

**COUNCIL MEETING (REGULAR)
DECEMBER 4th, 2024**

The Council of the Town of Monon met for a regular meeting on **Wednesday, December 4th, 2024**, at the Monon Town Hall. Members present were President Ken Hickman, Ron Benakovich, Toni Onken, Chris Franklin and Jamie Myers. Also present were Town Marshal/Street Commissioner Roger Young, Attorney Rebecca Trent and Clerk Treasurer Annette Sipkema.

President Hickman started our regular meeting @ 6:30 pm and led everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance followed by a moment-of silence.

MINUTES, PAYROLL, BILLS & CLAIMS:

Minutes: President Hickman asked if everyone had a chance to review the Regular & Executive meeting minutes from November 6th, 2024 and the Executive Meeting Minutes from November 13th, 2024.

Ron Benakovich made a motion to approve the REGULAR & EXECUTIVE minutes (11/6 & 11/13) as presented. Chris Franklin seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Payroll, Bills & Claims: President Ken Hickman asked if all members had reviewed the claims and payroll. Chris Franklin questioned the payment for the Arlo camera. Mr. Franklin stated that he thought that they were no longer using this camera system at the plant. Clerk Sipkema stated she will look into this.

Chris Franklin made a motion to accept the bills – claims – payroll.
Toni Onken seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

\$ 333,884.89

Month End Reconciliation Review / Sign Off... President Hickman reviewed the November 2024 bank reconciliations and validated them. Council Members and Pres. Hickman reviewed and signed off on the November month end balances.

VISITORS

BRADEN EVANS, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR WHITE COUNTY AREA PLAN, presented White County Zoning Amendment #A79. Asst. Dir. Evans explained that Amendment A79 is a proposal to establish updated, more restrictive regulations and standards for Commercial Solar Energy Systems. This amendment provides for more restrictive setbacks from road rights-of-way, non-participating parcels as well as municipalities. This amendment also changes the Permitted zoning district from A-1, General Agriculture to A-2, Agriculture Industry. Asst. Dir. Evans explained that the amendment also requires the applicant to provide a copy of the project's emergency response plan as well as coordinate with the local emergency response agency (ie. E911, Police, Fire, EMS, and EMA). Member Franklin asked if the amendment makes it harder for solar farms to be placed near residences without banning them completely. Asst. Dir. Evans stated that yes, the amendment has increased setbacks and fencing requirements and that a rezone to an A-2 district comes with its own requirements for size & distances from residential properties & municipalities.

Ron Benakovich made a motion to approve Amendment A79. Chris Franklin seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

UNFINISHED OR DEFERRED BUSINESS:

COMMONWEALTH ENGINEERING... Clerk Sipkema stated that Gabrielle stopped by the office and stated that the wastewater permit application has been submitted to IDEM and they are waiting on a response. Commissioner Young obtained the last 5-year Wellhead Protection Plan that was completed in 2013. After looking at the plan, Commissioner Young thought it would be best to go ahead and have Commonwealth update this plan. After a brief discussion,

Chris Franklin made a motion to approve the task order in the amount up to \$8,500 to update the plan. Ron Benakovich seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Jim Davis shared that paperwork has been submitted for the READI 2.0 grant. Commissioner Davis stated that White County will receive up to 4.8 million dollars. Commissioner Davis is optimistic that a sizeable amount will be available to assist the town with the wastewater treatment improvements and Greenwood St. expansion project.

INSURANCE BIDS....President Hickman stated that Howe Insurance Agency left information for each member with Howe's 2025 insurance quote. Alisha Howe requested that this information not be shared with anyone outside of the council. There is another company interested in providing a quote, but they are still in the process at the time. They hope to have this for presentation at the Dec 18th meeting. Clerk Sipkema requested that the agent prepare the package prior to the Dec 18th meeting for the council to review. The current policy expires on Dec 31st, 2024 so a decision will have to be made at the next meeting.

ORDINANCE 2024-11, GOLF CART ORDINANCE 1ST READING....Member Myers stated that the only question he had is in regards to the location of the required sticker. Marshal Young stated that the rear bumper is the best location for the officers.

Chris Franklin made a motion to suspend the rules and forgo the 2nd reading. Jamie Myers seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Jamie Myers made a motion to approve the Golf Cart Ordinance. Toni Onken seconded. Motion passed unanimously. Ordinance #2024-11

CONTRACT RENEWALS....President Hickman stated that Standish Consulting has submitted a one year renewal contract for council consideration. Pres. Hickman stated that no changes were made to the contract which would be in effect from Dec 1, 2024 thru November 30, 2025.

Chris Franklin made a motion to renew the Standish Consulting contract. Toni Onken seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

President Hickman stated that there were a couple changes to the Little Law contract for 2025. In Section 2, the retainer fee increased from \$6,000 to \$8,000 as approved November 6th, 2024 and Section 3b was revised to include the number of monthly meeting attendance requirements.

Toni Onken made a motion to renew the 2025 Little Law Contract. Jamie Myers seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

ORDINANCE 2024-12, 2025 SALARY....Member Myers stated that he realized after the last meeting that the part time positions were inadvertently looked over at the previous meeting. Member Myers suggested that the salary ordinance be revised to include the following:

Council President & Members receive a \$15/week increase (\$780/year).

Part time deputies, part time emts and crossing guards receive a \$2.00/hour increase.

EMS Director, Assistant Director, Fire Chief and Assistant Chief each receive a \$10/week increase (\$520/year).

After a brief discussion,

Ron Benakovich made a motion to approve the salary increases as proposed. Chris Franklin seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

A revised salary ordinance will be prepared and presented at the next meeting on Dec. 18th.

HYDRANT FEE....CLERK SIPKEMA shared that the \$2166.50 monthly hydrant fee paid by the town is paid out of the General Fund and deposited into the Water Operating. Each month \$2,000 is moved from water operating to water depreciation. This money is to be used for water hydrant maintenance, repair, infrastructure, upgrades and upkeep of the current hydrants and new hydrant installation. The depreciation balance as of November 30th was \$108,122. Clerk Sipkema stated that it is her understanding that the council had decided that the sewer/water rates should be reviewed annually. The last increase was in April of 2023. The council agreed that this had been discussed and that the town is due for a rate increase. Member Benakovich stated that there are a lot of residents in town on a fixed budget and that he is not in favor of a rate increase and a new fee at the same time. There is also concern among the members that it is unknown at this time how the rates will be affected by the pending sewer improvement and expansion project.

After a brief discussion, the council concluded that it would be best for the town to continue to pay the hydrant fee.

CIVIC CENTER ROOF....JIM DAVIS stated that the roof needs to be tore off and replaced. A quote was received from Everlasting Contractors LLC and Knox Roofing. Mr. Davis stated that while the quotes appear similar, the quote from Knox Roofing was received in 2023. Mr. Davis stated that the roof from both contractors would come with a 20 year warranty, but that the Everlasting Roof warranty stands out to him as it is backed by the manufacturer, not the installer.

The quote from Everlasting expires on December 8, 2024. The council discussed the probability that the quote would likely increase if they did not lock in the rate before Dec. 8th.

Chris Franklin made a motion to accept the quote from Everlasting Commercial Roofing LLC in the amount of \$23,348.76. Ron Benakovich seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

AMERICAN RESCUE FUNDS.....CLERK SIPKEMA stated that there was still \$17,989.56 left in the ARPA fund. The fire hose has been ordered, but the invoice has not yet been received. Fire Chief Garrett stated that he just received the invoice tonight and this has been forwarded to Clerk Sipkema. The total amount due was \$7058, of which the town's portion is \$3529. At the last council meeting, the purchase of 100 meters was approved in the amount of \$16,900. This quote did not include the transmitters that are required to convert the system to radio read meters. Commissioner Young requested a new quote from our supplier, Core & Main. 100 meters & transmitters were quoted at \$35,912. There is not enough money in the fund to cover this entire purchase. Member Myers asked what our options would be to fund this project. Clerk Sipkema stated that there will be approximately \$14,450 left in the American Rescue Fund that needs to be spent by the end of 2024. This amount can be used towards the purchase and the remainder could be paid out of Cumulative Capital Development or the town's EDIT fund. There was a discussion over their options and how they wanted to proceed.

Jamie Myers made a motion to purchase the meters & transmitters in the amount of \$35,912, using the remainder of the ARPA funds and splitting the balance between the Cumulative Capital Development & EDIT funds. Chris Franklin seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

STAFF REPORTS:

TOWN MARSHAL ROGER YOUNG.... 1) Finishing end of year training report for the academy. 2) December 10th the old town hall will be used for K-9 training. 3) December 7th, Marshal Young will assist the City of Monticello with their Christmas Parade. Officer Clark will return the favor by assisting the next weekend at the Town of Monon's Christmas Parade.

Marshal Young stated that he has been contacted about properties that are building without a permit. He explained that building complaints need to be filed with White County Building & Planning as they are the enforcer, not the police department. Member Benakovich asked why the citizen has to make the complaint? Why can't the town turn the violation in? Clerk Sipkema stated that in the past complaints were accepted from town authorities, but that they still have to be in writing. Sipkema stated that the complainant is required to sign the complaint form and that some citizens are concerned about retaliation. In her opinion, if the violation is clearly visible, then the town could submit the complaint on behalf of the citizen. Clerk Sipkema stated that outside of an obvious building addition or new build, the citizen should have to file the complaint. For example, if a citizen suspects that a takeout restaurant is operating in a residential area or that a dwelling has been converted into a boarding house then the citizen would need to file the complaint.

STREET COMMISSIONER ROGER YOUNG.... 1) the crew has been out sweeping the streets. 2) the utility locator is out of commission. 3) maintenance of the snow plows has been completed. The garage has been cleaned so the vehicles can be stored out of the weather. 4) getting a quote for painting the meeting room.

CLERK-TREASURER ANNETTE SIPKEMA... 1) the town has not received an invoice for our portion of the fire department insurance policy (1/2). Clerk Sipkema stated she has tried multiple times to contact the township trustee and has not received any response. Member Myers will contact him. 2) JJ Selagy is resigning from the Board of Zoning Appeals. The town will need to find a replacement. An ad will be placed on our Facebook page. 3) Clerk Sipkema inquired if any member was interested in obtaining a recording of the AIM Council Member Seminar on Dec. 17th. No one is interested at this time.

COUNCIL MEMBER CHRIS FRANKLIN....inquired if there was any update on the old funeral home on Market St. There has not been much activity at the site and it looks rough. Marshal Young will reach out to area plan to check on the status of the building permit application.

COUNCIL MEMBER JAMIE MYERS...he would like for the town to apply for the Community Crossings Grant in the upcoming year. President Hickman suggested that Member Myers head up a committee and submit the application. Clerk Sipkema stated that she talked to Tim Brown about the grant and upcoming filing periods. Mr. Brown said that the process takes time, but that it may be possible to submit the documents during the open period in July. President Hickman will reach out to Tim Brown and Member Myers will contact Edwin Buswell, KIRPC, to find out how much it would cost to have them assist the town with this process. 2) Member Myers requested consideration of purchasing new chairs for the audience and new executive chairs for the members. Eight executive chairs would run about \$2400 and fifteen new audience chairs would be approximately \$1200 plus shipping and handling. Commissioner Davis stated that the county has a surplus of chairs, desks, filing cabinets, etc that the town would be welcome to. Clerk Sipkema will contact the courthouse for more information.

COUNCIL MEMBER RON BENAKOVICH... thanked Marshal Young for posting no parking signs at the end of Walnut St, but he has witnessed people disregarding the signs. Requested that the police department keep an eye on this. 2) expressed displeasure over trash pickup. There have been many instances where trash has been left lying in the road. He has also witnessed the trash tote being damaged by the trash truck, for example puncturing a hole in the tote with the arm. Clerk Sipkema stated that the town has a local manager that can be contacted and that a regional manager has also provided his information for any issues that can not be resolved locally.

Jamie Myers made a motion to adjourn the meeting.
Chris Franklin seconded the motion. Motion carried.

The meeting adjourned @ 8:11 pm.

There will be a year end meeting on Wednesday, December 18th, 2024, at 6:30 p.m.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT: Ken Rifelman

COUNCIL VICE PRESIDENT: Ronald Bell

COUNCIL MEMBER: Toni Duke

COUNCIL MEMBER: Chris Franklin

COUNCIL MEMBER: _____

ATTEST: Annette Sipkema