

Town of Monroe
Town Board Meeting Minutes
September 5, 2024

Pledge of Allegiance recited.

Monthly expenses were reviewed and approved.

July and August Minutes were approved.

Those in attendance at tonight's meeting are Mike Geels, Joshua Geerken, David Bard, Clayton Lengerich, Karthon McCullough, Rachel Tague, Clayton Lothridge, Craig Marcum, Kris Burkhart, AJ Bertsch and both local newspapers.

New Business

Nothing to discuss.

At this time Mike suggested to close the meeting to open up the first hearing of the budget meeting for 2025. Josh made a motion to close. David seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

Craig Marcum is here with Baker Tilly to discuss the 2025 budget. He brought with him some books to show the activity of the town over this year and what's projected to next year. These books will be made available in the Clerk-Treasurers office until the end of 2025. Craig said that most accounts are sitting above 15% which is the SBOA requirement. Mike made a motion to close this budget hearing and continue with another meeting. Josh made a motion. David seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

At this time, Mike opened the next meeting being held to discuss the Cum Fire Fund.

Craig Marcum with Baker Tilly is here tonight to discuss the Cum Fire fund. This fund has been dormant since 2019 according to Craig. It was initially used to pay the Fire Contract and any incidentals but the Clerk-Treasurer has been paying the contract amount from the public safety fund which is shared with the police department. David spoke up and said that he wants the cum fire fund spent solely on the fire department. Mike spoke and said that they are receiving their money, it's just coming out of the public safety fund instead of the cum fire fund, but they are not going without. The town has roughly \$32k to spend on anything the fire department requests or the fund can be marked dormant and then the money can then be placed in the rainy-day fund to use however the town sees fit. This money can be spent on a number of things to help the town. Craig mentioned that this can be moved or it can just sit in the fund until a decision is made. Kris said he's indifferent since the contract is being paid. David spoke and said that he feels we'd be taking money away from the fire department if we were to place this \$32k in the rainy-day fund. Josh mentioned he will abstain from this conversation since he's on the fire department. Kris asked if this money can be spent on building maintenance and repairs. Craig said yes, it can be used for anything with the building. Mike suggested to keep the money in this cum fire fund and use it for building maintenance understanding that once this money is spent, it's gone. Mike asked for a motion. David made a motion to keep the money in the cum fire fund. Josh abstained. Motion passed 2-1.

At this time, Mike suggested closing this meeting and opening the regular town board meeting back up. Josh made a motion. David seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

Old Business

Nothing to discuss.

Town Superintendent

Justin was present at tonight's meeting. Karthon McCullough has recently been hired and started September 3, 2024. Karthon worked at Best One in Monroe so the council members were familiar with him and welcomed him to the town. Justin stated we'll needed to change the employee benefits document to reflect some changes since hiring Karthon. Justin is recommending health insurance to take effect on his start date. He's also recommending holiday pay start 3 months after hire date as well as Karthon getting a town paid cell phone effective immediately. All the rest can remain the same. Mike asked for a motion to approve all of these changes. David made a motion to approve the changes and asked that Clayton amend the current employee document showing these changes. Josh seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

Heavy trash is scheduled for next week.

We have some SRF funds left over so Justin is working on using up the rest of this money. A watermain needs replaced between Van Buren and Andrews Streets. A quote from Fleming Excavating came in at \$143582.46. This is the only quote to come in to the town. Justin is recommending council approve this quote. We will have another meeting to make this official. David made a motion to accept the quote from Fleming. Josh seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

Justin purchased a Quonset to house bulk salt. He purchased this from Krueckeberg Auction and was able to get it for ½ the cost of new. He did receive a quote from Schwartz Contractors in the amount of \$14,100.00. He is asking council to approve this quote so a salt building can be built and hold bulk salt. He believes this will save the town tremendously. David made a motion to accept the quote for the salt building. Josh seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

Justin would like to purchase a new plow for the alley's that need cleared in the winter months. The town currently owns a large one, he is asking for a smaller one. Josh doesn't think we need one right now because we don't get as much snow as we do ice. David feels it would be a good addition. Council has decided to table this topic for another time.

Justin made council aware that a stop sign will be added to the intersection of Polk St. and 124 by the gas station and Best One. INDOT has done a study at this intersection and decided a 4-way stop is needed for safety. Josh has reached out to INDOT to get some questions answered but that fell on deaf ears. The new signs will be added on October 16, 2024.

Police Department

AJ said he didn't have much to share. He will be putting a post on the PD Facebook page letting residents know of the new stop sign being placed at Polk and Washington.

Fire Department

Kris Burkhart is present at tonight's meeting. He brought up that the fire department has an opportunity to purchase a 2001 Fire Rescue truck. It's got 27600 miles. The issue is with the fire department that the truck will be purchased from. The fire department who owns the rescue truck is wanting to sell it to another township. Since the Monroe Fire Department is not a township, Kris is asking that the town purchase the truck for the fire department. The owners are asking \$1.00 (not a typo) to purchase this rescue unit.

It will need new tires, new brakes, new lettering on the side and new air conditioners. Kris is willing to absorb the cost of what needs fixed. He is just asking that the town pay \$1.00 to purchase. David made a motion to purchase the rescue unit for the fire department and make all the repairs on the rescue unit using the cum fire fund money. Clayton spoke up and said that he would recommend approving the purchase but that anything else will need to wait until Kris has firm quotes to bring back to council for approval. This will also give Clayton time to create a document for the sale of the truck.

Kris also mentioned that the fire department will be at the Monroe Day celebration.

Clerk-Treasurer

Rachel is present at tonight's meeting. She brings with her the quote from WM. This quote is for the next 3 years. The new pricing is set to begin October 1, 2024 and will increase to \$17.44 for the 1st year, \$18.84 the 2nd year and \$20.35 for year 3. The extra trash cans will go from \$8.50 to \$9.25. Clayton said that we'll need to have a public hearing before the approval of the new WM contract and trash increase ordinance. It was decided that September 17, 2024 will be the public meeting to discuss the WM contract. Rachel will see if she can get some other quotes in the meantime.

Town Attorney

Clayton is here for tonight's meeting. He recommends council hold another public reading of the water increase ordinance on September 17, 2024 following the meeting to discuss the trash increase. Council was in agreement.

Other Business

Clayton Lothridge was present at tonight's meeting. He brought up Monroe Day scheduled for September 7, 2024 from 4-8pm. He mentioned that the Decatur and Berne communities also have events scheduled this weekend but he's hopeful for a good turnout. He said that he thinks maybe moving the Monroe Day back a weekend or forward a weekend may help in the future so there's no competition between communities. Josh mentioned that this is Matt Browns area and that suggestion may need to go to him.

With nothing further to discuss, this meeting was adjourned.

Town Board President

Clerk-Treasurer