

Minutes of Sweetser Town Council
September 24, 2020

- I. The meeting was called to order by Dave Fox at 7:00 pm; the roll was called as follows:
Matt Stewart—Present
Travis LeMaster—Present
Dave Fox—Present
Chuck Briede-Present

The roll was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and a prayer offered by Matt Stewart

II. **Minutes**

Dave Fox made a motion to approve the minutes of the September 10, 2020 meeting. Chuck Briede seconded the motion.

Roll Call:

Matt Stewart-Aye
Travis LeMaster-Aye
Dave Fox-Aye
Chuck Briede-Aye

III. **Bills**

After discussion, Chuck Briede made a motion to approve the paying of the bills as written. Travis LeMaster seconded the motion.

Matt Stewart-Aye
Travis LeMaster-Aye
Dave Fox-Aye
Chuck Briede-Aye

IV. **Public Forum**

- No comments

V. **Department Reports**

Maintenance Dept.—Superintendent Devin Cole was in attendance.

- Devin and Mitch Hansel of Fleis & Vandenbrink reviewed the plans for the drainage improvements to the three properties on the west side of Main Street as one moves south from Peterson Drive (this is the part of the 2021 sidewalks project that was altered and approved by INDOT). Each driveway will have a culvert with a trench drain over the top and each driveway will have a concrete approach from the street to the back of the sidewalk. The culverts will be connected to the catch basin at the corner of Peterson and Main and each property will also have access to a two foot tap coming off the drain pipe to which they can tie in if they choose for downspouts and yard drainage.
- Devin reported that he has been receiving applications for the open street maintenance and wastewater plant assistant position, and that he has some interviews scheduled. A discussion ensued about the rate of pay for the position and the fringe benefits of the position. Clerk reviewed the cost of insurance premiums and the amounts paid respectively by the employee and the town. Devin and the council agreed that after Devin conducts the interviews, he would narrow the selection to one or two candidates and meet with a subset of the council to decide whom to hire.
- Devin reported that the Hubert Street storm water sinkhole (due to a collapsed tile) has been fixed.
- Devin reported that he has hired Mitch Cook to install a catch basin on Davis Street between Osborne and Meridian. The winning bid for the project came in under \$2,000. Devin had received another bid of approximately \$5,000 from Keith Sullivan Excavating. This project should help alleviate some of the standing water in the yards in this area of Davis Street and allow another access point for the jetter (which makes more of the line accessible for clean-outs).
- Devin will be shutting down and winterizing the shelter restroom and drinking fountain on October 1.
- Devin said he has begun preparations for fall leaf pick-up.
- Devin reported that there currently no issues with the wastewater plant.
- Mitch distributed and summarized a proposal for an application for a 2020 CCMG project, for work in 2021, on Main Street from the railroad tracks to SR 18, Main Street from SR 18 to Peterson, and Davis Street from Main to Meridian (scope of work had been approved at a previous meeting and thus does not require a vote by the council). This project would primarily involve installing new drainpipes and resurfacing the streets. This would be a 75/25 project with an estimated project cost of \$220,000, thus making the town's commitment approximately \$55,000 plus engineering design fees. The Fleis & Vandenbrink engineering estimate is \$18,720. The council asked Mitch if some work along Gayle Drive could be added to the project and still fit within the estimate. Mitch estimated the cost to add the Gayle Street work would bring the total project estimate to \$229,234 and the town commitment to \$57,308.50.

Matt Stewart made a motion to add work on Gayle Drive to the application for the 2020 CCMG Resurfacing and Drainage Project for Main Street and Davis Streets. Travis LeMaster seconded the motion.

Roll Call:

Matt Stewart-Aye

Travis LeMaster-Aye
Dave Fox-Aye
Chuck Briede-Aye

Travis LeMaster made a motion to accept the proposed Professional Services Agreement for engineering design work for the 2020 CCMG Resurfacing and Drainage Project for Main Street and Davis Street from Fleis & Vandenbrink at an estimated cost of \$18,720. Dave Fox seconded the motion.

Roll Call:

Matt Stewart-Aye
Travis LeMaster-Aye
Dave Fox-Aye
Chuck Briede-Aye

- Chuck renewed the discussion of the proposed contract with the railroad for the sidewalk across the rail line. Mitch will continue to work with the railroad and INDOT on possible adjustments to, and clarifications of, the terms of the proposed agreement. Town counsel Michael Hotz said that some of the insurance requirements should also be clarified because, as the proposed agreement is written, the town may have to increase its current limits.

Police Department Dept.—Marshal Ryan Hornback was in attendance.

- Ryan said that everything in his department is going well at this time.
- Chuck asked how the school crossing guard position was going. Ryan responded that crossing guard Demi Cheek is doing a great job, is very conscientious, and has not missed a day thus far.
- Chuck asked if we could point the town hall camera away the back doors and towards the town dumpster and recycling bins. Ryan said the range of view of the camera is so narrow that it will probably not be useful in identifying people inappropriately dumping into the town dumpster and recycle bins. Ryan suggested locking the units to prevent the dumping.
- Steve Kelley reported that someone had recently camped along the trail and asked if Ryan's deputies could check the trail before ending their shifts.

Parks Department—President Steve Kelley was in attendance.

- Steve reported that he took the town hall flagpole in to get it fixed but they were unable to fix it, so they are sending us a new one. The town just has to pay for the shipping which is estimated at no more than \$25.
- Steve said he had fixed the flags and poles that could be fixed but had to order 8 new poles and seven flags. The flags and poles were damaged in a late summer storm.
- At the last meeting Steve told the council there were 15 dead trees and 24 stumps along the trail that should be removed this year, if possible. Steve presented two quotes for the work: one for \$4,000 and one for \$4,500. Steve asked the council if there was going to be any action on this item. A discussion ensued concerning which fund could be utilized to pay for the tree work. It was decided that there were adequate monies in the CEDIT fund.
- Steve said he would like to get the windows of the conning tower of the caboose fixed this year. He estimated the materials cost at \$200.
- Steve said we would have to have someone come in with a skid steer to dig holes to replace the trail signs that were vandalized and stolen. He estimated the cost at \$1,200. Matter was tabled.

Dave Fox made a motion to accept the \$4,000 bid from Helmuth Tree Service of Kokomo to remove 15 dead trees from the trail, grind the stumps, grind 24 additional stumps, and perform some other trimming and clearing; and to authorize Steve to proceed with the repairs to the caboose conning tower windows, with expenditures for both projects to come out of the CEDIT fund. Chuck Briede seconded the motion.

Roll Call:

Matt Stewart-Aye
Travis LeMaster-Aye
Dave Fox-Aye
Chuck Briede-Aye

VI. Continuing Business

- Chuck and the clerk apprised the council of the status of the 2021 budget process and proposed dates for public hearing and adoption.
- Dave asked Michael Hotz to update the status of filling the council vacancy. Michael said the Grant County Clerk had issued a letter today acknowledging the vacancy. Thus, the council has 30 days to fill the vacancy. It was decided the deadline for council member candidates to express interest in the position will be October 19 and that interviews would be conducted, and a candidate selected, at the October 22 council meeting.
- Michael said the judge had signed the quiet title order for the Church Street property.
- Travis provided an update of the Sesquicentennial committee meeting schedule and fund-raising efforts; he said the fund-raising is going well.

VII. New Business

- Matt gave a brief recap of the Harmony Music Festival that was held in Sweetser on September 19.

- Matt suggested that if the area where the festival was held was to be leveled off and graded, it could be utilized for many other types of events. He discussed some ideas for events that have been suggested to him as well as some ideas of his own that could be potential revenue generators. There was further discussion on how best to prepare the area for other uses.
- Matt led a discussion of possible ideas for the Church Street property. He mentioned some ideas that Rich Gamble had imparted to him.
- With all the new sidewalks planned in the next few years, Travis raised the question of if we need an ordinance to address who is responsible for snow removal and other maintenance related to the sidewalks. And after the currently planned sidewalks are installed, are we going to try and install them in other areas? A discussion ensued about possible locations and funding sources.
- Chuck recommended that the council formally address responsibility for trash receptacles of businesses that are currently using town receptacles at no charge.
- Michael said he and Ryan had reviewed the abandoned vehicle ordinance and Ryan would be coming up with a plan to address some of the situations in town.
- Matt inquired as to the plan and timing of soliciting proposals for the residential trash pick-up contract as the current contract expires in May of 2021. Chuck recommended we send out RFP's just after the first of year.

VIII. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:43 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
John Potter
