

Meeting of the Town Council of Huntertown, Indiana
Monday, April 1, 2024, 6:00 p.m.
Huntertown Town Hall, 15617 Lima Road

A public meeting of the Huntertown Town Council was held on Monday, April 1, 2024, at Huntertown Town Hall, 15617 Lima Road, Huntertown, IN. Present were board members Patricia Freck (P); Brad Hite, Tina McDonald and Brandon Seifert; Town Manager Hannah Walker; Clerk-Treasurer Ryan Schwab; Resource Officer Brandon Reichert; Derek Frederickson of Engineering Resources Inc.; David Hawk of Hawk Haynie Kammeyer & Smith; twenty (11) members of the public and zero (0) members of the media. Council member Michael Aker participated via electronic means.

Patricia Freck called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Patricia Freck suspended the meeting at 6:00 p.m. and reopened a Public Hearing for Huntertown Ordinance 2024-005, an Ordinance amending ordinance No. 05-015, as amended, to establish a new system development charge for new water connections to the municipal water system of the Town of Huntertown. The floor was opened for public comment and the following comments were brought forth:

Jamie Lancia, a local builder with Lancia Homes, located at 9430 Lima Road, Fort Wayne IN, provided the council with a spreadsheet detailing a proposed capital surcharge for new water customers and its impact on the town's revenues. He would like to see the town employ a surcharge coupled with a reduced system development charge for new construction to be paid by both the developer and the new home owner, rather than \$2,500 system development charge to be paid the developers/builders. He detailed the current challenges to the housing market and the impact the town's water has on the need for builders to install water softeners in new homes.

Ric Zehr, a local developer with North Eastern Group, located at 10808 La Cabrea Lane, also supported a new surcharge and reduced system development charge. He said that about 90-percent of the 2,434 lots that have yet to go through the secondary plat approval process are represented by his company and Oakmont Development. He asked the council to consider tabling the ordinance to allow its financial consultant Steve Carter to investigate the fiscal impact on the proposed surcharge.

After no further public comment was brought forth, Patricia Freck reconvened the regular meeting at 6:10 p.m.

COUNCIL ACTION

Brandon Seifert made a motion to approve the minutes from the March 18, 2024, regular meeting. Tina McDonald seconded. Motion carried 5-0.

Tina McDonald made a motion to approve the minutes from the March 21, 2024, special meeting. Brad Hite seconded. Motion carried 5-0.

Brandon Seifert made a motion to approve the General, Water and Sewer claims dated March 18, 2024, in the amount of \$346,983.68. Tina McDonald seconded. Motion carried 5-0.

Tina McDonald made a motion to consider of Huntertown Ordinance 2024-005, an Ordinance amending ordinance No. 05-015, as amended, to establish a new system development charge for new water connections to the municipal water system of the Town of Huntertown. Michael Aker seconded. Brandon Seifert said he met with Ric Zehr and his staff along with Derek Frederickson of Engineering Resources and would like the town to consider reducing the system development charge to \$1,500 instead of \$2,500 and consider either a

new tiered rate for water utility billing or a surcharge on new water customers. Additionally, he would like for Steve Carter to provide an updated financial analysis on those options. He also said that the town should look into eliminating the sprinkler credit, as he was told by Derek Frederickson that the sprinkler credit is causing more problems with capacity issues at the water plant than new construction is. Derek Frederickson said that the irrigation of lawns for new construction is the biggest reason for capacity issues and not necessarily the sprinkler credit itself. Seifert reiterated his point that he would like to take a hybrid approach to new charges and not put it all on the development community. After no further conversation, the motion carried 4-1 (Seifert – Nay; Aker – Aye, Hite – Aye; McDonald – Aye; Freck – Aye).

Michael Aker made a motion to adopt of Huntertown Ordinance 2024-005, an Ordinance amending ordinance No. 05-015, as amended, to establish a new system development charge for new water connections to the municipal water system of the Town of Huntertown. Tina McDonald seconded. Motion carried 5-0.

Tina McDonald made a motion to approve Huntertown Resolution 2024-002, a Resolution regarding extension of sewer or water services outside of the corporate limits. Michael Aker seconded. David Hawk provided the council with a copy of the resolution and covered its details, noting that it will be helpful for the council to enunciate its policies rather than leave them vague. He said the resolution cites two council ordinances that each relate connectivity to the utility system, noting specifically that any requested connection outside the corporate limits must be contiguous to current town boundaries and agree to voluntary annexation in order for the town to accept them, unless the town council chooses otherwise. Brandon Seifert said he would not vote in favor of the resolution since it was just presented to him tonight. After no further discussion, the motion failed 1-4 (Hite – Nay, McDonald – Nay, Seifert – Nay, Aker – Nay, Freck – Aye).

NEW BUSINESS

Outside of items listed under Council Action the following New Business was brought forth.

- Patricia Freck introduced Hannah Walker as the new Town Manager for the town.
- Ryan Schwab presented Change Order No. 2 from the Indiana Department of Transportation for the Carroll Road Reconstruction project. The change order would increase the project amount by \$9,001.00 due to various utilities being in the way of the storm sewer work. Board members presented questions about the project which Schwab could not answer. Patricia Freck asked that Schwab contact USI Consultants and have them attend the next meeting to discuss the change order.
- Ryan Schwab informed the council that the City of Fort Wayne will be upgrading the signal controllers and system for street lighting to a modern platform. The cost will be \$7,500 for each of the three signals in town. He will budget the expense for 2025.
- Ryan Schwab asked the council for input on the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds that the town must have allotted for expenditure by the end of 2024. He noted the Hathaway Road septic relief project as well as the Apollo Drive, Gemini Drive, Mercury Lane reconstruction project as planned projects. Council members agreed that those items were suitable. Schwab said he would make sure the town's ARPA plan reflected that and present it to them at a future meeting.
- Ryan Schwab asked if the council had a preference on mulch vs. rock for the landscaping at Town Hall. Council members said they would like to see a cost comparison before deciding.
- Ryan Schwab provided an update on the demolition and asbestos siding removal of the property at 15607 Lima Road. He noted that the I&M meter at the home needed to be pulled before the contractor could finish removing the asbestos siding. The siding should be removed by Friday, April 5, 2024, and the second contractor will be in two weeks for the demolition of the building the week of April 15, 2024.

OLD BUSINESS

Outside of items listed under Council Action, the following Old Business was brought forth:

- Discussion on creating a traffic barrier between Tally Ho Drive and Verdigris Pass was reintroduced. Resource Officer Brandon Reichert said there is not a really good approach to this project, which would likely be very extensive. Brad Hite expressed issues with closing the connection for golf carts but understood then need to keep automobiles and ATVs out of people's yards. Council asked to see an estimate on costs to close off the street and will address the matter at a future meeting.

REPORTS

Council members did not provide a report.

Resource Officer Brandon Reichert had no further report.

Clerk-Treasurer Ryan Schwab had no further report.

Outside of items listed under Council Action, Derek Frederickson had no further report.

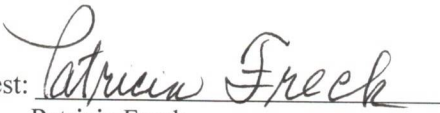
Outside of items listed under Council Action, David Hawk had no further report.

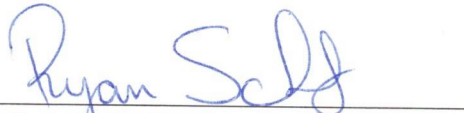
PUBLIC COMMENT

Brian Bracht, a resident at 1417 Verdigris Pass, provided the council with a packet that included pictures of property damage and potential dangers of not putting a traffic barrier at Verdigris Pass and Tally Ho Drive. He said he and his neighbors do not want any vehicle traffic through the area and would not be in favor of connecting the two streets. He was not requesting anything fancy; he just wants to keep golf carts and ATVs out of his back yard.

After no further public comment was brought forth, Tina McDonald made a motion to adjourn. Brandon Seifert seconded. The motion passed with a voice vote and the meeting adjourned at 6:54 p.m.

Attest:


Patricia Freck
President


Ryan Schwab
Clerk Treasurer