

## COUNCIL MEETING (REGULAR)

AUGUST 6, 2025

The Council of the Town of Monon met for a regular meeting on **Wednesday, August 6, 2025**, at the Monon Town Hall. Members present were President Ken Hickman, Vice President Ron Benakovich, Toni Onken and Jamie Myers. Also present were Attorney Rebecca Trent, Town Marshall Roger Young and Clerk Treasurer Annette Sipkema.

Member Chris Franklin was absent.

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

**President Hickman** informed Dianne Tribbett, Park Board President, that he gave the school permission to park vehicles on the Babe Ruth field during the Cross Country Invite. Mrs. Tribbett objected. After discussion,

Toni Onken made a motion to allow parking on the diamond for the event. Jamie Myers seconded. 3 votes in favor; 1 against. Motion carried by majority of the vote.

### **MINUTES, PAYROLL, BILLS & CLAIMS:**

**Minutes:** Ron Benakovich made a motion to approve the REGULAR meeting minutes from July 2<sup>nd</sup> and the BUDGET workshop minutes dated July 23rd. Toni Onken seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

**Payroll, Bills & Claims:** Ron Benakovich made a motion to accept the bills – claims – payroll. Jamie Myers seconded. The motion carried unanimously. **\$258,401.91**

Council members reviewed and signed off on June and July fund balances.

**Month End Reconciliation Review / Sign Off....**President Ken Hickman reviewed and signed off on June and July bank reconciliations.

### **VISITORS:**

**DIANNE TRIBBETT, PARK BOARD PRESIDENT**, requested the council approve an appropriation transfer from one category (tree trimming) to another to purchase the basketball goals for the new basketball court that was generously donated by Rose Acres. Clerk Sipkema will work with Dianne on the amount needed and prepare a resolution for the September meeting.

**JENILYNNE KYBURZ, WHITE COUNTY AREA PLAN**, presented White County Zoning Ordinance Amendment A83 & A84.

Amendment A83 proposed an increase to the maximum height allowance for development within the I-3 zoning district, allowing building heights to go from 55 feet to 110 feet. There were no questions from the council. Toni Onken made a motion to approve the amendment. Ron Benakovich seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Amendment A84 proposed revised standards for Mobile Retail Food Establishments (Food Trucks). These standards include the districts to which they may be located, the permitting process and identifies setbacks with property boundaries. There were no questions from the council. Jamie Myers made a motion to approve the amendment. Toni Onken seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

## **OLD/NEW BUSINESS:**

**COMMONWEALTH ENGINEERING....** GABRIELLE TABER stated that the working group continues to meet bi-weekly. The group has been scheduled to meet with the White County Commissioner's on August 18<sup>th</sup> @ 8:15 a.m. at the county courthouse to discuss a previous offer to assist with the project financing gap. There have been two new commissioners elected since this was first discussed in 2022. Commonwealth is working with Baker Tilly on engineering components to make sure the project stays within budget expectations.

**SANITATION BIDS.....**REBECCA TRENT, TOWN ATTORNEY, stated she is waiting on a response from Waste Management (WM) regarding return of the totes. At this time, she had not heard back from him yet. Attorney Trent stated that her notice to them stated that the town will not pay the exorbitant amount they (WM) quoted to pick up the totes at the end of 2025. The town will ensure that the totes are returned to the site (TBD). Attorney Trent will follow up with WM to confirm that they have accepted these terms and provided the drop off location. **Tabled to the September meeting.**

**COMMUNITY CROSSINGS GRANT APPLICATION....**Quote still not received. President Hickman shared that Roger, Annette and himself met with Ken a couple weeks ago to go over some details for the engineer to provide an accurate quote. President Hickman stated that the biggest difference would be that any new sidewalks associated with the CCMG would be 5' wide instead of 3 to meet ADA requirements. **Tabled**

**BUDGET & SALARY DISCUSSION.....**Clerk Treasurer Annette Sipkema asked if the council had any questions regarding the drafted budget they were sent for review. There were no questions. Clerk Sipkema stated that she suggests no major increase to the budget while the impact of SB1 are determined. Clerk Sipkema pointed out some major changes which included removing \$7,500 from the General Fund for sidewalks (due to other sidewalk funding), and shifting machinery and equipment purchases to the EDIT Fund. A 15% increase was estimated for 2026 insurance rates. It was also noted that the payment terms of the new truck lease are still pending. Clerk Sipkema inquired to the council what their thoughts were on the vacant superintendent position. Were they considering hiring a superintendent next year or remain with the current operation of the outside contractor & street commissioner. It was noted that retaining the contractor avoids additional employee benefit costs. This may be reconsidered pending Tracy's wastewater testing progress. Concern over the current service contract was discussed regarding training requirements, on-site presence, and timely submission of required state reports. While improvements have been noted in water operations, it was agreed that contract obligations must be met, and deficiencies should be addressed through formal communication via the town attorney. Council acknowledged the goal of increasing Tracy's involvement in water and wastewater operations to potentially reduce reliance on the outside contractor in the future. Staff adjustments may be made to free up her time for plant operations and compliance work.

President Hickman inquired if the township payment for Emergency Services has been received, which it has not. President Hickman expressed his concern over firefighter compensation, noting that current pay is \$10 per call. Several members expressed concern that this rate has not kept pace with the demands and risks of service. Suggestions were made to increase the rate, with \$30 per call proposed as a potential target, subject to budget review and township board approval. Discussion included call volume estimates, township cost-sharing, and the impact on volunteer recruitment and retention. No formal action was taken. Council agreed to continue reviewing the budget and revisit firefighter pay later in the year.

Clerk Sipkema stated that at the budget workshop there was a discussion regarding Tracy's classification following her Water Certification. The issue being that Ms. Anderson was incorrectly classified as 'labor with one certification' instead of retaining her current classification as 'Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator (WWTP-OP with no certification)'. and being moved up to 'WWTP-OP with one certification'. The council agreed that this was an error and that she should be compensated at the operator's rate of pay. The proposed change would increase her hourly wage from \$22.52 to \$23.78. It was agreed that this

correction should be made retroactive to acknowledge the mistake and properly compensate her for her work.

Jamie Myers made a motion to reclassify Tracy as WWTP-OP w/ one cert with retroactive pay effective July 3, 2025. Ron Benakovich seconded. All in favor, motion passed.

#### **DEPARTMENTS:**

**TOWN MARSHALL ROGER YOUNG.....** 1) Marshall Young reported increased vehicle maintenance costs including significant repairs to Officer Jake's squad car. 2) An outside trainer will conduct a three-day interview and interrogation course at the Sheriff's Office, which Officer Miller is scheduled to attend. 3) Roger also noted the need to purchase a scanner with a USB port for ticket processing. 4) Revamping street signs on Middlestat & Railroad.

**STREET COMMISSIONER ROGER YOUNG...**1) Contacted a nearby company that offers free painting of handicapped parking spaces. 2) Yard waste pickup has been separated from brush collection, with yard waste now accepted in lidded containers (under 40 lbs.) or small piles for pickup—plastic bags will no longer be opened. Brush will continue to be collected on Mondays, weather permitting. 3) Cody and Auner will attend training in Wolcott, with a focus on hydrant maintenance. 4) Two hydrants remain out of service, including one inside Vanguard that is obsolete. 5) Options for installing a dry hydrant at Vanguard are being explored, which could allow filling multiple tankers simultaneously. 6) The town's truck delivery is now projected for 2026, with no production date confirmed. Commissioner Young stated this will be the 2026 model at the current 2025 price. 7) Street paving schedules are pending contractor updates.

**CLERK-TREASURER ANNETTE SIPKEMA...**1) The park has received the following donations: White County Community Foundation: \$1,000 for the new pickleball courts and Rose Acres is covering the cost to install a new basketball court, approximately \$38,000. 2) Keller Development and the local Area IV held a virtual meeting to discuss potential income based housing on Larry Brown's property east of town. Results from the submitted application for funding options should be available around November. After determination is received, the group will meet again to discuss options.

**ATTORNEY REBECCA TRENT...nothing at this time.**

#### **COUNCIL MEMBERS....**

**Member Toni Onken....**inquired on the status of the old funeral home. Commissioner Young stated that the owner is considering remodeling the property in phases with three apartments in the first phase. Commissioner Young stated that the clerk is revamping the attorney's property nuisance forms into a fillable format for the department.

**Vice President Ron Benakovich....** suggested that any future trash contract be scrutinized and that future cross-country meets be moved to the school property to avoid the recurring issue with the baseball diamond at the park.

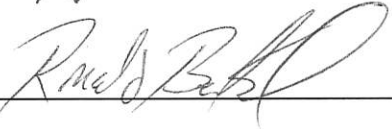
There being no other business to discuss,


Jamie Myers made a motion to adjourn the meeting.


Ron Benakovich seconded. Meeting adjourned @ 8:07 p.m.

There will be a Public Hearing held on Wednesday, September 3, 2025 at 6:15 p.m. with the regularly scheduled meeting to follow.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT: 

COUNCIL VICE PRESIDENT: 

COUNCIL MEMBER: 

COUNCIL MEMBER: 

COUNCIL MEMBER: 

ATTEST: 

*These minutes are a summary of actions taken at the Monon Town Council meeting. The full video archive of the meeting is available for viewing at <https://www.youtube.com/@townofmonon> for as long as this media is supported.*

*Official signed minutes may be requested at the Clerk's Office or viewed at <https://townofmonon.com/2025-minutes>*