

TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
November 14, 2022
7:00 p.m.

I. CALL TO ORDER & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Council President J. Fisher called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

Roll was called by Clerk-Treasurer C. Udvard; present were Council President J. Fisher, Council Member J. Ton, Council Member S. Darnell, and Council Member D. Lafata. Council Member L. Kittredge was absent.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Council Member D. Lafata made the motion to approve the minutes of the October 24, 2022 Meeting; motion seconded by Council Member S. Darnell; motion approved by unanimous voice vote.

IV. CONSIDERATION OF CLAIMS

Council Member J. Ton made the motion to approve the claims as presented, motion seconded by Council Member D. Lafata; motion approved by unanimous voice vote.

V. PETITIONS AND COMMENTS FROM THE FLOOR

Tim Trella- Food Cart- Tim Trella -235 Westchester Ave.- introduced himself as Executive Chef of Compass Group. Trella stated that his friend has a food cart and asked for permission to set up downtown a couple days a week. Trella serves “simple” food and would avoid Thursdays since there is already a vendor out there. Council President J. Fisher has spoken with Town Manager D. Cincoski regarding requirements. The Duneland Chamber of Commerce has approved his food cart being in the parking lot. Trella will need approval and a signed license agreement with the Town since this would be done on Town property. Council Member J. Ton made the motion to approve Trella’s food cart, pending legal approval; motion seconded by Council Member S. Darnell; motion approved by unanimous voice vote.

Lorelei Weimer- Downtown Parking Survey- Weimer, Executive Director of Indiana Dunes Tourism and President of Chesterton Branding Leadership Team appeared before the Council. Weimer presented a downtown parking survey and results. Weimer stated that all lots besides the Chamber parking lot are privately owned. Two surveys were administered, one for visitors

and residents and one for downtown businesses. There were 1,288 residents that completed this survey. Among the responses, 84% of the response was from Chesterton residents. The main reasons for visiting were: 1) Dining, 2) The European Market, 3) Special events 4) Shopping 5) Banking. 55% are staying 2 or less hours downtown. Weimer commented that those involved would like to increase the time people stay downtown. Comments were made regarding parking not being easy to find on Saturdays. Twenty business surveys came back from the downtown businesses. Around 65% said they get customer complaints about the lack of parking. Business employees are now using the street parking because of no time limits. Employers are having to protect and or police their parking lots during events such as the European Market. Council Member J. Ton commented that the survey was very well done and he appreciated this information. Council Member J. Ton made the motion to take these survey results under advisement and set an executive session to discuss a strategies to purchase parking, motion seconded by Council Member D. Lafata; motion approved by unanimous voice vote.

VI. REPORTS FROM OFFICIALS & DEPARTMENT HEADS

A. Police—Chief T. Richardson introduced Officers Darren Conley and Nicholas Vanni. Both officers live in the Duneland area, come from Highland Police Department, and have many years' experience on the force and in instruction. Clerk-Treasurer C. Udvare performed the oath of office for the new officers and welcomed them.

B. Fire – Chief E. Camel reported that they are ready to pick up the new Sutphen engine on Friday morning. Also, Chief Camel reported that there were 159 calls for service last month, with a total 1,574 for the year.

C. Clerk Treasurer- 2023 Boards & Commissions- Clerk Treasurer C. Udvare reported on the open seats for boards and commissions in 2023. It was determined by Town Council consensus that letters of interest must be received by December 2nd . Also, Clerk-Treasurer Udvare presented the 2023 municipal holiday schedules. Council Member J. Ton made the motion to approve the 2023 holiday schedule, motion seconded by Council Member D. Lafata; motion approved by unanimous voice vote. Lastly, Clerk-Treasurer Udvare requested a public hearing for additional appropriations at the December 12, 2022 meeting. Council Member D. Lafata made the motion to approve setting the public hearing, motion seconded by Council Member S. Darnell; motion approved by unanimous voice vote.

D. Streets, Sanitation, & Central Service – LED Lighting CEDIT Request- Street Commissioner J. Schnadenberg requested to enact the 2 inch snow parking ban on November 18th at 12:01 a.m. Council Member D. Lafata made the motion to approve enactment of the 2 inch snow ban parking, motion seconded by Council Member S. Darnell; motion approved by unanimous voice vote. Next, Commissioner Schnadenberg reported that the department struggled with the leaf program and they are still working on it, having added weekends and holidays to catch up. The program will hopefully be continued until the end of the month, weather permitting. The department is currently one week behind schedule. Next, Assistant

Street Commissioner D. Moy requested to update the lighting from fluorescent to LED in the street department. Assistant Street Commissioner Moy explained that this could cut utility costs. He has received a couple estimates for the project. The project could be covered with CEDIT funds and is not a public works project. Town Attorney C. Nolan commented that this is under supplies and services since the fixtures themselves are not being replaced. There is a NIPSCO rebate if installation occurs by December 2nd, 2022. An estimate of \$15,000 for the project has been received and will be reviewed by legal. Council Member D. Lafata made the motion to allow CEDIT funds to be used and for the street department to be able to proceed with the project, pending legal approval, motion seconded by Council Member S. Darnell; motion approved by unanimous voice vote.

E. Engineering – American Structurepoint Agreement- Westchester-Liberty Trail- Town Engineer M. O’Dell reported that this is at the right of way stage. INDOT is doing an environmental review. Legal has reviewed the contract. This project will eventually be partly paid through NIRPC. Engineer O’Dell asked for pre-purchase engineering to be paid out of CEDIT. Council Member J. Ton made the motion to approve the pre-purchase engineering expense out of CEDIT, motion seconded by Council Member D. Lafata; motion approved by unanimous voice vote.

Robinson Engineering, Ltd. Agreement- Emergency Vehicle Pre-emption Project- Town Engineer M. O’Dell reported that this has been applied for in part with NIRPC and is partially funded. There is a \$230,875 engineering cost, which Engineer O’Dell has been working with legal on. This took time because seven entities are involved. Chesterton is the lead agency. Other entities will sign a memorandum of understanding. The contract needed to be worded so that we are just responsible for the Town portion if other entities back out. Council Member J. Ton commented that preemption for emergency vehicles saves lives. The cost estimate is \$1.5 million with construction occurring in 2025 or 2026. Funding may be able to be phased for each community. Council Member J. Ton made the motion to approve the agreement with Robinson Engineering Ltd.; motion seconded by Council Member S. Darnell; motion approved by unanimous voice vote.

F. Building — Building Commissioner M. O’Dell reported that the department has been working with Chipotle and Dunkin Donuts. He also reminded residents to remove their large political signs at this time.

G. Parks –Superintendent T. McLead reported that Thomas Centennial park has been decorated for Christmas. It’s ready for the celebration on November 26th.

H. Attorney—Town Attorney C. Nolan reported that legal is working on the Urschel Expansion project. They would like to fund the project with economic development commission bonds issued by the Town – there would be no impact on tax payers. There is a public hearing by the EDC next week. Next, Attorney Nolan explained that there are three appointments needed to the

Chesterton Economic Development Commission and that it was needed to make sure these appointments are up to date. All three appointments are appointed by the Town Council President. The first appointment is recommended by the Town Council to the Council President. Council Member J. Ton nominated Council Member L. Kittredge to the Chesterton Economic Development Council, motion seconded by Council Member D. Lafata; motion approved by unanimous voice vote. Council President J. Fisher appointed Council Member L. Kittredge to serve on the Chesterton Economic Development Council. The 2nd member is nominated by the Porter County Council, who was notified and their 15 day period to make nominee has passed, so, the nomination went to President Fisher to make the 2nd appointment. Council President J. Fisher reappointed Nick Walding and Dane Lafata to the Chesterton Economic Development Council.

I. Utilities- No report.

J. Town Manager—Town Manager D. Cincoski reported that CivicPlus will be giving us a no cost redesign of our website. This will be a several month project. Next, Town Manager Cincoski reported on the greenhouse gas emissions survey. NIRPC did a workshop about climate change issues. The community is doing a climate risk assessment—this is something to think about. Lastly, Town Manager Cincoski reported that he received a letter from the Chamber asking for permission to mount security cameras on their building. There would be four cameras total at the Chamber’s expense. The Town would have access to the cameras for the police department. Council President J. Fisher would like legal to review the contract for whoever the Chamber uses to ensure that we don’t have any liability. The Lessee would need to be responsible for damages. Council Member J. Ton made the motion to approve the cameras, pending legal approval, motion seconded by Council Member S. Darnell; motion approved by unanimous voice vote.

VII. PUBLIC HEARINGS, BID OPENINGS, & REMONSTRANCES

NONE

VIII. ORDINANCES AND/OR RESOLUTIONS

Ordinance 2022-18- Authorizing the Town of Chesterton to Issue Economic Development Revenue Bonds- Attorney C. Nolan presented the ordinance on 1st reading only. The public hearing will be next week with the Economic Development Commission and the Redevelopment Commission will have a hearing at the end of the month. Council Member S. Darnell made the motion to approve the ordinance on 1st reading, motion seconded by Council Member J. Ton; motion approved by unanimous voice vote.

IX. COMMUNICATIONS

NONE

X. PUBLIC AFFAIRS LIASION REPORT- Social Media Update- Public Affairs Liaison K. Nevers provided a report. We have doubled the number of Facebook followers since Nevers started. Council President J. Fisher commented that the report was well done. Council Member D. Lafata commented that the responses to comments on the articles is great and informative. Council Member J. Ton commented that the quality of writing draws people in.

XI. OLD BUSINESS

NONE

XI. NEW BUSINESS AND/OR UPDATES

NONE

XII. COMMENTS FROM THE BOARD

| | |
|------------------------------|---|
| Council Member S. Darnell: | No comment. |
| Council Member J. Fisher: | Council President Fisher thanked the Street Department for all your work for the leaf program. |
| Council Member L. Kittredge: | No comment. |
| Council Member J. Ton: | Council Member Ton commented that the CEDC is not raising interest rates on business loans. There is \$131,000 available to be loaned out. These loans are available to businesses in Town and the application process is streamlined on the Town website. The loans are at 2% interest. Council Member Ton also commented on the next step for the Highway 49 safety plan. Reconstruction of Indian Boundary and 49 is the next step and is on INDOT's schedule. This is currently scheduled for 2024. |
| Council Member D. Lafata: | No comment. |

XII. ADJOURNMENT

Council Member S. Darnell made the motion to adjourn, motion seconded by Council Member D. Lafata; motion approved by unanimous voice vote.

ATTEST:

COUNCIL PRESIDENT

CLERK-TREASURER C. UDVARE