

Town of Pierceton
Council Public Meeting Minutes
Pierceton Community Building
May 13, 2024 @ 6:30 pm

Opening

The monthly meeting of the Town of Pierceton was called to order immediately following the Pledge of Allegiance and prayer by Glenn Hall.

Present

Council Members Glenn Hall, Eric Trump and Matt Brubaker. Town Attorney Tammy Keirn. Clerk-Treasurer Myra Mast. Town Marshal Jim Bumbaugh and Town Superintendent Casey Boggs.

Approval of Minutes

- April Council Meeting 4-8-2024
- April Special Meeting 4-15-2024
- Special Meeting 7-19-2023
 - These minutes were missed in 2023. Under the advisement of the State Board of Accounts, minutes were presented for approval.

Claim Docket

\$115,637.31 in claims were paid.

Guests

- Kim Cole from Taproot Brewhouse
 - Requested the closure of the alley North side of the Taproot Building for a Sunday Farmer's market that will run from June to the end of September. Kim requested the road closure to be from 1:00 pm – 5:00 pm. Matt motioned to approve, Eric seconded the motion and the vote passed with a 3-0 vote.
- Adam Cluster owner of Self Storage Near Me
 - Requesting the council provide their opinion regarding allowing commercial businesses in town to have cargo containers on their property.
 - The Council approved providing comments to Matt Sandy at the Kosciusko County Area Plan Commission that they are in favor of cargo containers at commercial locations with a variance but are not in favor of them at any residential locations. Glenn commented they could possibly support a temporary container at a home that experienced a fire or water damage.
- Chelsea Creekmore was on the agenda to present plans for her building located at 117 & 119 N First Street but was not able to attend the meeting due to a family emergency. The council would like Chelsea to present plans at the June meeting for the balcony in question.
- Annie Espinoza emphasized that she wanted to be on the agenda for two reasons.

1. “How does the council feel they are doing for the residents of Pierceton five months into 2024?”
 - Glenn Hall and Eric Trump listed their achievements since taking office January 2024.
 - Working with the RDC to create a spending plan for TIF funds.
 - Meeting regularly with Kosciusko County Chamber to make sure Pierceton has a voice.
 - Meeting with Kosciusko County Commissioners and Council.
 - Attended multiple US 30 Propel meetings.
 - Master Utility Study
 - Making sure the K21 grant money is being spent on the approved improvements.
 - Redesigning the town website.
 - Glenn contacted the county highway and commended them on the paving of Pierceton Road.
 - Keeping in contact with MACOG and OCRA regarding grant opportunities for the town.
 - Meeting with Representative Craig Snow concerning the Industry Retention Initiative money that will be available for the county.
 - Glenn also mentioned that the council’s time has been consumed by one percent of the town concerning a project this council inherited from the previous council.
2. “Rats”
 - Annie mentioned that resident Lee Newswanger felt he was shunned at the April meeting with his complaint. Eric Trump advised that we were in contact with the health department regarding Lee’s previous complaints to them. Matt Brubaker apologized to Lee if he somehow was short. It was advised that any issue brought to the council may not be solved at that meeting but an update would be provided at the following meeting. Since this was the beginning of the meeting, there was no chance for the update at the point this was introduced. Eric did advise that the health department had been to the property.
 - Annie advised Glen as to what his job is.
 - Annie claimed that there is a gossip circle where one person talks to another then to another. She reiterated that they have a gossip circle and “are really good at it”.
 - Glenn responded to Annie’s concerns that the council should have ears to listen.
 - Glenn proclaimed that he is an optimist and has observed in his forty years living in Pierceton and especially the five months in the council that some residents cannot see past their front door and rally the troops for the negative. He stated that even if we

don't agree, we need to work together to find the positives and make things a success.

Approvals

- The Council unanimously approved splitting the cost of the postcards to announce the garage sale days and trash pickup day with the chamber as was done in 2023.
- Eric Trump motioned to approve to donate a \$50 item to the Pierceton Chamber scholarship auction. The motion was seconded and approved with a 3-0 vote.
- Matt Brubaker motioned to approve a three-minute rule for speaking during a council meeting. The motion was seconded and passed with a 3-0 vote.
- The Council approved the paying of three Axon invoices from 2021 which total \$3929.75 and the remaining invoices will be budgeted to pay in 2025.
- A pump at the wastewater plant stopped working. The quote for repair is \$10,000. A new unit is \$9750. Matt Brubaker made a motion to approve the purchase of the new pump. Eric Trump seconded that motion and the purchase was approved with a 3-0 vote.
- The water heater at the Senior Center is not working. The council approved the purchase for the replacement by a 3-0 vote.
- Ordinance 2024-5-1, an ordinance adopting a new employee handbook for the town, was approved by a 3-0 vote. A motion was made by Eric Trump and seconded by Matt Brubaker to forego the two reading rule in order to move forward with the approval and implementation of the new handbook.

Streets, Water, Sewer - Casey Boggs

- The leak on SR 13 has been delayed as the permit for INDOT has not been obtained. The permit is needed as G&G will be hired to do the water line repair and will not do it without the state permit. They also have the equipment that will be able to handle the suction for the amount of water from the leak which the town does not have.
- Provided information regarding the Senior Center water heater which is not working.
- Provided quotes on repair of and a new unit for a pump at the wastewater plant.

Pierceton Police Department – Jim Bumbaugh

- Jim Bumbaugh addressed the council as the town marshal and a resident of the town stating that the council is doing a phenomenal job and he and the other officers appreciate the council's support and professionalism.
- Officer Hasting attended a one-week Crisis Intervention Team training at the Warsaw Police Department.

- Plans are being made for a speed blitz on First Street in the downtown area in the next couple of weeks.
- Officer Jones was recognized on social media for helping a resident change a tire.
- Ordinance for golf carts do not allow them to be driving on SR13, drivers must be at least 16 years old with a valid driver's license and the driver must be able to show financial responsibility for the golf cart.
- The PPD began coverage for Sidney by monitoring traffic and patrolling the streets while in the town.
- Glenn stated that a friend built a new podium for the council and when Glenn asked the cost, the friend said it was a gift in recognition of the coverage in Sidney by the Pierceton Police Department.

Clerk's Report

- The revised employee handbook was presented to the town council.
- Announced upcoming events: Town-wide garage sale, June 7th & 8th and the Spring Trash Pickup Day, June 15th.

Recreation Board Report – Kim Rose

- The Recreation Board elected new officers for 2025.
 - President, Kim Rose
 - Vice-President, Paula Smith
 - Secretary, Georgia Tenney
- The board is looking at adding a flagpole at the Community Park and will possibly use the \$1500 that was donated by the Lion's Club when it disbanded.

Other Business

- Glenn Hall presented an update on the Propel US 30 Project.
 - Several possibilities for the intersection of SR 13 and US 30.
 - Full interchange would essentially wipe out half of downtown which they will not do.
 - Different type of intersection.
 - Reroute SR 13 from South of Pierceton at the "S" curve to the West side of town with the interchange near the current industrial park.
 - Phase 2 discussions are complete.
 - Additional meetings will be listed on the website at propelus30.com and this is also the place residents can submit input.
 - Pierceton is the US 30 East project.
 - Glenn stated he would like to have infrastructure in place for diverted traffic before the work on US 30 begins.

Community Comments

- Social Worker, Amanda Vandermark, stated that she is representing unknown residents who are against the sidewalk project on the East Side of Third Street.
 - Stated residents feel questions are not being answered.
 - Unknown residents that do not live on Third Street say they are affected by the sidewalk but no details to that were provided.
 - Announced that clerk, Myra Mast, had previously advised her that residents need to hire an attorney. Myra acknowledged she had recommended that Ms. Vandermark hire an attorney due to accusations she had made via email to Myra. Amanda stated she was asking basic questions but continued by making accusations.
 - Low to moderate income residents will assume liability for the sidewalks.
 - Questioned way the sidewalk was going on Third Street but then stated that the original trail plan was the inspiration but it was a plan from ten years ago.
 - Questioned placing a sidewalk where the sewer lines are before the utility study.
 - Stated NIPSCO has not been contacted yet regarding utility poles.
 - Questioned Matt Brubaker regarding a previous comment that there was no other project the funds could be used for and compared that to the projects other communities had chosen.
 - Amy Roe who was the coordinator for the HELP program tried to address the question and explain the process and how each community selected members to steering committees who presented project ideas to their councils and the councils voted on what projects to add to the Strategic Investment Plans.
 - Kim Rose interrupted Amy stating she did not understand anything Amy was saying.
 - Amy redirected and tried to simplify what she was trying to get across but was consistently interrupted by Amanda Vandermark. Amy did explain how there was an event that was held at the Community Building to get community input but did not have a good turnout. A survey was also put out that was left open for “an eternity” for input and ideas. Amy explained that all projects were presented to and approved by the council and each community had different projects in their Strategic Investment Plan and only those projects were approved by OCRA for the grant. The Pierceton council originally approved the Pole Barn Rec Center but due to community opposition, that was dropped and the sidewalk project was approved.

- Amanda interrupted Amy as she was explaining the issue with water lines that may need replaced in the downtown area and why that area was not chosen for sidewalks. Glenn stepped in at this point to allow other residents to comment.
- Stephanie Campbell commented that she felt residents were disrespecting Amy Roe as she tried to explain the project. David Hartup said he didn't know what Amy was saying.
- Stephanie Campbell also advised that the Christmas Committed sold slices of pie at the Fire Department Fish Fry and raised \$800. She advised also that the laundry soap fundraiser for the Pierceton Youth League raised \$4500.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Council, by a motion duly made and seconded, the meeting adjourned at 8:20 pm. The next general meeting will be at 6:30 pm on June 10, 2024, at the Pierceton Community Building.

Minutes Submitted by Myra Mast, Clerk-Treasurer.

Council President

Clerk-Treasurer