SYRACUSE TOWN COUNCIL

REGULAR MEETING

April 15, 2025 @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, and Clerk-Treasurer Virginia Cazier. Absent were Council member Larry Siegel 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.

The Council Minutes - The minutes from March 18th, regular meeting presented for approval. Paul Stoelting moved to approve the minutes; Bill Musser seconded. All in favor. The motion carried.

The Town Claims - Claim #'s 0313-0430 for $560,815.76 presented for approval. Paul Stoelting moved to approve the claims; Cindy Kaiser seconded. All in favor. The motion carried.

Ordinance 2025-03 Travis & Jamie George vacation of unimproved public way – Steve Snyder presented an aerial view of the public way that is asked to be vacated. There are no utilities in the public way. Paul Stoelting made a motion to vacate the public way; Bill Musser seconded. All in favor. The motion carried.

Town Council Redistricting-Back in 2021, Legislator passed mandated that every community redistrict if they met certain criteria which Syracuse does. There were communities that did not know about redistricting. 2024 the Senate bill 135 was passed to give everyone an extension to abide by the redistricting by June 30, 2025. David suggested forming a small committee to redistrict our community. We have added Kern's crossing subdivision and Urban Oaks into the population of the town since the last time the redistricting was applied. The lines would shift because of the population. There was another conversation about some wards being at large, can we do that as part of the redistricting, 5 wards, make 2 at large. If we did 2 at large it would give more opportunity for individuals to run for office that did not live in that ward. If we were to do this it would be at the next election, which would be Paul Stoelting and Larry Seigel. This would be a conversation to discuss with our Town Attorney.

Declaratory Resolution 2025-03 Tax Abatement request, North Trace RV Park LLC- Steve Showalter requested a tax abatement for the first two years at 100 percent, reasons for this, there will not be any income till Spring of 2026 and will not be profitable the first three years. It is not a huge corporation that is asking it's a family that lives, shops and dines in your community. This is a real property tax abatement. Steve stated they are investing around 8 million dollars in phase one. Bill Musser made a motion to approve Declaratory Resolution 2025-03; Paul Stoelting seconded. All in favor. The motion carried.

ENGINEER – COMMONWEALTH

Gail Garber, representing Commonwealth Engineer, submitted the PER and Application for funding to OCRA.

Helped coordinate the bid advertisement for the CCMG project, bids have come in. Jeremy will have a recommendation for the council at the next meeting.

Kern Road Sanitary Sewer Extension, working on site restoration.

TOWN MANAGER

David Wilkinson asked if there were any questions in his report. The RV Park Annexation, we have to have six public meetings next week for anybody who has questions about the annexation.

Pearl Street is almost complete, there are some repairs that need to be done. The alley that runs between the hardware store and W. Main restaurant would the council consider turning it into a pedestrian only alley. The alley is not being used often and would like to make it a safer way to walk to the parking area from the uptown area. Most of the council feels it's a good idea. Nathan Scherer thinks it is a good idea to reach out to the hardware store and let them know the plan for the alley.

Main Street parking lot potential ways of funding it, three funding ideas, encumber some funds from this year's street budget and combine them with some funds next year, get a general obligation bond, or we have some extra cash in general fund that is just sitting there, we are bringing in more revenue than we are spending. We are sitting in a surplus of 6 million dollars. Spoke with Jim Higgins and according to Jim we can use that money, it would require an additional appropriation from the council, and you can just pay cash for it. This is the last nonutility project we have left

to work on. If we want to do it, we have to encumber funds. Nathan Scherer stated he is not in favor of the bonding. Paul is concerned with the new SB1 passing how it will affect our future funding.

POLICE

Jim Layne, Police Chief, asked if there were any questions in his report. Newest officer Jacob Bolen will be graduating from Law Enforcement Academy on April 25th.

No ADA complaints.

PARK

Chad Jonsson, Park Superintendent, Arbor Day is April 25th at the Schrock athletic complex.

Awarded the $90,000 grant from K21, which will go towards the pickleball courts at Schrock fields, along with the money from ARPA and money we have set aside to cover the cost. Anticipating it to be complete by the end of the year.

Egg hunts were last weekend, there were more people than last year, all went well.

Touch a Truck, May 3rd from 10-12.

The Market opens on May 7th.

The registration for the Mudtastic is open for June 1st.

Only have two applications for lifeguards.

PUBLIC WORKS

Mark Aurich, Public Works Director, asked if there were any questions in his report.

FIRE TERRITORY

Mickey Scott, Fire Chief, asked if there were any questions in his report. First request is we had an agreement that was signed on February 21, 2024 for $365,238.00. Did make some changes to match our other ambulances. The final invoice for the ambulance is $366,288.00. Need approval from the Council for the difference of $1050.00. Paul Stoelting made the motion to pay the difference; Cindy Kaiser seconded. All in favor. The motion carried. We should have the ambulance by the end of this month.

Currently we have a 2001 Aerial to be replaced. If it is refurbished it would cost $1,370,000.00. A letter of Intent to possibly purchase a new aerial from Sutphen under Sourcewell in the amount of $2,189,700.00. Paul Stoelting made a motion not to exceed $2,189,700.00; Cindy Kaiser seconded. All in favor. The motion carried.

CLERK TREASURER

The Clerk-Treasurer, nothing to report.

TOWN ATTORNEY

Jay Rigdon, Town Attorney, absent.

DISCUSSION FROM THE FLOOR

Nothing.

DISCUSSION FROM THE COUNCIL

Bill Musser talked about charging stations for electric vehicles. MACOG sent the Town Manager notice that the grant is on hold per Presidential executive order.

NEW BUSINESS

Nothing.

OLD BUSINESS

Nathan Scherer stated that in the newspaper today, inkfreenews, they posted how Syracuse is the most expensive neighborhood in Indiana. Need to call the community together, to strengthen our community and make it more affordable for people to live in. Otherwise, we are going to have challenges growing and if we don't grow our tax base especially with passing SB1, money is only going to get tighter. We put out some information before on annexation, it's important for people to know that if you are in an agricultural asset property allowing the town to annex you there is no tax impact. It is important that people understand that. It could make their property more valuable.

Paul Stoelting moved to adjourn the Town of Syracuse Council Meeting; Bill Musser seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 8:02 p.m. All in favor. Motion carried.

ATTEST: _____
Virginia Cazier, Clerk-Treasurer

_____
Nathan Scherer, Council President