

**ANDREWS TOWN COUNCIL MINUTES  
OF A PUBLIC MEETING HELD DECEMBER 11, 2023**

A public meeting of the Town Council of the Town of Andrews, Indiana convened on December 11, 2023, at 6:00 p.m. at the Andrews Town Hall in accordance with applicable law and pursuant to appropriate notice.

**ROLL CALL**

Council Members John Harshbarger, Laura Dillon, and Roger Newsome, Jr. were in attendance. Clerk-Treasurer Laury Powell declared a quorum was present and the meeting would continue.

**APPROVAL OF COUNCIL MINUTES**

Laura Dillon made a motion to approve council minutes for a Regular Session held November 27, 2023. Roger Newsome, Jr. seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

**HUNTINGTON COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

Mark Wickersham presented the 2024 service contract proposal after summarizing HCED's accomplishments in 2023 and stated that the HCED board members are looking for the Town's help in 2024. There is no change to the annual support request of \$3,000.00, payable twice a year in June and December. After brief discussion, Laura Dillon motioned to appoint John Harshbarger to replace Bill Johnson's vacated seat on the HCED Board of Members and to accept the HCED 2024 agreement. Roger Newsome, Jr seconded the motion which carried 3-0.

**OLD BUSINESS**

There was no representative of Norfolk Southern Railroad in attendance so there was no further discussion on closing the Snowden Street railroad crossing. The council unanimously voted to not accept the NS proposal and to keep the street open at the November 27, 2023 meeting.

Clerk-Treasurer Powell updated the Council on the 2024 board appointment list. With both the library and HCED seats appointed, she confirmed that the following have agreed to serve another term on the following boards: Phil Sunderman on the Andrews BZA, Andy Eckert on the Plan Commission BZA [ETJ], and herself, Laury Powell, to the HC CEDIT Advisory Board. She was awaiting a reply from Kirby Jones about the EMA Advisory Board. The Council unanimously agreed to accept and approve the slate of appointments as presented this evening.

Councilmember Dillon asked for an update on the McCoart water consumption issue discussed at a recent meeting. Utility Superintendent Colin Bullock said one data logger has been done that showed a pattern of unusually high consumption around the first and middle of the month. He said he is still monitoring the situation and should have an update for them soon on his findings.

**NEW BUSINESS**

Town Marshal Austin Bullock's final pay of his tenure was brought up for discussion, which will include the payout of his Earned Comp Time hours to be paid in the first payroll of 2024. Payroll 1 begins on December 25, 2023 and runs through January 7, 2024, encompassing the last week of Bullock's employment in Andrews. Council members all agreed Bullock has been a wonderful employee and of great service to the community as the Town Marshal since 2016. Citing precedence, Dillon motioned to give a one-time bonus payment to Austin Bullock in the amount of \$2,337.62, which is equal to his current bi-weekly salary, to be paid out in 2024 with his last paycheck. Roger Newsome, Jr. seconded the motion. Motion was approved unanimously.

PHP Insurance Renewal Proposal: Since CT Powell was unable to be in attendance, Dillon briefly recapped the December 5 employee health insurance meeting with a PHP representative. Employees expressed concern on rising health care expenses under the high deductible plan, however it would be



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cost prohibitive to the Town to change plans according to Dillon. She suggested that next year's council members consider increasing the HSA distributions paid to employees annually to offset out of pocket expenses. Discussion ensued, then Laura Dillon motioned to accept the PHP 2024 Health Insurance Proposal. Roger Newsome, Jr. seconded the motion which carried 3-0.

On behalf of attorney Adrian Halverstadt, Powell presented the TRECS 2024 Contract to Council that would allow the Town to collect outstanding debts owed to utility accounts by intercepting personal state income tax refunds. Dillon motioned to accept the 2024 contract, which was seconded by Newsome. Motion carried 3-0.

Powell initiated discussion concerning H&H Trash Disposal's complaint that many residents were not bagging trash placed in the totes. The trash contract does state trash must be bagged, however there is no stipulation on the bag size as the email stated. It was noted that H&H is using new trucks with lift arms, which may be adding to the loose and blowing trash complaints. There have also been multiple reports recently of broken lids left behind by the new trucks.

Clerk-Treasurer Powell next shared that County Clerk Septer offered to attend an upcoming meeting to administer the oaths of office for all incoming elected officials. After discussion, it was decided that Powell should ask if the evening of December 27 would work for Septer as a final meeting is needed to wrap up this year's business.

**DEPARTMENT REPORTS**

Police Department: Town Marshal Austin Bullock reported that he and Josh Platt have purged the evidence room, adding it to Huntington's list to be taken to Indianapolis to be destroyed. He also said he placed a final ammunition order for the year. He also said that his office is ready to move forward with the next stage of ordinance enforcement at 443 E McKeever St whenever they direct him or Josh to do so, by posting a citation for non-compliance and thus begin accumulating daily fines. The town attorney has all supporting documentation ready to go in 2024 if needed. After discussion, Newsome reaffirmed his stance and motion from the November 27 meeting to wait until Spring 2024 to see if the property owner follows through on promised improvements. Council members unanimously agreed on an April 30 deadline to see progress underway at 443 E McKeever St. Finally, with several Deputy Marshal applications in hand, Bullock asked Council if they want to proceed with interviews at this time. After discussion, it was decided to call an Executive Session of the Council for Friday, December 15 at 9:00 a.m. to conduct interviews of the top three candidates.

Fire Department: Dean Young said that Kirby Jones just messaged him and has agreed to serve another term on the EMA Board. Council unanimously approved his appointment to the 2024 EMA Board.

Utility Department: Colin Bullock said that he was in Sweetser recently to inspect the leaf vac machine. He reports that it is in good shape and runs fine. The asking price is \$7,500.00 and it is currently for sale since the equipment is no longer needed after subcontracting leaf pickup in their town. After discussion, Newsome motioned to purchase the leaf machine from Sweetser for \$7,500.00. Dillon seconded the motion which was approved unanimously. Finally, Bullock said SES contacted him today saying they would begin work soon on behalf of the new property owner, to remove old gas tanks and lines. SES also inquired about discharge which Bullock said he would research the town ordinance for associated fees and procedure. IDEM would oversee all permitting.

Clerk-Treasurer: Laury Powell said the SBOA audit may wrap up tomorrow. The end is in sight. She then informed council members of changes affecting local newspapers in 2024. The HC Tab will be subscription only, while the Huntington Herald Press will reduce publishing dates from two to one day



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per week. The Herald Press will provide more information in a forthcoming letter to the Town. Next, Powell shared with the council that she needs to issue a utility account refund of \$44.92 to the Peter Clouser estate. Since the estate paid ahead on the account during the sale process, a credit remained once the account was closed. Dillon stated she would abstain from any discussion and the vote since Peter is her stepfather. Roger Newsome, Jr. motioned to approve the utility account refund. John Harshbarger seconded the motion and it carried 2-0. Finally, Powell asked for a council member to volunteer to review and approve any claims she may have in a year-end batch. Harshbarger and Newsome both gave their nod of approval to Dillon, who agreed to review for approval any late December claims. Council members then decided to call a Special Meeting of the Council for December 27<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m. to address the December 15 Executive Session matter and any other necessary business.

**CLAIMS**

Laura Dillon made a motion to approve the claims as presented, which was seconded by Roger Newsome, Jr. The Motion was approved 3-0.

**OTHER BUSINESS**

Ray Tackett, 420 N Market St, gave his thoughts on the recent Facebook Andrews News group allowing inaccurate postings during the last election cycle. He is not a fan of social media. Discussion ensued between those involved with the recent online discussions.

With no further business, Laura Dillon made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:23 p.m., which was seconded by Roger Newsome, Jr.

Approved this 27<sup>th</sup> day of December 2023.

APPROVED BY  as  
JOHN HARSHBARGER COUNCIL PRESIDENT

APPROVED BY  as  
LAURA A DILLON COUNCIL MEMBER

APPROVED BY  as  
ROGER NEWSOME, JR. COUNCIL MEMBER

ATTEST BY  as  
LAURY L POWELL CLERK-TREASURER