

TOWN OF MONON
COUNCIL MEETING
APRIL 1, 2026

The Council of the Town of Monon met for their Regular Meeting on, April 1, 2026 at the Monon Town Hall Conference Room, 422 N Market St. Members present were President Ken Hickman, Vice President Ron Benakovich, Jamie Myers and Toni Onken. Also present were Attorney Rebecca Trent, Town Marshall Roger Young and Clerk Treasurer Annette Sipkema.

Chris Franklin was absent.

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

READING OF MINUTES.... Council President Ken Hickman asked if all members had reviewed the meeting minutes from March 4, 2026. There were no questions or comments.

Ron Benakovich made a motion to accept the minutes, Toni Onken seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

BILLS/CLAIMS:... The Council reviewed the bills, claims, and payroll. No questions or concerns were raised by any Council members.

Jamie Myers made a motion to approve bills/claims as presented. Seconded by Ron Benakovich. Motion carried unanimously. \$ 268,744.67

MONTHLY RECONCILIATION: None at this time.

VISITORS:

TERRY SAUNDERS, RESIDENT,.... Terry Saunders addressed the Council on two matters. First, she noted that vehicles are frequently parking in front of fire hydrants throughout town and asked whether anything could be done to curb the practice, noting that while conditions are not currently in drought, caution is warranted. Marshall Young stated that there is statute that addresses the issue and offered to distribute information about it. Saunders raised concerns regarding overflowing Main Street trash cans and wind-blown litter. The Council discussed the impact of recent weather and acknowledged high-litter areas near the railroad and local businesses. A commitment was made to conduct a cleanup blitz once the weather improves.

SEAN GARRETT, FIRE CHIEF,.... Regarding a Knox Box system, Garrett reported a quote of \$2,620 for the initial unit, installation, wiring, and key for the truck, plus a recurring annual cloud license fee of \$721. He noted the Township has agreed to pay half of the initial unit cost. The system would allow emergency responders keyless access to secured buildings, and he cited two incidents this year in which doors had to be broken down, as well as a three-hour wait at a residence for a key holder. Council discussed the proposal at length. Some members expressed reservations, noting it was not budgeted and raised questions about how many residents could afford the individual Knox Box units (estimated at approximately \$200 each). Council Member Onken asked how many units Monticello had in use, and Council indicated interest in obtaining that information before proceeding further. Garrett agreed to gather more data and return with additional numbers. No formal action was taken at this time.

Council Member Myers also raised the question of whether the department's dent-puller tool—previously purchased for the ambulance—could be used to extract door locks as an alternative to forced entry. Garrett indicated he was not aware of the tool and its application.

Chief Garrett reported that Tanker 10 is currently at a repair facility. The front bumper is cracked and misaligned on all four corners, a condition attributed in part to the weight of the Q siren over time. The repair quote is \$6,441. Garrett noted he requested heavier 3/16-inch steel plate for the replacement rather than the original 8-gauge material. He indicated the Township would co-participate in this repair as well. Member Myers suggested contacting the manufacturer to pursue a warranty or workmanship claim, even given the truck's age, noting the principle that "you can't get what you don't ask for." No formal vote was taken.

Chief Garrett also reported that Squad 8 is back at Wells Diesel for repair and continues to have an intermittent stalling issue that mechanics have been unable to diagnose. A PCM (powertrain control module) is suspected but not confirmed, and the part is reportedly difficult to source. The

fuel system is also being inspected. Council was asked only to be aware of the situation; no action was required.

JIM DAVIS..... Regarding the 2026 Food Fest, Davis reported the event is scheduled for June 6, from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., with a parade beginning at the school at 9:45 a.m. Due to changes on Fourth Street, the main stage will be relocated in front of the fire station. The car show will be held on Fourth Street, in the parking lot next to KIRPC, and around the tracks on the west side, since the lumberyard is no longer available. Davis noted he spends between \$3,500 and \$4,000 annually on entertainment and relies on sponsorships, though this year's sponsorship response has been lower than prior years. He confirmed sufficient funds in the account to proceed. He also noted plans for a kids' train, bounce houses, and a potential beer garden, for which he requested formal Council approval.

Jamie Myers made a motion to approve the beer garden for the 2026 Food Fest. Ron Benakovich seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Davis further reported that he is obtaining cleanup estimates for three blighted sites: the old fertilizer plant on Third Street, the old Napa store building, and the Fourth Street fire debris site (the former Monon Meats/Bossung property). He expects to have written quotes to the Council by the end of the week.

Regarding the Fourth Street fire debris site (the Bossung property), a broader discussion took place involving Davis, Town Attorney Rebecca Trent, Marshal/Street Commissioner Roger Young, and Council members. Trent reported that Monon Meats' insurance carrier denied liability because the fire was determined to be accidental rather than the result of negligence. The property owner, Mr. Bossung, has no insurance and no financial means to address the cleanup. Trent noted that the town could pursue condemnation proceedings, or alternatively, ask Bossung to voluntarily deed the property to the town to expedite the process. She also suggested exploring whether the town's own insurance might cover cleanup costs given the liability risk posed by the unstable structure, particularly with a public event planned nearby. Council members expressed concern about the risk of falling brick and other debris, especially during the Food Fest, and discussed the need for temporary fencing as a short-term protective measure. There was general agreement that the situation has gone on long enough (since July of the prior year) and that the town must act. Trent committed to contacting Bossung immediately and, if he is uncooperative, initiating condemnation proceedings so the matter can be advanced by the next meeting.

Davis also announced an informal community jam session scheduled for the following Wednesday for anyone interested in music performance, with the longer-term goal of organizing monthly performances at the theater or gazebo throughout the summer.

UNFINISHED/NEW BUSINESS:

COMMONWEALTH ENGR.. WW PROJECT..... President Hickman relayed a message received from Gabrielle Taber: the DNR public notice period expires on April 10, at which point the DNR permit is expected to be issued, either on that date or within a few days thereafter. A scheduled wastewater treatment plant meeting the prior week was canceled due to no new developments, but a meeting is scheduled for the following week.

2026 COMMUNITY CROSSINGS GRANT BIDS..... Three bids were received for the 2026 Community Crossings grant paving project. The work covers: Brooks Street (to and from Fifth Street), Race Street (Fourth Street to Second Street), Third Street (from address 421 to Pine Street), and Lincoln Street (from Monroe to 322 feet north of Monroe). The project includes pavement replacement, standard curbing, and sidewalk replacement. The three bids received were:

- Milestone Contractors (Lafayette): \$1,133,350.00
- Central Paving: \$993,562.70
- Reith-Riley Construction (Lafayette): \$739,695.30

The grant program requires acceptance of the lowest responsible bid. The town's 20% local match for the Reith-Riley bid amounts to \$147,939.06.

Ron Benakovich made a motion to accept the low bid from Reith-Riley Construction in the amount of \$739,695.30, seconded by Council Member Jamie Myers. Motion carried unanimously.

ROOF ESTIMATES (100 N PINE ST GARAGE).... Marshal/Street Commissioner Roger Young reported that the garage at the wastewater plant is in need of a new metal roof. Three local bids were obtained:

- F&D Construction: \$6,700
- M&M Construction: \$6,500
- Four Brothers Construction: \$6,500

Young recommended awarding the project to Four Brothers Construction, noting that M&M has been used frequently and that it is beneficial to spread work among local contractors. Council concurred.

Jamie Myers made a motion to award the shop roof replacement to Brothers Construction at \$6,500. Ron Benakovich seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

STAFF REPORTS

Roger Young, Town Marshal... 1) The department's Flock cameras have generated valuable leads, including identifying a stolen vehicle from Seymour, Indiana, leading to a pursuit ending in arrest. 2) A murder suspect from Ohio was intercepted using the Flock camera network by local agencies, culminating in an arrest. 3) Ongoing property cleanup enforcement tasks are being performed as weather permits.

Roger Young, Street Commissioner... 1) The NPDES permit work, with Gabrielle's assistance, is progressing well and saving costs by not using an engineer for the whole process. 2) The Dorothy Street lift station has been operating smoothly without any issues. 3) The east clarifier is currently being reassembled and is expected to be back online within the week. 4) A three-quarter-inch copper waterline break in the alley south of Fifth Street has been repaired, with the assistance of Accu-Dig. 5) Scheduled boiler inspections by the insurance company are set for April 22. 6) Crews have been actively picking up trash along Railroad Street and alleys during good weather days. 7) Flowers are awaiting planting season inside the school's greenhouse. 8) A hydraulic line on the Bobcat required repairs and has been addressed. 9) A meter pit at the 100 block of Arch Street has been rebuilt. 10) A sewer issue on Arch Street was addressed and found to be the property owner's issue; they were advised to fix it or face Health Department action. 11) The Easter egg hunt may need postponement due to wet conditions from rain. 12) The Council reviewed a building permit request for 313 North Arch Street involving a residential addition and second-story garage expansion. Based on preliminary staff review and information from IDEM, the project does not appear to increase the sewer system load. Attorney Trent noted that the project may proceed under the 2015 sewer ban provided offsetting capacity is demonstrated. Council expressed no initial objection, pending a final review of the IDEM documentation that Clerk Siphkema will forward to Attorney Trent to confirm the project may move forward.

Annette Siphkema - Clerk/Treasurer... 1) A potential new park employee has been identified, but confirmation is pending due to the candidate checking if the position will impact his current insurance coverage, which is crucial because of his spouse's medical needs. 2) Cash reserve reports were distributed to the Council. The park fund reserves are declining, and this may require action during budget discussions through either a levy increase or reduced appropriations. The fund, however, is not yet in critical condition. 4) A new service window for the utility payments desk will be installed, costing approximately \$650. This will involve Rob's Glass Repair replacing the sliding window with a fixed pane, microphone, and cash slot for security. Installation is expected within three to four weeks. 5) The Standish contract has been signed, with copies distributed to Attorney Trent. 6) Office staff are developing detailed workflow documentation to facilitate cross-training between the clerk and the deputy clerk.

Attorney Rebecca Trent... Attorney Trent committed to two actions regarding the Fourth Street property: first, to contact property owner, Mr. Bossung, to determine whether he would cooperate voluntarily, including the possibility of deeding the property to the town; and second, if he is uncooperative, to initiate condemnation proceedings so that the matter can be brought before the Council at the next meeting. She confirmed that any debris currently on town property—including the street, sidewalk, and alley—can be cleaned up immediately by town

staff. Clerk Sipkema agreed to contact the town's insurance carrier to explore potential coverage for cleanup given the liability exposure.

Council Members... Council Member Jamie Myers echoed concerns about vehicle registration violations, noting that some residents are backing vehicles close to walls or objects to obscure license plates. Young acknowledged the issue and indicated that vehicles showing signs of non-movement or other irregularities can still be investigated. Myers also urged a full enforcement and cleanup blitz once weather improves.

ALL OTHER MATTERS..... No additional matters were discussed.

Jamie Myers made a motion to adjourn at 7:26 p.m., seconded by Ron Benakovich.

The next regularly scheduled meeting will be held on May 6, 2026 @ 6:30 p.m.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT: Ken Johnson

COUNCIL VICE PRESIDENT: _____

COUNCIL MEMBER: Loni Duke

COUNCIL MEMBER: Cliff

COUNCIL MEMBER: [Signature]

ATTEST: Annette Sipkema

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 after 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>