SYRACUSE TOWN COUNCIL

REGULAR MEETING

December 19, 2023 @7:00 P.M.

Town Council President Cindy Kaiser called the Regular Meeting of the Syracuse Town Council to order at 7:00 p.m. Other Council members present were William Musser, Nathan Scherer, Clerk Treasurer Virginia Cazier, and Town Attorney Jay Rigdon. Paul Stoelting and Larry Siegel were both absent.

Cindy Kaiser opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Comments – Discussion from the floor (agenda items only) 2 minutes per speaker 10 minutes total.

The minutes from the November 21, 2023, regular meeting presented for approval. Nathan Scherer moved to approve the minutes; William Musser seconded. All in favor. The motion carried.

Claim #'s 1481-1605 for $1,190,374.81 presented for approval. Nathan Scherer moved to approve the claims; Bill Musser seconded. All in favor. The motion carried.

Resolution 2023-04 Transfer of Funds Authorization Bill Musser moved to approve Resolution 2023-04; Nathan Scherer seconded. All in favor. The motion carried.

Ordinance 2023-11 Salaries and Compensation Bill Musser moved to approve Ordinance 20223-11; Nathan Scherer seconded. All in favor. The motion carried.

Corporate Deed Transfer of Dolan Dr. property to Turkey Creek Library Bill Musser made the motion to accept the Corporate Deed; Nathan Scherer seconded the motion. All voted for the motion. None against. The motion carried.

Doug and Jeannine Schrock, alley vacation continuation of consideration Attorney Steve Snyder spoke about the plated public way, Lake View Avenue, which is petitioned to be vacated. In Mr. Snyders handout to the Council was attached the state statue, which stated four reasons to vacate a public way. 1. Hender the growth of the unit or surrounding which it is contiguous. 2. Vacation would make access to the land of the agreed person, the person who opposes the vacation, by means of the public way difficult or inconvenient. 3. The vacation would hinder public access to a church, school, or other public building or place. 4. The vacation hinder the use of a public way by the neighborhood in which it is located or to which it is contiguous. Steve stated there is no basis for a remonstrance. The area is fully developed, there will be no hindering of growth and the vacation does not make access to any person's property difficult in any way. The Schrock's are following the state statue. Bill Musser reiterated that it has been the town policy not to vacate property, he does not see any reason to vacate this alley/public way. Nathan Scherer asked what entitles them to the whole width of the public way? Steve said the law, when you vacate a public way that is part of a plat, the title to that land is already owned by the adjust landowner. In this case it would be the Schrock's. Cindy Kaiser agreed with Bill Musser on not vacating the alley/public way. Steve stated that the Schrock's are going to put their driveway in that alley all the way down to Hiawatha Dr. Nathan asked if the town would need to maintain it, Steve replied no. Council asked if there were any questions or comments to the public. Cory Mast, who spoke at the last meeting, still opposes the vacation of the alley/public way. Cory stated if the town gives up the alley/public way, what does that show other residents in town who have asked for the exact same thing but was denied by Council. He also worries about the children around the neighborhood, if it is paved the cars will be moving much quicker. Steve stated if it is not vacated, we will have an entry that way, if it is vacated, we won't have an entry that way, and if you vacated the entire alley/public way to the street then no one can pave it except for the person who ends up being the owner of it after the vacation. Bill Musser made a motion to deny their request to vacate the alley/public way; seconded by Nathan Scherer. All in favor. The motion carried.

KEDCO update on the Southshore Development Terry Sweeney, Kosciusko Economic Development Corporation, requested on behalf of Southshore Development for the Town to pay one-third of the cost for the impact study. The study will be done by Baker Tilly. The cost of the study would not exceed $40,000, one-third of that would be $13,333.33. Southshore Ventures are ready for an agreement with water and sewer, so they can move forward with a two-phase project. The first phase would be 120 apartments and the second phase would be another 120 apartments. It would be a $50 million dollar investment. This would be on the north end of the 150-acre property. There was a meeting with some Town council members, County redevelop committee, some members of the Syracuse redevelop committee, the consensus of that meeting was that the development was a good idea. Their thoughts were to get an impact study done. The County commissioners approved paying one-third of the impact study. Terry introduced State Representative David Abbott, this study will help him make a case to help with changing the annexation legislation. Bill Musser stated that tonight we do not have a majority and Nathan Scherer will not vote due to conflict of interest. David Abbott stated this study would be beneficial to the town, on what the Town gains on investments, sales tax, tourism, all those things you gain by annexing. David Abbott is going to move forward with the annexation legislation. Nathan

Scherer thanked Mr. Abbott for coming to the meeting. Nathan also stated that David Abbott has an interest in maneuvering the law to help communities grow, willing lawmakers recognize opportunities and are willing to do what is best for the community. David Abbott stated his policy department jumped on this opportunity. They believe in economic development statewide. Terry asked to be on the agenda in January.

Letter of Engagement London Witte Group, Annexation Fiscal Plan, North Trace RV Park This is in conjunction with what the Town has approved with Steve Unger. Steve Unger will do the legal side and London Witte will do the financial side. Cindy Kaiser will just need to sign the engagement letter.

Town Pier continuation from last month's meeting Are we going to leave the pier as is or redesign it? Town Manager stated that it would cost around $3000.00 to change the angle of the pier. Bill Musser is against moving the pier. Jeff Nicodemus said when they put the pier in years ago it was straight with the road. Town pier has been in that location for a long time. John Heckaman from Sudlow Pier said the pier that is there now was done in 2007. The gentleman who is complaining about the pier next door bought his property in 2009. In the sixty's and seventy's, it was straight with the road. No action will be taken at this time.

2024 Appointments Cindy Kaiser appointed Nathan Scherer, Jim Layne, and Cory Mast for a one-year term for Redevelopment Commission. The Council appointed; Town Attorney one-year term Jay Rigdon, Police Chief one-year term Jim Layne, Fire Territory Board one-year term Nathan Scherer, Cindy Kaiser, Corky Wong, Andrew Grossnickle (Attorney), Tree Board three-year term Chad Jonsson & David Wilkinson, Park Board three-year term Paul Newcomer & Jenell Laham. Bill Musser made a motion to nominate the 2024 Board Appointments as listed; Nathan Scherer seconded. All in favor. Motion carried.

Election of 2024 Town Council President Bill Musser made a motion to nominated Nathan Scherer for the 2024 Town Council President. Nathan Scherer accepted the nomination. Cindy Kaiser seconded. All in favor. Motion carried.

ENGINEER – COMMONWEALTH

Jeremy Hardy, Commonwealth Engineer, projects with F.A. Wilheim are coming to close, the Oakwood Lift Station will close on January 2nd. There were substantial savings on the project. At the next meeting will discuss additional work to be done with Council's approval.

Task Order 2023-02 Kern Road Sanitary Sewer Extension, properties along Kern Road that has been annexed by the town, are having failing septic systems. The town needs to provide those residents with town sewer. Approval of Task Order 2023-02 totaling $40,000. Bill Musser motioned to approve the task order 2023-02; Nathan Scherer seconded. All in favor. Motion carried.

Jeremy stated that as of November 30th the state would like to see all lead services replaced within 10 years.

TOWN MANAGER

David Wilkinson had three different engineering firms look at the two municipal parking lots and only two quotes came back. A&Z Engineering quoted $51,705, which was significantly lower. The Town Manager is looking for approval on A&Z Engineering to design the Pearl Street parking area for next year. There was money encumbered from 2023 Syracuse TIF Professional Services. Completion should be in September 2024. Bill Musser made the motion to approve A&Z Engineering quote of $51,705 for the Pearl Street parking lot; Nathan Scherer seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion carried.

Painting the north water tower will be done as soon as we get pricing.

POLICE

Jim Layne, Police Chief, asked if there were any questions in his report. Police Officer, Sara Pritchard, graduated from the academy last Friday. She will be starting back to work soon. No ADA complaints.

PARK

Chad Jonsson, Park Superintendent, absent.

PUBLIC WORKS

Mark Aurich, Public Works Director, asked if there were any questions in his report. Currently have a lead service line inventory started, there are lot of unknowns in the system. Mark stated he is a year ahead of schedule, has every service line identified. 2024 spring, summer, and fall all meter pits will be identified.

Oakwood lift station will be done on January 2nd. The Water main is in, restoration will be done in the spring, grass seeding etc. Booster station controls are in and functioning better than expected.

FIRE TERRITORY

Mickey Scott, Fire Chief, asked if there were any questions in his report. Mickey asked for approval to purchase ten new ballistic vests in the amount of $22,680.00 from LITE Tactical Solutions. Bill Musser made the motion to purchase the vest not to exceed $22,680.00; Nathan Scherer seconded. All in favor. Motion carried.

CLERK

The Clerk-Treasurer asked if there were any questions in her report.

TOWN ATTORNEY

Jay Rigdon, Town Attorney, nothing to report.

DISCUSSION FROM THE FLOOR

Nothing

DISCUSSION FROM THE COUNCIL

Nothing

OLD BUSINESS

Nothing

NEW BUSINESS

Nathan suggested getting better equipment for council meetings. David informed the Council that he has been working on doing that and it will be mandatory in 2025.

Bill Musser adjourned the Town of Syracuse Council Meeting; Nathan Scherer seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 8:32 p.m. All in favor. Motion carried.

ATTEST:

Virginia Cazier, Clerk-Treasurer

President

Nathan Scherer, Council President