# SYRACUSE TOWN COUNCIL

## REGULAR MEETING

April 16, 2024 @7:00 P.M.

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

Nathan Scherer opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Comments – Discussion from the floor (agenda items only) 2 minutes per speaker 10 minutes total. Matt Goodnight, 702 N. Lake Street, is a board member for the Syracuse area planning commission. He talked to residents on how we could make Syracuse a better place to live, work and play, one of the things he heard most was a dog park. He knows the Dolan property will be used for the new library and suggested looking at the St. Andrews baseball field. It already has a fence for a dog park. If we had known early on that this property would have been available, we could have used it for a dog park. A property like that does not come around very often.

Cory Mast,1102 N. Hiawatha Dr., spoke about agenda item #11 requesting a public right of way put down. Cory had several reasons why we should not have the public right of way paved.

The minutes from the March 19, 2024, regular meeting presented for approval. Paul Stoelting moved to approve the minutes; Cindy Kaiser seconded. All in favor. The motion carried.

Claim #'s 360-490 for $531,242.48 presented for approval. Paul Stoelting moved to approve the claims; Cindy Kaiser seconded. All in favor. The motion carried.

Nathan Scherer moved item #12 from the agenda ahead, Ridge Group Introduction, then removed himself from the council chambers. Tyler Bowers, a rep from Ridge Group out of Muncie IN, introduced himself to the Council. He responded to the RFP for Southshore and through that process he worked with Nathan Scherer, Jeff Dyson and KEDCO. While discussing multifamily development, they realized shortly after that there would be a water utility issue. They explored well water and how that would affect a multifamily development, it would cost close to 2 to 2.5 million dollars. Larry asked what that would include. Tyler stated it would include, well that would have to be dug, the pump house, holding tank large enough to assure all the units would be able to use their water, also have water for any emergencies like a fire. Larry informed Tyler it would cost the Town around 2.6 million to take water out to Southshore, around $200 per linear foot. Tyler reiterated that he is introducing himself to the Council and gave a background on the company. They are currently working with KEDCO and have an interest in working with Southshore. There is no agreement, tonight is just an introduction to the Council. Larry asked how the town benefits from this. Tyler stated from what he has seen from other towns; more housing brings in more people, brings in more taxpayers, brings in more infrastructure. Jeff Dyson, South Shore Ventures, said with multifamily housing the market typically goes towards younger families. If most of those families are young families with kids, that directly affects the school system. The State pays $6,000 to $7,000 per student to be part of the school system. The town will benefit by bringing in 120-240 families from the development that they are looking to build, also building 80-100 homes will benefit from the water as well. Paul Stoelting appreciated the introduction and stated there would probably be several months of discussions on this and wanted to conclude this matter. Nathan Scherer came back into the council chambers.

**Ordinance 2024-05 Rabbit Ridge Bond for consideration and approval** Paul Stoelting made a motion to approve Ordinance 2024-05; Bill Musser seconded. All in favor. Motion carried.

**Ordinance 2024-06 Animal Waste, Introduction, and consideration for approval first reading** Nathan Scherer made a motion to suspend the rules. Any questions on the Ordinance, Larry asked how this Ordinance was brought up. Code Enforcement was getting complaints from residents about dog waste not being picked up from homeowners walking their dog. The town has no way of enforcing waste being picked up other than asking them to pick it up. Paul asked why horses are not put on this Ordinance. David stated there are two versions, one with and without horses. The complaints were just about dog waste. The version brought was just on dog waste, if the Council would like the other version, it can be brought to the next council meeting. Larry moved to table Ordinance 2024-06. If it is going to be tabled, we need to add to it next month or pass it as is and not having to deal with horses. Nathan made a motion to suspend the rules; Cindy seconded. All in favor. Motion carried.

**Ordinance 2024-07 Introduction and consideration for approval – St. Andrews UM Church Rezoning Request** Matt Sandy, Kosciusko Area Plan Commission, brought a rezoning recommendation to the Council, for the St. Andrews Church Ballfield from public use to commercial. Steve Snyder, local attorney, stated the property has been sold, the purchaser intends to use it as a personal warehouse with a second story resident on a portion of it and the rest of it will be available for plating. The purchaser and the church have entered into a purchase agreement. Steve is asking the

Council to approve Ordinance 2024-07 for rezoning. Larry Siegel made a motion to suspend the rules; Bill Musser seconded. All in favor. Motion carried. Larry Siegel made a motion to adopt Ordinance 2024-07; Paul Stoelting seconded. All in favor. Motion carried.

**Resolution 2024-01 Façade Grant update, introduction, and consideration for approval** Cindy Kaiser made a motion to approve Resolution 2024-01; Bill Musser seconded. All in favor. Motion carried.

**KEDCO Agreement for Services and Update** Dawn Wilkinson, Operations Manager, presented the agreement and contract with the Town of Syracuse to be renewed. Bill Musser asked what projects they are working on this year for Syracuse. Dawn replied South Shore and Rabbit Ridge are the two in the area. The cost has increased from $15,000.00 to $17,500.00. Paul Stoelting made a motion to approve the agreement as written; Cindy Kaiser seconded. There was further discussion on the agreement, Larry stated that almost everything has been harder because of interference from KEDCO. KEDCO does not have a director and the town does not know what to expect. Nathan asked what the timeline was for a new director. There is a contract in the works currently. We have a pending motion; we can move to table the pending motion for next month. Bill Musser made a motion to table the motion; Larry Siegel seconded. All in favor. Motion carried. The Council advised KEDCO to have a representative from our community on their board, Larry Seigel volunteered to do it.

**Jeff Beer requested improvements of Public Right of Way off North Shore Drive** Jeff Beer, Beer and Slabaugh, Doug Schrock bought two lots on North Shore Drive, he wanted a cost to improve the alley behind his lots. Doug is requesting to pave the alley at his cost. Paul asked Mark Aurich, Public Works Director, what the benefit to the town would be. Mark replied the Town has no use for another alley.

**Request of Letter of support ref Rabbit Ridge** Rabbit Ridge is requesting variance to allow multifamily duplexes on the property. Just asking for support from the Council. The council all agree and support.

ENGINEER – COMMONWEALTH

Chris Harrison, Commonwealth Engineer, updates on current projects North Tower has been drained and being sandblasted. Oakwood Force Main is moving forward. There was a meeting for the water asset management plan and preliminary engineering review in the process of moving forward with both. Kern Road Sewer Extension the draft as been done, review next month. Working on water loss audit, requirement due every two years.

Task Order 2024-03 Resurfacing existing asphalt pavement and providing for sidewalks and curb ramps replacement utilizing local funds, in the amount of $63,900.00. Larry Siegel made a motion to approve Task Order 2024-03; Paul Stoelting seconded. All in favor. Motion carried.

TOWN MANAGER

David Wilkinson asked if there were any questions in his report. Garbage collecting contract is ending in July. David crafted an RFT to put out for bids. Would the Council like to change the contract time, currently it's a 7-year contract. The recycling is bi-weekly currently, would the Council like to change it to weekly. The council decided to change it to weekly. Will have the RFT completed for the Councils review and would like to send it out in May.

David sent information to the Council on an outside vendor who warrants water leaks, residents would subscribe to them independently, allow them to cover the cost of any water loss, repairs from water leaks. This would elevate the Town from making water adjustments to a utility bill. They would bill separately. It is like an insurance policy for residents. The Town would receive 10% of the revenue. The rep was willing to come and meet with the Council regarding any further questions.

David met with some of the uptown businesses on the DORA, they are interested in it. There will be another meeting next Monday. Towns can have more than one DORA.

POLICE

Jim Layne, Police Chief, asked if there were any questions in his report. Jim informed the Council that we do have two reserves on, Jacob Bolen and Nick Overmyer, both attending the Kosciusko reserve academy. New hire, RJ Plumber, is due to have his physical done on May 2nd, we should know within two to three weeks when his start date will be.

Jim met with the Safety Board and one of the subjects that was brought up was how we can retain officers and attract new officers when the need arises. Jim stated that there are other towns that offer police vehicles used after hours, the upside to that is there is more visibility in town, they would be required to respond to any emergency to assist an officer on duty. Some of the departments that offer that are Indiana State Police, DNR, Kosciusko Co. Sheriffs Dept., Warsaw Police Dept., Winona Lake PD, and Nappanee Police Dept. Larry asked how do you track personal use

vs business use for tax purposes. Are family members riding with them? Jim replied yes. Jim said they do have waivers for anyone other than an employee to ride-along and are not allowed to operate it. Larry suggested talking to our insurance agent. The Clerk-Treasurer has done some research on this, spoken to our insurance agent and our insurance agent does not agree with ride-alongs due to our liability. Most of the towns around Syracuse do not allow ride-alongs. As long as we can get the clearance from our insurance agent, the Council is in agreement with Jim's idea.

No ADA Complaints.

PARK

Chad Jonsson, Park Superintendent, the Arbor Day is on the 26th of May. Will be doing it at Schrock field with the 3rd grades.

Upcoming events, 4th of May is Touch a Truck 10-12:30 at the community center.

18th of May will be a shred event at the ballpark. Donations will be accepted to have their papers shredded. This date is also the opening of the Farmer's Market.

Project updates, Roof is coming along at the community center. Ward Park playground is scheduled to start around the 6th of May.

Larry asked about lifeguards. Chad replied, it has been publicized at $20.00 an hour, on the town's website, parks facebook page and all the schools. Have not had a lot of inquiries, they are trying. Cindy asked Chad to send her something and she will put it on the Syracuse Lake website.

PUBLIC WORKS

Mark Aurich, Public Works Director, asked if there were any questions in his report. Just reiterated what Chris from Commonwealth informed the Council. Larry asked about the water leak going up to the tech park. Mark stated they put a temporary hold on finding it, the ground is so saturated, also with the rain coming down it is impossible to try to locate it. Once it dries up, we can do a chlorine residual to try to find the leak.

FIRE TERRITORY

Mickey Scott, Fire Chief, asked if there were any questions in his report. ISO report should be back by the end of May. They do it every 5 years, it used to be done every 10 years.

Bill asked what the distance is between fire hydrants. Mickey replied 1000 feet.

CLERK TREASURER

The Clerk-Treasurer was not present.

TOWN ATTORNEY

Jay Rigdon, Town Attorney, nothing to report.

DISCUSSION FROM THE FLOOR

Nothing

DISCUSSION FROM THE COUNCIL

Nothing

OLD BUSINESS

It was brought up from last month's meeting about changing the date or time of the Council meeting. Date and time will stay the same.

NEW BUSINESS

Nothing

Paul Stoelting moved to adjourn the Town of Syracuse Council Meeting; Bill Musser seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 8:55 p.m. All in favor. Motion carried.

ATTEST: _____
Virginia Cazier, Clerk-Treasurer

_____ Pro Tem
Nathan Scherer, Council President