The Regular Town Council Meeting of the Town of Schererville, IN was called to order by President Thomas Schmitt at 7:08 p.m. in the Schererville Town Hall, 10 E. Joliet Street Schererville, IN.

Attendance was taken with the following Council Members present: Caleb S. Johnson, Kevin Connelly, Robin Arvanitis, Rob Guetzloff and Thomas Schmitt. Staff members present: Attorney David Austgen, Fire Chief Robert Patterson, Deputy Fire Chief David Meyer, Police Chief Pete Sormaz, Deputy Police Chief Steve McNamara, Park Superintendent John Novacich, IT Robbie Hansen, Director of Operations Andy Hansen, Town Manager Jim Gorman, Clerk-Treasurer Michael Troxell and Recording Secretary Robin Thiel.

THEREUPON, Approval of the minutes. Mr. Johnson made a motion to approve the minutes of the February 8, 2023 Public Meeting, seconded by Mrs. Arvanitis. All in favor (5-0).

THEREUPON, Claims

A. APV #106936 - APV #107379 on the General Docket, Totaling $1,763,705.70
B. APV #106947 - APV #107374 on the MVH Docket, Totaling $96,366.86
C. APV #106959 - APV #107270 on the Payroll Docket, Totaling $1,171,393.05
D. Various Funds, First National Bank of Omaha, Credit Card Charges, $13,112.87
E. Various Funds, Austgen Kuiper Jasaitis, February Legal, $11,371.05
F. Various Funds, Menards Hardware, Supplies, $8,370.52
G. Various Funds, Auto-Wares, Parts, $15,634.16
H. Public Safety Funds, Franciscan Health EMS Academy, A. Elkmann 2023 Paramedic Class Installment, $1,500.00
I. Park Non-Reverting Funds, Jessica Baler-Gallegos, Settlement, $214.00
J. Park Bond 2018 Fund, DLZ LLC, Pmt. #10-Pennsy Greenway, Phase IV, Invoice #705276, $1,404.87
K. Various Funds, Rothschild Insurance Agency, Inc., Premium Due, $3,787.00
L. Park Impact Fee Fund, The Arsh Group Inc., 2023 Parks Impact Fee Study, $4,308.00
M. General Fund - Police, Governmental Insurance Exchange, Statement #2023020011, $2,500.00
N. Various Funds, Lowe's, Parts, $73.93
O. Various Funds, Circle "R" Mechanical, Repairs, $3,025.94
P. Various Funds, Rhomar, Vehicle Supplies, $1,550.49
Q. Park Non-Reverting Fund, Andrew Spencer, Program Services, $1,500.00
R. Park Non-Reverting Fund, Big Tent Events, Craft Fair Tent, $8,997.50
S. Park Non-Reverting Fund, Lake Central School Corporation, $3,000.00
T. Various Funds, Enterprise Rent-A-Car Vehicle Lease, $3,346.64

Mr. Troxell stated he has an additional claim to add to the agenda.

U. Fidelity National Title Company, Outlet B Pershing Road, $375.00

Mr. Johnson made a motion to accept the claims as presented, seconded by Mr. Guetzloff. All in favor (5-0).

THEREUPON, Correspondence NONE

THEREUPON, Reports

Chief Patterson reported that the Schererville Fire Department responded to 259 EMS related calls and 52 Fire related calls, for a total of 311 calls for February 2023.

Chief Sormaz stated that yesterday at Round the Clock, they had their first 2023 Coffee with a Cop. He stated it was a very nice event and thanked Round the Clock for hosting that, and all of the Council and Staff members who showed up to support the Police Department, Coffee with a Cop.

THEREUPON, Public Comments Regarding Agenda Items

Joe Konicek, President Schererville Professional Firefighters Association, stated that this in reference to Item I., Safer Grant. Mr. Konicek started off by reading off a list of names of past members of the Schererville Fire Department, who have left the Schererville Fire Department to go to other Departments, because they were tired of working everyday with minimum staffing levels. He stated that in 2012 they had 13 full-time platoon firefighters that responded to 2,848 calls for service. He stated that the Schererville Fire Department currently has 18 full-time platoon firefighters that responded to 4,001 calls for service in 2022. He stated that is a 29% in call volume, they only have the minimum staffing requirement of six firefighters on duty, now spread out between three fire houses. He stated that currently they just responded to a structure fire with six personnel on duty. Mr. Konicek stated that what they should have on duty is no less than four firefighters at each Fire house. Mr. Konicek gave a comparison between Schererville Fire Departments and other departments.

Mr. Konicek stated that once again they brought a solution to this project using the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the Safer Grant. He stated with this program you can potentially hire three to six new full time firefighters for the department. He stated that all of the Council members received a copy of the letter they provided on why they need to follow through with, if accepted, hiring three new firefighters through the Safer Grant. Mr. Konicek explained to the Council the OSHA, two in two out rule. It states that no more than two firefighters can operate inside a burning building unless there are two other firefighters outside that building. He stated that if you only have six firefighters on duty, two are on ambulance calls and one has to sit there and operate the fire engine, which leaves three firefighters left. Who is going to put the fire out, who is going to rescue them if something would go bad, who is there to help the victims when they get pulled out. He stated that this is a daily occurrence where they are down to two firefighters sometime. Mr. Konicek spoke about the part-time firefighters and the overtime our full-time firefighters have been working. He asked the Council to consider the Safer Grant that is on the agenda this evening.

Mr. Kevin Deane, 1905 Sir Richard Road, stated that Item G., Consider extending the Families First Coronavirus Response Act. He stated that you are talking about ten days of paid leave. He stated that his research says that the CDC has changed those guidelines to five days, if you haven't had a temperature over the previous twenty-four hours you can return to work. He stated he is wondering why we are staying with the ten day limit.

THEREUPON, Old Business NONE

THEREUPON, New Business

ITEM A. Ord. #1992, An Ordinance Amending Town Ordinance No. 1820, Being "An Ordinance Amending the Schedule of Towing and Storage Fees to be Charged and Collected for Such Services by the Schererville Metropolitan Police Department, Repealing all Ordinances and Town Code Sections, or Parts Thereof, in Conflict Herewith, and All Matters Related Hereto", Repealing all Ordinances And Town Code Sections, or Parts Thereof, in Conflict Herewith and all Matters Related Hereto

Mr. Gorman stated that this is an Ordinance amending Ordinance 1820, to increase the fees for towing and storage of vehicles that the police may need off the street. He stated that

the Ordinance reads the same, the only thing that has changed is the fees. He stated that they are having some of the towing companies come out because other municipalities in our area are charging more.

Mr. Johnson made a motion to consider on 1st reading, Ordinance #1992, seconded by Mr. Guetzloff. All in favor (5-0).

Mr. Guetzloff made a motion to adopt Ordinance #1992, seconded by Mrs. Arvanitis. All in favor (5-0).

ITEM B. Consider Acceptance of Northwest Indiana Symphony Orchestra Contract - $12,000.00 (Performance Date Saturday, July 22, 2023)

Mr. Connelly made a motion to approve, seconded by Mr. Johnson. Mr. Johnson asked Mr. Troxell if this is the same as last year. Mr. Troxell stated yes, it is the same. All in favor (5-0).

ITEM C. Consider Approval to Purchase Property Located at 445 Kennedy Avenue, Schererville, IN (Parcel 10) from Laura A. Filosa in the Amount of $285,000.00 and to Authorize the Town Manager, Director of Operations, Clerk-Treasurer and Town Attorney to Finalize Execution of Documents **(Kennedy Avenue Improvements)**

Mr. Gorman stated that this is in Phase I, which is the Tracks project. This is parcel is shown on the screen in purple, it is on the north side of the tracks, east side of Kennedy Avenue.

Mr. Johnson asked Mr. Gorman if we have already agreed to execute the documents for yellow and orange properties shown on the screen. Mr. Gorman stated they are still in process, but yes, those have been approved. He stated that once we approve it, it goes back to INDOT. He stated INDOT pays for 80% and we pay for 20%.

Mr. Johnson made a motion to approve the Purchase property located at 445 Kennedy Avenue, seconded by Mr. Connelly. All in favor (5-0).

ITEM D. Consider Sale of Road Salt to Cedar Lake, Lake County, Indiana

Mr. Hansen stated that Cedar Lake reached out to us, they did not purchase any salt this year and since we had a mild winter our salt barn is very full. He stated Cedar Lake asked for 400 tons and they worked it out to have it delivered to them, we would not make any profit, and it works out for both communities.

Mr. Connelly made a motion to approve the sale of road salt to Cedar Lake, Lake County, Indiana, seconded by Mr. Johnson. All in favor (5-0).

ITEM E. Consider Variance of Use to Permit the Relocation of an Existing Static, 10.5' x 36', Off-Premise Advertising Structure to be Relocated 600' to the East, Placed at a Zero Setback on Side and Front Yards with an Overall Height of 48'

Board of Zoning Appeals Case #23-2-2
Location: 7860 Burr Street (Care First Immediate Care/ Center - Methodist Hospital)
Petitioner: Lamar Advertising Company, Real Estate

Manager - Shawn Pettit
Favorable Recommendation by the B.Z.A. 3-0 - with Conditions: 1) Subject to all Federal, State and Local Approvals, 2) Subject to Landscaping around The Base of the Structure

Mr. Gorman stated that currently have a static sign on the future Subaru property. They have already taken that down and they are moving it 600' to the east on Methodist Property and it will be the exact same sign that they just took down.

Mr. Guetzloff made a motion to approve the Variance of Use, with the conditions as stated above, seconded by Mr. Connelly. Motion carries (4-0-1) Mr. Johnson abstained from voting.

ITEM F. Consider Request from the Park Board to Allow Beer and Wine at the following events: (Dates subject to change If rescheduled due to weather)

Friday, May 12th	Party in the Park	Redar Park
Friday, May 26th	Party in the Park	Redar Park
Wed. June 7th-Sun. June 11th	Celebrate Schererville Fest	Redar Park
Friday, June 23rd	Party in the Park	Redar Park
Friday, June 30th (rain date July 1)	Fireworks	Rohrman Park
Friday, July 14th	Party in the Park	Redar Park
Friday, July 21st	Party in the Park	Redar Park
Saturday, July 22nd	NWI Symphony	Redar Park
Friday, July 28th	Sch. Chamber Corn Roast	Redar Park
Friday, August 11th	Party in the Park	Redar Park
Friday, August 18th	Party in the Park	Redar Park
Friday, August 25th	Evening Under the Stars	Redar Park
Saturday, September 16th	Country-A-Fair	Redar Park

Mr. Connelly made a motion to approve the Park Board to allow beer and wine at the above listed events, seconded by Mr. Guetzloff. Mr. Johnson asked Chief Sormaz and Deputy Chief McNamara if we have been having any issues with excess of alcohol or problems arising with these events. Chief Sormaz stated no they have not had any issues at the park. Mr. Johnson asked if we have to approve this every time or are we able to grant this authority to the Park Board. Mr. Novacich stated that the Town Ordinance does not allow alcohol in the Park, and that is why it is brought up to the Council, since the Council has the authority to waive or change the Ordinance. Mr. Johnson asked if we could amend the Town ordinance to grant the Park Board to allow alcohol at events that they deemed worthy. Attorney Austgen stated yes you could.

All in favor (5-0).

ITEM G. Consider Approval to Extend Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA), to May 11, 2023 (Currently Due to Expire on March 31, 2023). This Act Compensates up to Eighty (80) Hours of Paid Leave to Employees that are Off Work Due to Covid-19

Mr. Gorman stated that we currently have no employees off due to COVID, we just had one come back yesterday. He stated that we have had eight employees off for the months of January and February. Mr. Gorman stated that we are aware that the CDC did change their policy, we do not follow that policy because part of that policy is coming back wearing a mask. He stated that would be hard a thing to police, in our opinion. Mr. Gorman stated they are asking it to be extended to May 11th, due to the Federal Government suspending that emergency. Mr. Gorman stated that there are very few employees who use the 80 hours because on the onset of symptoms, that is when the clock starts and we include weekends.

He stated it is ten calendar days, not ten paid days. Mr. Johnson asked if this is a thing with other municipalities. Mr. Gorman stated he does not know about other municipalities, but our employees are still getting coronavirus.

Mrs. Arvanitis made a motion to Extend Families First Coronavirus Response Act to May 11, 2023, seconded by Mr. Guetzloff. All in favor (5-0).

ITEM H. Consider Donation to "Dollars for Scholars" (Request For $1,200.00) Approved by the Donation Committee 3-0

Mr. Connelly made a motion to approve the Donation, seconded by Mr. Guetzloff. All in favor (5-0).

ITEM I. Consider Authorization to Submit Application for the "Fire Department Manpower Safer Grant"

Chief Patterson stated that the Safer Grant is out there to assist Departments with improving staffing for their department. The Grant gives a 3 year term, fully paid.

Mr. Guetzloff made a motion authorize and approve the finishing and submission of the Safer Grant application, with two conditions. 1) The submission is contingent upon the Town having the sufficient funding if awarded and 2) that the Town staff of the Fire Department provide a report to the Town Council, seconded by Mrs. Arvanitis.

Roll call vote: Mr. Johnson - Yes; Mr. Connelly - Yes; Mrs. Arvanitis - Yes; Mr. Guetzloff - Yes; Mr. Schmitt - Yes. Motion carries (5-0).

ITEM J. Consider Acceptance of Donations $15.00

Mr. Troxell read into the record the Donations for the month of February 2023.

Mr. Johnson made a motion to accept the donations as read, seconded by Mr. Guetzloff. All in favor (5-0).

THEREUPON, Business from the floor

Mr. Konicek thanked the members of the Council for passing the agenda item for the Safer Grant. He stated that hopefully they will see additional staffing in years in come.

Meeting adjourned.

Thomas J Schmitt
THOMAS SCHMITT
TOWN COUNCIL PRESIDENT

Michael A Troxell
MICHAEL A TROXELL, IAMC, CPFIM, CMO
TOWN CLERK-TREASURER

A TRUE COPY

TOWN OF SCHERERVILLE SEAL LAKE COUNTY, INDIANA

