

Minutes of Sweetser Town Council
October 8, 2020

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

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

II. **Minutes**

Matt Stewart made a motion to approve the minutes of the September 24, 2020 meeting. Travis LeMaster seconded the motion.

Roll Call:

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

III. **Bills**

After discussion, Matt Stewart made a motion to approve the paying of the bills except the \$4,000 invoice from Helmuth Tree Service, as the work has not yet been performed. Chuck Briede seconded the motion.

Matt Stewart-Aye
Travis LeMaster-Aye
Dave Fox-Absent
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 recommended that the application for the 2021 CCMG Main Street project be amended to include replacing approximately 365 of old limestone curbing on Main Street. This addition to the project would add approximately \$9,200 to the total project cost and approximately \$2,300 to the town's commitment. The fiduciary letter for the project would be amended to reflect a total estimated project cost of \$238,434 and a local match commitment of \$59,608.50.

After discussion, Chuck Briede made a motion to approve amending the 2021 CCMG Main Street Project to include replacing approximately 365 feet of old limestone curbing on Main Street. Travis LeMaster seconded the motion.

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

- Travis asked Devin if Bob Highley had spoken with him concerning the drainage that Mr. Highley had installed on his property under his driveway. Mr. Highley wanted to be sure the town is aware of it so that any heavy equipment that is used in upcoming projects avoids his property so as to not damage the drainage infrastructure he had installed. Devin said he had spoken with Mr. Highley to address his concerns.
- Devin reported that he has hired Jeff Speicher as wastewater and streets assistant. Jeff's first day was Oct. 5, 2020. Jeff is full time, \$640 week salary, and is eligible for benefits. The clerk will provide paperwork to Jeff so he can indicate his benefit choices.
- Devin said he planned to begin leaf pick-up on or around November 1. Pick-up days will be Monday, Wednesday, and Friday.
- Devin reported that some local farmers have inquired about acquiring our old leaves and compost and having it dumped on their fields. A discussion ensued about testing the compost, delivery options, cost to the town, and price the town would charge. Devin will continue the conversation with the farmers to see what they may be willing to pay for the materials.
- Matt asked Devin if his department would have time to transfer some of the extra topsoil at the wastewater plant to the dog park and spread it there in an effort to level the area somewhat. Devin responded that because of the limitations of our equipment it would probably be better to rent the equipment or to hire out the project. Devin suggested hiring Mitch Cook may be the least expensive option. Devin will speak with Mitch and report back to the council.
- Devin reported additional vandalism along the trail: someone pulled the rest of fence along 700 and dumped it in the creek. Devin said they will get it out and dispose of it.

- Devin reported that INODT has put out a call for Federal Aid projects. Call window is November 2 to December 11. Mitch said this call was for FY 2026. These would be for additional sidewalk projects. A discussion ensued of possible future sidewalk locations. Matter tabled for now.
- Devin reported that they would be replacing the catch basin on Mr. Westfall's property.

Police Department Dept.—Marshal Ryan Hornback was not in attendance.

- No report at this time

Parks Department—President Steve Kelley was in attendance.

- Steve continued the discussion concerning the vandalism along the trail. Steve has consulted with town counsel Michael Hotz about getting a sign to post at the High School seeking information on the vandals. Steve reviewed the extent of the damage to the signs, posts, and fence; he estimated the cost to repair the damage at around \$4,000. The possibility of placing a camera or cameras in the area was discussed. Also discussed were placing some signs in the area and posting some pictures on Facebook.
- Ron Achor asked if the town was in a position to patch and crack seal the asphalt trail. Chuck responded that there was not room in the budget this year but that it may be feasible next year.

VI. Continuing Business

- Chuck opened the hearing for the 2021 budget, presented as proposed Ordinance 5-2020. Clerk reviewed budget handouts and proposals with the council. Clerk reported that we would have reduction of appropriations resolutions for MVH and Local Road and Streets. Clerk further reported that we will have to pass additional appropriations for the CCD fund. There being no questions from the public, Chuck closed the hearing.

Travis LeMaster made a motion to pass on first reading Ordinance 5-2020, the proposed 2021 budget for the Town of Sweetser. Matt Stewart seconded the motion.

Roll Call:

Matt Stewart-Aye

Travis LeMaster-Aye

Dave Fox-Absent

Chuck Briede-Aye

- Chuck reported that the council is accepting applications to fill the current council vacancy that arose with the untimely passing of Rich Gamble. The application window closes October 19th, and the council hopes to select a new council member at the meeting of October 22nd.
- Mitch Hansel submitted the revised "Pedestrian Crossing License Agreement" from the Central Railroad Company of Indianapolis allowing for a crosswalk where the railroad intersects with Main Street in Sweetser. In place of the \$300 annual lease to be paid by the town, the agreement now calls for a one-time payment of \$1,500 and somewhat higher insurance limits on our policy. Clerk reported that the increased limits would increase the town insurance premiums by approximately \$125 per year. Council accepted and signed the agreement.
- Mitch reviewed the estimated timeline and dates for the notification of contract award from INDOT, bid solicitation, bid opening, and the commencement of construction for the CCMG and sidewalk projects in 2021.

VII. New Business

- Travis introduced proposed language for a future ordinance, or to amend current ordinances, to proscribe certain types of vehicles from operating on the trail. Travis noted that the current signage is not consistent with vehicle definitions and descriptions in current Ordinances. Travis recommended that the new or amended Ordinances should include some penalties for violations as well as a provision that the violator be responsible for court costs. Travis is also concerned that some of the signage along the trail may be attempting to regulate activities that the town does not have the authority to regulate. Town counsel Michael Hotz will study the issues that were raised during this initial discussion. Matter tabled for now.
- Travis asked if the town would be establishing trick-or-treat hours for Halloween. Chuck recommended October 31 from 5 to 8 pm. Counsel agreed.
- Michael Hotz initiated a discussion of Mr. Newhouse's request for a "hold harmless" agreement between he and the town in consideration of his permitting the town to utilize his gravel lot during town events. The lot is to the east of town hall. Michael indicated that there could be some issue with obtaining coverage unless we have a lease agreement. Current council members indicated there is a current agreement that was signed sometime in 2015. Clerk will locate the agreement and report back to the board. Matter tabled for now.
- Chuck asked if we had received an answer to our inquiry about possible insurance requirements relating to EMS coverage of the Sesquicentennial. Clerk said that we did not yet have an answer. Clerk will follow-up.
- Matt suggested the council should schedule an executive session with employee reviews prior to addressing the salary Ordinance.

VIII. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
John Potter
