

Minutes of the Wingate Town Council Meeting

Held August 13, 2024

ROLL CALL

The Wingate Town Council Meeting began at 6:00 p.m. Council Members Kyle Campbell, Curt Hadley, and Andrew Lorenz responded to roll call. Maintenance Supervisor Jay Busse of Busse Excavating and Troy Elless of UMAC were present. Janet Alexander of Local Government Services was also present.

Council President Kyle Campbell asked Janet Alexander to facilitate the meeting.

PUBLIC HEARING

OCRA Master Planning Grant Application

Janet Alexander introduced Mike Kleinpeter of Kleinpeter Consulting Group, LLC, the grant writer assisting the Town with the application for a \$90,000 Water, Sewer & Stormwater OCRA Planning Grant. Mike explained that this is the public hearing for the proposed grant. He explained that the application would be filed this Friday, August 16th. Mike explained that if awarded, the town would pay \$10,000, \$5,000 from Water, and \$5,000 from the Sewer funds. Mike stated that the town would only pay the \$10,000 if we got the grant. He said that we would pay nothing if we did not get the grant. In that event, the town would re-apply for the next round.

He stated that the award announcements will be made at the end of next month (September). If we receive the grant, the town will hire an engineering firm to look at water, sewer, and stormwater issues in the town. The grant requires a cost estimate for three projects for each utility: water, sewer, and stormwater. The city will provide input on what those projects might be. As part of the process, we advertised a request for qualifications, and HWC Engineering was the only firm that responded to this request. Their contract will be included in the application. We will only sign that contract with HWC Engineering if we are awarded the grant.

Mike also stated that his firm posted a residential survey on SurveyMonkey. So far, thirty-five (35) residents have taken that survey. He asked everyone present to share the link. He would like to have as many as fifty surveys completed by Friday. He also brought hard copies of the survey to share this evening.

Following his comments, Janet Alexander stated that this was a public hearing and asked if anyone from the community would like to speak for or against the proposed master planning grant application. Mark Fruits, a town resident, stated that he favors the application. He

particularly wants the town to find a way to address the stormwater drainage issues. No one else spoke up, and the public hearing was closed.

At the close of the public hearing, Mike presented the Resolution Authorizing the Application for the Planning Grant. Curt Hadley motioned to approve the resolution, which Andrew Lorenz seconded. The motion was put to a vote, and it was carried. Kyle Campbell signed the resolution on behalf of the Town Council.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Janet Alexander asked if anyone from the community wished to speak on any matter not listed on the agenda. Tyler Wilson commented on the little league baseball season. He stated that they held over forty (40) games this year and estimated that about 2,500 people visited the town to attend these games.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Town Maintenance Supervisor Jay Busse reported that a new water service has been set up for a gentleman who is preparing to build four new houses. He also reported on the recently completed crack sealing and road treatment. Jay persuaded the vendor to apply the test sealant on two city blocks instead of just half a street. Resident Joyce Stonecipher commented that the road crew was friendly, professional, and efficient, especially given the challenging weather conditions.

Jay also reported that an old metal sewer line under the railroad is causing blockages that require regular maintenance (jetting every two to three months).

He also expressed concern about children playing near the street and setting up basketball goals that overhang the road. Jay suggested that the Town Marshal might want to discuss this issue with the residents. Council member Curt Hadley suggested that we give the residents advance notice before scheduling road work in the future.

Troy Elless of UMAC reported that the lift station experienced some overflow incidents in June due to heavy downpours, which have not happened in years. One of the three pumps in that lift station was down for repairs, contributing to the issue.

Coal Creek Fire & Rescue – Chief Darren Forman reported that the Fire Rescue team had a busy month responding to nineteen service calls in July. He stated that this is the highest number in a single month. He said there were five calls for New Richmond and fourteen for the Wingate area. Six of the calls were fire-related, and thirteen were EMS-related calls. There were eighty-five calls for service this year by July 31st. The Chief also expressed his gratitude to the Town Board for hosting the Sweet Corn Festival, which was a success despite

the warm weather. Darren stated that the park was full the entire day. He also said that they served breakfast this year, which went well. Fifty cars were registered for the car show.

Janet Alexander asked who was reporting on behalf of the Park Advisory Board. Sally Fruits stated that they collected donations during the Sweet Corn Festival, raising \$50.00. This was deposited at the Community Foundation, which brought the current balance of the Park Improvement fund up to \$68,301.75.

A fundraising letter drafted by the committee was discussed. The letter is intended for residents and local businesses to request donations and to announce the \$192,100 grant awarded for improvements at Wingate Park. This grant will fund the construction of a new picnic shelter, handicapped-accessible restrooms, a concession stand, and a community conference room. Joyce Stonecipher mentioned that the committee has discussed whether to include the grant award amount in the letter, as some members expressed concerns that it might discourage donations. The letter's primary goal is to encourage tax-deductible contributions from the community, with checks directed to the Montgomery County Community Foundation. Janet expressed her desire to consult with Kelly Taylor from the Community Foundation for input before finalizing the letter for distribution. After reading the proposed letter aloud, a discussion followed. Andrew Lorenz motioned to approve the draft fundraising letter, and Curt seconded the motion. The motion was carried.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The meeting minutes from July 9, 2024, were presented for approval. Andrew Lorenz made a motion to approve the minutes, which Kyle seconded. The motion was put to a vote, and it was carried.

FINANCIAL REPORTS

Janet Alexander presented the town's financial reports. The reconciled financial reports for July 2024, including the Fund Report, Appropriation Report, Bank Statement, and Bank Reconciliation, were presented and reviewed. Andrew Lorenz made a motion to approve the reports as provided. Curt Hadley seconded the motion. The motion was put to a vote, and it was carried.

The Accounts Payable Docket for \$56,777.11, dated August 13th, was presented to the board. Kyle Campbell made a motion to approve the claims as presented. Curt Hadley seconded the motion. The motion was put to a vote, and it was carried.

Janet pointed out that the financial report also included a utility adjustment of \$65.07.

OLD BUSINESS

Specifications for the Proposed Park Pavilion

Janet Alexander provided the Board and the Park Improvement Committee copies of the Indiana Code citation regarding the advertisement of specifications for a public works project. She stressed that there are specific legal requirements for public works projects, explaining that a public works project requires that the specifications be advertised and made available to potential bidders. Also, the request for bids must be advertised in the Journal Review twice, two weeks apart, before advertising the project; the Town should ask the Town Attorney, Stu Weliever, to look at the advertisement Mike Kleinpeter suggested that the town share the ad with Rose Scovall to ensure they include all the required language for a Read Grant project. A discussion was held. Andrew Lorenz volunteered to collaborate with the committee to complete the specifications.

Janet will provide contact information for the committee member to contact Rose Scovel's contact information. She also said that she has not heard anything from Stu on the voluntary annexation of the park property.

NEW BUSINESS

Astra Liability Insurance Renewal

Janet Alexander explained that the Town's Liability insurance renewal is coming up. The agent, Miranda Conrad, provided the renewal packet. This information was emailed to each member of the Council and Jay Busse for review. The initial application must be returned to her by the end of this month. Once she receives the application, she will send back the final version by September 22nd for the council's approval. Janet said she would complete the initial application and return it to Miranda for review. When she sends back the final, I will present it to you. The actual renewal date is October 22, 2024. A phone or Zoom meeting can be set up with Miranda to discuss the policy. She is available for discussions regarding the policy and works from home from 7:00 AM to 4:00 PM.

Water & Wastewater Rate Study Quotes

Janet Alexander pointed out that the balances in the water and wastewater funds have been decreasing due to rising expenses, particularly from multiple water line repairs. This is a concerning trend, and because of that, she believes that the current rates should be reviewed.

She reminded the board that when the Town hired her and Suzy Bass in December of 2017, the water fund was negative by \$56,000, which required a corrective action plan mandated by the State Board of Accounts. Until then, the town had been covering shortfalls by effectively lending money from its general account to the utility fund.

During the last regular Board meeting, the Council authorized her to solicit written quotes for water and wastewater rate studies. Since then, she obtained quotes from four reputable accounting firms, including:

- Baker Tilly: Quoted \$10,000 per utility – total \$20,000.
- London Witte Group (LGW): Quoted not to exceed \$6,250 for a basic review.
- Krohn & Associates: Quoted \$4,500 per utility – total \$9,000.
- Kleinpeter Financial Group: Offered a quote of \$3,500 per utility or \$6,000 for a concurrent study, with a payment option contingent on construction project financing.

Copies of the quotes will be provided to the Board for review and consideration.

Kyle Campbell made a motion to the table, which Andrew Lorenz seconded. The motion was put to a vote, and the matter was tabled.

Shawn Kleinpeter introduced himself and his company, Kleinpeter Financial Group.

OTHER BUSINESS

The following items of other businesses were discussed.

Town of Wingate Website & IN.gov Domain & Licensing Janet Alexander is still working with IOT and SHI to coordinate the domain and licensing.

Radar Signage and Park Security Cameras Jared Kirby was absent. Discussion concerning these items was tabled until the next meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Phil Bane said he had hired a tree trimmer to top the tree hanging over his mother's house. The tree is located on Wabash and Vine Streets.

Darren Foreman stated that the old bank's condition is worsening, and he believes it will eventually collapse. He wants the council to know that firefighters will not enter that building because it is too dangerous. A discussion was held.

ADJOURNMENT

As there was no further business, a motion to adjourn at 6:58 P.M. was offered. The next regular meeting of the Town Council will be held at 6:00 p.m. on September 10, 2024

Respectfully submitted,

Kyle Campbell
Council President
Acting Clerk-Treasurer