TOWN OF MONON
COUNCIL MEETING
JANUARY 7, 2026

The Council of the Town of Monon met for their Regular Meeting on, January 7, 2026 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.

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 December 18, 2025. There were no questions or comments.

Jamie Myers made a motion to accept the minutes, Ron Benakovich seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

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

Jamie Myers made a motion to approve bills/claims as presented. Seconded by Toni Onken. Motion carried unanimously. **$ 106,153.55**

Mr. Brent Gillum, President and CEO of LightStream, returned to the Council to follow up on items previously discussed. He advised that the new Lightstream bucket truck is en route and formally proposed the sale of the 2016 bucket truck inherited from Monon Telephone to the Town for $10,000. Commissioner Young noted that another municipality has expressed interest in purchasing the Town's existing bucket truck should the purchase move forward. Council Member Myers asked whether the new bucket truck would also replace the red service truck. Commissioner Young clarified that the purchase would replace only the existing bucket truck. Following discussion,

Toni Onken made a motion to proceed with the purchase in the amount of $10,000 of the MVH Fund. Council Member Myers seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Gillum also provided an update on the former Standard Auto building, stating that demolition is expected to begin at the first break of spring. He reiterated Lightstream's offer to sell the property to the Town for $1 upon completion of demolition and requested legal assistance to expedite the paperwork to allow for a seamless transfer. Attorney Trent indicated she will begin processing the necessary paperwork.

COMMONWEALTH ENGR...WW PROJECT..... Gabrielle Taber reported that all wastewater project documents were submitted to USDA in mid-December. USDA is currently reviewing everything, and the next step will be for them to issue an approval letter allowing the project to go to bid. She noted that USDA has been short-staffed but hoped to receive the letter this month. She mentioned that Rob would be meeting with USDA representatives in a couple of days to discuss this and other matters.

2026 CONTRACTS: FIRE & EMERGENCY SERVICES..... Town Attorney Rebecca Trent presented two contracts: one for services with the fire department and the other for EMS. The Council discussed several aspects of the fire contract, focusing particularly on the payment structure for runs and meetings. There was debate about whether firefighters should receive more for runs ($15) than for attending meetings ($20), with some Council members questioning why meeting attendance would be compensated at a higher rate than responding to potentially dangerous fire calls. Council Member Myers recommended setting a single rate of $15 per run, regardless of whether the run was in town or township territory, to simplify administration. The Council also discussed payments for mutual aid runs and reviewed run statistics. In 2025, there were 152 in-town fire runs and 220 township runs.

Ron Benakovich made a motion to set the firefighter compensation at $15 per run regardless of location. Toni Onken seconded. Motion carried with Council Member Myers abstaining due to his position with the fire department.

Ron Benakovich made a motion to accept the Fire Protection Services contract as amended with the $15 per run rate. Seconded by Council Member Onken. Motion carried with Council Member Myers abstaining.

Toni Onken made a motion to accept the 2026 EMT contract. Ron Benakovich seconded. Motion carried with Council Member Myers abstaining.

The Council also discussed issues with the township contract, particularly regarding insurance payments. It was noted that the township trustee had not cashed a check from 2024 for insurance costs of approximately $7,889. The Council decided to coordinate with the township trustee to resolve these issues.

STANDISH CONTRACT.....Attorney Rebecca Trent presented a draft contract for services with Standish. She indicated that she had sent the contract to Standish but had not yet received feedback. The Council expressed concerns about Standish's compliance with reporting requirements and responsiveness to communications. Council Member Onken referenced a recent email exchange where Standish responded with "as per my last email" but had not actually provided the requested information previously. The Council noted a recent notice of non-compliance that still needed resolution. The Council decided to table the contract discussion until the next meeting to allow time for everyone to review the contract more thoroughly and to address compliance issues.

AIM MEDICAL INSURANCE RESOLUTION #2026-1.....Clerk-Treasurer Annette Sipkema explained this was a resolution to join AIM for medical insurance beginning March 1, 2026. She noted that Attorney Rebecca Trent had reviewed the document and approved it.

Ron Benakovich made a motion to approve the AIM Medical Insurance Resolution. Jamie Myers seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

STAFF REPORTS

Roger Young, Town Marshal...1) Training records are being completed for submission to the Indiana Law Enforcement Academy. 2) Officer Bob Hickman has returned to school and is reportedly in the best health for a long time. 3) Officer Cosgray will continue to serve as a part time SRO to prevent Officer Hickman from being overworked. 4) Young's rifle is ready for pickup, pending preparation of ATF-required documentation.

Roger Young, Street Commissioner... 1) A clarifier pump at the wastewater plant has been replaced; there is currently no backup, and a new pump would cost approximately $14,000. 2) A basement meter that measures waste, which is reported to IDEM, is malfunctioning and needs replacement. Quotes for a replacement are being obtained. 3) The new town truck has been delivered. 4) Upon delivery, it was found that the snow plow from the previous truck was not compatible, so a new plow was ordered. This plow is being assembled and should be ready soon. 5) The non compatible plow was sold to the purchaser of the GMC truck for $1,500. 6) Trash Service: Concerns were raised about residents outside town limits receiving trash service due to water or sewer services, conflicting with ordinances that specify service for "residents of Monon and Monon businesses." The Council requested those living outside of town limits be given 30 days notice that service would be discontinued.

Annette Sipkema - Clerk/Treasurer..... 1) She received a letter of interest from Linda Griffin to serve on the Park Board.

Ken Hickman made a motion to appoint Linda Griffin to the Park Board. Toni Onken seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

2) Clerk Sipkema will post an ad for the seasonal Park Caretaker position. This position begins on April 1 thru Nov 1. 3) She received a thank-you letter from Gutwein Motors for the town's purchase of the new 2026 Ford F-250. 4) Howe Insurance provided the town's asset list to Clerk

Sipkema. This is being reviewed with Commissioner Young for accuracy. 5) End of the year financial tasks are in progress.

Attorney Rebecca Trent…1) She and Clerk-Treasurer Sipkema have completed the ordinance violation lien process. Notices were sent out, certified mail receipts returned, and notarized forms are ready to be recorded. 2) She sent a letter regarding the structurally compromised building discussed at the previous meeting. She advised that if the town wants to require the building to be demolished, they may need to have an engineer inspect it to establish the structural issues, as the burden of proof is high for municipalities seeking to condemn a building.

Council Members……. Council Member Myers noted his position on the need to purchase a leaf vacuum and replace the red service truck. He asked about the right-of-way near Harold's business related to the Young Estate and potential buyers. Myers also commended the police department for handling approximately 180–200 calls per month.

Council Member Benakovich emphasized creating a capital expenditure calendar and thorough inventory to avoid unnecessary insurance costs, along with addressing OSHA compliance for firefighters with facial hair.

ALL OTHER MATTERS

No additional matters were discussed.

Jamie Myers made a motion to adjourn at 7:41 p.m., seconded by Ron Benakovich.

The next regularly scheduled meeting will be held on February 4, 2026 @ 6:30 p.m.

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