

June 20, 2023

TOWN OF GRIFFITH TOWN COUNCIL MINUTES

Council President Rick Ryfa called the June 20, 2023, meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

POLICE OFFICERS KILLED IN THE LINE OF DUTY:

Police Officer Mark Christopher Wagner II
Trooper Jacques F. Rougeau Jr.

ROLL CALL:

James Marker
Lawrence Ballah
Rick Ryfa
Tony Hobson
Melissa Robbins

ALSO ATTENDING:

Gina Smith- Clerk Treasurer
Greg Mance – Chief of Police
Steve McDermott – Building Commissioner
Alfredo Estrada – Attorney for the Town
Roy Schoon – Fire Chief
Andy Raab – Director of Public Works

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Council Member Tony Hobson made a motion to approve the minutes of the June 6, 2023, as presented, seconded by Council Member Melissa Robbins, all in favor, Motion Carried.

APPROVAL OF CLAIMS: Various Funds \$977,267.46 Council Member Jim Marker made a motion to approve the claims as presented, seconded by Council Member Larry Ballah, all in favor, Motion Carried.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

1. The next Town Council meeting will be on Tuesday, July 6, 2023, at 7:00 p.m. There will be a study session before the meeting at 6:30 p.m. and one will follow, if necessary.
2. There will be a Town Council study session next Tuesday, June 27, 2023, at 6:00 pm.

COMMUNICATIONS: NONE

REPORTS:

- Public Works – Elm Street, west of St. Mary’s, CN Railroad is going to close the intersection from 6/26-6/30. Sidewalk update REX contract A substantially done.
- Police – No Report
- Fire – No Report
- Building Commissioner - No Report
- Finance Report – No Report

Griffith Bluesfest will be this weekend; Broad Street will be closed mid-day Friday and reopen sometime on Sunday evening after the event.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS:

BUSINESS FROM THE COUNCIL: NONE

OLD BUSINESS: NONE

NEW BUSINESS:

1. **St. Mary's Western Days Festival Fireworks Display Permit:** This will be on August 20, 2023, at approximately 9:00 pm, Council Member Jim Marker made a motion to approve this Fireworks Permit, seconded by Council Member Larry Ballah, all in favor, Motion Carried.

2. **Park Board requesting to purchase 2023 Chevrolet Colorado \$32,130.00, authorizing Clerk to seek financing:** Council Member Tony Hobson made a motion authorizing the Clerk Treasurer to seek for this purchase, seconded by Council Member Melissa Robbins, all in favor, Motion Carried.

3. **36th Marian Pilgrimage in Honor of Our Lady of Czestochowa:** This will take place on Saturday and Sunday, August 12th, and 13th, this will take place through Griffith on August 13th. Council Member Melissa Robbins made a motion to approve them for using Griffith for part of their Pilgrimage, seconded by Council Member Tony Hobson, all in favor, Motion Carried.

4. **Engagement Letter with Barnes & Thornburg:** This is a proposal to provide General Obligation Bond for the Town of Griffith, assisting the Town as our General Counsel instructing any transactions, we enter into preparing documentation for transactions and assisting the time preparing for required hearings at the local level, preparing for and participating in any meetings that are required by any agencies and attending any meetings as requested by the Town. Coordinating, scheduling closing the bonds. For these services they are charging us \$37,500.00. Council Member Larry Ballah made a motion to accept Barnes & Thornburg agreement and allow Council President Rick Ryfa to sign the agreement, seconded by Council Member Jim Marker, all in favor, Motion Carried.

5. **Ordinance 2023-16 Public Hearing and Adoption of Sewage Rates:** Rick Ryfa opened the Public Hearing at 7:14 pm. Reedy Financial gave a presentation. Resident Don McCarter asked if the sprinkling credit would go away, Ryfa responded no, this is for Sanitary. The Town has an ordinance that has been in place for the water sprinkling credit and until it is removed it will stay. Don asked about getting a septic bill. Not unless he is connected to the Town. No other questions. Ryfa wanted clarification in 2021 that the bill to Hammond Sanitary was \$700 plus thousand, and the estimated new bill will be \$1,900,000.00, that is confirmed, doubled. \$1.2 million increase in our billings from Hammond. Ryfa stated those costs will fluctuate directly with how much rain we get. Before closing the Public Hearing Ryfa asked for any questions, comments, or remonstrators either for or against the rate increase. No response, at 7:25 Ryfa closed the public hearing. Council Member Jim Marker made a motion to approve and final adopt on the first reading, seconded by Council Member Larry Ballah, all in favor, Motion Carried. Council Member Jim Marker made a motion based on the majority suspending the rules, Roll Call taken, all in favor, rules are suspended. Council Member Jim Marker made a motion that we approve Ordinance 2023-16, seconded by Council Member Larry Ballah, all in favor, Motion Carried.

6. **Resolution 2023-18 Transfer Appropriations:** Council Member Tony Hobson made a motion to adopt Resolution 2023-18 seconded by Council Member Melissa Robbins, all in favor, Motion Carried.

7. **Ordinance 2023-19:** Ordinance amending Ordinance 2022-33, establishing a rental policy fee. Council Member Larry Ballah made a motion to adopt the amended Ordinance 2023-19, seconded by Council Member Jim Marker all in favor, Motion Carried. Council Member, Council President Rick Ryfa entertained a motion to suspend the rules, Council Member Larry Ballah stated so moved, seconded by Council Member Jim Marker, Roll Call taken, all in favor, rules suspended, Council Member Larry Ballah made a motion to adopt this new amended Ordinance, seconded by Council Member Jim Marker, Ryfa stated the only addition was the area where that allows us to waive a fee to a local municipality, they would still need to abide by all the regulations, all in favor, Motion Carried.

8. **Resolution 2023-20:** Preliminary determination to issue General Obligation Bonds of the Town of Griffith, Indiana. The Town of Griffith has considered issuing general Obligation

an aggregate principal amount not to exceed Two Million Five Hundred Thousand Dollars, (the Bonds) to finance various capital expenditures in the Town (collectively, the Project) Council Member Melissa Robbins made a motion to approve Resolution 2023-20, seconded by Council Member Tony Hobson, Ryfa stated tonight this is making a preliminary determination to issue GO Bonds and subsequently public hearings, all in favor, Motion Carried.

9. Bid Opening Griffith Oak Street & Broad Street Lighting: We are looking at putting permanent lights at the intersection of Oak Street and Broad Street to help with the lighting. Council President Rick Ryfa opened the bid: Midwestern Electric: Council Member Larry Ballah read the bid total cost of quote: \$49,225.00. No other bids. Council President Rick Ryfa entertained a motion to send this to Public Works Director as well as the attorney to review and a recommendation, Council Member Larry Ballah so moved, seconded by Council Member Jim Marker, all in favor, Motion Carried.

Council President Rick Ryfa stated this will conclude the Town Council Meeting, we will open the Water Board Meeting. There will be time for Public Comment after the Water Board Meeting.

Pending Items: NONE

Public Comment:

Don McCarter: 2023-20- Project, how much, all at once, Capital project purchase of house on Main Street, Engineering cost for Town Hall; replenish funds.

Tim Diamond: Bill from Advanced Engineering Services \$4,90.00 to be paid from Central Park Bond, approved by Town Council

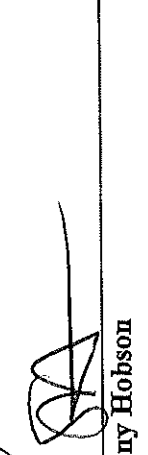
There being no further business to come before this Council, the meeting adjourned to 7:41p.m.

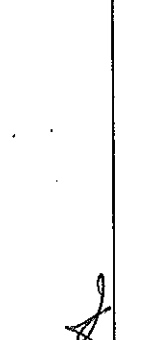
COUNCIL MEMBERS OF THE TOWN OF GRIFFITH, LAKE COUNTY, INDIANA


Rick Ryfa – President


Lawrence Ballah – Vice President


James Marker


Tony Hobson


Melissa Robbins


Attest: Gina Smith - Clerk Treasurer

