

Town Council Meeting
Monday, October 23, 2023
6:00 P.M.

Edinburgh Town Council met in a regular session on Monday, October 23, 2023, at 6:00 P.M. at the Town Hall, 107 South Holland Street, Edinburgh, Indiana.

President Ryan Piercefield called the meeting to order and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Members answering roll call: Councilwoman Miriam Rooks, Councilwoman Debbie Buck, Councilman Jeff Simpson, Vice President Dawn Graham, and President Ryan Piercefield. Also present were Town Manager Kevin McGinnis, Clerk-Treasurer Scott Finley, and Town Attorney Dustin Huddleston.

Minutes – Council meeting minutes of October 9, 2023.

Councilman Simpson made a motion to approve the minutes as submitted. Councilwoman Buck seconded. Motion carried.

Claims – The council received a copy of the claim docket in their council packet. The total of the docket was \$987,034.04. Mr. Finley said he had signed off on all the claims in that docket and presented them to the council for approval.

Councilwoman Buck made a motion to approve the claims as submitted. Councilwoman Rooks seconded. Motion carried.

Blue River Dam Informational Presentation Jerry Sweeten – Jerry Sweeten of Ecosystems Connections said his company focuses on limnology, or the study of lakes and streams. He said he was a professor at Manchester University. He presented a PowerPoint presentation. He explained that they have been working to remove low head dams from waterways. The funds are through the National Fish Passageway. He explained the benefits of removing dams to the fish life in the area. The dam in Edinburgh was built in the mid 1800's and is reaching the end of its life. These types of dams are culturally historic but are not necessary for flood prevention. Because these funds are available through the National Fish Passageway, the money will only be available to remove the dam while it is blocking the path of the river. If it fails, the money may not be available. There would be no cost to the town for the removal of the dam. The blocks and foundation of the dam would be retained to use for a historical monument. He explained the extreme cost and difficulty of repairing a dam like this.

The council thanked Dr. Sweeten for his presentation.

Police K-9 Donations – Mr. Finley said he is looking to get retroactive approval for a K-9 fund donation. The donation was made in cash, so he went ahead and deposited the money. The donation was from Hope Veterinary Clinic for \$600.

Councilwoman Graham made a motion to approve the \$600 donation from Hope Veterinary Clinic. Councilwoman Rooks seconded. Motion carried.

IMPA Commissioner Appointment – Town Manager Kevin McGinnis said our current IMPA commissioner, Mike Jenner is retiring and moving away. The staff is recommending Kevin Rubush be appointed to fill his position.

Councilwoman Graham made a motion to appoint Kevin Rubush as IMPA Commissioner. Councilwoman Buck seconded. Motion carried.

New Electric Services – Electric Superintendent Steve Clark said he submitted a spreadsheet to the council. The town is getting more and more growth and it is costing the electric department a lot of money upfront. The Timbergate subdivision alone is going to cost around \$900,000. We have no mechanism to charge developers for the upfront cost. The only way to get that money back at this point is to raise rates. It will take a very long period of time to recoup those costs.

Mr. McGinnis said when he was working in land development, it was not unusual for him to have to pay an upfront cost per lot.

Mr. Finley said he would be in full support of these fees. From a rate standpoint, if the department is eating those costs, ultimately the rest of the customers will be paying for that development in increase rates to cover those development costs.

Discussion was held regarding the cost per lot.

Medic New Hire Pay – Interim Fire Chief Chuck Ridpath said he has a new Paramedic he would like to get approved at \$28/hour. His name is Gabe Thomas.

Councilwoman Buck made a motion to approve Gabe Thomas as a Paramedic at \$28/hour. Councilwoman Graham seconded. Motion carried.

SCBA Quotes – Mr. Ridpath said at the next meeting he would like to have quotes to present. He spoke with Mr. Finley to make sure we are doing the process correctly.

Mr. Finley said he would like to have Mr. Huddleston review this purchase because on one hand it is going to exceed the amount to go to public bid however, there is only one vendor that sells the gear that is compatible with the bottles that we currently have. If we go with a different quote, we would also have to purchase new bottles.

Councilman Simpson made a motion to allow Mr. Huddleston to review the SCBA purchase. Councilwoman Graham seconded. Motion carried.

Full Time Firefighter New Hire – Mr. Ridpath said the department is looking to fill its A-shift opening. John Henderson is willing to come back and become a shift leader.

Councilman Simpson made a motion to approve the hire of John Henderson for A-shift. Councilwoman Buck seconded. Motion carried.

Waterworks Wessler Contract Amendment #6 – President Piercefield said this is still under review and requested it be tabled.

Councilwoman Graham made a motion to table Wessler Contract Amendment #6. Councilman Simpson seconded. Motion carried.

Johnson County Cumulative Bridge Fund Petition – Mr. McGinnis said he received a request from Greenwood to sign a petition for the county to bring back the Cumulative Bridge Fund. That fund helped pay for bridge repair for all bridges in the county. It was started in the 1950's but was eliminated in 2022. The caveat to this petition request is Edinburgh has no bridges. We only have a few culverts that would be covered by this fund. Signing this petition could ruffle the feathers of the county.

Councilwoman Graham made a motion to table the Cumulative Bridge Fund Petition until legal can review. Councilwoman Buck seconded. Motion carried.

Councilwoman Graham made a motion for Mr. Huddleston to review the Cumulative Bridge Fund petition. Councilwoman Buck seconded. Motion carried.

Timbergate Vehicle Discussion – President Piercefield said the council would like more time to review this information.

Councilman Simpson made a motion to table the Timbergate Vehicle Discussion. Councilwoman Buck seconded. Motion carried.

Other Business

Councilwoman Rooks thanked the parks department for their work with the scarecrow contest and the 5K runs.

Councilman Simpson thanked Dr. Sweeten for his presentation as the dam has been on everybody's mind recently.

Departmental Comments

Mr. McGinnis gave an update on his Town Manager's report.

Councilman Simpson said it still says we are trying to acquire two more easements for the 252 project. Are we making any headway on that?

Mr. McGinnis said one owner was refusing certified mailings and was not responding. Those documents have now been hand delivered. He has a certain time frame to respond to the notice. The other we are starting to make some progress on. He was asking for an outlandish electrical upgrade to his property. We may have to condemn the area if we do not come to an agreement. That process can take months.

President Piercefield said the Fire Station and Main Street extension grand openings will be tomorrow evening. He invited the public to come.

Golf Course General Manager Wayne Gibbs said he has had a full time Assistant Pro position open for about 3 years. They have been filling the role with part time people. However, they are having a hard time filling the maintenance positions with part time people. He would like to change the Assistant Pro position to a full-time maintenance position.

Councilwoman Graham made a motion to approve moving the full time Assistant Pro position to a full-time maintenance position. Councilwoman Buck seconded. Motion carried.

Electric Superintendent Steve Clark said they are getting quotes to explore a possible bore under the river for future growth.

Mr. McGinnis said we are also exploring that option for the Wastewater department.

Street Superintendent Clark McCollum said the Main Street extension is now open and the signage is already up.

Parks Director Daniel Teter said basketball registration is underway. He thanked the electric department for assisting with moving a pole. He said the Clown Run was a great event and the Scarecrow Madness event has been a great success.

Community Center Director SaraBeth Drybread said there will be a vote from 3:30 to 4:30 on Thursday to vote for the best scarecrow. She said there has been a lot of misinformation circulating about the dam and she asked if the council could set up a public meeting for discussion.

President Piercefield said the council is looking for a time to set up a town hall meeting regarding the dam. Nobody wants to see the dam go but the cost to rebuild is extreme and poses a safety issue to the citizens. The council is still trying to figure out what to do with the dam and a time to have that type of meeting.

Public Comments

John Burton of 515 South Walnut said the gas company is still doing work on Walnut Street. The street has been torn up for a year and seven months. He sees people tripping in holes they are leaving with a single cone in them. He said with Halloween coming up, he worries about kids tripping and falling in these holes.

President Piercefield asked Mr. McCollum to contact Centerpoint and if they cannot get it fixed to fill the holes temporarily.

Being no further business or comments, Councilman Simpson made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Councilwoman Buck seconded. Motion carried.

EDINBURGH TOWN COUNCIL

Absent
Ryan Piercefield, President

Dawn Graham
Dawn Graham, Vice President

Debbie Buck
Debbie Buck

Miriam Rooks
Miriam Rooks

Jeff Simpson
Jeff Simpson

ATTEST:

Scott Finley
Scott Finley, Clerk-Treasurer