

Town Council Meeting
September 9, 2024
6:00PM

Edinburgh Town Council met in a regular session on Monday, September 9, 2024, at 6:00PM at the Town Hall, 107 South Holland Street, Edinburgh, IN.

Council President Ryan Piercefield called the meeting to order and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Members Answering Roll Call: Council President Ryan Piercefield, Councilwoman Miriam Rooks, Councilwoman Debbie Buck, Councilwoman Sherri Sweet, and Councilman Michael Bryant.

Also present were Clerk-Treasurer Rhonda Barrett, Town Attorney Dustin Huddleston, and Town Manager John Myers.

Minutes- Minutes of August 26, 2024, Town Council meeting.

Councilwoman Rooks made a motion to approve August 26, 2024, Council meeting minutes. Councilwoman Buck seconded. Council President Piercefield abstained as he was not present at the meeting. Motion carried.

Claims- Clerk-Treasurer Barrett presented two claim dockets in the amount of \$201,486.20 for end of month June 2024 and \$314,641.94 for September 9, 2024.

Councilwoman Buck made a motion to approve both claim dockets as presented. Councilwoman Rooks seconded. Motion carried.

Ordinance 2024-15 Approving Plan Commission Resolution 2024-03 Rezoning (1st Reading)-

Attorney Huddleston introduced Ordinance 2024-15 a proposed ordinance to approve Plan Commission Resolution 2024-03 for the rezoning of certain property from a R1 to a planned unit development. This is the 1st reading and a Public Hearing on this ordinance will be held at the September 23, 2024, meeting.

Ordinance 2024-16 Approving Plan Commission Resolution 2024-4 Rezoning (1st Reading)-

Attorney Huddleston introduced Ordinance 2024-16 a proposed ordinance to approve Plan Commission Resolution 2024-4 for the rezoning of certain property from a R1 to an RB. This is the 1st reading and a Public Hearing on this ordinance will be held at the September 23, 2024, meeting.

Resolution 2024-24 Temporary loan from Rainy Day to Sewage Operating- Clerk-Treasurer Barrett stated that the sewage operating fund is requesting a loan from the Rainy-Day fund to cover costs associated with the sewer lining project and some recent repairs/improvements. The loan is to be paid back over a ten-month period.

Councilwoman Rooks made a motion to approve Resolution 2024-24 Temporary Loan from Rainy Day Fund to Sewage operating. Councilwoman Buck seconded. Motion carried.

Discussion was held concerning when the new utility Vac truck would be arriving.

Wessler Invoice 44925 for Water Treatment Plant- Clerk-Treasurer Barrett presented Wessler invoice 44925 in the amount of \$433.50 for the water treatment plant.

Water Superintendent Bill Jones stated this invoice is from Wessler having to come out and check operations at the water treatment plant when it went down for several hours recently after a recent internet outage.

Further discussion was held on the balance of the remaining funds and an upcoming meeting with Wessler on the expenditure of the remaining funds.

Councilwoman Rooks made a motion to approve Wessler Invoice 44925 for Water Treatment Plant. Councilwoman Sweet seconded. Motion carried.

Councilwoman Rooks made a motion to authorize Council President Piercefield to sign Wessler Invoice 44925 for Water Treatment Plant. Councilwoman Buck seconded. Motion carried.

Donation to the K-9 Fund- Clerk-Treasurer Barrett stated they received two donations for K9 fund totaling \$350 and a motion is needed to accept the donations.

Councilwoman Rooks made a motion to accept the two donations to the K9 fund. Councilwoman Buck seconded. Motion carried.

Baker Tilly Budget 2025 Scope of Work- Clerk-Treasurer Barrett presented the scope of work and agreement from Baker Tilly for their assistance with the Town budget for 2025.

Councilwoman Rooks made a motion to approve the Baker Tilly 2025 Scope of Work subject to legal review. Councilwoman Buck seconded. Motion carried.

INDOT Land Acquisition- Town Manager John Myers stated this land acquisition was presented by Attorney Huddleston at a previous Town Council meeting for property on US 31 and 800 North that the Town owns which contains a lift station and a water main. INDOT is offering to purchase this property for \$11,900 to install a turn lane going northbound. Mr. Myers stated that after Attorney Huddleston's research, per the Council's request, that no appraisals of the property by the Town are required at this time. Town Manager Myers recommended that Attorney Huddleston review all of the documents pertaining to the acquisition.

Attorney Huddleston stated that if the Council wants to accept the purchase proposal, the first step would be to authorize him to review the documents, and he could have them ready for the next council meeting. Attorney Huddleston stated that appraisals by the Town could be done to confirm that the offer to purchase is a fair amount. Appraisals could cost \$3000, but they are not required as INDOT provided appraisals with the purchase proposal. Attorney Huddleston stated that in the original proposal there was a deadline, he reached out to INDOT after the last council meeting, and they gave a 30 day extension on the offer to purchase.

Councilwoman Rooks made a motion to approve Attorney Huddleston review the land acquisition proposal as presented. Councilman Bryant seconded. Motion carried.

Holiday of Lights Building Permissions- Director of Economic Development Sarabeth Drybread discussed the Town's policy on no alcoholic beverages in public buildings or parks and the council's previous approval a few years ago to allow alcohol at a Town sponsored event on Town property.

Director Drybread requested to host an event at the John Drybread Community Center in November as a fundraiser for the Town's Holiday of Lights. Director Drybread stated it will be tasting and pairings with food from Swine and Dine Event and Catering out of Columbus and would last a couple of hours.

Discussion was held regarding if law enforcement would be necessary for the event and how many people would attend.

Councilwoman Sweet made a motion to approve the Holiday of Lights Building Permission request to allow alcohol at the Community Center during the Swine and Dine event. Councilwoman Rooks seconded. Motion carried.

Attorney Huddleston recommended that Director Drybread contact our insurance carrier to obtain a one-day policy for the event.

Challenge Plastics Electric Rate Discussion- Anne Worden with Challenge Plastics requested a reprieve from the recent electric rate increase. Mrs. Worden requested the Council look at their case individually to give a delay in the electric rate increase or grant them a sliding scale. Mrs. Worden stated they are paying for electricity they are not even using.

Council President Piercefield noted that the electric rate increase should have happened a long time ago and the town was hemorrhaging money causing other customers to help pick up the slack.

Discussion was held concerning how billing by demand works.

Mrs. Worden stated she would like to see a calculation based on their average demand instead of on peak demand for 30 minutes during a month, something that seems to be more in keeping with what they are actually using.

Electric Superintendent Steve Clark stated that he is not aware of any other utility doing something of that nature and that every utility does it on a sliding window like we do. Superintendent Clark stated that the issue is that the town, as a provider, is billed on a 30-minute window and if we did an average, we would be back where we were before and not recovering what we have to pay our provider, IMPA, for those demand charges.

A discussion was held comparing electric rates for surrounding areas to ours.

Mrs. Worden clarified for the Council that she is requesting the Council to consider giving their business a sliding scale or a sliding increase to the point they are at now retroactive to when they received it up to January 2025, or a smaller increase overall.

Council President Piercefield stated Attorney Huddleston would have to look further into the matter since it would be specific to Challenge Plastics. President Piercefield stated the Council will need to think about what course of action to take to be fair across the board for all the businesses in the same boat.

Jeff Litzelman with Beacon Industries asked if the Town is trying to recoup the money that the town lost or trying to flat line to not lose any more money.

Electric Superintendent Steve Clark stated that the Town is not trying to recoup what was lost, that historically, the demand that we have been paying IMPA for several years, is almost three times more than what we have been charging our customers.

Town Manager John Myers noted that the electric rate increase has affected all town department bills as well and that we are not exempt from paying any utility bills.

Habitat for Humanity Donation Request- Executive Director for Habitat for Humanity Lee Ann Wilbur requested the Town reimburse Habitat for Humanity for their permits and fees for the Habitat house being built on 507 South Pleasant Street.

Councilwoman Rooks noted that for the Habitat house on Walnut Street that was built, only the variance filing fee and building permit fees were waived. Councilwoman Rooks also noted that the water department superintendent stated there is an existing water meter pit on the property and that a water tap would not be necessary.

Discussion was held concerning the sewer lines on the property and meter deposit fees.

Clerk-Treasurer Barrett confirmed the total cost for the water, sewer, and electric deposits. Barrett stated once the utilities are established in the new homeowner's name, and new deposits paid by the homeowner, then Habitat's utility deposits will be applied to Habitat's final bill and any balance remaining will be refunded back to Habitat.

Ms. Wilbur noted that this is Habitat's fifth house built in Edinburgh and that they have paid almost \$4,500 in property taxes for those houses last year. Once Habitat builds the home, they become a lender. Ms. Wilbur stated they do train and support the future homeowners of a Habitat house.

Further discussion was held on waiving fees and being fair and unbiased when making decisions.

Councilwoman Rooks made a motion to waive the Habitat for Humanity building permit fee of \$242.16, the water tap fee of \$900.00, and the utility deposit and account setup fees of \$315.00, and that the sewer tap fee of \$2000 would remain. Councilman Bryant seconded.

Roll Call for Habitat for Humanity Donation Request Motion: Councilman Bryant voted yea, Councilwoman Sweet voted yea, Councilwoman Buck voted nay, Councilwoman Rooks voted yea, and Council President Piercefield voted yea. Motion carried 4-1.

Other Business

Councilwoman Rooks asked Director of Economic Development Sarabeth Drybread the status of the removal of the building on 201 West Main Cross Street that is currently owned by JMH. Director Drybread stated she was informed last week that JMH contacted a third party to take the building.

Attorney Huddleston stated that he had drafted a proposed purchase agreement and sent it to JMH's attorney.

Discussions were held concerning whether any of the upcoming events would be hindered due to the building removal.

Town Manager John Myers stated the commissioners are going to release the guidelines for opioid grants on September 16, 2024. Mr. Myers will be meeting with Police Chief Doyne Little and Fire Chief Justin Lollar to discuss ideas to apply for these grants.

Police Chief Doyne Little stated they are preparing for the Fall Festival and the parade this week. Chief Little stated that he had discussions with Street Superintendent McCollum about blocking streets off for the festival, and that Town Manager Myers and he had discussed some added safety features by using dump trucks to block off areas.

Water Superintendent Bill Jones stated that resident Hal Gelfius south of town would like to tap into the city water. Jones stated the town has a water main that goes all the way around his property on both sides. They are not annexed in, but they are within our water district.

Council President Piercefield stated Mr. Gelfius would have to pay the connection and utility deposit fee.

Councilwoman Rooks made a motion to approve Attorney Huddleston to research the water connection for Hal Gelfius on US 31. Councilwoman Buck seconded. Motion carried.

Director of Economic Development Sarabeth Drybread announced if anyone was interested in ordering the Lion's Club Lunch for Thursday, September 12, 2024, she had order forms for people to take. Director Drybread stated the Fall Festival events are on the town's website. The opening ceremony for the Fall Festival is Wednesday, September 11, 2024, at 4:30PM. Director Drybread stated there will be a band Friday and Saturday night at the festival. Director Drybread stated they are ahead of schedule for the Holiday of Lights and have \$7,500 in sponsorships so far. Director Drybread stated you can order scarecrow kits from the John Drybread Community Center by September 23, 2024.

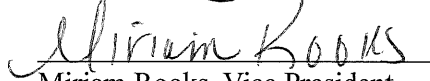
Adjourn

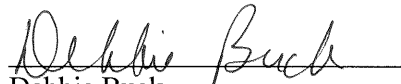
Being no further business or comments, Councilwoman Rooks made a motion to adjourn. Councilwoman Buck seconded. Motion carried.


These minutes are a summary of actions taken at the Town of Edinburgh Council meetings. The full video archive of the meeting is available for viewing at <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL0pagNU7lg5FkjGffQvWphtcPehlL-R5g> for as long as this media is supported.

EDINBURGH TOWN COUNCIL


Ryan Piercefeld, President


Miriam Rooks, Vice President


Debbie Buck


Sherri Sweet


Michael Bryant

ATTEST


Rhonda Barrett, Clerk-Treasurer