

**TOWN OF MUNSTER**  
**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE TOWN COUNCIL**  
**MARCH 17, 2025**

A meeting of the Munster Town Council convened at 6:30 p.m. on Monday, March 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, Fire Chief Mark Hajduk, Director of Operations Bob Valois, and Town Attorney Dave Westland. Hammond Sanitary District representative Mike Hawkins was present virtually. The news media was represented.

President Shinkan presided and opened the meeting with a moment of silence, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

**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. Robert Thomas, 8445 Manor Avenue, expressed concern about accessibility to the train tracks and requested a fence along the train.

Mr. Christopher Pitts, 8445 Manor Avenue, expressed concern about the train and would like a fence.

A discussion about the feasibility of a fence along the train tracks ensued. Council President Shinkan shared we are looking for a solution.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Minutes of a regular meeting held on March 3, 2025

**ACCOUNTS PAYABLE VOUCHER REGISTERS**

Confirmation of Voucher Register #25-1K dated 01/31/25 totaling \$50,985.29  
Approval of Voucher Register #25-1J dated 01/31/25 totaling \$159,770.00  
Confirmation of Voucher Register #25-3B dated 03/06/25 totaling \$142,554.93  
Confirmation of Voucher Register #25-3C dated 03/07/25 totaling \$542,962.00  
Confirmation of Voucher Register #25-3D dated 03/10/25 totaling \$59,572.01  
Confirmation of Voucher Register #25-3E dated 03/10/25 totaling \$43,609.13  
Confirmation of Voucher Register #25-3F dated 03/13/25 totaling \$569,875.51  
Approval of Voucher Register #25-3G dated 03/17/25 totaling \$2,227,578.77

### **ANNUAL RED FLAG**

The Federal Trade Commission requires utility companies to adopt an identity theft prevention program or red flag policy. In April 2009, the Council came into compliance by adopting Ordinances 1424 and 1514. The policy requires an annual report on the program. Copies of the ordinances are attached.

Most of the practices in the policy were in place prior to adoption of Ordinance 1424. The following table shows the number of events since implementation. Each time there was an incident, Staff denied starting billing until proper identification was provided.

2011	-0-	2019	1
2012	1	2020	-0-
2013	-0-	2021	-0-
2014	1	2022	-0-
2015	1	2023	1
2016	1	2024	3

Since the last report, there have been three red flag incidents. Two separate property owners requested more individuals to have their name added to their water utility account. When asked why, they could not give a logical answer. We believe they may have requested to try to prove residency for the school system. Neither party could prove their attachment to the property and were not allowed to add their name. As a result of prior similar incidents, a procedure has been put into requiring the primary account holder be with them at the time of signing up, as well as proof attaching the extra person to the property.

One property owner had problems with identity theft. As a result, she removed her name from her water account, and we allowed her room mate to sign up for services at this property. There should be no further issues as she is no longer considered an active account holder.

On May 9, 2024, the Town Council approved an agreement with the Indiana Department of Technology to create a website specifically for Water Billing. This website went live on June 20, 2024. This new site provides information for our residents regarding all things water billing. This is also a safe space for our residents to request/end water service and sign up for ACH payment. We have seen great improvements in the sign-up process since going live and our residents have very much appreciated this new method of correspondence.

### **WATER LEAK ADJUSTMENTS 2025-10 AND 2025-13**

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
2025-10	3,000	32,000	1 month	\$ 237.29	\$ 213.18	\$ 24.11
2025-11	4,000	60,000	2 months	\$ 408.85	\$ 290.66	\$ 118.19
2025-12	8,000	45,000	1 month	\$ 325.55	\$ 262.58	\$ 62.97
2025-13	3,000	41,000	2 months	\$ 294.21	\$ 176.02	\$ 118.19
2025-14	6,000	260,000	9 month	\$ 1,449.21	\$ 1,393.88	\$ 55.33

Councilor Nellans moved, with a second by Councilor Hofferth, 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.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

#### **RESOLUTION 2149: SIGNING AUTHORITY WITH INDOT**

Proposed RESOLUTION 2149 is A RESOLUTION GRANTING AUTHORITY TO SIGN INDOT DOCUMENTS FOR CCMG-2025. The Town has been awarded \$1,500,000.00 in 2025 Community Crossing Matching Grant funds for 2.706 miles of roadwork as described below.

Road	From	To	Length
Timberwood Lane	White Oak Avenue	Ashwood Lane	0.447 miles
Lilac Lane	Camellia Drive	Azalea Drive	0.080 miles
Somerset Drive	White Oak Avenue	Redwood Lane	0.549 miles
Harrison Avenue	Fisher Street	Ridge Road	0.720 miles
Cornwallis Lane	Westminster Lane	Westminster Lane	0.398 miles
Westminster Lane	Cornwallis Lane	Cornwallis Lane	0.256 miles
Cobblestone Road	Boxwood Drive	Main Street	0.256 miles

INDOT administers the CCMG projects and requires a resolution to authorize someone to sign the contract and related documents for the project. The CCMG program runs on a tight timeline and having authority to sign is critical to the process. Resolution 2149 has been drafted to authorize Patricia Abbott to sign the CCMG 2025 documents.

Councilor Hofferth moved, with a second by Councilor Nellans, to adopt Resolution 2149, as presented. Councilors Hofferth, Gardiner, Nellans, Petersen, and Shinkan voted in favor; none voted against. Motion passed.

#### **ORDINANCE 1979: STOP SIGN INSTALLATION**

Introduced ORDINANCE 1979 is AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE GENERAL PROVISIONS OF CHAPTER 54, TRAFFIC AND VEHICLES, OF THE MUNSTER CODE OF ORDINANCES PERTAINING TO ADDITIONAL STOP SIGNS AND CHANGE OF SPEED LIMIT. The Main Street train station is expected to be operational at the end of the summer. With the expected increase in traffic, Public Works has identified the need for a three-way stop at the intersection of Allison Road and Donna Drive in Community Estates.

Public Works and Police have discussed the situation and agree that it would be in the best interest of safety for the Community Estates neighborhood to install stop signs at this intersection. Stop signs will be placed facing north and south on Allison Road and a stop sign on Donna Drive.

For enforcement to occur, the stop signs must be approved by ordinance. Ordinance 1979 has been created for this purpose.

Councilor Petersen moved, with a second by Councilor Nellans, to hear Ordinance 1979 on first reading and schedule second reading for April 7, 2025. Councilors Hofferth, Gardiner, Nellans, Petersen, and Shinkan voted in favor; none voted against. Motion passed.

### **CCMG 2025-1: DESIGN ENGINEERING**

The Town of Munster recently applied for and was awarded Community Crossing Matching Grant (CCMG) funds from INDOT for 2025. The grant is a 50/50 grant with Munster providing at least 50% of the funds to repave or reconstruct the following street.

Road	From	To	Length
Timberwood Lane	White Oak Avenue	Ashwood Lane	0.447 miles
Lilac Lane	Camellia Drive	Azalea Drive	0.080 miles
Somerset Drive	White Oak Avenue	Redwood Lane	0.549 miles
Harrison Avenue	Fisher Street	Ridge Road	0.720 miles
Cornwallis Lane	Westminster Lane	Westminster Lane	0.398 miles
Westminster Lane	Cornwallis Lane	Cornwallis Lane	0.256 miles
Cobblestone Road	Boxwood Drive	Main Street	0.256 miles

The Town would like to engage SEH of Indiana, LLC to complete topographic survey, prepare engineering plans and specifications, and provide bid services to rehabilitate the streets. These services will be completed for a lump sum of \$99,000.00.

SEH will also provide on-site inspection services during construction. Resident Project Representative Services (RPR) include an average of eight hours of on-site representation/day over sixteen weeks which is the anticipated construction timeline. RPR will also include preconstruction meeting, verification of installed quantities, assembly of final construction records and the preparation and submittal of INDOT closeout documents. The fee for this work is \$128,000.00

Councilor Gardiner moved, with a second by Councilor Nellans to approve engineering design services to SEH for the CCMG 2025-1 project to include Timberwood Lane, Lilac Lane, Somerset Drive, Harrison Avenue, Cobblestone Road, Cornwallis Lane, and Westminster Lane in the amount of \$99,000.00 and Resident Project Representative Services in the amount of \$128,000.00. A discussion ensued regarding traffic calming in these projects. Harrison Avenue will be discussed at an upcoming speed team meeting. Councilors Hofferth, Gardiner, Nellans, Petersen, and Shinkan voted in favor; none voted against. Motion passed.

### **LANDFILL IMPROVEMENTS**

The original gas wells and collection system at the landfill were installed between 2004 and 2006 as part of the landfill closure and capping process. There have been minimal improvements since then. The time has come to make some improvements, and Cabeno Environmental Field Services has provided a quote for the following.

The work includes installation of a new 6" line between wells GW-E22 and GW-E8, installation of new, smaller lines from the new 6" to wells GW-E19, GW-E15, and GW-E11, installation of a sump by well GW-E15 and a partial repair to the line going to well GW-E14. Most of the work is in the golf course area with most of it in the rough. There will be times when lines will go into the fairways. None of the tee boxes or greens will be impacted.

Cabeno estimates the work will take about five to six weeks. Weather, unmarked/mismarked utilities and working around the golf course could lead to delays and additional work. Because of these unknowns, the cost estimate is for Time and Materials. The current estimate is \$148,445.00. In light of the unknowns, Staff has recommended adding a 20% contingency bringing the authorization request to \$180,000.00. The work will be paid from the 2024 GO Bond proceeds and the Solid Waste Management Fund.

This work will help resolve the lack of vacuum currently happening at the most active wells which are in the northeast corner of the well field. The work improves the gas collection and aids in setting up and operating the new generator. Routine modifications and improvements will be necessary moving forward to provide the gas for the generator, to prevent migration of the gas, and to maintain regulatory compliance.

Councilor Hofferth moved, with a second by Councilor Nellans, to approve the Scope of Work from Cabeno Environmental Field Services, LLC in their proposal dated February 27, 2025, at a not-to-exceed amount of \$180,000.00 for the landfill gas improvements. Councilors Hofferth, Gardiner, Nellans, Petersen, and Shinkan voted in favor; none voted against. Motion passed.

### **NICTD INVOICES**

On May 16, 2022, the Munster Town Council executed two written commitments and agreements with the Northern Indiana Commuter Transportation District (NICTD). The First Written Commitment and Agreement directed NICTD to authorize its Design-Build Contractor to proceed with a change order for the design and construction of the platforms at the new Ridge Road and Main Street passenger train stations. This is what is commonly referred to as the “betterments.” This includes material upgrades for the platform and a covered bike canopy at both stations. At the Main Street it also includes material upgrades for the underpass entrance, site improvements with pavers, a stone-faced knee wall, improved signage, extended sidewalks, benches, and bike parking. The additional design and construction costs were estimated at \$6,007,657.87.

The Second Written Commitment and Agreement, for \$397,175.59, directed NICTD to authorize its Design-Build Contractor to proceed with the design and construction of the alternate location of the water main between Fisher Street and the Canadian National/Grand Trunk Western Railroad. Additional fire hydrants, a gate valve, relocation of the 8” stub for the Kenmara site, and tracer wire for pipe identification.

NICTD pays the contractors directly for both the betterments and the watermain work. They then invoice the Town with supporting documentation for reimbursement. For a time, invoices were received monthly. Staff turnover at both entities led to the invoices being sent to the wrong location. The mix-up was recently discovered, and the invoices were forwarded to the proper address.

Staff met with NICTD several times to go through the past-due invoices to ensure accuracy. Normally, these invoices would be included with the regular Voucher Registers. Because of the situation, this group of invoices is being presented separately to Council. Future invoices will go through the regular voucher process. Adequate funding is available and budgeted for what was anticipated for 2025 work. Because of the backlog of invoices, there will be an additional appropriation request soon.

Retainage of 5% is withheld which will be paid when the project is complete. The current total retainage is \$98,456.45.

Councilor Gardiner moved, with a second by Councilor Nellans to approve the invoices due to NICTD totaling \$1,870,672.66 to be paid from the TIF Allocation Fund. Councilors Hofferth, Gardiner, Nellans, Petersen, and Shinkan voted in favor; none voted against. Motion passed.

### **PURCHASE OF TRUCK**

Public Works has increased the number of crew members, and an additional truck is needed for the Street Department fleet. The purchase will be made from the 2023 G.O. Bond Proceeds. Quotes were received as follows.

Vendor	Cost	Fees	Discount
Bosak Chevrolet	\$59,360.00	\$ -	\$6,886.00
Garber Chevrolet	\$60,035.00	\$ 246.53	\$5,281.53
Phillips Chevrolet	\$60,035.00	\$ 444.70	\$5,416.00

Councilor Gardiner moved, with a second by Councilor Nellans to approve purchase of a new 2025 Chevrolet Silverado 1500 4WD Crew Cab for a total purchase price of \$52,474.00 from Bosak Chevrolet. Councilors Hofferth, Gardiner, Nellans, Petersen, and Shinkan voted in favor; none voted against. Motion passed.

### **PURCHASE OF Z-TRAK MOWER**

Public Works needs a new Z-Trak mower. Working through Sourcewell, a proposal from Gruel Brothers. Sourcewell provides procurement services to governmental units through national contracts with vendors secured through competitive bidding. This provides the lowest competitive pricing in compliance with IC 5-22-10-5.

Gruel Brothers quote is for a TRZ 7661 66" brush-cut mower with terrain tracks originally priced at \$25,999.00, less a discount of \$3,899.85 for at final cost of \$22,099.15. The purchase will be made with 2022 and 2023 G.O. Bond proceeds.

Councilor Hofferth moved, with a second by Councilor Nellans, to approve the purchase of a Z-Trak mower from Gruel Brothers, Inc. in the amount of \$22,099.15. Councilors Hofferth, Gardiner, Nellans, Petersen, and Shinkan voted in favor; none voted against. Motion passed.

### **DISPOSAL OF EQUIPMENT**

Public Works has the following equipment that is no longer in use or no longer serviceable.

- 17 server racks
- 2 Lenovo computers, Serial Numbers N91667 and N91720
- 3 Internet switches

Councilor Gardiner moved, with a second by Councilor Hofferth to declare the items surplus, authorize Public Works 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.

### **PORTFOLIO REPORTS**

Councilor Gardiner reported a sustainability group meet with students and interested residents to work together to promote sustainability in Munster. Councilor Shinkan would like to be a part of the group. The grand opening of the Centennial Park Pro Shop and Driving Range was held earlier in the day and was a good event. The Lake County Solid Waste will be meeting on March 21, 2025 and he is unable to attend, asked if one of the other Councilors as appointed alternates would be available.

### **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, April 7, 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 Hofferth, the meeting adjourned at 7:00 p.m. by voice vote.

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**George Shinkan, President**

**ATTEST:**

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**Wendy Mis, Clerk-Treasurer**