

**TOWN OF
DARMSTADT, INDIANA**

SETTLED 1822

INCORPORATED 1973

**Minutes of
December 8th 2020**

These minutes are not intended to be a verbatim transcript.

TOWN COUNCIL

Paul Freeman, President
Aaron Kendall, Council Member
Ken Godeke, Council Member
Ray Engler, Council Member

CLERK-TREASURER

Mallory Lowe
P. O. Box 20
Darmstadt, In 47618

Board president, Paul Freeman, called the town meeting to order at 7:30pm. In attendance were President Paul Freeman, Clerk-Treasurer Mallory Lowe, Council members Ken Godeke and Ray Engler. Also present was Superintendent Jeff Goerges, Assistant Superintendent Aaron Enlow and Attorney Jason Spindler. Council member Aaron Kendall attended via phone.

Kendall made a motion, seconded by Engler to accept the minutes from last month. Motion passed 4-0 voice vote. Engler made a motion, seconded by Godeke to approve last month's financial report. Motion passed 4-0 voice vote. Godeke made a motion, seconded by Engler to approve the accounts payable claims. Motion passed 4-0 voice vote.

CLERK-TREASURER'S REPORT:

Mallory Lowe stated as she was filing and paying the federal and state payroll last week, she reviewed our IRS lookback period. Over the last 4 quarters we've gone over the \$50k threshold. It was \$50,400 you might know. So, that throws us from being a monthly depositor into being a semi-weekly depositor for next year and probably thereafter. We've been a monthly federal tax depositor since 1973 except for one time a couple years ago. Lowe advised council, as you know, we have 7 employees- 5 are paid monthly, 2 are paid biweekly. (I do 3-4 payrolls a month) So with this new deposit schedule she will also be doing 3-4 federal tax deposits a month instead of one. Lowe stated she will most likely contact our AIM accounting rep or SBOA to make sure these changes and schedule will be correct. Lowe commented to council she wanted to let everyone know the changes as there will be several more tax entries than before on our monthly bills report at the meetings next year.

Lowe noted she continues to work and train with Keystone on the new town software program, Key Fund, which replaced the Key Budget program the town has had for last 11 years. Lowe advised it's not very user friendly but does show real time balances finally. Lowe noted that this new program is definitely made for auditors more than it is for users.

Lowe advised council that apparently there had been a breach on Jeff's town credit card. Lowe advised she was not notified or made aware of this until receiving a letter in the mail saying there had been fraudulent charges and Chase would be sending a new card. Lowe stated we have two town credit cards on the same account. Each card has its own number so purchases can be organized and tracked per card. Lowe advised that Jeff assured her the latest credit card statement was correct, they went over every transaction, no fraudulent charges were on there, they had all been corrected and removed before receiving our statement. Lowe stated she and Jeff attached all the receipts and that Jeff was the only one who made any purchases on the card last month.

In the Utility Department: Lowe advised our new meter reading measurements started a couple weeks ago with the first sewer bills being mailed out with meter readings in the 100's instead of 1,000s. Lowe stated that she noted the change in the comment section of the sewer bills. Lowe advised she had a few calls concerning the new billing format and calculations but for the most part all went well. Lowe noted that our software vendor made the software changes for the 400 meter readings we receive from Evansville but Lowe still has to manually calculate the meter readings from German township Water every month since they measure to the 10's of gallons. Lowe advised that we only have 32 customers with that water company. Lowe stated Monthly sewer billing takes about ½ a day to complete if there are no calculation or equipment issues.

Lowe advised she continues to pay many bills by eft to arrive on time especially with mail delays lately, council still approves. Lowe stated she will be preparing all the sewer liens, having them recorded at the recorder's office and placed on the 2021 property taxes. The deadline to get those recorded liens to the auditor's office is January 15th.

Lowe stated as it looks now, there will be about 14 liens filed unless they pay in the next couple weeks. Lowe will also get with Jeff to receive data for any more sewer inspection credits that she will need to apply to customer accounts before preparing and calculating the December sewer bills to be mail out last week of the month.

In General Town Items: Lowe advised she will be beginning year end tasks soon which includes recording our December Settlement in all the different funds properly, closing out December and then year-end on our Keystone Software, preparing the huge Annual Report for the State Board of Accounts on the State Gateway Program and then completing W2's and W3 for our taxes. Lowe also advised that next month will be our first meeting of the year and one of council's duties is to vote on who will be the 2021 council president.

Old Business

1. Sewer Pump Inspections/Outflow Update

Jeff noted that they have not done sewer inspections lately. Freeman asked how many have been completed. Jeff advised he believes about 100 have been completed since they've started but not many lately. Freeman noted that with the covid and the shutdowns that we may need to postpone until spring to continue the inspections. Spindler advised that we notify the residents that inspections will be temporarily halted.

2. Bank Building Update

Aaron Kendall advised that the convenience store people backed out after learning the town would not help with the \$8k grease trap installation. They had agreed to \$1500 a month for a 3 year lease plus pay insurance and taxes. Kendall suggested we offer them a couple months free rent in exchange for the grease trap if they are still interested. Council discussed options. Kendall advised that he believes we should keep the property since it's paid for and continue receiving offers and negotiations. Council will continue to discuss and be open to offers.

3. Update on Railroad Street/Repairs

Engler advised he is still working with Vanderburgh county on the issue and will continue to pursue.

New Business

1. 2021 Payroll Ordinance

Freeman presented to council his proposal to cut the annual bonuses this year down to \$500 for Jeff Goerges, \$250 for Aaron Enlow and in addition change the family health insurance stipend. Freeman also proposed a payroll increase of 1.5% for the two maintenance positions including the Clerk-Treasurer's position. Lowe stated that we had not discussed any of this, asked if the other council members were aware of these proposed cuts, why it wasn't discussed openly, did council realize this was \$1,000 cut to Aaron's health stipend. Freeman's proposed changes to the town's current health insurance stipend for the two Maintenance positions were from the current \$9000 for family and \$7,560 individual, to a flat \$8,000 annually and do away with the family and independent classifications. Lowe asked why she continues to be denied and excluded from the same equal benefits of Health and Retirement that other town clerks receive. There was discussion amongst council, clerk, maintenance and residents. Council member Engler stated he was unaware that the Clerk-Treasurer's position was not receiving any benefits. Aaron Enlow also voiced his concerns that none of this had been discussed in an open forum and asked what the reasons were. Jeff Goerges advised that he had asked for an open meeting with the entire town board and it never happened. Jeff stated he wanted the town to be aware of what was going on, openly and have other council members opinions besides just Paul Freemans. Engler advised that he values the work Lowe does and that she shouldn't feel that she's getting slighted. Ray advised he would like to have a chance to review the numbers before making decisions. Aaron Kendall asked Mallory Lowe how far off this was from the regular percentage. Spindler answered that her raises for the years prior had been uniform. Spindler stated that Mallory Lowe can forward AIM's Annual State Payroll Data to the council for comparison and review. Ken Godeke noted that he only received an email last night before the meeting and asked if any of the council members had discussed this. Spindler advised we needed to further discuss and should continue this public meeting at a future date when everyone has had the opportunity to discuss openly and gather information. Spindler set the date of Tuesday, December 22nd at 2pm to continue this meeting remotely but publicly, Spindler will be the moderator and we would not adjourn tonight.

2. Azteca Update

Engler advised that he has spoke with Commonwealth Engineers about the proposed permit. The deadline is December 18th for residents to send their comments to IDEM.

3. Solid Waste Board Appointee for 2021

Ken Godeke agreed he would continue to attend the Solid Waste Board meetings for 2021. Lowe will notify Jean Carlson at the Vanderburgh Solid Waste Board that Godeke will continue to serve on that board.

4. Off Duty Sheriff Patrols – Eric Gries

Eric Gries advised that he has been reviewing our traffic reports from the county along with average speeds. Eric stated he looked into contracting with the Vanderburgh County Sheriff Department and they said they could do 4 hour shifts at \$30 an hour. Eric noted the Sheriff Deputy could patrol the town and any particular streets we request.

Superintendent Report

Jeff Goerges advised that last month we used 2.2 million gallons through the mag meters, they had 9 service calls this month so far and they had 11 service calls last month. Jeff noted they had the clutch kit replaced on the tractor. Jeff noted that 2 more houses are going in, one on Inglefield Road and Hoing Road. Jeff stated that he hired someone to repair the roof on the Old State Road house, the guy had covid so it should be completed after he is well.

Fire Dept Report

Brandon Zimmer emailed his report to Mallory Lowe since he was out of town. Freeman read it out loud.

Deputy Sheriff Report

Not present

Board member comments

No further comments

Attorney comments

Jason Spindler advised the council would continue their discussion and voting on the salary ordinance Dec 22 at 2pm and that it would be done remotely. Spindler will send out the call-in information and moderate the meeting.

Resident comments

Mark Stocker advised that the road is washing out under the road at Martin Road. Mark stated that the rain rolls hard down the road by Butts house and starting to wash out quite a bit. Mark suggested putting in some rip rap. Aaron Enlow advised that the area has already been repaired. Mark thanked them and will go by and look.

Mark Lowe asked the other council members what they thought about the fact that the town clerk does not receive the retirement or health benefits that the guys or other town clerks in the state receive. Ray Engler replied he was not aware until tonight.

Mark Stocker stated that anytime he's called Mallory Lowe with town questions she's always been right on it. Stocker advised that if anyone comes to these meetings even one time you know who is the main person is here, it's her. Stocker stated that she has all the information the council needs so that they can also do their job. Stocker said Lowe should have the 5% because it's based on performance and her performance is great. Stocker told council if you lose her, you're going to lose a real wheel, he said as a taxpayer that is what he has to say about that.

Gary Schmitt asked what would be done with the big dead tree that Halter Tree service left on Martin Road. Jeff noted that the town will take it down unless he wanted to. Gary asked what is going to be done about the salvage yard on the corner of Hoing. Jeff advised that Aaron Kendall forwarded us information from Ron London at Area Plan that they have been working on the property, visiting, and now fining the homeowner for the vast number of vehicles.

Kate Potter mentioned she would still like to purchase the bank building. Kate stated she continues to put in offers and has raised her offer but to no avail. She has contacted Kyle and Aaron. Kate stated that a big grease trap is not needed for that small of a building, that a building that size only needs an above ground grease trap.

Mark Stocker advised that he doesn't think the town realizes what a jewel we have in Kate, that she has put Darmstadt back on the map with all of her community events and weekend markets.

The meeting was suspended until Tuesday, December 22nd at 2pm remotely.

Attest:

Mallory Lowe

