SYRACUSE TOWN COUNCIL

REGULAR MEETING

May 16, 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 Paul Stoelting, William Musser, Nathan Scherer, Larry Siegel, Virginia Cazier, Clerk-Treasurer and Jay Rigdon, Town Attorney.

Cindy Kaiser opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Comments – No public comments.

The minutes from the April 18, 2023, regular meeting presented for approval. Larry Siegel was rebuking the minutes from the April meeting, claiming some things were taken out of context" regarding Jay Rigdon's statements on the water fees. The Clerk Treasurer stated they will be corrected. Larry Siegel also claimed there were other issues with the minutes but did not have time to proofread the document. The Clerk Treasurer informed the Council that the New Business in the minutes were transcribed word for word. Paul Stoelting moved to approve the minutes; William Musser seconded. Larry Siegel opposed. The motion carried.

Claim #'s 536-660 for $632,711.93 presented for approval. Paul Stoelting moved to approve the claims; Nathan Scherer seconded. All voted for the motion; none against. The motion carried.

Jim Layne, Chief of Police, stated Sarah Pritchard is getting sworn in today. Sarah is the new police officer who replaced Daniel Buell position in the Police Department. Jay Rigdon swore in Sarah Pritchard.

Ordinance 2023-4 Adding Stop Sign at Development Drive & Technology Way. Town Manager stated Development Drive was the last road added in the Technology Park. Paul Stoelting moved to approve Ordinance 2023-4; Larry Siegel seconded. All voted for the motion; none against. The motion carried.

Resolution 2023-3 Amendment to Resolution 2019-04 removing Town Manager from PERF. David Wilkinson, Town Manager, explained that this is his 30th year in PERF. PERF has a rule of 85. Combination of your age and years of service, you are eligible to start withdrawing, David will achieve this, this coming June. The only way to start withdrawing is to stop contribution to PERF. David can continue to work and not be a PERF member. Cindy asked about the contract with the Town. David asked if the money that is being contributed to his PERF, be contributed to the 401K's that the Town has, Hoosier Start or AUL. Currently, David is just asking to be removed from PERF. Paul Stoelting moved to approve Resolution 2023-3; William Musser seconded. All voted for the motion; none against. The motion carried.

Ben Logan, Director for Habitat for Humanity for Kosciusko County, based in Warsaw. Ben is here to remind the Council if there is a building or land that the Town would consider donating to Habitat for Humanity. Habitat for Humanity will put a house back on the land, this will provide housing for low-income households. Nathan Scherer asked how many homes they have built around the area. Ben estimated between 7 and 10, but nothing recently in Syracuse.

Amy Roe, Kosciusko County Community Coordinator, passed out a sheet about her mission to the Council. She was hired to manage a grant that the County had received, in partnership with smaller communities. The Grant would take 30% of the ARPA funds and a one-year commitment from the communities that want to participate. The grant is called The Hoosier Enduring Legacy Program. The communities that partnered with them were Etna Green, Mentone, Milford, and Pierceton. One of the programs she spoke with Nathan Scherer and Cindy Kaiser about was Youth Entrepreneurship, she continued to explain to the rest of the Council. She also mentioned she works closely with KEDCO, to try to build closer connections with smaller communities. She continued to talk about projects being done around Kosciusko County.

Alan Tio, KEDCO, passed out a sheet reviewing KEDCO's mission in motion. Alan stated he spoke with the Town Manager and is willing to come and talk to the Council once a month on updates and what is going on with KEDCO. He shared a couple of things that KEDCO is working on this year. They focus on three pillars: entrepreneurship, housing, and talent. KEDCO's job/responsibility is to find the right resources, collaborating with the communities, and business owners. They are here to provide expertise along the way and help invest in our community. Alan talked more about the housing in our community. He is working with a company to recruit more remote workers to this area. Larry Siegel stated there are other communities allowing ADU, Accessory Dwelling Units, Syracuse could benefit from that. ADU would help with housing shortages around our community. Larry asked if KEDCO is interested in helping the County and Town produce Codes to allow ADU. Alan stated they would work as a supporting role, will work with the planning commission, town council, and town manager. They would look at other communities that allow ADU's. Larry and Alan also discussed the $75 million dollars for housing infrastructure that the State just passed. Larry asked how

KEDCO would help the Town. Alan stated we need to look at the budget for those projects, once that program is available, we can make sure we are getting those projects in and present a point of contact. Larry stated there are two projects that are ready to start and wanted to know if KEDCO can assist the Town. Alan stated yes KEDCO can assist with the two projects. Paul Stoelting asked Alan if he was going to ask for a contribution from Syracuse. KEDCO asked for $15,000 for the year 2023. The Town has already paid $7,500 at the beginning of this year. Town agreed to fund the second half of $15,000. Larry Siegel moved to approve the approve $7,500.00; Paul Stoelting seconded. All voted for the motion, none against. The motion carried.

ENGINEER – COMMONWEALTH

Chris Harrison, Commonwealth Engineer, has not obtained prices yet for the Oakwood Lift Station, and is expecting pricing from F.A. Wilhelm within the next two weeks. Chris also discussed the Reconstruction of Railroad St. from Oak Street to Main Street. He does have a revised cost estimate on the paving project. Inflation has caused an increase in pricing. The current cost is $21,778.00, $15,000 is for concrete and asphalt, and a $5,000 increase for maintenance for traffic control. Time frame is around the first of June. Larry Siegel approved the increase for the Railroad project from Oak Street to Main Street; Paul Stoelting seconded. All voted for the motion, none against. The motion carried.

TOWN MANAGER

David Wilkinson asked if there were any questions in his report. The closing date for the Harkless property is on June 9th.

Cindy asked if David attends the ribbon cuttings at Urban Oaks Apartments. David tries to go to as many as he can. David talks to the owners of Urban Oaks Apartments on a weekly basis.

Nathan Scherer asked about Dr. Allan's project. David stated he is meeting with him on Thursday. He is also waiting to hear from Dr. Parent on Oakwood.

POLICE

Jim Layne, Police Chief, asked if there were any questions in his report. No ADA complaints.

PARK

Chad Jonsson, Park Superintendent, informed the Council that the Arbor Day Celebration was moved from April 28th to May 3rd at the new ballpark from 10-2 with 85 third graders in attendance.

Ball Park's opening day was on 29th of April.

This Saturday is the opening day for the Farmers Market, across the street from the Town Hal, will run till Labor Day weekend.

Harvest Festival will be in October.

PUBLIC WORKS

Mark Aurich, Public Works Director, asked if there were any questions in his report. At the RDC meeting, Mark asked for Syracuse TIF funds to purchase a new barns chopper pump for the Pickwick Lift Station. Pickwick Lift Station is the main lift station in town. Mark asked for approval from the Council in the amount of $29,040.00 for the new barns' chopper pump, which includes everything. The timeframe is 6-8 weeks. Paul Stoelting approved the purchase of $29,040.00 for the new pump; William Musser seconded. All voted for the motion, none against. The motion carried.

Town Manager spoke about the lights at the Tech Park, Mark has been doing research on Solar powered streetlights. RDC approved the quote from LED Lighting for 14 poles and lights, to come out of the S. Benton TIF. The original quote has expired, and it was for $43,176.29. We are asking to spend $50,000.00 to cover any extra cost that may arise. We are still working on getting a contactor to install the poles and lights. Paul Stoelting made the motion to spend $50,000 on the lights and poles for the Tech Park not to exceed $50,000; Larry Seigel seconded. All voted for the motion, none against. The motion carried.

FIRE TERRITORY

Mickey Scott, Fire Chief, asked if there were any questions in his report. They have the first Safe Sitter Class this Saturday; it is a 6.5-hour class, and the class is free.

Teaching CPR Classes to the Town employees, three days this week.

Fire Territory purchased a boat from a local vendor, in Syracuse. Encumbered $45,099.26 from the 2022 Equipment Budget. The Boat cost $40,599.27. Nathan Scherer made a motion to approve the purchase of the new boat for $40,599.47; Paul Stoelting seconded. All voted for the motion, none against. The motion carried. Will receive the boat next week.

CLERK

The Clerk-Treasurer has nothing to report.

TOWN ATTORNEY

Jay Rigdon, Town Attorney, has nothing to report.

DISCUSSION FROM THE FLOOR

Nothing

DISCUSSION FROM THE COUNCIL

Nathan Scherer talked about putting a committee together to address the Railroad Bridge that is between Wawasee and Syracuse Lake. He read a statement letting the Council know that CSX addressed our concerns and agreed to work on the bridge next week. Each bay is expected to take around four weeks to complete.

OLD BUSINESS

Nothing

NEW BUSINESS

Larry Seigel announced his retirement from the RDC. He read a statement he wrote and nominated Nathan Scherer to be on the RDC; Paul Stoelting seconded. All voted for the motion, none against. The motion carried.

William Musser stated that the Council talked about dissolving the RDC. There was no recollection from the other board members about dissolving the RDC. William was not suggesting dissolving the RDC, he is suggesting does that make sense. Town Manager stated the RDC serves a purpose. RDC has done a tremendous amount of work around the town. There are five committee members plus a school board member.

Paul Stoelting made a motion to adjourn the Town of Syracuse Council Meeting; William Musser seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 8:07 p.m. All in favor. Motion carried.

~~ATTEST:~~ Cindy Kaiser

Cindy Kaiser, Council President

ATTEST: Virginia Cazier

Virginia Cazier, Clerk-Treasurer