

Minutes of Sweetser Town Council
June 8, 2023

- I. The meeting was called to order by Kyle Taylor at 7:00 pm; the roll was called as follows:
Roll Call:
Charles Myers-Present
Matt Stewart-Present
Travis LeMaster-Absent
Kyle Taylor-Present
Chuck Briede-Present

The roll was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and a prayer.

II. **Minutes**

After discussion, Chuck Briede made a motion to approve the minutes of the May 25, 2023, meeting as written. Charlie Myers seconded the motion.
Charles Myers-Aye
Matt Stewart-Aye
Travis LeMaster-Absent
Kyle Taylor-Aye
Chuck Briede-Aye

III. **Bills**

After discussion, Matt Stewart made a motion to approve the Bills Docket of June 8, 2023, as submitted. Chuck Briede seconded the motion.
Charles Myers-Aye
Matt Stewart-Aye
Travis LeMaster-Absent
Kyle Taylor-Aye
Chuck Briede-Aye

IV. **Public Forum**

- Resident Jeffrey Miller of 216 E. Sherron asked if the overgrowth on his neighbor's property is an ordinance violation, whose responsibility it is to address the overgrowth, and if he is permitted to cut back the overgrowth on his property that is from the neighbor's plants. Mr. Miller also related to the council that he is the resident with the security light that resident Mike Williams expressed concern with at the May 25 council meeting. Mr. Miller, the council, and town counsel Michael Hotz discussed possible resolutions to the issues.

V. **Department Reports**

Police Department – Marshal Ryan Hornback was in attendance.

- Ryan:
 - Reported 165 calls in the period. He said the average is approximately 130.
 - Asked if we could replace one of the in-vehicle radios the second half of this year and the other one the first of half of 2024. He said they will be obsolete sometime early in 2024.
- Chuck asked if Ryan was going to assign a deputy to monitor the dumpsters the night before the town clean-up. It was decided not to assign a deputy this year.

Maintenance Department – Operations Manager Patrick Kendall was in attendance.

- Patrick reported:
 - He has a candidate interested in the public utility assistant position and/or the maintenance assistant position. There are some concerns with the medical insurance premiums and deductibles. There was discussion of alternative plans within AIM (our current medical

insurance provider) and of other providers. There is also some concern about the \$20 maximum hourly rate for the position per ordinance.

- The Alliance of Indiana Rural Water has a program that would subsidize a portion of the public utility assistant position.
- Jacob Melcher was hired at \$15 per hour as a temporary maintenance assistant.
- We currently use Verizon for the town cell phone service. Patrick would like to switch to FirstNet through AT&T and will get a quote.

- There was a discussion of the town vehicle take home policy
- There was further discussion of wage levels.

After discussion, Matt Stewart made a motion to pass on first reading Ordinance 2023-4, an Ordinance Amending Ordinance 2022-6, the 2023 Salary Ordinance for the Town of Sweetser, Indiana, as follows:

Public Utility Assistant \$21.50 per hour cap

Part-time mower position \$10 per hour

Temporary Maintenance Assistant \$15 per hour

Chuck Briede seconded the motion.

Charles Myers-No

Matt Stewart-Aye

Travis LeMaster-Absent

Kyle Taylor-Aye

Chuck Briede-Aye

- A resident on Catherine Drive had a root ball removed that was interfering with the sanitary sewer line. Bragg excavating performed the service. The cost of the service was approximately \$1,300. The resident has inquired if the town will pay for a portion of the service. The council discussed the demarcation point where town responsibility ends for repairs to the system as stipulated by the current sewer use ordinance. Council asked town counsel Michael Hotz to review the language of the current sewer use ordinance and report back with an interpretation of the policy and recommendations for amendments, if necessary. Currently, the council thinks the town has no responsibility for the cost of this specific repair.

Parks Department—President Steve Kelley was in attendance.

- Steve reported on the trail clean-up by the Oak Hill students on May 23. He said they got everything accomplished and did a great job.
- Steve said the brush pile had been burned back.
- Kyle initiated a discussion of working with a private business and repurposing the train cars as an Airbnb. Matter was tabled.
- Steve said replacement trees for main street cannot be located at this time.
- Steve said they had dugout and prepped the area for the bike repair station concrete pad. He also said he had located someone to supply the concrete.

VI. Continuing Business

- No update on obtaining a credit and/or debit card for the town.
- Kyle said he is still working on getting appraisals for the Church Street property.
- Michael said he has not been able to reach anyone at Dollar General. He recommends we send them a notice of an ordinance violation.
- No updates on the codification project.
- Kyle reported that Triad had provided an update on where Sweetser was on the SRF funding list.
- Matt said he still needed to contact Habitat for Humanity to gauge their interest in the Bragg Street property.
- Patrick did not have new information on where the gas station connects to the sanitary system.

- Chuck reported he had the quarterly review with INDOT for the sidewalk project. Proposed schedule is for the bid letting in spring of 2024 with construction later in 2024; or bid letting in December of 2024 with construction in 2025.
- Clerk updated the council on questions concerning the level of utility bill collections for April.

VII. New Business

- Resident Sheila Johnson of 508 Devoe Drive requested her utility late fee be waived. She has not been late before.

After discussion, Matt Stewart made a motion to waive the utility late fee of Sheila Johnson. Chuck Briede seconded the motion.

Charles Myers-Aye

Matt Stewart-Aye

Travis LeMaster-Absent

Kyle Taylor-Aye

Chuck Briede-Aye

- Council scheduled a public works meeting for Tuesday, June 20, 6 pm at town hall.

VIII. Adjournment

There being no further business before the council, the meeting was adjourned at 8:53 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
John Potter
