

Town Board Meeting Minutes

February 1, 2024

Those in attendance tonight are Mike Geels, Josh Geerken, David Bard, Clayton Lengerich, AJ Bertsch, Justin Shaffer, both newspaper journalists, Matt Brown, Steve Bailey and Rachel Tague.

January minutes were approved.

Monthly expenses were approved.

New Business

Nothing new to report.

Old Business

Justin started off stating that he had just held the bid opening for the 2024 CCMG project this year. He only received 1 bid and that was from Brooks Construction in the amount of \$273,867.50, pending review of those documents, they will be awarded this job.

Justin heard from Culy Contracting regarding the force main work that needs done.

Town Superintendent

Justin clarified that the 124 project is not our project, its INDOTS project. It was initially slated to start in 2023 but then was pushed back in 2024, 2025 and is now slated for 2030. Justin has been working hard to keep this project alive. He believes it's a good project for Monroe, to improve safety and the betterment of the town. He is asking council if they would like Justin to continue to fight for this project or let it go and let INDOT do whatever INDOT is going to do. The town has already put over \$65,000 towards this in preparation of the work to be done and now it seems it was spent for no reason. Josh asked what kind of feedback Justin has gotten. Justin stated the negative feedback relates to people losing their parking space on Washington St. However, Justin stated that since 1994, there has been a law in place for no parking along this strip between Keller and Adams St. This has never been enforced but is still valid. There has been talk from INDOT to cut some things from the project to lower the cost. Justin said that this is in INDOT's hands, not the towns. David spoke up and said that he is worried about the safety of the children in this particular area of that is to be rebuilt. He's worried about the Amish lane being accessed by vehicles who are looking to go around traffic turning into the bank or the school. Steve Bailey spoke up and said that if there is anything he can do on the county side, he will more than willing to assist the town. Mike said he'd like council to support Justin in this matter and continue to push INDOT. David made a motion to accept Justin's position and support, Josh seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

Justin has been a member of the AWWA for over 10 years now. He's played a role in their programs and is in charge of the competition section within the AWWA annual conference. He's asking council if he may attend the AWWA annual conference in Anaheim California in June of 2024. David said that in the end, it will be the town who benefits from any new information Justin brings back. He is in full support. Josh made a motion to allow Justin to attend this meeting. David seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

Justin and Clayton have been working together to get an ordinance put together for non-billable water/sewer usage. For instance, the Fire Department does not get billed for any water/sewer used however it only states that in the Fire Department/Town contract. There are other places that do not receive bills as well and those include the Water Department and hydrants that get flushed regularly. At

our last audit, the auditors were questioning these and Justin is concerned that we do not have anything in writing to state this. Justin does keep track of water loss on his end. Clayton will present an ordinance in the near future for review.

Justin is asking council to create a fund to be used for residents that need financial assistance with their utility bills. He is also asking to continue designating a certain dollar amount to be used for the Angel Tree program at Christmas time to give to children who would otherwise not receive anything. He would like the town to absorb the tax spent to purchase these gifts. Rachel spoke up and stated that she did not know how the SBOA would view this. Mike told Justin to get some more info and council will look into this.

Justin would like to have something in writing stating how the delinquent bills are handled. How many days past due a resident can be, and then what steps are taken after that to ensure payment to the town. Clayton said he can combine that with another ordinance but will continue to work on this.

Justin is working on CCMG work and an agreement between Best One/Zurcher Tire. This agreement will provide verbiage on what Best One and the town will be responsible for and a dollar amount.

Monroe Grain has agreed to let the town have a 20 foot right of way along their east property line. The survey work is completed and Clayton is working on an agreement to present next month.

Clayton and Justin have been working on agreements with the school and with 4-H to get some much needed renovations done. The school will need to move some water lines and since they're going to be doing that, Justin would like to perform some work while that's accessible. This will need to include the 4-H grounds as well. Justin stated that the town will purchase the material and AC will have their construction company do the work to install. Clayton will present this at next months meeting.

Justin has been working Mike Mendoza, the resource officer at AC. They have been discussing ideas on how to light up the crossing guard area. As it is, during the winter months, it's very dark in the mornings. Justin is trying to figure out the best way to light that area up and bring attention to the crossing guard station.

Fire Department

No one present

Police Department

AJ is present but doesn't have anything to report.

Clerk-Treasurer

Rachel is present at tonight's meeting. She brought up 2 delinquent bills. She's asking at what point does she bring this to council to make decisions on how to proceed with the unpaid balances. David said to go ahead and let council know once the door hangers have been hung. Rachel will work on this to create a system that will work for everyone.

Rachel is asking council to destroy checks with the Farmers & Merchants old routing number printed on them. They are no longer valid and cannot be used. Council approved this request.

Rachel is asking council to renew a CD in the amount of \$8,000. It is up for renewal on February 12, 2024. Council approved. Josh made a motion, David seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

Rachel is asking council to have a sewage rate study done to increase funds for the sewage fund as it is not healthy at this time. The end of 2023, had the town sitting in the negative however, with the help of

Baker Tilly, Rachel and Justin the fund is better and no longer sitting in the negative. Mike asked for a motion. Josh made a motion, David seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

The Adams County Economic Development source in Decatur is looking for someone to replace Deb Giessler. She was on the board while serving as town board president. Rachel is asking for council to nominate someone to replace Deb. Mike nominated Clayton Lotheridge to fill this spot and asked for a motion. David made a motion, Josh seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

Town Attorney

Clayton did not have anything to present.

Other Business

Town appointments need to be presented at this time.

Deputy Clerk - Joyce Kenney

Town Marshal - AJ Bertsch

Street Superintendent - Justin Shaffer

Utility Superintendent Justin Shaffer

Maintenance Superintendent Justin Shaffer

Assistant Superintendent Paul Davis - Intern

School Crossing Guard Harold Ballard

Fire Chief Kris Burkhart

First Asst. Fire Chief Matt Brown

Town Attorney Clayton Lengerich

Planning Commission Adams County Planning Commission

Zoning Board Adams County Zoning Board

South Adams Senior Cntr Al Lehman

David made a motion to accept the appointments. Josh seconded. Motion passed 3-0

The Adams County Plan Commission is asking to renew their contract with the town. The town pays \$400.00 yearly for their services. Clayton reviewed this agreement and told council they were good to approve and sign.

Mike asked everyone if there were any questions or concerns. Steve Bailey spoke up and said that Adams County will be starting a new vision program for Adams County. He said they are working on what the area towns and cities envision in the future. They are planning to hire an outside consulting firm to assist with this vision plan and will include the Town of Monroe. He is extending an invite to the town for any future dealings with this vision plan.

With nothing further to discuss, this meeting was adjourned.

Town Board President

Clerk-Treasurer

