

**ANDREWS TOWN COUNCIL MINUTES  
OF A PUBLIC MEETING HELD FEBRUARY 12, 2024**

A public meeting of the Town Council of the Town of Andrews, Indiana convened on February 12, 2024, at 6:00 p.m. at the Andrews Town Hall in accordance with applicable law and pursuant to appropriate notice.

**ROLL CALL**

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

**APPROVAL OF COUNCIL MINUTES**

Roger Newsome made a motion to approve council minutes for a Regular Session held January 22 and a Special Meeting held January 24, 2024. Dean Young seconded the motion for the January 22 regular session minutes but not the special meeting he was unable to attend. Dillon seconded the motion for the January 24 meeting. The motion carried 3-0.

**OLD BUSINESS**

Eric Woodmansee updated the Council on the DC Construction matter, reporting that a third party estimate to take out and replace the faulty storm water infrastructure came in at \$127,125.00. However, that only included patching McKeever St and not the preferred mill and overlay where the street will be cut. Eric will get an updated estimate for council members and the town's attorney at Burt Blee so they can proceed in making a formal claim on the bond and move forward towards payment or litigation.

Regarding the sidewalk project dispute, Woodmansee said he has updated the INDOT work permit through November and asked Council how they wish to proceed this year in addressing the pitted surface on several concrete panels. To date, Bolinger Concrete has refused to budge on Council's stance for the company to provide a 1-year workmanship warranty, in addition to the manufacturer's 1-year material warranty, on all recap work performed to repair the sidewalk. Discussion ensued and it was decided an estimate from another local contractor, or two, would be sought for further consideration by council members and the attorney.

**NEW BUSINESS**

Water Litigation Liaison Position: Council President Laura Dillon led discussion on a proposed contract, explaining the benefits of employing John Harshbarger as a water litigation specialist representing the Town on occasion as required of him by the Town Council. Harshbarger previously served 12 years on the Andrews Town Council and worked closely with Taft Law attorneys in the Town's efforts to rehabilitate a plume of hazardous volatile organic chemicals underneath a portion of the Town that have impacted the Town's water supply. His wealth of knowledge and experience would be an asset moving forward in this litigation. Harshbarger would be hired as an employee, thereby protecting his attorney-client privilege, receiving a per diem of \$25.00 and federal gas mileage reimbursement for each day Council requires his assistance. Dean Young made a motion to accept the contract as written and hire John Harshbarger as a Water Litigation Liaison for the Town of Andrews. Roger Newsome seconded the motion, which passed unanimously in the affirmative.

As a result of the contractual agreement approved and signed between the Town of Andrews and John Harshbarger, the Town's salary ordinance now requires an amendment. Council President Dillon introduced and read Ordinance 2024-1 Amending Ordinance 2023-7 (2024 Salary Ordinance) for the first time. Dillon explained it updates the list of Town positions and compensation to include the Water Litigation Liaison position accepted by Harshbarger. Roger Newsome motioned to accept and pass Ordinance 2024-1 on its first read. Dean Young seconded the motion, which carried 3-0. The ordinance is scheduled for a second reading and approval at the February 26 meeting.



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Council President Dillon next led a discussion summarizing recent water project meetings with the USDA on January 24 and the Huntington County Commissioners on January 30. Pros and cons were highlighted in the Town's options to source safe, clean water for its residents, including sourcing new wells independently and regionalization. Dillon also spoke of raising the current water rate to the State minimum to better qualify for SRF funding and meet rising operational expenses for the Water Department. Input from several town residents was heard concerning rate increases. Dillon asked if council is ready to do an interim rate change at this time, beginning the process to formally raise rates. With no motion made by Council, it was agreed members will continue to gather information on this subject and continue discussion at a future meeting.

**DEPARTMENT REPORTS**

Police Department: Town Marshal Josh Platt reported that Deputy Marshal Raber has been working on his own and is doing a great job. Raber will attend LEA in July. Platt expects to receive drug forfeiture money soon and plans to bank the proceeds in the Police Equipment appropriation to help offset the forthcoming Axon Dash Camera expense. Josh said with Spring arriving soon, he will begin issuing verbal notices to property owners with excess junk and debris in their yards. If necessary, Platt will follow up with written warnings to those not in compliance with town code. Finally, Platt told Council he is looking to add new Reserve Officers to his department.

Fire Department: Chief Evan Schenkel reported his department participated in ice water rescue training in January. Also, training for the new volunteer fire fighters is halfway complete.

Utility Department: Colin Bullock said his employees have been busy televising sewer lines and working on sewer plant maintenance. Dillon questioned Bullock on past projects that involved mapping water lines and leak detection.

Clerk-Treasurer: Laury Powell informed council members that she rolled over 2023 on January 26 and the Gateway Debt Management Report is complete. She is now working on the Annual Financial Report in Gateway and in response to the recent SBOA audit emphasis on internal controls, will have Larry Tippin review for accuracy all Capital Asset Worksheets and the pending Gateway AFR Capital Assets Report for third party verification of her computations. Powell then announced that H&H Disposal's Dan Stoffel will be at the February 26 meeting to discuss the number of totes in service and monthly compensation. Also, she shared that Huntington County Clerk Septer plans to hold two Early Vote Centers at the Andrews Town Hall with this being a Presidential Election Year. The Primary date will be Friday, April 26 from 11:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., and the General Election date will be Friday, October 25 from 11:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Powell also said she filed several liens for 2023 vegetation abatement billings that were not paid last year.

**CLAIMS**

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

**OTHER BUSINESS**

Tobi Biehl, Dollar General Store Manager, told council members that her request for a small rest area with picnic tables was recently permitted by the DG Corporate Office. She wishes to provide an inviting place for campers, bicyclists, and canoeists to take a break while at the store. Biehl said her employees will maintain the area and keep it clean, but she asked if the Town had a couple of picnic tables to spare for use at the rest area. Council members liked her idea and asked Bullock to check on the wood picnic table inventory and follow up with Biehl.


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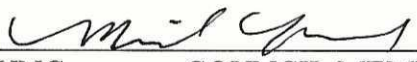
Dean Young said he was contacted by Amy Bonewitz, 174 N Snowden St, with a complaint on an alley that was recently rutted by a contractor's van. Bullock was asked to repair the ruts, restoring the original condition of the alley without making improvements such as gravel.

With no further business, Roger Newsome made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:12 p.m., which was seconded by Dean Young.

Approved this 26<sup>th</sup> day of February 2024.

APPROVED BY  as  
LAURA A. DILLON COUNCIL PRESIDENT

APPROVED BY  as  
ROGER NEWSOME, JR. COUNCIL MEMBER

APPROVED BY  as  
MICHAEL D. YOUNG COUNCIL MEMBER

ATTEST BY  as  
LAURY L. POWELL CLERK-TREASURER