SYRACUSE TOWN COUNCIL

REGULAR MEETING

November 19, 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.

Michelle Camacho, The Twisted Tiki Food Truck, spoke to the Council on concerns regarding food trucks setting up in Syracuse as well as offering workable solutions. She understands that other food service businesses feel that food trucks are competition, it is important to know that food trucks also bring in people from out of town. Local retail businesses use food trucks to draw people to their business. They have worked with local businesses like Polywood, Main Channel Marina, Revolving Closet, and many more in town. Michelle made several suggestions like limiting time and paying an annual permit fee of $600.00. Local police officers could assist with code enforcement on weekends. Larry Siegel asked if she had read the existing ordinance. It is posted on our website.

Jason Metz, owner of Metz Auto and Outdoors 600 S. Huntington St, he stated it was his idea to bring a food truck to his location of business and support the community. He is not here to hurt any other business in town, he is here to offer something to the community that he could be proud of. We also need to think about property owner's rights, if we want to have an event or food truck to bring people into our business we should not be penalized. Metz wants to support the town and local businesses. He just wants to make everyone happy.

The Council Minutes - The minutes from October 15, 2024, regular meeting presented for approval. Cindy Kaiser moved to approve the minutes; Paul Stoelting seconded. The votes were 4-0. The motion carried.

The Town Claims - Claim #'s 1255-1379 for $747,296.39 presented for approval. Paul Stoelting moved to approve the claims; Cindy Kaiser seconded. The votes were 4-0. The motion carried.

Proposal for Legal Services, Bose, McKinney, and Evans LLP – Larry Siegel made a motion to adopt this agreement with Bose, McKinney and Evans and have Nathan Scherer sign the agreement; Paul Stoelting seconded. The votes were 4-0. The motion carried.

Public Hearing reference Adoption of Resolution Designating ERA, 110 Innovation Blvd – Nathan Scherer opened up for a public hearing and closed the hearing.

Confirmatory Resolution 2024-07 Storie Real Estate – Bill Musser made a motion to approve Confirmatory Resolution 2024-07; Paul Stoelting seconded. The votes were 4-0. The motion carried.

Ordinance 2024-07 Salaries and Compensation Introduction – There was a discrepancy on the cost of living raise for next year. Larry Siegel moved to tabled till next month; Bill Musser seconded the motion. The votes were 4-0. The motion carried.

Ordinance 2024-06 Weed Ordinance, further discussion – The Town Manager stated that this ordinance was present to the Council several months ago and the ordinance was tabled. The Council asked the Town Attorney to update the ordinance according to some specifications that were addressed at the last meeting. There were two version brought to the Council for review. One version was copied from the Ft. Wayne Ordinance that lined up with what the Town was looking to use. Mowing setbacks were also mentioned at the meeting and how far back it should be. There was further discussion on setbacks with commercial and residential. The council agreed on 75' for both commercial and residential setbacks. Larry Siegel made a motion to adopt Ordinance 2024-06; Bill Musser seconded. The votes were 4-0. The motion carried.

Food Truck discussion – Larry Siegel stated we have had people against food trucks in the meeting and people for food trucks in the meeting, he feels we need to hear from more people on this discussion. We do have an existing ordinance that is not being complied with. Michelle Camacho spoke up and stated she follows the ordinance, she has peddlers permits through the Kosciusko Co. Health Dept., attended a meeting with the BZA, and paid for the Town permits as well. Bill Musser spoke about other businesses stating they are losing business by 40%. Michelle Camacho asked if she could see the paperwork showing that other businesses are losing business by 40% by having their food truck in town. A food truck is always going to be at a disadvantage, they are weather dependent, and some do not have outdoor seating. Their number of sales is much lower than a brick and mortar.

ENGINEER – COMMONWEALTH

Gail Gerber, Commonwealth Engineering, spoke about ongoing projects and activities. The PER is working with MACOG, looking to get some grant money for the town.

The CCMG project was not awarded, working on resubmitting it.

The Kern Road Project is coming along, almost wrapped up.

TOWN MANAGER

David Wilkinson asked if there were any questions in his report. Opioid funds, we have yet to decide how we are going to spend the money. The Town currently has $29,585.96 in restricted funds, we are scheduled to receive around $5000.00 to $6,000.00 in the next couple of years. There is a local group that deals with addiction that we could give the money towards, Kosciusko Coalition on Drug Education (K-CODE). K-CODE investigate problems associated with drugs, alcohol, and other addictive behaviors in our community. There was a lengthy discussion on where local facilities are in and around Syracuse.

The Town was intending to use the ARPA funds on the Kern Road Project, but the project was not as much as we thought. We currently have an extra $97,892.98 of ARPA funds. David informed the Council that we need to encumber the funds for a project by the end of the year or the money will have to go back to the government. David put a list of possible projects in the Councils packets, Council will take this under advisement for next meeting.

POLICE

Jim Layne, Police Chief, asked if there were any questions in his report. Jim asked if there were any questions on his request for the AEDs for the squad cars. We currently have ten squad cars. What we have in the squad cars are outdated and have been recalled.

No ADA complaint.

PARK

Chad Jonsson, Park Superintendent, had a couple of updates. All parks have been winterized. Halloween had a couple events on the 26th, Trick or Treat Trails & Haunted trails out at the WACF. The upcoming first Saturday in December will be breakfast with Santa.

PUBLIC WORKS

Mark Aurich, Public Works Director, asked if there were any questions in his report. Leaf pickup will continue till snow fall.

FIRE TERRITORY

Mickey Scott, Fire Chief, asked if there were any questions in his report. Mickey asked the Council to purchase a vehicle from Kelly Chevrolet in Fort Wayne for $51,453.00. The vehicle is a 2024 Chevrolet Tahoe SSV, Kelly Chevrolet will hold the vehicle for them till January 5, 2025. Bill Musser made a motion to approve the purchase of the 2024 Chevrolet Tahoe SSV; Paul Stoelting seconded. Votes were 4-0. All in favor.

Mickey spoke about the electrical out in station two and asked the Council to hire Ritter Electric Heating Cooling & Plumbing to provide service to the well pump. Cindy Kaiser made a motion to hire Ritters for $19,475.00; Bill Musser seconded. Votes were 4-0. All in favor.

CLERK TREASURER

The Clerk-Treasurer asked if there were any questions in her report. Larry asked if the insurance we are getting IPEP-Anthem is legal according to SBOA. Yes, it is legal, IPEP (Indiana Public Employers' Plan) is a group self-funded workers compensation program for Indiana Public Employers, and we have used IPEP-Anthem for the year 2024 and want to continue using it for 2025. Larry suggested the Town Attorney review the group insurance.

Paul Stoelting does not want to have a Year End meeting; Cindy Kaiser seconded the motion. Votes were 4-0. All in favor.

The Clerk also mentioned that across the board the HSA amount when from $3200 to $3300. The clerk asked if the Council would approve the $100 increase. The Council decide to table it till the Town Attorney reviews the insurance.

TOWN ATTORNEY

Jay Rigdon, Town Attorney, nothing to report.

DISCUSSION FROM THE FLOOR

Nothing.

DISCUSSION FROM THE COUNCIL

Larry mentioned the horse parking in the Pearl Street Parking area is four feet outside the residents' back door. The Town is trying to come up with a solution. Larry also mentioned parking on the road on Pearl Street, finding a solution for that as well.

OLD BUSINESS

Nothing

NEW BUSINESS

Nothing

Bill Musser moved to adjourn the Town of Syracuse Council Meeting; Paul Stoelting seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 8:14 p.m. All in favor. Motion carried.

ATTEST: _____
Virginia Cazier, Clerk-Treasurer

_____ Presided
Nathan Scherer, Council President