

The Regular Town Council Meeting of the Town of Schererville, IN was called to order by President Rob Guetzloff at 6:44 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, Thomas Schmitt and Rob Guetzloff. Staff members present: Attorney David Austgen, Fire Chief Robert Patterson, Deputy Fire Chief David Meyer, Police Chief Pete Sormaz, Asst. Park Superintendent Irene Mireles IT AJ Garcia, Town Engineer Neil Simstad, Director of Public Works Chad Nondorf, Director of Operations Andy Hansen, Town Manager Jim Gorman, Clerk-Treasurer Michael Troxell and Recording Secretary Robin Thiel.

THEREUPON, Approval of the minutes. Mr. Schmitt made a motion to approve the minutes of the November 12, 2025 Public Meeting, seconded by Mr. Johnson. All in favor (5-0).

THEREUPON, Claims

- A. APV #122638 - APV #123019 on the General Docket, Totaling \$2,898,768.13
- B. APV #122638 - APV #122973 on the MVH Docket, Totaling \$231,619.37
- C. APV #122653 - APV #122943 on the Payroll Docket, Totaling \$1,432,463.82
- D. Various Funds, First National Bank of Omaha, Credit Card Charges, \$12,859.33
- E. Various Funds, Austgen Kuiper Jasaitis, November Legal, \$13,285.40
- F. Various Funds, M&J Underground, CCMG 2024-2: Burr Street, Pay Request #5, \$335,664.03
- G. Various Funds, Invoice Cloud, Invoice #574-2025_11, \$150.00
- H. Park Dist. Bond Debt 2004, Computershare Corporate Trust, Principal & Interest Due, \$130,865.00
- I. 2016 Taxable G.O. Bond Debt Svc. Fund, Argent Institutional Trust, Principal & Interest Due: 2016 Taxable G.O. Bond, \$110,687.50
- J. Park District Bonds, Series 2018 Fund, Huntington National Bank, Principal & Interest Due, \$401,102.76
- K. Various Funds, Bank Of America, 2025 Bana Vehicle & Equipment Lease-Principal & Interest, \$285,078.98
- L. Cable TV Fund, Advanced Engineering Services, Invoice #2510621201, \$772.00
- M. Various Funds, Menards, Supplies, \$4,452.02
- N. Various Funds, Auto Wares, Parts, \$34,278.43
- O. Solid Waste Management Fund, Smith, Concrete Blocks, \$4,800.00
- P. Various Funds, Al Warren Oil, Fuel, \$17,904.17
- Q. Various Funds, Aim, Dues, \$13,559.00
- R. Park Bond 2004 Fund, Computershare, Invoice #2502907, \$400.00

Mr. Troxell stated he has two additional claims to add to the agenda.

- S. Trust Tech, Annual subscription for Office 360 \$19,320.00
- T. Liberty Mutual, Annual Bonds \$1,775.00

Mr. Schmitt made a motion to approve the claims as presented, including the two added by Mr. Troxell, seconded by Mr. Johnson. All in favor (5-0).

THEREUPON, Correspondence NONE

THEREUPON, Reports

Mr. Hansen reported on Kennedy Avenue, we finally actually started that project this past week. He stated that they're working on the Junction Avenue portion, no road closures at this time, although there will be some trail detours on that section of the Pennsy Bike Trail.

Mr. Gorman reported on the progress at the Wastewater Treatment Plant. He stated that they have started to cover the

second half of the bio-solids building, which is fully constructed other than covering the top.

THEREUPON, Public Comments Regarding Agenda Items NONE

THEREUPON, Presentation

Acknowledge Eagle Scout Project by Cameron Berry

Mr. Schmitt stated that Cameron Barry is an Eagle Scout and has been working on his project since October 2025. Mr. Schmitt stated that we are here to honor and provide a certificate of recognition that acknowledges Cameron. He is a member of the Scout Troop #532 and is being recognized by the Schererville Town Council for his outstanding achievement of the Eagle Scout project of a Cancer Memorial Garden. Cameron installed a cancer memorial garden just east of the Police Department parking lot along the Pennsy Bike Trail. Mr. Schmitt stated that Cameron wanted to build this for his mom, a cancer survivor, and to dedicate the garden to those fighting against cancer. The Town Council members presented Cameron with a plaque. Cameron thanked the Council and everyone who made this project possible.

THEREUPON, Old Business

ITEM A. Ord. #2036, An Ordinance Amending Town Zoning Ordinance No. 2004, as Amended, the Same Being an Ordinance Classifying, Regulating, and Redistricting The Location, Height, Area, Bulk and Use of Buildings And Structures and the Use of Land in the Town of Schererville, and for Said Purposes, Dividing the Town into Districts, and all Matters Related Thereto
(Second Reading)

Plan Commission Case #25-11-21
Petitioner(s): Town of Schererville - James Gorman, Town Manager
Location: 143 W. Joliet Street
Rezone from Residential (R-2) to Institutional Zoning District (INST) Classification
Plan Commission Favorable Recommendation 6-0

Mr. Gorman stated that this is the second reading of this Ordinance, it was on the agenda last month. This is for the future fire station project.

Mr. Schmitt made a motion to adopt Ordinance #2036, seconded by Mr. Connelly. Motion passes (4-1). Mr. Johnson voting no.

ITEM B. Ord. #2037, An Ordinance Amending Town Zoning Ordinance No. 2004, as Amended, the Same Being an Ordinance Classifying, Regulating, and Redistricting The Location, Height, Area, Bulk and Use of Buildings And Structures and the Use of Land in the Town of Schererville, and for Said Purposes, Dividing the Town into Districts, and all Matters Related Thereto
(Second Reading)

Plan Commission Case #25-11-22
Petitioner(s): Town of Schererville - James M Gorman, Town Manager
Location: 0.370 Acre Parcel East of 149 Joliet Street and South of Joliet St.
Rezone from Residential (R-2) to Institutional Zoning District (INST) Classification
Plan Commission Favorable Recommendation 6-0

Mr. Connelly made a motion to adopt Ord. #2037, seconded by Mrs. Arvanitis. Motion passes (4-1) Mr. Johnson voting no.

THEREUPON, New Business

ITEM A. Ord. #2041, An Ordinance Regarding the Town of Schererville Regulations, Fees and Procedures for Licensing, Repealing Town Ordinance No. 1236, Town Ordinance No. 1325 and Town Ordinance No. 1549, and All Matters Related Thereto

Mr. Hansen stated that the next three ordinances are all related to the Animal Control. He stated that they will repeal all of the existing animal control ordinances for simplicity. He stated that they will also move any of the cases from the Board of Safety to the Town Court, which is more enforceable.

Mr. Hansen stated that this particular Ordinance is amending the dog and cat licensing fees. He stated that these fees will be deposited into the pet adoption fund to help offset those costs.

Mr. Connelly made a motion to consider on 1st reading, Ordinance #2041, seconded by Mrs. Arvanitis. All in favor (5-0).

Mrs. Arvanitis made a motion to adopt Ordinance #2041, seconded by Mr. Connelly. All in favor (5-0).

ITEM B. Ord. #2042, An Ordinance Amending the Town of Schererville Regulations, Fees and Procedures for Adoption of Animals from the Schererville Animal Control Department, Establishing Fees for Adoption And Repealing Ordinance No. 1549, Ordinance No. 1626 And Ordinance No. 1652, and all Matters Related Thereto **(First Reading)**

Mr. Hansen stated that this ordinance is amending the adoption fees for cats and dogs. Currently the fee is \$65.00 and the new amount will be \$200.00. The fee includes the neutering and spaying, rabies vaccination, heartworm test, microchip and AIDS test for the appropriate species. Mr. Hansen stated that these fees will be deposited in the pet adoption fund to help offset these cost.

Mr. Connelly made a motion to consider on 1st reading, Ordinance #2042, seconded by Mr. Schmitt. All in favor (5-0).

ITEM C. Ord. #2043, An Ordinance Amending the Humane Control And Regulations of Animals within the Town of Schererville, Lake County, Indiana, Repealing, Town Ordinance No. 1549 and Town Ordinance No. 1652, And all Matters Related Thereto **(First Reading)**

Mr. Hansen stated that this ordinance updates the current humane treatment of animal's ordinance. It increases the fine range for violating the ordinance. The fees will be deposited into the pet adoption fund to help offset those costs.

Mr. Connelly made a motion to consider on 1st reading, Ordinance #2043, seconded by Mrs. Arvanitis. All in favor (5-0).

ITEM D. Ord. #2044, An Ordinance Establishing Compensation, Salaries, and Wages for Officials and Employees of The Town of Schererville, Lake County, Indiana, Classifying Certain Positions of Employment Together With Rates of Pay, Repealing and Amending Prior Ordinances in Conflict Herewith, and Declaring that An Emergency Exists

Mr. Gorman stated that this is the annual salary ordinance that we visit every year. This ordinance includes a

3% increase across the board, along with a few other minor adjustments that department heads have requested.

Mrs. Arvanitis made a motion to consider on 1st reading, Ordinance #2044, seconded by Mr. Schmitt. All in favor (5-0).

Mr. Johnson made a motion to adopt Ordinance #2044, seconded by Mrs. Arvanitis. All in favor (5-0).

ITEM E. Ord. #2045, An Ordinance Amending Town Solicitor Regulations Ordinance No. 2008, Being: "An Ordinance Establishing Replacement and Current Regulations for Licensing of Solicitors in the Town of Schererville, Lake County, Indiana", Repealing all Ordinance and Town Code Provisions, or Parts Thereof, in Conflict Herewith, and all Matters Related Thereto

Mr. Gorman stated that this amends our current solicitor ordinance and it reflects for profit entities to accommodate their free speech right.

Mr. Connelly made a motion to consider on 1st reading, Ordinance #2045, seconded by Mrs. Arvanitis. All in favor (5-0).

Mr. Connelly made a motion to adopt ordinance #2045, seconded by Mrs. Arvanitis. All in favor (5-0).

ITEM F. Ord. 2013C, An Ordinance Amending Town 2025 Ordinance No. 2013, Being: "An Ordinance Establishing Compensation, Salaries and Wages for Officials and Employees of the Town of Schererville, Lake County, Indiana, Classifying Certain Positions of Employment Together with Rates of Pay", Authorizing a Special One-Time Holiday Gift Payment for Schererville Town Employees, Excluding Elected Officials, in Appreciation for Dedicated Service during the 2025 Calendar Year, and all Matters Related Thereto

Mr. Gorman stated that this ordinance amends the current salary ordinance that we have on the books for 2025. He stated it includes a Holiday Gift for town employees in the amount of \$50.00

Mr. Schmitt made a motion to consider on 1st reading, Ordinance #2013C, seconded by Mr. Connelly. All in favor (5-0).

Mr. Schmitt made a motion to adopt Ordinance #2013C, seconded by Mr. Connelly. All in favor (5-0).

ITEM G. Consider Approval to Purchase Property Located at 122, 116 and 118 Kennedy Ave., Schererville, IN, From Kennedy Ave. Outdoor Storage, LLC in the Amount Of \$34,800.00 Right-of-Way and Temporary Right-of-way And to Authorize the Town Manager, Director of Operations, Clerk-Treasurer and Town Attorney to Finalize Execution of Documents (Phase 3 - Parcel 10) (Kennedy Avenue Improvement Project)

Mr. Hansen stated that this is for Kennedy Avenue Phase 3 - parcel 10, shown on the projector screen, in the amount of \$34,800.00. This amount was based on the appraisal and a supplemental amount based on comparable properties in the area.

Mr. Schmitt made a motion to approve the purchase of property located at 122, 116 and 118 Kennedy Avenue, seconded by Mr. Connelly. All in favor (5-0).

ITEM H. Consider Approval to Purchase Property Located at 114 Kennedy Ave., Schererville, IN, from Michael and Thomas Golumbeck in the Amount of \$40,200.00 Right-of-way and Temporary Right-of-Way and to Authorize the Town Manager, Director of Operations, Clerk-Treasurer And Town Attorney to Finalize Execution of Documents (Phase 3-Parcel 11) (Kennedy Avenue Improvement Project)

Mr. Hansen stated that this is for the Kennedy Avenue Phase 3 - parcel 11 shown on the projector screen. The amount is \$40,200.00, which was based on the appraisal and a supplemental amount based on comparable properties in the area.

Mr. Schmitt made a motion to approve the purchase of property located at 114 Kennedy Avenue, seconded by Mr. Johnson. All in favor (5-0).

ITEM I. Award Bid for 2026 Mowing Season

Mr. Nondorf stated that they added three quarters of an acre for zone 3 mowing for the Burr Street trail and the right-of-way areas, the large parks remain the same in acre mode. Mr. Nondorf stated that publication went out to bid on November 7th and again on November 21st. After the public bid opening on December 5th, the bid packets were reviewed and they found two companies that had incomplete bids so they were removed from the process. He stated that the 2nd lowest and most responsible bidder for zone 3 and large parks was Shelton Landscaping and Snow Removal, their price came in at \$112,580.00. Mr. Nondorf stated that the total mowing contract for 2026 will be \$170,612.00, with an overall price decrease of \$8,450.00 from the 2025 contract.

Mr. Connelly made a motion to award the bid to Shelton Landscape and Snow Removal, seconded by Mrs. Arvanitis. All in favor (5-0).

ITEM J. Consider Acceptance of Extension of Mowing Zone 1 and Zone 2 for 2026 with Harrison's Lawn

Mr. Nondorf stated that they are asking for the same price, same amount of acres, nothing has changed from 2025.

Mr. Schmitt made a motion to extend the mowing contract with Harrison's Lawn, seconded by Mr. Johnson. All in favor (5-0).

ITEM K. Consider Donation to the Lake Central Education Foundation

Mr. Gorman stated that the Lake Central Education Foundation is asking for a \$2,000.00. He stated that last year we donated \$1,000.00.

Mr. Schmitt made a motion to donate \$2,000.00 to the Lake Central Education Foundation, seconded by Mrs. Arvanitis. Motion passes (4-0-1) Mr. Johnson abstained.

ITEM L. Consider Acceptance of 2026 Fire Services Agreement Between St. John Township and the Town of Schererville

Cathy LaRue, St. John Township Trustee, stated that the Council Members have the 2026 agreement in front of them. She stated that that this year's current agreement was \$37,080.00 and for 2026 it will be reduced to \$32,500.00. Ms. LaRue stated that the Townships have a specific fire levy fund and that's what they pay for Fire and EMS from. She stated that for the coming year, 2026, they received the usual 4% increase for Fire levy, however the increase in their property tax cap impact, which reduces their budget was substantial. Ms. LaRue

stated that she contacted the DLGF and questioned this and she was told it is due to the new Senate Bill One.

Mr. Connelly made a motion to accept the 2026 Fire Services Agreement, seconded by Mrs. Arvanitis. All in favor (5-0).

ITEM M. Consider Acceptance of Donations - \$6,975.60

Mr. Troxell read the donations for the month of November 2025 into the record.

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

ITEM N. Election of 2026 Town Council Officers

Mrs. Arvanitis read the list of Town Council Officers and Board & Commissions appointments for 2026 as follows:

Town Council President - **Robin Arvanitis**
Town Council Vice President - **Thomas Schmitt**

Utility Board President - **Thomas Schmitt**
Utility Board Vice President - **Robin Arvanitis**

Redevelopment Commission President - **Kevin Connelly**
Redevelopment Commission Vice President - **Rob Guetzloff**

Stormwater Management Board (R)- 3 year term - **Caleb Johnson**
Stormwater Management Board President - **Caleb Johnson**
Stormwater Management Board Vice President - **Thomas Schmitt**
Stormwater Management Board Secretary - **Robin Arvanitis**

Waterworks Appointment (D) 3 year term - **Rob Guetzloff**
Waterworks President - **Rob Guetzloff**
Waterworks Vice President - **Thomas Schmitt**

Attorney - Town; Redevelopment Commission; Waterworks Board; Stormwater Management Board; Utility Board; Town Council; EDC and Town Court - **David Austgen, Austgen Kuiper Jasaitis P.C.**

Attorney - Plan Commission; Board of Zoning Appeals; and Park Board - **Burke Constanza & Carberry LLP**

Attorney - Board of Safety - **Burke Constanza & Carberry LLP**

Town Engineer - **Neil Simstad, NIES Engineering**

Plan Commission Appt. (D) - 4 year term - **William Jarvis**
Plan Commission Staff Members Appt.(1) - 1 year term-
Tom Anderson
Plan Commission Staff Members Appt. (2)- 1 year term -
Chris Rak
Plan Commission Staff Members Appt. (3)- 1 year term -
Miles Long

BZA Appt. - A Non-Plan Commission Member - 4 year term -
Mike Davis

Park Board Appt. (D) - 4-year term - **Ed Repay**

Board of Safety Appt. (D)- 3-year term - **Eric Graf**
Board of Safety Appt. (R) - 3 year term - **Dave Eeningburg**

Southcom PSAP Executive Board Member - 1-year term -
Jim Gorman,

Redevelopment Commission School Board Appointment- **Nicole Kelly**

Liaison to Park Board; Park Foundation; Park Dept. -
Robin Arvanitis

Liaison to Public Works - **Thomas Schmitt**

Liaison to Board of Safety (Fire & Police Dept.) -
Thomas Schmitt

Liaison to Wastewater Treatment Plant - **Kevin Connelly**

Liaison to Plan Commission; Board of Zoning Appeals -
Robin Arvanitis

Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission (NIRPC) Appt.
Thomas Schmitt

Lake County Solid Waste Management District Appt. -
Robin Arvanitis

Liaison to Lake Central School Board - **Mike Troxell**

Liaison to Lake County Drainage Board - **Rob Guetzloff**

Liaison to Schererville Chamber of Commerce - **Mike Troxell**

Mr. Schmitt made a motion to approve the appointments as read, seconded by Mrs. Arvanitis. All in favor (5-0).

THEREUPON, Business from the floor

Jacob Thornton, President Schererville Fire Fighters Union, Local 4279, 1650 South Cline Ave, stated that they are here to address their social media posts, administration's response in the article posted in the NWI Times. He stated before anything else, they want to make one thing absolutely clear, their recent post was never intended to attack our administration, shame this Council or criticize Town leadership. He stated that their purpose was and always remains to inform and educate our residents about the realities of Schererville Public Safety. Transparency is not confrontation, transparency is service and their responsibility to this community includes being honest about the conditions they face. Mr. Thornton stated that recent statements, suggestions that emergency response is never affected by staffing levels, this is not accurate. He stated while their commitment to this community never changes, their operational capability absolutely does. He stated this is the truth and that is what they stated in their post. Mr. Thornton stated that the Town's minimum staffing assigns just six personnel to protect more than 30,000 residents every day. Under this model, they operate two ALS ambulances each with at least one paramedic, one EMT, and one ALS engine with one officer and a firefighter EMT as a minimum. He stated that the goal is to have a paramedic on the engine, but this is not always possible. Although not common, there have been shifts where the engine has had no paramedic, leaving only two paramedics for the entire town, one on each ambulance. He stated that when both paramedics are on emergencies, no in Town ALS remains available and the residents must wait for outside units. Mr. Thornton stated that critical emergencies, including cardiac arrest, cardiac emergencies, respiratory distress, strokes and major traumas require both an ALS engine and an ALS ambulance, immediately committing four of our six personnel when we're at minimum, this leaves just two people on one ambulance to cover the rest of Schererville. Mr. Thornton stated that Station 3 is unstaffed whenever they are at minimum staffing, which occurs at least 33% of all shifts. He stated that an unstaffed station cannot respond functionally, it is closed for that shift. He stated that Schererville Firefighters give their maximum effort no matter how they are staffed, but residents should not be asked to settle for minimum staffing. Mr. Thornton stated that they respectfully ask this Council to work with them to achieve staffing levels that reflect the standard of service this community deserves. He stated that the Town of

Schererville deserves one firefighter for every 1,000 residents. They ask the Council and the administration moving forward to hear their call that they are invested. He stated they stand together and they want to provide for our residents that we took an oath to protect.

Mr. Thornton said finally, they want to address recent comments suggesting that the Schererville Firefighters Union is a party not representing the Town. With respect, this is both inaccurate and disappointing. The Schererville Firefighters are the Town, they are employees of the community, protectors of the community, servants of this community and neighbors to this community. He stated that they have been there whenever a resident has asked, whether it's an emergency or simply a neighbor in need. They may not speak for the Town Administrative leadership, but they absolutely speak for Public Safety. They forever take tremendous pride in serving Schererville in every way they can.

Cathy LaRue, St. John Township Trustee, stated she wanted to thank the Fire Department and the Firefighters Local 4279 and Chief Patterson, for the food drive they just had at Strack and VanTil's. She stated they collected a large, not only food donation, but monetary donation.

Meeting adjourned.

ROB GUETZLOFF
TOWN COUNCIL PRESIDENT

MICHAEL A TROXELL, IAMCA, MMC, ACPFIM, CPFA, CMO
TOWN CLERK-TREASURER

A TRUE COPY