TOWN OF MONON
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING
AUGUST 5, 2026

The Council of the Town of Monon met for their Regular Meeting on, August 5, 2026 at the Monon Town Hall Conference Room, 422 N Market St. Members present were President Ken Hickman, Vice President Ron Benakovich, Toni Onken and Jamie Myers. Also present were Town Marshall Roger Young, Superintendent Tracy Anderson and Clerk Treasurer Annette Sipkema. 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.

Member Chris Franklin was absent.

READING OF MINUTES....Council President Ken Hickman asked whether members had reviewed the Regular Meeting minutes dated July 1 and the Budget Workshop Meeting minutes dated July 8, 2026. There were no additions or corrections.

> **Ron Benakovich made a motion to approve the Regular & Budget Workshop Meeting Minutes as presented, Toni Onken seconded. The motion carried unanimously.**

BILLS, CLAIMS, PAYROLL, AND MONTHLY RECONCILLIATION....

President Hickman stated he would like to present the bills, claims, payroll, and the monthly reconciliations for June and July together for approval. President Hickman asked if there were any objections or questions, being none

> **Toni Onken made a motion to approve bills, claims, and payroll, Jamie Myers seconded. Motion carried unanimously. $351,684.16**

VISITORS

A resident raised concerns regarding electric scooters being operated unsafely throughout town, particularly in alleys and at intersections, and requested that rules and regulations be established. Marshal Young responded that his officers have been instructed to confiscate scooters and bicycles when riders are caught violating traffic laws, and that the vehicles will be held until a parent makes contact, with the intent of making it an educational intervention involving parents. Marshal Young also noted that School Resource Officer Bob Hickman is planning to conduct an educational outreach at the school once they are back in session.

A second visitor noted that the traffic signal on the state highway was malfunctioning. Marshal Young confirmed the issue had already been reported to dispatch, who in turn notified INDOT.

New, Unfinished or Deferred Business

1. Commonwealth Engr...WW Project Update/Bid Recommendation.....Gabrielle Taber from Commonwealth Engineering reported that four bids were received on July 15, 2026 for the wastewater treatment plant project. The lowest qualified bidder was identified as a reputable contractor with statewide experience. The bids came in approximately $2,000,000 over the previously estimated low-end figure. Commonwealth is working with the low bidder on value engineering deductions, with quotes expected by end of the week. An updated budget will be provided to the coordination group — including the Town, Baker Tilly, bond counsel, and other stakeholders — the following Wednesday. The project goal remains to close and execute the contract on or before December 2026.

The Greenwood Street component was identified as the primary item to be removed from the current project scope, with the possibility of addressing it as a separate project at a later date. Additional funding avenues being pursued include returning to USDA Rural Development for supplemental grants or loans, and approaching the County Commissioners, who had previously expressed willingness to provide financial assistance.

2. Baker Tilly Bond Introduction.....Town Attorney Rebecca Trent presented the first reading and introduction of the bond ordinance, designated Ordinance No. 2026-8-1. The ordinance is intended to establish, construct, and finance the municipal sewage works system, with a total project estimate including incidentals of $19,355,000. The ordinance also provides for the refinancing of existing related bonds. No vote was taken at this meeting; the ordinance will be formally acted upon at a subsequent meeting. The Town's goal is to keep the total bond amount under $20,000,000.

3. 2026 Salary Ordinance Amendment – Ord #2026-6-1.....Council Members signed the 2026 Salary Amendment Ordinance that was approved at the June 3, 2026 Council Meeting.

4. Police Dept....New Vehicle.....Marshal Young presented bids for a new police vehicle. The options reviewed were a Dodge Durango at $45,424.80, a Ford Explorer Police Interceptor at $47,573, and a Ford F-150 Police Interceptor truck at $48,529. Marshal Young expressed a preference for the truck, citing ease of ingress/egress given the demands of a 12-hour shift, off-road capability, and the ability to tow the radar trailer. The Durango was not recommended due to reported transmission and electrical issues. Gutwein's offered a $14,000 trade-in on the current vehicle. Delivery is expected approximately three months from order, and the vehicle would be a 2027 model year. The Council concurred with Marshal Young's preference, noting that the modest price difference was justified by officer preference and the value of buying locally.

> **Jamie Myers made a motion** to approve the purchase of the Ford F-150 Police Interceptor truck; **seconded by Ron Benakovich**. The motion carried unanimously.

5. 2027 CCMG Application .....The Council discussed the ongoing Community Crossings Matching Grant (CCMG) work, with President Hickman noting strong positive public feedback regarding the sidewalk and curb improvements on Race and 3rd Streets. Clerk-Treasurer Sipkema noted that the grant application window opens September 1 and closes September 30, and that the engineer, Ken Smith, needed confirmation to proceed by mid-August. The Council agreed to move forward with the application. Greenwood Street was identified as a priority street for future consideration, given its poor condition. Marshal Young and Superintendent Anderson were directed to work with the engineer on street selection. The engineer is scheduled to meet on-site the following Friday to review project progress.

STAFF REPORTS

Roger Young – Town Marshal.....1) Marshal Young reported that a meeting with the trailer court is being rescheduled to address cleanup. 2) He has received no response from the mortgage company regarding the Race Street property and will follow up. 3) The radar trailer is to be deployed near a school crossing zone immediately, in advance of the school year. 4) Marshal Young is actively seeking candidates for the school crossing guard position and noted that the current pay of $22 per day makes recruitment difficult, suggesting the compensation warrants review. 5) Training updates and ICE split figures are pending.

Tracy Anderson – Municipal Superintendent ..... Superintendent Anderson provided the following updates: 1) **Streetlights:** Market Street inspection completed; issues include a delayed startup at the former auto parts store, with other locations operating normally. 2) **Wastewater Treatment Plant:** East clarifier rebuilt; west clarifier's sprocket drive issue fixed the same morning. The wastewater sampler is repaired. 3) **Water Main Break:** 4-inch break on 2nd St. repaired without service interruption. 4) **Water Softeners:** Peerless quote delayed; Town among few still using costly water softeners. 5) **Alley Improvements:** Successful Harley rig rental; further grading and stone work needed. 6) **Generator Maintenance:** Completed July 30; multiple part replacements were made. 7) **Street Sweeper:** Ready to resume post-alley work. 8) **Peerless Billing Issue:** Repair bills since 2023 unissued; meeting planned to resolve. 9) **Water Plant Roof:** Damage noticed; inspection recommended. 10) **Vanguard National Trailer:** $30,000 estimated for a failing hydrant repair. Superintendent Anderson asked for clarification on who would be the responsible party for replacement. 11) **Dumpster Recommendation:** Buying three dumpsters could save $21,000 annually; exploring inclusion in wastewater project costs. 12) **Hydrant Painting:** Summer staff repainting ongoing.

Annette Sipkema – Clerk/Treasurer.... 1) Clerk-Treasurer Sipkema reported that four new rear tires and valve stems have been installed on the ambulance; billing has not yet been received. 2) Clerk Sipkema presented a preliminary overview of the 2027 budget. The proposed 2027 property tax levy is $643,036, distributed as follows: General Fund at $393,036, MVH at $150,000, and Park Fund at $100,000. The General Fund budget is proposed at $1,069,550, an increase of $47,270 over the current year, including increased capital improvement allocations for the Police Department (from $5,000 to $8,000) and the Fire Department (from $11,000 to $25,000). The Park Fund budget is proposed at $128,800, reduced from the current $148,000, primarily by reducing the capital improvement allocation from $45,000 from $30,000. 3) Clerk-Treasurer Sipkema also presented information on establishing a Cumulative Fire Fund. Due to statutory filing deadlines already having passed for the current budget cycle, the earliest such a fund could be established is 2027 paid in 2028. At the maximum allowable rate of $0.0333 per $100 of assessed value, the fund would generate approximately $38,777 annually based on the Town's current net assessed value of approximately $116,000,000. The Council expressed unanimous support for pursuing the Cumulative Fire Fund, recognizing the need to plan for the eventual replacement of aging fire apparatus.

Rebecca Trent, Attorney..... Attorney Trent noted she is working on two ordinances for introduction at the next meeting: one establishing fees for public records requests, designed to allow the Town to deny requests that appear to be for commercial phishing purposes; and one governing right-of-way permits for utility companies and other entities working within town rights-of-way, which would require permits, fees, and performance bonds.

Attorney Trent also addressed the status of the Town's operator/consultant arrangement with Dustin, noting that his contract is not auto-renewing and that prior discussions had indicated this arrangement would likely conclude at the end of the year. Superintendent Anderson confirmed that Dustin had failed to respond to a recent violaion on time, and that she had personally facilitated delivery of necessary paperwork to ensure the inspection was ultimately completed, albeit late. The Council concurred that the transition away from this contract arrangement is appropriate, and Superintendent Anderson expressed confidence in her ability to manage operational compliance going forward with support from Alliance and other technical resources.

Council..... Member Onken reported that a sidewalk panel near a resident's property (Rosie's) is spalling and deteriorating, consistent with a prior issue at another location. She requested that the contractor be contacted to inspect and repair the defect. Marshal Young will reach out to Melton Construction.

Member Myers raised the condition of the Town's entry signs coming into Monon, noting they are beginning to look worn. Marshal Young and Superintendent Anderson confirmed that two signs are in need of replacement. Unique Graphics, who completed the most recent installation, will be contacted for a quote, and an additional quote from a local sign maker will also be sought. Member Myers also inquired about the status of the ordinance violation log/spreadsheet and whether it is being maintained. Marshal Young confirmed that an update would be sent via email.

Vice-President Benakovich commented on junk vehicles near his rental property and near Town Hall. Marshal Young confirmed that vehicles have been tagged and will be followed up on, and indicated he intends to post no-parking restrictions on the west side of the railroad tracks along Railroad Street due to a vehicle obstructing a stop sign.

President Hickman advised the Council that his term on the Area Plan Commission expires after four more meetings, and that a replacement must be appointed. The position meets the second Monday of each month at the

courthouse, pays $100 per meeting, and typically involves rezoning matters. Member Myers expressed interest and requested additional information. President Hickman also noted that a multi-use trail from Monticello to Monon along the existing railroad corridor is being actively explored by community leaders, and that letters of support have been requested.

All Other Matters……No additional matters were brought forward.

Adjournment

Jamie Myers made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:01 p.m., seconded by Ron Benakovich.

Council was reminded that the Budget Hearing is scheduled for September 2, 2026 at 6:15 PM, with the Regular Monthly Meeting immediately following the hearing.

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 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