SYRACUSE TOWN COUNCIL

REGULAR MEETING

October 17, 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, Larry Siegel, Clerk Treasurer Virginia Cazier, absent were Council Member Nathan Scherer and Town Attorney Jay Rigdon.

Cindy Kaiser opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Comments – No public comment

The minutes from the September 19, 2023, regular meeting presented for approval. Paul Stoelting moved to approve the minutes; William Musser seconded. Larry Seigel did not approve of the minutes. The motion carried.

Claim #'s 1200-1335 for $682,997.42 presented for approval. Paul Stoelting moved to approve the claims; Larry Siegel seconded. All voted for the motion; none against. The motion carried.

Ordinance 2023-05 Water Rate increase the unmetered rates were removed from the ordinance. William Musser moved to approve Ordinance 2023-05; Paul Stoelting seconded. All voted for the motion; none against. The motion carried. The council agreed to start the increase on January 2024 meter reading for billing February 2024.

Ordinance 2023-06 Sewer Rate increase William Musser moved to approve Ordinance 2023-06 starting the increase January 2024 meter reading for billing February 2024; Paul Stoelting seconded. All voted for the motion; none against. The motion carried.

Economic Development Agreement with Rabbit Ridge Steve Snyder spoke about the proposed senior housing behind 1033 N. Indiana Avenue, also known as Rabbit Ridge. The anticipated cost of the project is twelve million, possibly more once the project is completed. After a lengthy discussion with the RDC Board, they agreed to an 80% increment being available to the developer as the development moves forward. There needs to be improvement at the site before there are any increases in asset value, meaning Dr. Allen would need to come up with the money ahead of time. Either a bond or promissory note needs to be issued by the RDC to be utilized as collateral for Dr. Allen to borrow the money to get the project started. The first step is the signing of the Economic Development Agreement. After the agreement has been signed, Steve Snyder will talk to Dennis Otten to discuss which would be a better option, a bond or promissory note. Both The Town and RDC have no responsibility for repayment of those bonds or notes. The bonds are payable only out of the increments of the increased asset value. The Town is not issuing general revenue bonds, the Town has no responsibility of repaying the bonds, the only way they are repaid is out of the increment that is generated by the project once it is constructed. 80% of the increased value of the property tax is going to go to the payment of those bonds or notes. No obligation to the Town or RDC. The only obligation of the town will be maintaining the utilities and roads. There will be forty-four duplexes plus a community building developed. Currently there is a Residential TIF, would we need a Commercial TIF as well? There is no need for a Commercial TIF, it is all for Residential use. Can the Town maintain it with the 20%, and yes it can, everything will be brand new. The completion is set for the end of 2027.

Town Manager stated that the RDC did approve the agreement. Larry stated he spoke with Jeff Goralczyk, President of the RDC, right before the Council meeting and stated Jeff did not know what it was about and didn't fully understand the agreement. The Town Manager, Clerk Treasurer & RDC member, David Rosenberry all disputed what Larry Siegel was stating. There was a lengthy discussion with Dr. Allen back in June at the RDC meeting about the project, all seemed to agree that everyone knew what the project was about. William Musser made a motion to approve the Economic Development Agreement as written; Paul Stoelting seconded the motion. All voted for the motion; none against. The motion carried.

Ordinance 2023-08 Additional Appropriation Local Road & Bridge Matching Grant Fund transferred to Community Crossing Grant Reconstruction Railroad for $158,143.50. Paul Stoelting made the motion to approve the additional appropriation for $158,143.50; Larry Siegel seconded the motion. All voted for the motion; none against. The motion carried.

Ordinance 2023-09 2024 Budget William Musser approved adopting budget 2024; Paul Stoelting seconded the motion. All voted for the motion; none against. The motion carried.

Indiana Telephone Network Water Tower Rental Sarah Yotter who represented Ben Plickerd, put together a preliminary contract for the Town of Syracuse and Indiana Telephone Network. They currently pay Mentone and Claypool $100 a month. In Syracuse their equipment is on the Sweetlix property, which will be torn down later this year. Sarah stated they currently pay $120.00 a month. The Public Works director had no objection to the equipment being placed on top of the North water tower. Mark did some research on the rental rates, the lowest rental rate he

found was $500.00. William Musser asked if Sarah could approve $500.00 a month, yes, she can. It was agreed that the Town attorney will review the contract before the Town signs the contract. Sarah is going to email the Public Works director the revised contract to review. Mark will forward it to the Council. William Musser summarizes the edits for the contract, three-year lease, no auto renewal, and Indiana Telephone Network will contact the town after three years to renegotiate the contract. Sarah will have the contract ready the day after the Council meeting to send to the Public Works director. Insurance was discussed and the Council also wants it in the contract. Larry motioned a preliminary approval with the Council's edits and Town attorney's review; Paul Stoelting seconded the motion. All voted for the motion; none against. The motion carried. The Public Works director was thanked for his research.

Borden Waste Away Eric Ivory, Municipal Account Representative, discussed the fuel surcharges that the Town was paying that were not in the original contract. The Clerk Treasurer realized that the appropriation will be in the red by the end of the year. We notice that a fuel surcharge of $4,500.00 a month was added to our invoice. Typically, there are surcharges of around 20% to 30% added to an invoice to cover regulatory compliance epa standards and fuel index. Eric informed the Town Manager that he is waving the surcharges in November through July 2024, knowing that contract negotiations are coming up next year. The contract we have is a seven-year contract which expires July 2024.

ENGINEER – COMMONWEALTH

Jeremy Hardy, Commonwealth Engineer, was not present.

TOWN MANAGER

David Wilkinson asked if there were any questions in his report. David has been working with Ashley, the new Chamber director, considering redesigning the welcome sign on the south side of town. Does the Council have any ideas? Ashley is looking to make the sign more noticeable. There has never been a welcome sign on the North side of Town. There were some concerns that the sign on the south side was not readable. Ashley is also trying to find a place on the North side of town to put a welcome sign. Paul Stoelting suggested after David and Ashley figure out what they want to do come back to the Council with designs and pricing.

POLICE

Jim Layne, Police Chief, asked if there were any questions in his report. Trick or Treat will be on Tuesday, October 31st from 6-8. No ADA complaints.

PARK

Chad Jonsson, Park Superintendent, was not present.

PUBLIC WORKS

Mark Aurich, Public Works Director, asked if there were any questions in his report. Mark took the opportunity to thank the Public Works employees for all their hard work with the three projects going on currently. Larry Siegel also complimented the Public Works employees. The Lakeside Drive project has one more hydrant to install. Final tie into Pickwick on Monday, October 23rd. Most of the meter pits are installed. Still waiting on 14-meter horns that we should have had already. The Oakwood lift station has two dewatering wells installed. Pumps were approved and installed. Larry Siegel asked if we are eliminating the other lift station. Mark stated he modified the plans for the other lift station, bypass the original station, strip it down inside and out, pull pumps, rehab the old station. Paul Stoelting asked when the paving is expected to be finished. Mark anticipates a week to a week and a half. Mark also thanked the Police department for slowing traffic down on Pickwick Drive.

FIRE TERRITORY

Mickey Scott, Fire Chief, asked if there were any questions in his report. S.R. 13 will have the railroad crossing closed from October 22nd through November 6th. The new building is ready to be moved into, the flooring and paint are completed. The Turkey Creek township and fire administration will both be moving into the new building. Larry asked who paid for the new building. Mickey stated that the Fire Department bought the building.

CLERK

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

TOWN ATTORNEY

Jay Rigdon, Town Attorney, was not present.

DISCUSSION FROM THE FLOOR

Nothing

DISCUSSION FROM THE COUNCIL

Nothing

OLD BUSINESS

Larry Seigel questioned the Clerk Treasurer on water and sewer tap fees. When someone comes into the office and wants to pay for water and sewer, can anybody do that? Usually, a developer or homeowner comes in to pay the tap on fees. The Clerk Treasurer explained the fees for both water ($1000) and sewer ($1000) and the extra fees if it is a new account ($200 Deposit), and if they are going to have a to have a street cut permit ($502). Larry stated If someone came from out of town you would have no idea because there is no ordinance or resolution. The Clerk-Treasurer asked what do you mean? Larry gave several examples of areas that are surrounded by the town and are not annexed, for example, Macy's Point Condos, Timothy Campbell on County Line Rd., North and South Kitson Lane, Bayview Estates, etc. Larry Siegel feels the Town needs a written policy in place to give the Clerk's Office and Public Works directions if anyone from out of town wants to hook on to the water and sewer. The Public Works director stated State law says if you are 300 feet from a sewer main you must connect. State law also says that the Town has the right to say nah or yah to providing sewer outside of town limits. If the sewer is within 300 feet they must, its state law, if the sewer is not there they can't just come in and say they want sewer and force us to do that. Mark also made it known that the tap on fees are done at the Public Works office. William Musser asked if we were going back to the original topic on what we will not allow water and sewer to outside residents? The clerk Treasurer stated it is common sense that if someone from out of town wants water and sewer, the town cannot provide that for them, it is not available. There is nothing for them to tie into. If annexation is going to be a topic on the agenda, it should not be under old business. William Musser agreed if we are going to talk about it make it an agenda item.

NEW BUSINESS

Nothing

William Musser adjourned the Town of Syracuse Council Meeting; Paul Stoelting seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 8:37 p.m. All in favor. Motion carried.

ATTEST:

Virginia Cazier, Clerk-Treasurer

Cindy Kaiser, Council President