

Town of Pierceton
Council Public Meeting Minutes
Pierceton Community Building
November 8, 2021
6:30 pm

Opening

The monthly meeting of the Town of Pierceton opened directly following the Budget Adoption which opened with the pledge of allegiance.

Present

Council members Tom Barker, Matt Brubaker and Mandy Espinoza. Clerk-Treasurer Myra Mast. Town Marshal Tim Sammons. Utilities Superintendent Casey Boggs.

Absent

Town Attorney Tammy Keirn.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes for the council meeting held on October 11, 2021 at 6:30 pm at the Pierceton Community Building were approved by council. Minutes for the Budget Hearing on September 13, 2021 along with minutes for the Budget Adoption on October 11, 2021 were also approved.

Claim Docket

\$84,697.67 in claims were paid.

Streets, Water, Sewer

- Matt Brubaker motioned to accept a quote from Endustra Filter Manufacturers for a blower filter upgrade in the amount of \$2995. Mandy seconded and the purchase was approved with a 3-0 vote.
- Casey requested a decision from council concerning the replacement fence and gates at the Pierceton-Washington Township Park and the Water Treatment Plant. After a brief discussion, council decided to move forward with the purchase of the black fence. The estimate for the park fence is in the amount of \$9820 and \$6760 for the Water Treatment Plant.
- Town employees planned to stick to the leave schedule as leaves are falling quickly. They will also pick up on Friday if they fall behind.
- Casey announced that Pierceton was awarded the Community Crossing Matching Grant in the amount of \$156,888.75. The town is responsible for twenty-five percent of the total project cost of \$209,185.
- Tom Barker would like to have the South end of second street added to the project which would be paid for by the town.

Police Report from Town Marshal Tim Sammons

- Town Marshal Sammons stated that he and Council President had met to discuss the JAG radio grant that was submitted on Wednesday, November 3, 2021. If awarded, the grant would cover the full cost of the radios.
- Officer Ashley Jones will graduate from the academy on December 9, 2021.

Clerk-Treasurer Report from Myra Mast

- An Inter-local Agreement for Kosciusko County was presented to Council for approval. The agreement states that an annual fee of \$500 charged to the Town of Pierceton grants access to the data base provided by the county to the Pierceton Police Department. The fee will be used by the county for replacement, maintenance and upgrading of equipment/software or access to the data. The Council approved the agreement with a 3-0 vote.
- INDOT plans to replace signs along State Road 13. In doing so, they requested the Council approve an official action request document. The signage is for "2 Hour Parking, 6am-6pm" on the East and West Sides of First Street from the North line curb line of Catholic Street to the south curb line of Columbia. Per the official action form provided by INDOT, the signage would only be placed to Market Street on the West side and they referred to State Road 13 as Main Street instead of First Street. Tom Barker wrote the corrections on the form and the Council approved the signage contingent on the acceptance by INDOT of the corrections.
- Myra again requested the Council discuss a time tracker system with QuickBooks Intuit since all council members were present. Matt stated it was time we got in the 21st Century. Tom's concern was that the clerk has access to the location of the police officers at any time. Office Tim Sammons again stated this was the first time he learned of the time tracker. Myra advised Council that the app could be used without the location tracker. She also stated that due to a hit and run incident earlier in the year in which the officer had entered 8 hours on his time sheet that day but there was no document history for this officer per the county dispatch reports and, therefore, creates liability issues. Officer Sammons requested that he and Casey meet with Council President Tom Barker to express their concerns since Casey was concerned how it would calculate comp time accurately. Matt expressed the need for an Executive Session and Tom agreed that one would be scheduled in the near future.
- Myra presented to council a request by town resident Larry Lawmaster for an adjustment on his water/sewer bill. He had a very large leak recently and it was not verified by the clerk's office that the leak did not go down the sewer pipes. Both clerk and deputy clerk were told that it was a toilet leak that went in the sewer then were told it was an outside hose leak. Tom Barker suggested the amount of \$192.88 be adjusted. Council voted 3-0 to approve the adjustment. Tom advised that the resident would not qualify for anymore adjustments within the next twelve months.

Christmas Committee Update

- Stephanie Campbell advised Council that the committee has raised \$22,029 since April of this year. With that, eight large displays were purchased and the committee is ready to purchase string light for building and trees and are planning to put small trees in front of businesses on State Road 13.
- The committee is planning to set up displays and lights on Sunday, November 28th at 1:00 and are looking for volunteers to assist. Volunteers will meet at the Community Building to receive their assignments. Lexlil has agreed to provide a lift which the fire department will be in charge of operating.

- Stephanie asked for approval for a small parade which will run along a side street in town on December 4th prior to the ceremony in Brower Park preceding the lighting of the displays. Tom expressed that there was no need for Council approval.
- The committee has purchased a large Santa and Sleigh piece from Herman Tool. The American Legion would like to display this on their roof top. Clerk Myra Mast advised that a liability agreement should be signed between the town and the legion before this could happen. Myra will contact town attorney Tammy Keirn to see what is needed.
- Tom Barked asked if the pieces purchased were the property of the town. Myra confirmed that was the intention of the committee. Tom would like a transfer to ownership completed so that there would be no question in the future as to who owned the items purchased by the Christmas Lights Committee. Myra will seek advise from the town attorney.
- Stephanie stated that a mailbox will be located at the top of the steps by the front doors of the library to collect letters to Santa between November 28th and December 10th. Forms will be distributed at the Pierceton Elementary School. Members of the Committee will send responses “from Santa” once all letters are collected.

Council

- Mandy Espinoza presented an update regarding the property at 306 S Third Street which is owned by Lee Newswanger. Mandy is also on the board with Area Plan and stated that the alley that Newswanger would like to have vacated is also the access to the neighbor’s garage. If the alley is vacated, the neighbor would have a garage that is landlocked. The only way that the alley can be vacated would be if the two property owners could come up with an agreement on the use of the vacated property. Mandy has made several attempts to contact Lee but has not been able to connect with him as of the time of the council meeting.
- Tom Barker spoke about the rate increases discussed at the Special Council Meeting held on October 7, 2021. Per the study completed by Baker Tilly earlier in the year, the town will move forward with the process to increase the water and sewer rate. Trash collection fees will also increase from \$9 to \$11 beginning in January 2022. Non-sufficient check fee will be raised from \$9 to \$25. The rental rate for the Community Room will be raised from \$75 to \$100 with the cleaning deposit to remain at \$75 but will need to be presented at time the room is reserved. The council has also discussed the implementation of other fees such as sewer tap fees, return trip fees, customer requested meter reads and meter tampering fees.

Other Business

- Attorney Stephen Synder was present representing Paragon Medical. Resolution 11-1-21, a Declaratory Resolution was presented to Council. The resolution ratifies the approval by the Pierceton Town Council of the abatement forms presented on September 2, 2021. The Council voted 3-0 in approval of the Resolution.
- Stephen Snyder announced that a Confirmatory Resolution would be submitted at the December 13, 2021 meeting for adoption in regards to the acceptance of the Abatement.

- Clerk, Myra Mast, signed a Notice of Hearing and Snyder will take care of the publication in the Times Union newspaper.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Council, by a motion duly made and seconded, the meeting was adjourned at 7:34pm. The next general meeting will be at 6:30 pm on December 13, 2021 at the Pierceton Community Building.

Minutes Submitted by Myra Mast, Clerk-Treasurer



Council President



Clerk-Treasurer