

**Minutes of Sweetser Town Council**  
**December 10, 2020**

- I. The meeting was called to order by Dave Fox at 7:00 pm; the roll was called as follows:  
Kyle Taylor-Present  
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**

Chuck Briede made a motion to approve the minutes of the November 19, 2020 meeting, as amended. Travis LeMaster seconded the motion.

Roll Call:

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

III. **Bills**

After discussion, Travis LeMaster made a motion to approve the paying of the bills as corrected to reclassify to the proper funds the Fleis & Vandenbrink invoice for the add-on work performed for the 2020 resurface and drainage project. Chuck Briede seconded the motion.

Kyle Taylor-Aye  
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 via ZOOM.

- Devin reported the fall leaf pick-up has been completed and the leaf vac has been transported to Fort Wayne for repairs to the clutch assembly. He is uncertain at this time if the repair would qualify under the warranty.
- Devin reported that he had ordered for the treatment plant new belts for the blowers, parts for the upcoming flow meter calibration, and a spare motor for the screen.
- Devin reported that the Christmas lights have been installed.
- Devin reported we were awarded the CCMG grant for next year. Mitch Hansel of Fleis & Vandenbrink said the award was for \$178,825.50 and the towns' match responsibility will be \$59,608.50. He said plans are ready to go. It was decided the bid notice will go out as soon as possible. Mitch said that they would be putting special provisions in the contracts to make sure that the work was coordinated to be finished by August 1 (before the Sesquicentennial).
- Matt asked Mitch when the State Road 18 bridge replacement project was going to happen. He said the bids go out in February and the construction would be scheduled for the spring. Matt expressed the hope that the bridge project would be completed prior to the Main street paving being completed so that detoured truck traffic is not routed downtown.
- Chuck said he thought the electric bill for the Eagle lift station was running high again and asked Devin to investigate.

- Devin said that the Town may qualify for a pool of grant funds available through the Coronavirus Relief Fund (CRF). Clerk reported that the amount available is \$37,537. A discussion ensued concerning aspects of the CRF, what qualifies for reimbursement, and whether the town should apply for the grant.
- Devin asked if we had a COVID-19 plan in place for employees in the event one of our employees was exposed to COVID-19 or contracted COVID-19. The clerk reviewed known safety rules and guidelines as well as quarantine requirements and mandated paid time off rules for employees missing work due to COVID-19 related time off. Also discussed were contingency plans for operating the treatment plant in the event our town staff were out for COVID-19 or other reasons.

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

- Matt reported that to compensate for Roger Bowland’s pending retirement, vacation requests, and gaps in the schedule, Ryan has hired three new part-time deputies to help fill-in.
- Matt said Ryan is working on some cases that will require reporting to the FBI in early February.
- Matt reported that Ryan said we have until June or July to submit ordinance violations to receive a share from a pool of county grant funds.

**Parks Department**—President Steve Kelley was not in attendance.

- No report

## **VI. Continuing Business**

- Travis provided an update on the Sesquicentennial celebration. He said fundraising has gone well and they have entertainment lined-up. They are working on planning the parade, other events, and lining-up vendors. Travis said possible COVID-19 restrictions are hanging over some of the planning at this time. The committee will next meet in January.
- Clerk distributed a draft of the 2021 Salary Ordinance for discussion and review. Matter was tabled until the December 17, 2020 council meeting.
- Kyle asked if we had formed the traffic and nuisance committee as discussed at a prior meeting. It was decided that Kyle would head-up that committee and Matt will also serve on it.
- Matt asked Devin if he had reached an understanding with the farmer who was interested in the town’s excess compost. Devin said the farmer was not interested in paying for it. The council said the town was not interested in a deal on those terms.
- Matt asked Devin if the grading at the dog park would require the installation of some drainage. Devin said it would and said they had some 4” tile they would install.
- Clerk reported that the 2021 Budget 1782 notice had been received and returned. Other than the CCI fund, all funds were approved as requested. Clerk also reported that the fall tax settlement had been received as well as the spring sewer lien collections.

## **VII. New Business**

- Jerry and Karen Smith were attendance. Chuck reported that the Smiths had presented a request to the Grant County Area Plan Commission to rezone the property located at 215 E. Sherron St. from R1 (Residential) to R3 (Residential) for the purpose of constructing a duplex on the property. The Plan Commission made a favorable recommendation and forwarded the same to the Town of Sweetser for consideration. Jerry and Karen discussed their connection to the lot, their history in the area, and their intentions for the planned duplex. They plan to live in one unit and rent the other one. They said they are planning a deluxe unit that would be an attractive addition to the neighborhood.

Kyle Taylor made a motion to suspend the rules and pass on the first reading Ordinance 2020-6 to amend the Grant County Code Section 153 (Areawide Zoning Ordinance) to permit a zone map amendment from Residential-1 to Residential-3 for the property located at 215 E. Sherron Street, Sweetser, Indiana. Dave Fox seconded the motion.

Kyle Taylor-Aye

Matt Stewart-Aye

Travis LeMaster-Aye

Dave Fox-Aye

Chuck Briede-Aye

Kyle Taylor made a motion to pass Ordinance 2020-6 to amend the Grant County Code Section 153 (Areawide Zoning Ordinance) to permit a zone map amendment from Residential-1 to Residential-3 for the property located at 215 E. Sherron Street, Sweetser, Indiana. Dave Fox seconded the motion.

Kyle Taylor-Aye

Matt Stewart-Aye

Travis LeMaster-Aye

Dave Fox-Aye

Chuck Briede-Aye

- Travis recommend that the town purchase new Christmas lights to replace the old ones currently in use and purchase additional Christmas lights, so they extend all the way down Main Street. He also recommended we do the same for the flags. Further, he suggested we consider purchasing lights and flags for placement along State Road 18 through town. Devin estimated the cost to replace the lights at about \$200 per pole. Devin and Dave will work on getting a quote for the lights.
- Dave initiated discussion of council officers for 2021. Matter was tabled until January.
- Dave resumed discussion of applying for the grant funds available under the CRF. After discussion,

Travis LeMaster made a motion to apply for the \$37,537 grant allocated to Sweetser under the Coronavirus Relief Fund. Kyle Taylor seconded the motion.

Kyle Taylor-Aye

Matt Stewart-No

Travis LeMaster-Aye

Dave Fox-Aye

Chuck Briede-Aye

- Kyle initiated a discussion of the condition and appearance of the town hall meeting room and asked what the process is for requesting repairs and replacements. Chuck expanded the discussion to the exterior of the building and how improvements could be funded. Devin said town hall desperately needs a new water softener system. Kyle reported that the #2 camera at the back of town hall is not working. Devin will begin working on the items.
- Travis introduced for consideration a possible resolution defining the proper relationship among the council, the council liaisons, and the town employees. Matter was tabled until the next meeting.
- Dave introduced two requests for waiver of penalties for late payment of utility bills. The requests are from Sherry Payne and Merrill Stevens. In both cases it appears there were issues with the mail and the late payments were not attributable to the payors.

Chuck Briede made a motion to waive the late fees for the Payne and Stevens accounts. Dave Fox seconded the motion.

Kyle Taylor-Aye

Matt Stewart-Aye

Travis LeMaster-Aye

Dave Fox-Aye

Chuck Briede-Aye

- Dave initiated a discussion of the property at 118 E. Bragg St. We have been filing liens for approximately two years to no avail. It seems the owners are both deceased, and the property has been abandoned by the heir(s) of the deceased. It was decided that the town will attempt to acquire the property in an upcoming tax sale. There is a doublewide trailer on the property that could be sold, and the property could then be resold by the town. In the interim, the clerk will cease filing sewer liens.
- Clerk reported that the town will need to file a request for an increase in appropriations for the CCD fund. A meeting was set for 5:00 p.m. on Monday, December 28, 2020. Clerk will have a notice published in the paper.

**VIII. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:50 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,  
John Potter

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