

**TOWN OF MUNSTER**  
**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE TOWN COUNCIL**  
**MARCH 3, 2025**

A meeting of the Munster Town Council convened at 6:30 p.m. on Monday, February 17, 2025. Ordinance 1830 is the basis for holding electronic meetings. The announced meeting location was Munster Town Hall, 1005 Ridge Road, Munster, Indiana. Councilors, Staff, and the public had the option to participate via Zoom meeting technology. The meeting was not recorded although a meeting transcript was electronically generated by Zoom.

Councilors George Shinkan, Joseph G. Hofferth, Chuck Gardiner, Jonathan Petersen, and David B. Nellans, and were physically present in Town Hall. Also present in Town Hall were Treasurer Wendy Mis, Controller/Interim Town Manager Patricia Abbott, Police Chief Steve Scheckel, Fire Chief Mark Hajduk, Director of Operations Bob Valois, Town Attorney Dave Westland, and Hammond Sanitary District representative Mike Hawkins. The news media was represented.

President Shinkan presided and opened the meeting with a moment of silence in remembrance of Officer Ryan Perez, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

**PUBLIC HEARING: ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATION (1)**

The first reading on the ordinance was held at the February 17, 2025, meeting. Additional appropriations were being sought in six funds: the LIT Economic Development Fund, Local Road & Street Fund, ARPA Fund, Motor Vehicle Highway Fund, Sewer Maintenance Fund, and Water Cash Operating Fund.

The procedure for securing additional appropriations requires a public hearing, scheduled for this evening, and the adoption of an ordinance by the Town Council. Upon passage of the ordinance, the appropriations for the Local Road & Street and Motor Vehicle Highway Funds will be submitted to the Department of Local Government Finance (DLGF) for approval. All other funds will be in effect and reported to the Department of Local Government Finance (DLGF).

President Shinkan opened the public hearing.

No member of the public came forward to speak, the public hearing was closed.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

The Town of Munster accepts public comments submitted both in-person and electronically. The public was informed, via the agenda posted at [munster.org](http://munster.org), that questions or comments about an item on the agenda were to be emailed to [wmis@munster.org](mailto:wmis@munster.org). All in-person public comments are limited to two minutes and limited to a total of twenty minutes for the public comment section.

Mr. John Castro, 9410 White Oak Avenue, reported the Munster School Board approved an agreement for the School Town to provide managed IT services to the Town to include maintenance and repair work, software updates, patches, virus protection, cyber security and disaster recovery services. School Board Member Castro appreciated the efforts of Town and School Town that made this possible.

Mr. Tom Jurich, 1839 Magnolia, shared his belief that the strategic planning should focus on infrastructure improvements.

## **CONSENT AGENDA**

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Minutes of a regular meeting held on February 17, 2025

### **ACCOUNTS PAYABLE VOUCHER REGISTERS**

Confirmation of Voucher Register #25-2H dated 02/20/25 totaling \$81,670.37  
Confirmation of Voucher Register #25-2I dated 02/21/25 totaling \$557,888.73  
Confirmation of Voucher Register #25-2J dated 02/27/25 totaling \$1,374,202.81  
Approval of Voucher Register #25-3A dated 03/03/25 totaling \$160,009.45

### **TREASURER'S REPORT**

The January 2025 Treasurer's Report was presented.

### **ACCEPTANCE OF SURETY BONDS**

There are statutory needs for certain officers and employees of a town to file individual surety bonds for the faithful performance of their duties.

IC 36-8-6-3(e) stipulates that a secretary of a 1925 police pension fund "shall, in the manner prescribed by IC 5-4-1, execute a bond conditioned upon the faithful discharge of the secretary's duties." IC 5-4-1-18(c)(2) required the "amount of the bond of any other person required to file and individual bond shall be fixed by the fiscal body of the unit" at not less than \$5,000. The Secretary of the Munster Police Pension Board is Brian Hernandez.

The Town of Munster Board of Safety is a town board of metropolitan police commissioners. IC 36-8-9-3.1(f), stipulates that a board member shall give a bond in the amount of \$5,000. The members of the Munster Board of Safety are Stephen Glombicki, Lorin M. Brown, Jerry Baffa, Linda S. Dunn, and Robert Dershewitz.

Public Official Bonds have been executed by the Board of Safety and the Secretary of the Munster Police Pension board and are now ready for the Town Council's acceptance.

### **OUTSTANDING CHECKS**

Pursuant to IC 5-11-10.5, "Disposition of Warrants and Checks," the Clerk-Treasurer is required annually to furnish the Town's fiscal body (the Town Council) a list of all checks that have been outstanding for a period of two or more years as of December 31 of the preceding year. Accordingly, Check No. 877451, dated December 20, 2022, drawn upon the Motor Vehicle Highway Fund, payable to Gallagher Materials for UPM Cold Patch in the amount of \$898.36 is declared void. The amount listed will be entered as a receipt to the fund upon which it was originally drawn, and the check is removed from the list of outstanding checks.

### **WATER LEAK ADJUSTMENTS 2025-06 AND 2025-09**

Staff received requests for adjustment under the leak adjustment policy adopted by the Town Council on April 8, 2013. The customers have completed the required form, and the requests meet all the criteria for adjustments as follows:

Adjustment Number	Average Usage	Actual Usage	Length of Time	Original Bill	Adjustment Amount	Adjusted Bill
2025-6	3,000	95,000	2 months	\$ 722.97	\$ 671.45	\$ 51.52
2025-7	3,000	21,000	1 month	\$ 139.86	\$ 118.64	\$ 21.22
2025-8	5,000	24,000	1 month	\$ 180.28	\$ 140.10	\$ 40.18
2025-9	-	42,000	1 month	\$ 305.49	\$ 281.64	\$ 23.85

Councilor Gardiner moved, with a second by Councilor Nellans, to suspend the rules, waive the readings, and adopt the Consent Agenda as amended. Councilors Hofferth, Gardiner, Nellans, Petersen, and Shinkan voted in favor; none voted against. Motion passed.

**OLD BUSINESS**

**ORDINANCE 1978: ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATIONS (1)**

Introduced ORDINANCE 1978 is AN ORDINANCE FOR THE ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATION OF FUNDS FOR THE YEAR 2025 (1). The ordinance was the subject of a public hearing earlier in the meeting.

Councilor Gardiner moved, with a second by Councilor Hofferth, to adopt Ordinance 1978, as presented. Councilors Hofferth, Gardiner, Nellans, Petersen, and Shinkan voted in favor; none voted against. Motion passed.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**IT SERVICE AGREEMENT**

In 2017, the Town engaged an outside contractor to handle its IT needs. Prior to that, it was conducted in-house. One of the reasons for the change was that the IT infrastructure needs had grown too large for one employee to handle. As the Town reaches the end of the current contract, other options were explored.

The Town and the School Town have long worked together on some related technology needs such as the phone system and connectivity. An ad hoc partnership was formed primarily between the Police Department and the School Town with the camera systems. From this grew the idea that a formal partnership could be mutually beneficial to both entities. The agreement presented this evening is the result.

Under the terms of the agreement, the School Town will provide managed IT services to the Town to include maintenance and repair work, software updates, patches, virus protection, cyber security and disaster recovery services. In short, all the IT services a municipality needs. To do this, the School Town will hire an additional staff member who will be primarily focused on the Town of Munster.

Currently, the School Town has IT technicians assigned to each of their facilities that also work together on all large projects. The new employee will follow this pattern with the Town being his or her assigned facility. This allows the Town to have someone with a deep knowledge of its systems while also having the support of a larger staff when there are big projects. At the same time, the School Town has additional staff to assist when they have a big project.

There will be a monthly payment of \$16,000.00 to the School Town for these services, which is slightly below the monthly cost currently paid to the third-party provider. It is a two-year agreement with

a review of fees after the first year. Both parties can terminate the agreement for any reason with a ninety-day written notice.

Once approved, the parties will enter a transition period where the School Town moves the Town away from the third-party provider. This will be accomplished by April 20, 2025, the expiration of the current agreement with the contractor. During this transition, the School Town will invoice the Town at a rate of \$160.00/hour for work done by their staff up to the monthly amount of \$16,000.00.

Staff of both the Town and School Town believe this can be a good partnership and an example of public entities working together to create efficiencies and to maximize use of our resources. The School Board approved the agreement at their meeting on February 24, 2025.

Councilor Hofferth moved, with a second by Councilor Nellans, to approve the Agreement for IT Services with the School Town of Munster. Councilors Hofferth, Gardiner, Nellans, Petersen, and Shinkan voted in favor; none voted against. Motion passed.

### **ENGAGEMENT LETTER: AFR TAX ABATEMENT SERVICES**

A new requirement was imposed for the Annual Financial Report (AFR) requiring a listing of direct and indirect tax abatements impacting a reporting entity started with the 2023 reporting year. This listing includes the amount of tax revenues reduced as a result of tax abatements. During the first year, there was a grant in place that allowed all units in Lake County to get this listing prepared for them at no cost. That option is no longer available.

Staff were not aware that this service would no longer be provided, and Lake County does not provide the required list. Development Economic Finance Consulting LLC performs this work and is run by the individual who did the work under the grant. This is a time-consuming task with a hard deadline. An engagement letter has been submitted for approval to perform the work which will be paid from the General Fund.

Of note, there were 78 total direct and indirect tax abatements impacting Munster. The direct abatements are from Centennial Village for \$1,682.31 or 38.67% of all that was abated. Indirect abatements from total \$2,667.98 for a total reduction in taxes received of \$4,350.29.

Councilor Nellans moved, with a second by Councilor Gardiner to approve the engagement letter with Development Economic Finance Consulting LLC dated February 13, 2025. Councilors Hofferth, Gardiner, Nellans, Petersen, and Shinkan voted in favor; none voted against. Motion passed.

### **ENGAGEMENT LETTER: LANDFILL ASSURANCE TEST**

The Indiana Department of Environmental Management (“IDEM”) requires documentation from the Town regarding financial assurance of the landfill. This requirement has traditionally been in place to assure IDEM that a private business owner operating a landfill site has placed financial assurance on record in case the owner closes the business without any warning, leaving behind a brownfield. The provisions in 329 IAC 10-39-2(a)(6) apply to municipalities as well, even though the same risks are not involved.

Baker Tilly has completed numerous reports on the financial status of the landfill for the Town. A letter of engagement to perform the work that must be completed to provide IDEM with the proper financial assurance has been presented.

Baker Tilly has the appropriate financial information to provide IDEM with information about the Town's general financial well-being. IDEM does not stipulate that the Town pass any further bonds or pay any sums of money at this time to comply with the financial assurance provisions.

The expense of these financial analyses is set at \$8,100.00 and is to be funded from the Solid Waste Management Fund.

Councilor Nellans moved, with a second by Councilor Hofferth, to approve the letter of engagement with Baker Tilly for the Annual; Landfill Assurance Test in the amount of \$8,100.00. Councilors Hofferth, Gardiner, Nellans, Petersen, and Shinkan voted in favor; none voted against. Motion passed.

### **ENGAGEMENT LETTER: REVENUE BONDS**

Council has expressed its desire to complete water infrastructure projects and adopted water rates to support these efforts. Public Works has identified an estimated \$14M in projects to be completed over the next five years. To accomplish this, we are looking at available financing options. Some projects might qualify for the State Revolving Fund and others for grants. Working with financial advisor Baker Tilly, Staff believes a revenue bond will be necessary.

Baker Tilly has presented an engagement letter to identify which funding sources are available to the Town and determining the best way to approach a revenue bond. The cost includes analysis of financial feasibility to determine most suitable financing, issuance of the bond to include method of sale, offering documents, preliminary and final official statements, communication with potential underwriters and/or investors, facilitating the sale of the bonds, and continuing disclosure services if necessary.

The cost of this work is \$80,000.00 and will be paid from the proceeds from the bond.

Councilor Gardiner moved, with a second by Councilor Nellans to approve the letter of engagement with Baker Tilly for Water Revenue Bond services. A brief discussion regarding the Hohman Avenue medians was held. Councilors Hofferth, Gardiner, Nellans, Petersen, and Shinkan voted in favor; none voted against. Motion passed.

### **DESIGN VARIANCE REQUEST**

The Town was awarded \$6,136,065 in federal funds through NIRPC to reconstruct Main Street from Columbia Avenue to Cypress Drive. DLZ was awarded the design engineering contract in 2022 and a supplemental agreement was approved at the October 7, 2024, meeting. Since then, DLZ has been working with Staff on various design elements including drainage. Four areas of conflict between the Town standards have been identified, and DLZ is requesting a variance for each from the Town of Munster Storm Water Technical Standards Manual, January 2023.

Town stormwater standards call for Type II NRCS design rainfall distribution for hydraulic analysis. Analysis of the roadside ditch/detention stormwater management for both water quality and conveyance performance require a critical duration analysis. The Type II NRCS system does not address all of the factors involved. DLZ is requesting a hydraulic design variance to use the Huff rainfall distribution method within the project limits.

Town stormwater standards call for an inlet grate opening adequate to pass the designed ten-year flow with 50% of sag inlet areas clogged. The existing sag stormwater inlets at the edge of the pavement meet the 50% sag limit. DLZ is requesting a hydraulic design variance within the project limits for each proposed roadside ditch inlet.

Town stormwater standards have a 0.2cfs/ac target release rate. Because of the conditions in place (i.e. utility locations, limited right-of-way width, topographical limitations) only underground or pipe detention can meet the target release rate within the other requirements. Two box culverts would be needed. Another option to meet the requirement would require 2' diameter pipes in other locations. The size of the box culverts and enlarged drainage structures would likely create conflicts with other utilities in the corridor creating project scheduling conflicts and a significant project cost increase of between \$1,000,000 and \$2,000,000. DLZ is requesting a hydraulic design variance within the project limits to use a release rate based on the existing ten-year stormwater event.

Town stormwater standards require the removal of floatables in stormwater runoff and treatment to the maximum extent practicable. Much of the project addresses water quality through construction of modified roadside ditches wherever possible. These ditches include underdrains configured for a 1" storm runoff event. There are areas within the right-of-way and where existing utilities prohibit construction of these ditches. In these cases, other methods will be used to handle the runoff that do not meet the standard. DLZ is requesting a hydraulic design variance within the project limits at four specific locations.

DLZ has worked with Staff on each of these matters. SEH has worked closely with DLZ to ensure the best way forward and is in agreement with the requested variances.

Councilor Hofferth moved, with a second by Councilor Gardiner to approve the requested design variances from the Town of Munster Storm Water Technical Standards Manual, January 2023, version for the Main Street Project. Councilors Hofferth, Gardiner, Nellans, Petersen, and Shinkan voted in favor; none voted against. Motion passed.

#### **ENGAGEMENT LETTER: LAKE/POND/DITCH MAINTENANCE**

Since 2000, Aquatic Control of Valparaiso, Indiana has performed vegetation management services including inspections and treatments at various locations in Munster. On February 11, 2025, a proposal for the Custom Vegetation Management Program at a cost of \$29,155.00 was received.

The maintenance includes inspections and treatment for the following locations.

- West Lake Subdivision – 1 lake, 4 ponds
- White Oak Estates Subdivision – 5 ponds
- White Oak Woods – 1 pond
- Centennial Park (Maynard Lake) – 1 lake
- Schoon Ditch (at Fisher Street between Calumet and Columbia Avenues) – 1 linear ditch
- Community Estates – 2 ponds

The Vegetation Management contract covers the sites listed above for bi-weekly inspection of two lakes, twelve ponds, and one ditch for nuisance aquatic vegetation with treatment as necessary during the contract period of April through September 2025. Schoon Ditch is a monthly rip-rap treatment for a contract period of April through August. If additional treatments are needed between monthly visits, this would be at the Town's request at a cost of \$362.00/treatment.

This work will be funded by the Sewer Maintenance Fund 2580 and covers Annual Lake, Pond & Ditch Maintenance, not fountain maintenance which is covered under a separate contract.

Councilor Nellans moved, with a second by Councilor Gardiner to approve the Aquatic Control proposal 410381 dated February 11, 2025, for 2025 Custom Vegetation Management Program in the

amount of \$29,155.00. Councilors Hofferth, Gardiner, Nellans, Petersen, and Shinkan voted in favor; none voted against. Motion passed.

### **CHANGE OF COST: FORKLIFT**

Council approved the purchase of a forklift model GP6ON from Voss Equipment at their March 4, 2024, meeting. The cost was \$49,556.40 less the trade-ins of Unit #353 and Unit #363. The Park Department has expressed interest in purchasing Unit #363 and Public Works would like to keep Unit #353.

The trade-in value of each unit is \$1,500.00. The Park Department will pay for Unit #363 from their 2022 GO Bond proceeds. The additional cost for Public Works will come from their 2022 GO Bond proceeds. Because there will be no trade-in, the Town must pay the full cost of the new forklift, and Council authorization is needed for the additional expenditure.

Councilor Hofferth moved, with a second by Councilor Nellans to approve the purchase of a forklift, model GP6ON from Voss Equipment for a purchase price of \$47,000.00. Councilors Hofferth, Gardiner, Nellans, Petersen, and Shinkan voted in favor; none voted against. Motion passed.

### **RETROFIT OF TANDEM AXLE DUMP TRUCK**

Unit 336 was purchased with anti-icing unit installed. Public Works would like to retrofit Unit 336 to be like the other tandem axle dump trucks with a V box salting bin and brine containers. Public Works received a proposal from W.A Jones priced through Sourcewell.

The W.A. Jones quote includes replacing the existing tank with a spreader and pre-wet tank kit for a total price of \$65,092.52. The purchase will be made with 2021 and 2022 GO Bond proceeds.

Councilor Nellans moved, with a second by Councilor Petersen to approve W.A. Jones quote to retrofit Unit #336 for a total cost of \$65,092.52. Councilors Hofferth, Gardiner, Nellans, Petersen, and Shinkan voted in favor; none voted against. Motion passed.

### **CALUMET AVENUE LED STREETLIGHT RETROFIT**

Midwestern Electric has provided current pricing to install LED light fixtures to replace the existing streetlights located on Calumet Avenue. This would be 117 fixtures for a cost of \$80,730.00. Pricing includes all labor to remove and dispose of the existing fixtures and to furnish and install new LEDs in their place. All traffic control is included. Pricing will be held for two weeks because the cost of raw materials is expected to increase due to tariffs.

Staff anticipate reduced NIPSCO costs because LED lights are more efficient and use less electricity. Staff are also looking into NIPSCO rebates for making this change. The project will be paid from the Cumulative Capital Development Fund.

Councilor Gardiner moved, with a second by Councilor Nellans to approve Midwestern Electric to retrofit 117 streetlight fixtures on Calumet Avenue to LED for a total cost of \$80,730.00. Councilors Hofferth, Gardiner, Nellans, Petersen, and Shinkan voted in favor; none voted against. Motion passed.

### **DISPOSAL OF EQUIPMENT**

The Police Department has the following equipment that is no longer in use or no longer serviceable.

- HP ProDesk G3 Mini - 8CG7466NRP / 8CG7390TPD / 8CG7514G9Z / 8CG7514FP0 / 8CG73906RB
- Acer Tablet WOI111700V442D2F2D7206
- Toshiba Tablet – X6281461Q
- 5 Axis Bullet Cameras Model# P1448-LE – Pole Mounted Cameras
- 9 Vigilant Solutions – VSR-20-975 Pole Mounted Cameras
- Meraki MR33 Wireless Access Point / SER# Q2PD-9NZH-449U
- Nikon Coolpix-30035799, 30035798, 32377138, 30035796, 32420202, 30007762, 32420132, 32377142
- Canon Powershot - 658061003797, 4626046764
- Pro Lite Laser Speed Radar-200-2072-00
- Old Throw Phone (NWRS uses a cell phone now)
- Sharp TV, 003814557 (from old Dispatch Center)
- Taser X2 (no longer use this model), x290095t2, x290095wp, x290099yd, x290099wk, x290095wn, x290095ym, x290095x1, x290099we, x290099wp, x290099x1, x290099wm, x290099wt, x290099ya, x29009603, x290095tc, x290099y3, x290095wx, x290095we, x290095xh, x290095wt, x290095xw

Councilor Nellans moved, with a second by Councilor Hofferth to declare the items surplus, authorize the Police Department to dispose of the listed property, and to remove same from the current inventory. Councilors Hofferth, Gardiner, Nellans, Petersen, and Shinkan voted in favor; none voted against. Motion passed.

## **REPORTS**

### **SIGNAL TIMING REPORT**

At the October 21, 2024, meeting, the Council approved SEH to perform a Signal Retiming Study along Calumet Avenue from River Drive to Main Street. SEH presented their findings at the February 26, 2025, Agenda Review meeting. Several areas were identified that could be improved. SEH will work with Midwestern Electric to reprogram the signals. The written report was presented.

## **PORTFOLIO REPORTS**

Councilor Gardiner reported the Munster Park Board will be hosting a ribbon cutting at the Centennial Park Pro Shop and Driving Range on Monday, March 17, 2025, at 2:00 p.m.

Councilor Shinkan updated the Council on statistics from the Police Department.

Clerk-Treasurer Mis shared updates from NIRPC and the upcoming 80/94 flex road improvements and updated the Council on the Munster Chamber of Commerce light pole banner sales.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

(Unless stated otherwise, all meetings of the Town Council begin at 6:30 p.m. at Munster Town Hall.)



The Town Council will hold a regular meeting on Monday, March 17, 2025. The Redevelopment Commission will hold a regular meeting immediately following.

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to come before the Council, and upon a motion by Councilor Nellans and seconded by Councilor Gardiner, the meeting adjourned at 7:02 p.m. by voice vote.

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**George Shinkan, President**

**ATTEST:**

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**Wendy Mis, Clerk-Treasurer**

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