room, 131 N. Wayne St, in accordance with rules of Council and applicable law.

Those present were: Council Members, Ethan Stivers, Steve Buzzard, Carrie Miller, Tavis Surfus; Clerk-Treasurer, Marilyn Morrison. Financial Consultant Greg Guerrettaz of Financial Solutions Group; Ben Adams of Commonwealth Engineering; Others.

President Stivers opened the meeting at 4:30 PM and announced the reorganization of Council for 2021. Buzzard moved, seconded by Surfus to nominate Stivers for President. Approved unanimously. Surfus moved, seconded by Stivers, to nominate Buzzard for Vice President. Approved unanimously. Stivers moved, seconded by Surfus, to reappoint Miller to the Huntington County CREDIT Board. Approved unanimously. By consensus the Council Meeting Schedule was set for the second and fourth Mondays of each month at 6:00 PM,

Discussion was held with Adams in regard to bids received for the Water Project as those bids exceeded the engineering estimates by a substantial margin. Discussed in detail were alternate bids which had been added to the main project of demolition of an existing Tower Park tower, construction of a larger tower within Tower Park, replacement of an existing well and a well house, and maintenance of Eleventh Street Tower. Total bid estimates were approximately \$1.9 million with the targeted bid amount being \$1.3 M. The Council, Adams, and Guerrettaz discussed removal of all alternates, addition of one alternate, and other situations to reduce the total cost. Guerrettaz gave a very preliminary financial report of the project impact on rates and local funds. The final financial impact report will be ready for the next meeting of Council, February 22nd, after the engineer finalized project costs.

Miller moved and Buzzard seconded approval of a Water Rate Study and Bond Issue Agreement with Financial Solutions Group in the amount of \$5,000 for rate study and \$25,000 to \$35,000 for the Bond Issue on the Water Project. Motion approved unanimously.

Miller moved and Buzzard seconded approval of a contract with Commonwealth Engineering for the Asset Management Plan as required by the Indiana State Revolving Loan Fund (SRF) to qualify for a loan from that agency for the Water Project. Amount of the contract \$20,000. Motion approved unanimously. Stivers moved, seconded by Buzzard, to approve a contract with Region 3A Development and Regional Planning Commission for update to the Town's Comprehensive plan which was last done in the 1990's. The update is necessary to qualify for any bonds, loans which include federal dollars. Motion approved unanimously in the amount of \$10,000. The project will include public input and involvement.

As the Town is not in compliance with the State of Indiana ADA plan, by consensus, Adams was asked to provide quote to produce the plan. An estimate of cost will be submitted.

Miller moved and Buzzard seconded approval of an agreement and registration with the Association of Indiana Counties Tax Refund Exchange and Compliance System (TRECS). Uncollected debts due the Town will be submitted to the State to be matched to Income Tax returns and if matched, the amount owed can be deducted from the return and paid to the Town after notification to the debtor. Motion approved unanimously.

Golfo representatives have reported that the pretreatment system will be operational by the end of February.

As two employees have contracted COVID, more discussion was held on policy. As one has returned to work with the other to return on February 9th, it was determined that masks must be worn with social distancing in place.

General consensus was given to a person interested in purchasing a Town owned property on Eleventh Street. More discussion must be held before a final determination can be made.

While the Town has an unwritten policy for writing off of bad debt, a recent audit stipulated that an Ordinance must be enacted citing the policy. Ordinance 2021-1, an Ordinance to Establish an Accounts Receivable as Collectible Bad Debt Policy was introduced. Ordinance 2021-2, an Ordinance to update Town Code as to Disconnects was also introduced.

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Resolution 1-2021, a Resolution to update the 1997 Purchasing Policy was submitted for consideration so as to meet changes in State requirements. Miller moved, seconded by Buzzard to approve which was done unanimously.

Buzzard moved, seconded by Miller, to approve payment of dues in the amount of \$1368 for membership in the Association of Indiana Municipalities. Motion approved unanimously.

By consensus, dues in the amount of \$70 were approved for membership in the Warren Area Chamber of Commerce.

Miller moved and Buzzard seconded approval of a 2021 Contract with Jackson Township of Wells County in which Jackson Township pays the Town and Salamonie Township \$5500 annually and \$500 for each run over 5. Motion approved unanimously.

By consensus, Brady Smekens was re-appointed to the Warren Board of Zoning Appeals.

The review of the Town's Insurance Policy was completed with an increase of 4.43% due to claim history. Following review of the Premium Worksheet as submitted by Stewart Brimner Peters of Fort Wayne as agents of EMC, Buzzard moved, seconded by Surfus to accept the proposal. Motion carried unanimously. Total cost for 2021 was set at \$55,317 which includes vehicles, buildings, grounds, etc.

Reviewed was proposal from Jeff Souder of Warren Area Chamber of Commerce in which Phase 3 of the Riverside Park development plan was outlined. With estimated cost of \$130,000, donations are now being accepted. If the Town was to replace the existing sidewalk the estimated cost was set at \$4530, Miller moved, seconded by Stivers to donate \$5,000 in CEDIT Funds. Motion carried unanimously.

Morrison submitted the January, February Accounts Register in the amount \$661618.44. Approved as submitted. To follow State mandated Internal Controls, the Council is now required to review payroll reports. Submitted and reviewed.

In the absence of the Operations Manager, Morrison submitted a request to purchase a smaller auger at the cost of \$2200 for use on the Pole Truck of the Electric Department. For the Water Department, a request to purchase a new Chlorine Scale at the cost of \$1400 due to the current scale being too old to recalibrate was submitted. Both requests were approved by consensus.

The next Regular Meeting of Council will be February 22nd at 6:00 PM.

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

As _____ Member As _____ Member
Carrie Miller Tavis Surfus