

The Regular Town Council Meeting of the Town of Schererville, IN was called to order by President Robin Arvanitis at 7:12 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, Thomas Schmitt, Rob Guetzloff and Robin Arvanitis. Staff members present: Attorney David Austgen, Fire Chief Robert Patterson, Police Chief Pete Sormaz, Deputy Police Chief Steve McNamara, Park Superintendent John Novacich, IT Robbie Hansen, Director of Public Works Andy Hansen, Director of Operations Jim Gorman, Town Manager Robert Volkmann, Clerk-Treasurer Michael Troxell and Recording Secretary Robin Thiel.

THEREUPON, Approval of the minutes. Mr. Connelly made a motion to approve the minutes of the February 9, 2022 Public Meeting, seconded by Mr. Schmitt. All in favor (5-0).

THEREUPON, Claims

- A. APV #101120 - APV #101568 on the General Docket, Totaling \$1,757,019.99
- B. Apv #101121 - APV #101566 on the MVH Docket, Totaling \$144,740.07
- C. Apv #101142 - Apv #101457 on the Payroll Docket, Totaling \$1,152,649.71
- D. Various Funds, First National Bank of Omaha, Credit Card Charges, \$15,387.27
- E. Various Funds, Austgen Kuiper Jasaitis, February Legal, \$9,514.22
- F. Park Bond 2018 Fund, DLZ LLC, Payment #21 & #23, NLT-1-12, \$15,645.45
- G. Various Funds, Menards, Parts, \$4,895.93
- H. Various Funds, Auto Wares, Repair Parts, \$10,359.55
- I. Cable TV Fund, Ryan Reay, Beaver Removal, \$100.00
- J. Park Non-Reverting Fund, Strack & Van Til, Program Supplies, \$348.35

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

THEREUPON, Correspondence NONE

THEREUPON, Reports

Chief Patterson reported that the Fire Department responded to 228 EMS calls and 52 Fire related calls, for a total of 280 calls for the month of February.

Chief Patterson reported that Deputy Chief Meyer and Captain Konicek have been in Buffalo, New York the last two days doing a final inspection our new Fire Truck. He stated that it sounds like the inspection went well, just a few minor things. Once it passes the inspection, the engine will be delivered to St. John Fire Services for final detailing.

Mr. Novacich stated that they have started the program registrations and in the months of January and February they had 1,092 program registrations, bringing in over eighty thousand dollars in revenue.

Mr. Volkmann reported that the ARPA Committee met and put together a plan for using the ARPA funds that we received through COVID stimulus package. Mr. Volkmann stated that they are looking for the Council's approval to spend those dollars. Mr. Schmitt stated that they received the final guidelines from the State on how the money can be spent.

Mr. Schmitt stated that the ARPA Committee has been meeting every couple of weeks. He stated that he and Mr. Johnson are on the Committee along with the staff members and they have come up with a list on how the ARPA money should be spent. Mr. Schmitt stated the Council members received a draft copy on what the Committee has recommended the money be spent. Mr. Schmitt stated that the Town will receive \$6,440,413.13 in ARPA Funding. He

stated that we received half of that so far. Mr. Schmitt read the list of seven categories the Committee has come up with.

Mr. Schmitt stated he would like to make a motion to authorize our town staff to work with Attorney Austgen regarding our ARPA funds, and to have our Attorney create an Ordinance for Use, to update the Salary Ordinance to accommodate the Premium Pay for our Employees, and an Ordinance for the relief to Non-Profits from loans, and to work with Mr. Troxell and his staff to generate a pay date for the employees premium pay, seconded by Mr. Johnson. All in favor (5-0).

Mr. Schmitt stated that our COVID Leave pay for our employees expires on March 31, 2022. Mr. Schmitt made a motion to extend the COVID leave pay for our employees until April 30, 2022, seconded by Mr. Guetzloff. All in favor (5-0).

THEREUPON, Presentation

Craig Zandstra - Potential Lake Hills County Park Site  
Sarros Property

Mr. Zandstra stated he was here at the October 2021 meeting and spoke to the Town Council, laying out the plans for a potential park between 77<sup>th</sup> and 85<sup>th</sup> avenues near the Pennsy Greenway Trail and Lake Hills Park. Mr. Zandstra stated he is here this evening with more details, regarding the land's educational and environmental possibilities. Mr. Zandstra stated over \$850,000.00 stands between the Lake County Parks Department and the creation of Lake Hills Park, a valuable patch of open space on the edge of Schererville.

Mr. Zandstra stated that he thinks it would be a great opportunity for schools and other groups to get out there and learn more about nature and some of the aspects of our ecosystem here in Northwest Indiana and how they function. Mr. Zandstra stated that most of the 99.3 acres of land have sat unused since the owners stopped farming in the 1980's.

Mr. Zandstra stated that Lake County Parks has been in talks with the owners for several years, but the \$1.7 million price tag has been a barrier. So far, Lake County Parks has secured just under half of the necessary funds through federal partners. Now the department is looking to local sources to make up the difference, including the Town of Schererville. Mr. Zandstra stated that he hopes to acquire the land as soon as possible, as the deadline to use some of the federal funding is this summer. He stated if they are not able to get the funds together and we can't get it purchased, then there is a good chance it will be developed.

Mr. Zandstra stated that the Lake County Parks is asking for a \$400,000.00 commitment from the Town, although any amount would be helpful. Mr. Volkmann stated that The Schererville council is still exploring on how they will participate. Mr. Zandstra stated he spoke to the County Commissioners and the Lake County Surveyor and he hopes to get some help there. He stated, to sum it up, the current plans include a 3-5 acre turf grass area for recreation, a playground, picnic shelter and extensive trail system.

Mr. Schmitt asked Mr. Zandstra what the total cost of the project is. Mr. Zandstra stated \$1,727,500.00.

Mr. Johnson stated he knows most of this property is in Schererville and asked Mr. Zandstra what the management plan is, and the relationship you anticipate with Schererville. Mr. Zandstra stated that they would probably look at some type of Inter Local Agreement between the County, the Town of Schererville and Park Departments. Mr. Zandstra stated that it is going to take some time to get all of the partners in place.

Mr. Volkmann asked Mr. Zandstra if they have any other parks that they work with. Mr. Zandstra stated that they do on some of their bike trails.

THEREUPON, Public Comments Agenda Items NONE

THEREUPON, Old Business NONE

THEREUPON, New Business

ITEM A. Ord. #1979, An Ordinance Amending Schererville Town Zoning Ordinance NO. 1797 pertaining to Regulation Of Pet Shops in the Town of Schererville, Repealing All Ordinances and Town Code Provisions, or Portions Thereof, in Conflict Herewith, and all Matters Related Thereto.

Mr. Gorman stated that Ordinance #1979 relates to pet shops. He stated that the Ordinance added some terms, such as animal shelters, dogs, cats and pet mills. He stated it also added language that pet mills, which they are sometimes referred to puppy mills are prohibited in the Town of Schererville. It also includes, if a pet shop sells cats or dogs that they cannot be from a pet mill or puppy mill.

Mr. Connelly made a motion to consider on 1<sup>st</sup> reading, Ordinance #1979, seconded by Mr. Johnson. All in favor (5-0).

Mr. Connelly made a motion to adopt Ordinance #1979, seconded by Mr. Johnson. All in favor (5-0).

ITEM B. Ord. #1980, An Ordinance of the Town of Schererville, Lake County, Indiana, Approving the Formation and Operation of a Police Reserve Officer Program in the Schererville Metropolitan Police Department, Repealing All Ordinances, Town Code Sections, and Terms, or Parts Thereof, in Conflict Herewith, and all Matters Related Thereto

Chief Sormaz stated that the Schererville Police Reserve Officer Program would consist of unpaid, certified volunteer reserve officers. Its primary purpose is to provide additional manpower to the Department during emergencies, special events or day to day operations which would otherwise affect the Department's ability to provide proper police service. Additionally, the Police Reserve Officer Program expands available police services and increases citizen participation in Department activities.

Chief Sormaz stated that the selection criteria for reserves are the same as for full-time police officers. The only difference is that they are not a paid member of the police department. Reserve officers serve at the pleasure of the Chief of Police and the Board of Safety has control of the matters. Chief Sormaz stated that police Reserve officers shall be responsible for essential job functions and serve a minimum number of unpaid hours of directed duty each month just like a full-time police officer. This would consist of attending in-service training, riding patrol in the districts, working assignments in other units with the Department or working any approved assignments. All laws, policies, rules and procedures, applicable to full-time sworn police officers, are applicable to report reserves while they are on or off duty.

Chief Sormaz stated, in addition to the many benefits, this would be a great recruitment program for our police department to attract potential full-time officers. After spending several months training and vested in the department, Reserves can enter the academy knowing all the particulars of the department. Reserves will have already become well-versed in the very fabric of the department they seek to serve. The police department can use this inexpensive resource to invest in the next generations of officers. Reserve Police Officers have proven time and time again

to be a very valuable resource for many of the police agencies in our area. Reserve police officer programs offer a great opportunity to get an introduction to law enforcement before hiring our next full-time officer.

Mr. Johnson asked Chief Sormaz if they will be carrying guns. Chief Sormaz stated yes they will. Mr. Johnson asked what kind of training they will have with guns, being on the road, etc. Chief Sormaz stated that they will receive the training as all of the sworn officers do. Mr. Johnson stated, so they have to qualify. Chief Sormaz stated absolutely.

Mr. Schmitt thanked Chief Sormaz, Deputy McNamara, Commander Bork and Commander Wagner, along with two of our Safety Board Members, Mr. Graf and Mr. Kouros. Mr. Schmitt stated he thinks this will be a great program for our Town.

Mr. Connelly made a motion to consider on 1<sup>st</sup> reading, Ordinance #1980, seconded by Mr. Schmitt. All in favor (5-0).

Mr. Connelly made a motion to adopt Ordinance #1980, seconded by Mr. Guetzloff. All in favor (5-0).

ITEM C. Res. #2022-3, A Resolution to Transfer Funds within a Category of appropriations.

Mr. Troxell explained the Transfer of Funds. Mr. Johnson made a motion to adopt Resolution #2022-3, seconded by Mr. Guetzloff. All in favor (5-0).

ITEM D. Consider Approval of Variance of Use to Allow a 42.6 Sq. Ft. Illuminated Digital Monument Sign to be placed within the Joliet Street Overly District.

Board of Zoning Case: #22-2-3  
Petitioner: Town of Schererville - Robert Volkmann,  
Town Manager  
Location: 500 E. Joliet Street - Sherwood Park, Lot 1  
Favorable Recommendation by BZA - 4-0.

Mr. Volkmann stated that this is a digital sign that will be in front of the Park Community Center. He stated that it is very similar to the one we have at Rohrman Park. He stated that this is for the Park Department to advertise their events, it's for the Park Department and the Community. Mr. Volkmann stated that this went in front of the BZA and passed 4-0, with no conditions. He stated that the Park Department will shut off the sign at dusk/dark, but in the winter time it gets dark so early, so the Park Department will manage the sign. Mr. Volkmann stated that at no time will it be on later than 10:00 p.m.

Mr. Guetzloff made a motion to approve the Variance to Allow an Illuminated Digital Monument Sign on Joliet Street, seconded by Mr. Schmitt.

Mr. Johnson stated that he feels the residents were led to believe that the sign was going to turn off at dusk. Mr. Volkmann stated that it was mentioned at the BZA to turn off at dusk, but in the winter time, dusk is at 4:00 pm. Mr. Volkmann stated that the BZA did not put any restrictions on it.

Mr. Johnson stated that the Council could put a restriction on it that the sign would be turn off at dusk, or if there is an event going on, that it be turned off after the event, but at no time no later than 9:00 pm.

Mr. Guetzloff amended his motion to approve the Variance, with the condition that the sign would be turn off at dusk, or if there is an event going on, that it be turned off after the event, but at no time no later than 9:00 pm, seconded by Mr. Schmitt. All in favor (5-0).

ITEM E. Consider Acceptance of Warranty Deed from Hawthorne Ridge Development, LLC (Jack Slager) located at 8310 Austin Avenue (Whispering Ridge Lift Station)

Mr. Gorman stated that this is for a Lift Station at Whispering Ridge Subdivision. He stated that the two year maintenance bond is up on that and the Town will take possession once all of the deeds are signed, and Attorney Austgen takes a look at it. He stated that the Town Sewer Department will take over the Lift Station.

Mr. Johnson made a motion to accept the Warranty Deed from Hawthorne ridge Development, seconded by Mr. Guetzloff. All in favor (5-0).

ITEM F. Award Bid for Road Materials

Mr. Hansen stated that the Public Works Department's yearly request for bids for the referenced Materials and Services was published in the local newspapers on Feb. 2, 2022 and Feb. 23, 2022. Bids were received in the Clerk-Treasurer's Office by 10:00 am on Feb. 23, 2022. He stated that the bids were opened publicly and taken under advisement for evaluation. Mr. Hansen stated that bids were taken for Asphalt Paving Materials and Services, Pour-in-Place Concrete Materials and Services, Road Materials - Stone, Gravel, Black Dirt & Sand and for Concrete Disposal Services.

Mr. Hansen stated that they are recommending the following:

Asphalt Paving Materials and Services be awarded to Milestone Contractors North, Inc.

Poured-in-Place Concrete Materials and Services be awarded to Colby & Co.

Road Materials - Stone, Gravel, Black Dirt and Sand be awarded to Walter's Excavation.

Concrete Disposal Services - be awarded to Milestone Contractors North, Inc.

Mr. Schmitt made a motion to approve Mr. Hansen's recommendations for 2022 Road Materials, seconded by Mr. Johnson, with discussion.

Mr. Johnson asked Mr. Hansen if there were any other bidders other than the ones we are awarding to. Mr. Hansen advised no. Mr. Johnson asked if this was appropriate if we only have one bidder. Mr. Hansen stated that in years past Rieth-Riley did our Asphalt Paving, but they did not bid this year. He stated that Walter's Excavating used to do the Concrete Disposal, but they did not bid on that this year.

Mr. Johnson asked if there is any explanation on why Rieth-Riley did not put a bid in for the Asphalt Paving.

Mr. Gorman stated that his guess would be that Rieth-Riley was awarded the bid for the CCMD in Schererville and they will be busy with that.

Mr. Volkmann stated that for Asphalt Paving, one of the biggest components of it is the logistics of it. He stated that they come from North Cline Avenue and our contract is, whether they are patching where a water break was or they are paving an entire street, it's still the same price per ton and it is still the same requirement. He stated that the main problem is the logistics of it.

All in favor (5-0).

ITEM G. Consider Acceptance of Agreement between the Northwest Indiana Symphony Orchestra and the Town of Schererville For Performance to be held on Saturday, July 23, 2022

Mr. Guetzloff made a motion to accept the agreement between the Northwest Indiana Symphony Orchestra and the Town of Schererville, seconded by Mr. Johnson, with discussion.

Mr. Johnson stated that he attended the symphony last year and thought the attendance was good. He asked if we have a number on how many attended. Mr. Novacich stated that they estimated that approximately 1,000 attended the event. Mr. Novacich stated that they have had higher attendance in prior years. Mr. Novacich stated he has submitted a grant in the amount of \$5,000.00 to go towards the Symphony.

Mr. Johnson stated that his thought is that is a large expenditure for an event. He stated that last year when he was there it didn't look like there was more than 250 people He stated that twelve thousand dollars for a couple hours is a lot of money.

All in favor (5-0).

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

Friday, May 6 <sup>th</sup>	Party in the Park	Redar Park
Friday, May 27 <sup>th</sup>	Party in the Park	Redar Park
Wed. June 8 <sup>th</sup> – Sat. June 12 <sup>th</sup>	Celebrate Schererville Fest	Redar Park
Friday, June 24 <sup>th</sup>	Party in the Park	Redar Park
Friday, July 1 <sup>st</sup> (rain date July 2)	Fireworks	Rohrman Park
Friday, July 22 <sup>nd</sup>	Party in the Park	Redar Park
Sat. July 23 <sup>rd</sup>	NWI Symphony	Redar Park
Friday, July 29 <sup>th</sup>	Sch. Chamber Corn Roast	Redar Park
Friday, August 12 <sup>th</sup>	Party in the Park	Redar Park
Friday, August 19 <sup>th</sup>	Party in the Park	Redar Park
Friday, August 23 <sup>rd</sup>	Evening Under the Stars	Redar Park

Mr. Guetzloff made a motion to approve the request from the Park Board to serve beer and wine at the events listed above, seconded by Mr. Schmitt. All in favor (5-0)

ITEM I. Consider Acceptance of Donations \$720.00

Mr. Troxell read into the record, the donations for February 2022. Mr. Guetzloff made a motion to approve the donations as read, seconded by Mr. Johnson. All in favor (5-0).

THEREUPON, Business from the floor NONE

Meeting adjourned.

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ROBIN ARVANITIS  
TOWN COUNCIL PRESIDENT

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MICHAEL A TROXELL, CMO  
TOWN CLERK-TREASURER

A TRUE COPY