SHELBURN TOWN COUNCIL
SHELBURN TOWN HALL
June 11, 2024 at 6:00pm

The meeting was called to order at 6:00pm with council members Aaron Lewis, Jared Miller, Alex Norris, and Noah J. Southwood in attendance.

The minutes from May 14, 2024 were approved and signed by the board.

Julie Hart and Ryan Keller of THRIVE West Central were present to discuss possible opportunities for the town's empty properties they own. They discussed a Market Potential Analysis of Sullivan County that would need to be done prior to moving forward with any plans. The Analysis costs $18,000 and they're hoping CRANE Navel Base may pay for it or Sullivan County. They will keep the Town updated on the progress.

Council President Noah J. Southwood made a motion to allow Dustin Geatches to purchase a motor for a digester blower, Seconded by Council Member Aaron Lewis. All in Favor.

The discussion of expanding the size of a water line due to multiple houses on the line at 550N and 100E was discussed. Council Member Aaron Lewis is going to get with Foreman Joel Miller and make a game plan on what needs to be done.

Council President Noah J. Southwood made a motion to allow Joel to purchase a cutting saw for $4500, Seconded by Council Member Alex Norris. All in Favor.

Council Member Alex Norris, who is also the Fire Chief, brought up that he would like to change the current Fire Ordinance Violation amount from $50 to $500 per illegal burn. Council President Noah J. Southwood suggested they reach out to Terry Modesitt to have him write up an ordinance to do so. Clerk-Treasurer Melissa Copeland asked if she could reach out to other towns to see if there was already a similar ordinance out there that they could use and just have Terry review it to see if it would work for Shelburn to save in attorney fees.

Council President Noah J. Southwood made a motion to adopt Ordinance 2024-06-11-01 Capital Asset Policy for the Town of Shelburn, Seconded by Council Member Noah J. Southwood.

Town Marshal Matthew Price was in attendance and gave the Town and Council an update on the Property Ordinance Violation Warnings he sent out back in May. Five letters came back vacant, one came back returned, and eleven were signed and received. Marshal Price is going to reach out to several lawn care services to attempt to get the properties cleaned up. He will continue to update the Town and the Council on the progress made at these properties.

A discussion began about properties located at 111 W. Mill St and 215 W Maple St. Council President Noah J. Southwood would like to see these properties torn down and cleaned up. There were at least five properties that were vacant and needed to be attended to but these properties he felt were the most severe. Council Member Aaron Lewis made a motion to move forward in tearing down and cleaning up these properties. Seconded by Council Member Noah J. Southwood. All in Favor. Clerk-Treasurer Melissa Copeland asked Town Marshal Matthew Price to please get her a copy of the ordinance violation letters and then she would move forward in the process of advertising for property clean up.

At previous Town Council Meetings, Council President Noah J. Southwood expressed his issue with allowing people to comment freely on the Town's Facebook Page. In May's meeting, the Council Voted 3-1 to turn off comments on the Town's Facebook Page. Since then, it has been discovered that you can not turn comments off on a Public Business Facebook Page, but you can enter "key words" that if

Billing Clerk Liz Miller filled out a "Request to Speak Form" and wanted to know if the Council would consider closing the Town Hall/Water Office on June 13th in Observance of the Juneteenth Holiday. She mentioned that banks and post office were closed, and that it is a Federal Holiday which is also recognized by the State of Indiana. Council Member Alex Norris mentioned that the workers would rather have Christmas Eve off instead. The hours on Christmas Eve are currently 8am-Noon. Council Member Alex Norris made a motion to add Juneteenth as a recognized holiday and Christmas Eve, giving both as paid days off. Seconded by Council Member Aaron Lewis. All in Favor. This will take effect immediately and Clerk-Treasurer Melissa Copeland will contact New Focus HR to update the Employee Handbook.

Council President Noah J. Southwood brought up that while the employee handbook was mentioned, he would like to bring up that he feels that no unauthorized people should be inside Town Vehicles. Then the discussion of fuel consumption was brought up and the discussion began that he felt town vehicles needed to be parked at the Garage when not on duty. He mentioned this was only for the town workers, and not the Town Marshal. The decision was made effective of as now, no unauthorized people should be in the Town Vehicles. The discussion on take home vehicles was tabled until the next meeting.

Council President Noah J. Southwood brought up the contract with Local Government Services, which is a woman owned company by former Clerk-Treasurers Suzy Bass and Janet Alexander. This company was hired on a contract basis in the Summer of 2022 by the previous Town Council to assist the then Interim Clerk Treasurer Jane Landry with the 2023 budget. Their contract was renewed in the Fall of 2023 by the previous Town Council at a rate of $150 per hour to allow them to assist Clerk-Treasurer Melissa Copeland with any tasks she may need help with. Noah J. Southwood stated that after two years Melissa should know how to do her job and he felt they were no longer needed, and he wanted to know what exactly they did for the Town of Shelburn. Clerk-Treasurer Melissa Copeland stated she has never used them for day-to-day tasks and only uses them to help her with the large tasks that she only does once a year, like the Budget and Annual Financial Report. She gave the break down of money spent over the years: For July 2022-December 2022, $1456.00, For all of 2023 $2604.00, and for 2024 so far, $882.00. Clerk-Tresurer Melissa Copeland mentioned that it is $150 an hour but it's like an attorney and you only pay them when you use them. She mentioned that as of the end of May we've already spent over $4200 with Town Attorney Terry Modesitt, which is already more than we spent the entire 2023 year . Clerk-Treasurer Melissa Copeland mentioned she felt this was another personal attack against her and against the women who own this business because they are Noah J. Southwood's competitors as well as one of the ladies testified in court on Melissa's behalf.
An argument ensued after Council Member Jared Miller spoke up and requested that the council just move on in which Mr. Southwood exclaimed "You're protecting her!" and Jared Miller said, "I'm not protecting anyone, this is about the town." A motion was made by Council Member Jared Miller to adjourn the meeting early, Aaron Lewis seconded the motion to adjourn. The Council president did not call it to a vote but instead told Council Member Jared Miller to "Get Mad!" The other council members and all residents got up and left the meeting. And the meeting ended.

Noah J. Southwood, President

Aaron Lewis, Vice President

Jared Miller

Alex Norris