Town Council of Merrillville
7820 Broadway Ave - Merrillville, IN 46410
Town Council Meeting Minutes of the Regular Meeting of
December 23, 2025, 6:30 P.M.

CALL TO ORDER: President Rick Bella called the meeting to order at 6:30 P.M.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: The Pledge of Allegiance to the United States Flag was led by President Rick Bella.

INVOCATION/MOMENT OF SILENCE: A brief invocation was given, along with a moment of silence, by Pastor Robert Szoke of Impact Church.

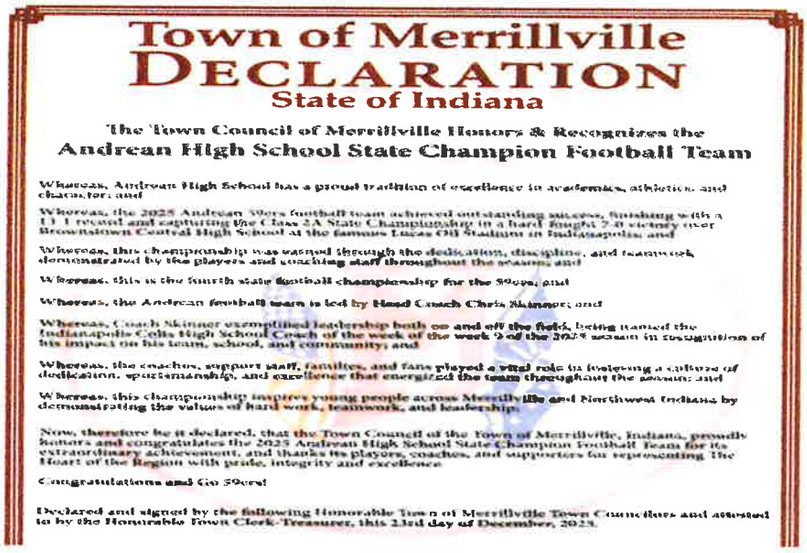
ROLL CALL of COUNCIL: – Present at the meeting were Councilors Rhonda Neal, Shauna Haynes-Edwards, Leona Chandler-Felton, Shawn Pettit, Keesha Hardaway, and Rick Bella. Clerk-Treasurer Eric January was present to memorialize the proceedings. A quorum was attained.

Councilor Margaret Uselac was absent.

PETITIONS, COMMUNICATIONS, ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS, AND REMONSTRATIONS:

- **Special Presentation:**
  President Rick Bella, Councilor Shawn Pettit, and Town Manager Griffin introduced Director Sheila Shine of Building and Planning, who was recognized by the Building Trades and Construction Council with a service to labor award for her extraordinary work in supporting growth, work, and integrity of the building trades and keeping unions strong throughout the year. Ms. Shine was presented with flowers from the Town Council of Merrillville.

- **Andrean High School Football Team Recognition:**
  The following declaration was read into the record by Councilor Shawn Pettit regarding the Andrean High School State Champion Football Team:



Town of Merrillville
DECLARATION
State of Indiana

The Town Council of Merrillville Honors & Recognizes the Andrean High School State Champion Football Team

Whereas, Andrean High School has a proud tradition of excellence in academics, athletics, and character; and

Whereas, the 2025 Andrean Wave football team achieved outstanding success, finishing with a 13-1 record and capturing the Class 2A State Championship in a hard fought 2-0 victory over Brownstown Central High School at the famous Lucas Oil Stadium in Indianapolis; and

Whereas, this championship was earned through the dedication, discipline, and teamwork demonstrated by the players and coaching staff throughout the season; and

Whereas, this is the fourth state football championship for the 90cys; and

Whereas, the Andrean football team is led by Head Coach Chris Skinner; and

Whereas, Coach Skinner exemplified leadership both on and off the field, being named the Indianapolis Colts High School Coach of the week of the week 2 of the 2025 season in recognition of his impact on his team, school, and community; and

Whereas, the coaches, support staff, families, and fans played a vital role in fostering a culture of dedication, sportsmanship, and excellence that energized the team throughout the season; and

Whereas, this championship inspires young people across Merrillville and Northwest Indiana by demonstrating the values of hard work, teamwork, and leadership.

Now, therefore be it declared, that the Town Council of the Town of Merrillville, Indiana, proudly honors and congratulates the 2025 Andrean High School State Champion Football Team for its extraordinary achievement, and thanks its players, coaches, and supporters for representing The Heart of the Region with pride, integrity and excellence.

Congratulations and Go 90cys!

Declared and signed by the following Honorable Town of Merrillville Town Councilors and attested to by the Honorable Town Clerk-Treasurer, this 23rd day of December, 2025.

It was moved by Councilor Pettit and seconded by Councilor Chandler-Felton to approve the declaration.

Upon a voice vote, the motion passed. The declaration was approved.

Coach Chris Skinner thanked the council on behalf of Andrean High School.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:
Public comments were made at the meeting. A copy of the video from the Town Council Meeting held on December 23, 2025, has been uploaded to the Town's website at: https://www.merrillville.in.gov/government/town_council/town_council_meetings.php.

MOTIONS ON THE TABLE:
Ordinance 25-28 (Discussion and Roll Call Vote)
An Ordinance Amending The Merrillville Municipal Code, Incorporating Statutory Language for The Office of Town Clerk-Treasurer, Clarifying duties as Clerk of the Legislative Body.

It was moved by Councilor Haynes-Edwards and seconded by Councilor Pettit to remove Ordinance 25-28 from the table.

Upon a voice vote, the motion passed. Ordinance 25-28 was removed from the table.

President Bella stated that action will be taken up under General Orders for Ordinance 25-28

CONSENT AGENDA:

- Accounts Payable Register Voucher Approval for December 23rd, 2025
- ARP Accounts Payable Register Voucher Approval for December 23rd, 2025
- Approval of Town Council Meeting Minutes of December 9, 2025

It was moved by Councilor Pettit and seconded by Councilor Chandler-Felton to approve the consent agenda.

Clerk-Treasurer Eric January requested that **warrant number 69004, for $800.00,** be added back to the Consent Agenda for approval. It was removed from the consent agenda at the December 9th Town Council Meeting.

Upon a question from President Bella regarding verbiage, Town Attorney Svetanoff responded that the warrant is being added to the consent agenda that was previously removed at the December 9th Town Council Meeting.

Upon a question from President Bella regarding Councilor Pettit's motion, standing with the addition of the warrant that was removed at the December 9th Town Council Meeting, Councilor Pettit responded that his motion still stands. Councilor Chandler-Felton also stated her second stand.

Upon a voice vote, the motion passed. The consent agenda was approved.

SPECIAL ORDERS:

a) A Public Hearing on Matters which require legal notice: Ord 25-38 Additional Appropriation:

i. Verification by Town Attorney of the validity of proof of publication dated December 13th, 2025, for the hearing date of 12.23.25.



CHICAGO TRIBUNE

media group

Proof of Publication



CHICAGO TRIBUNE

media group

NOTICE TO TAXPAYERS OF PROPOSED ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATIONS TOWN of MERRILLVILLE, INDIANA

Attorney Svetanoff reported that he has reviewed the Proof of Publication, and everything is in order and conforms with the Indiana Code. The council may proceed with the public hearing.

Upon a question from President Bella regarding explaining Ordinance 25-38, Town Manager Griffin responded that he would defer to Financial Advisor Hudson. Financial Advisor Hudson explained Ordinance 25-38.

ii. **Public Hearing Open:**
President Bella opened the hearing for Ordinance 25-38. There were no public comments.

iii. **Public Hearing Closed:**
President Bella closed the public hearing for Ordinance 25-38 and stated that action will be taken up under General Orders for this ordinance.

b) **Annual Election of Town Officers:**

- **Town Council President 2026:**
  - President Bella opened the nominations for President.
  - Councilor Pettit nominated Councilor Rick Bella for Town Council President. There were no other nominations.
  - **It was moved by Councilor Pettit and seconded by Councilor Chandler-Felton to close nominations and cast a unanimous ballot for Councilor Rick Bella. Upon a voice vote, the motion passed. The nominations were closed, and Councilor Rick Bella was unanimously approved as President.**

- **Town Council Vice President 2026:**
  - President Bella opened the nominations for Vice President.
  - Councilor Pettit nominated Councilor Rhonda Neal for Town Council Vice President. There were no other nominations.
  - **It was moved by Councilor Chandler-Felton and seconded by Councilor Haynes-Edwards to close nominations and cast a unanimous ballot for Councilor Rhonda Neal. Upon a voice vote, the motion passed. The nominations were closed, and Councilor Rhonda Neal was unanimously approved as Vice President.**

BZA & LARGE GATHERING ACTIONS:

Petitioner: Khaled Al Shaikh
Owner: Canton, LLC
Request: Special Exception Approval
Purpose: To allow a Tire Service Facility
Location: 1140 W. Lincoln Highway
Zoning: C-3, Highway Commercial Zoning District

Planning and Building Director Sheila Shine gave an overview of the business. She also reported that the ABZA approved the special exception with conditions to improve the parking lot, fence, and landscaping.

The Petitioner, Khaled Al Shaikh, stated that he would comply with the conditions and explained the nature of his business.

Upon a question from Town Attorney Svetanoff regarding the nature of the business at the property, the Petitioner responded that his business fixes tires, replaces tires, and performs wheel alignment and balancing.

Upon a question from Town Attorney Svetanoff regarding the storing of tires, the Petitioner responded that tires are stored within the environmental guidelines.

Director Shine informed the council that the Petitioner will be purchasing the property.

It was moved by Councilor Chandler-Felton and seconded by Councilor Haynes-Edwards to approve the BZA Special Exception with the BZA's conditions.

Vice President Neal voiced her concern regarding the landscaping. The Petitioner reiterated that he is going to make improvements as one of the conditions for approval.

Director Shine commented that the BZA was adamant that the Petitioner would not be approved for a business license until the paving, fencing, and landscaping were completed.

Upon a roll call vote, there were six affirmatives and no negatives. Councilors Shauna Haynes-Edwards, Leona Chandler-Felton, Shawn Pettit, Keesha Hardaway, and Rick Bella voted in the affirmative. The motion passed. The BZA Special Exception was approved.

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS:

***BUDGET & FINANCE*—NEAL**— Vice President Neal had nothing to report.

STREET DEPARTMENT & PARK MAINTENANCE - UZELAC– Councilor Uzelac was absent.

Upon a question from President Bella regarding a report, Town Manager Griffin responded that he has nothing from Councilor Uzelac, but Director Steve King is here to report under the Department Heads section on the agenda.

Upon a question from Vice President Neal regarding the speed humps, Director King responded that all the speed humps have been removed.

COUNCIL AFFAIRS—PETTIT—Councilor Pettit had nothing to report.

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE- HARDAWAY- Councilor Hardaway had nothing to report.

ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS- UZELAC – Councilor Uzelac was absent.

Upon a question from President Bella regarding a report, Town Manager Griffith and Director Matthew Lake had nothing to report.

PUBLIC SAFETY—HARDAWAY—Councilor Hardaway had nothing to report.

ELECTIONS, PUBLIC RELATIONS, & TOWN BEAUTIFICATION - NEAL- Vice President Neal had nothing to report.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT-PETTIT – Councilor Pettit had nothing to report.

UTILITY LIAISON –CHANDLER-FELTON – Councilor Chandler-Felton had nothing to report.

PARKS AND DEAN & BARBARA WHITE COMMUNITY CENTER - PETTIT – Councilor Pettit stated that he would defer to Jerry McCartney for the report.

SPECIAL COMMITTEES

ABANDONED-BLIGHTED PROPERTIES - HAYNES-EDWARDS & CHANDLER-FELTON– Councilor Haynes-Edwards had nothing to report.

SPECIAL TOWN PROJECTS – HAYNES-EDWARDS – Councilor Haynes-Edwards reported on the following event:

- **2025 Holiday Home Decorating Contest** - There were over 1,500 votes (no duplicates), and the winners have been announced on the Town's website, social media, and the mymerrillville app. The winner will be recognized at the Town Council Meeting.

SEMI-QUINCENTENNIAL COMMITTEE - HAYNES-EDWARDS – Councilor Haynes-Edwards reported that the meeting will be on December 29, 2025.

DEPARTMENT & COMMISSION REPORTS:

NORTHERN INDIANA REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION-HARDAWAY – Councilor Hardaway had nothing to report.

LAKE COUNTY SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT - NEAL - Vice President Neal reported that a meeting was held last week because the board had a quorum. The next meeting is scheduled for January 2026, where pertinent information will be given out.

THE SHARED ETHICS ENTITY-HARDAWAY – Councilor Hardway had nothing to report.

FIRE TERRITORY BOARD - NEAL & HARDAWAY – Vice President Neal and Councilor Hardaway had nothing to report.

CLERK-TREASURER OFFICE - JANUARY – Clerk-Treasurer Eric January reported on the following for November 30, 2025:

- **Collections** - (Comprises Court, Fire Department, General Fund, Obligated & Non-Obligated Funds, Police Department, RDA, Stormwater, and other Funds) $72,560,661.42. On January 31,

2025, the Town had $46 351,22, the largest part of our growth for 2025 came from bond closings.

- **Bond Closing Funds–** The Town has $37,322,718.80. We have interest payments, and most of the funds are already obligated.
- **Food & Beverage Tax Funds –** The Town has $2,474,286.10. We just received another check on December 11th, 2025.
- **Payroll** – All payroll payments have been on time.

STORMWATER MANAGEMENT RESOURCES-LAKE – Director Matthew Lake reported on the following updates:

- **Stormwater Master Plan-** The plan is being finalized with Christopher Burke Engineering. After the plan is complete, we will be submitting applications for two projects, coming up in Spring 2025, to the Little Calumet River Basin.
- **Digitizing of Files** – This project is almost complete with Archaic of Crown Point.
- **Resolution** – We are preparing a resolution for the board's approval that corresponds with Ordinance 25-40. We anticipate the resolution passing in January 2026.

SSCVA – DEANN PATENA - No Report

DEPARTMENT REPORTS/ TOWN MANAGER:

Director Jerry McCartney – Parks and Recreation Department
Director McCartney reported on the following:

- **Youth Winter Basketball League** – Registration is open.
- **Adult Winter Volleyball** – Registration is open.
- **Family Fun Days** – The days are on Saturdays, January 10th, 17th, and 24th.

Assistant Chief of Police Vasel– Police Department
Assistant Chief Vassel reported the following statistics for November 2025:

- **Calls for Service** – 2,450
- **Adult Arrest** – 96
- **Traffic Stops** – 432 resulting in 376 citations and 275 warnings.

Assistant Chief Vasel also reported that there has been a reduction in crimes, and a report will be given in January 2026 regarding this reduction. The Merrillville Police Department is hiring, and the posting for certified officers is listed on the Town's website. The deadline is January 23, 2026.

Director Shine – Building and Planning
Director Sheila Shine had nothing to report.

Director King - Street Department
Director Steve King had nothing to report.

Town Manager Griffin – Town Administration
Town Manager Griffin reported on the following:

- **Monthly Reports** – Town Manager Griffin reported that the staff report has been given to the council members and Clerk-Treasurer Eric January.

GENERAL ORDERS

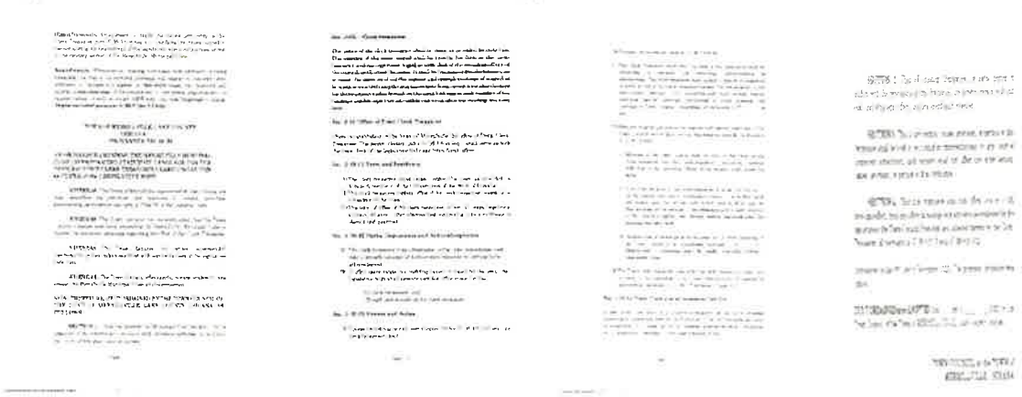
A. **Ordinances: (Discussion and Roll Call Vote):**

Zoning: (Motion to adopt or reject; confer IC 36-5-2-10(d): **NONE**

First Reading: **Ordinance (Discussion and Roll Call Vote):**

Ordinance 25-28 (Discussion and Roll Call Vote)
An Ordinance Amending The Merrillville Municipal Code, Incorporating Statutory Language for The Office of Town Clerk-Treasurer, Clarifying duties as Clerk of the Legislative Body.

-THIS SECTION LEFT BLANK-



Town Manager Griffin explained Ordinance 25-28 and requested that the rules be suspended to hear the ordinance on second and final reading.

It was moved by Vice President Neal and seconded by Councilor Chandler-Felton to approve Ordinance 25-28 on first reading.

Clerk-Treasurer Eric January commented that the clarifying language pertained to the need to implement electronic systems, as attending all these meetings in person is impossible. Clerk-Treasurer Eric January requested that the language regarding the equipment be added to section C of Ordinance 25-28.

Upon a question from President Bella regarding the electronics being added to Ordinance 25-28 being on the record in the minutes, Town Attorney Svetanoff responded that being on record is sufficient.

Upon arrival of the equipment, Town Manager Griffin stated that he would amend Ordinance 25-28. Town Attorney Svetanoff stated that we can move forward tonight with it being in the record.

Upon a roll call vote, there were six affirmatives and no negatives. Councilors Shauna Haynes-Edwards, Leona Chandler-Felton, Shawn Pettit, Keesha Hardaway, and Rick Bella voted in the affirmative. There were no negatives. The motion passed. Ordinance 25-28 was on first reading.

It was moved by Vice President Neal and seconded by Councilor Haynes-Edwards to suspend the rules and read Ordinance 25-28 on second and final reading.

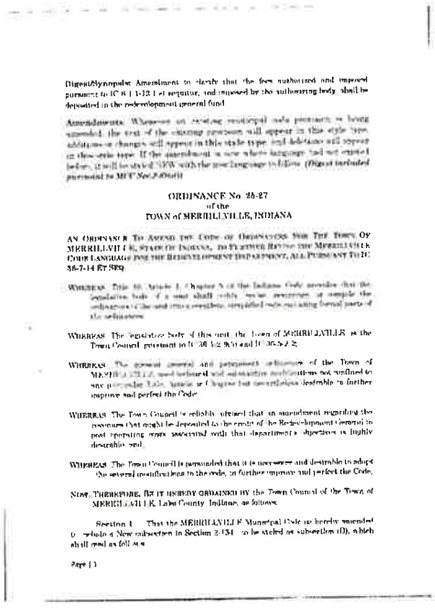
Upon a roll call vote, there were six affirmatives and no negatives. Councilors Shauna Haynes-Edwards, Leona Chandler-Felton, Shawn Pettit, Keesha Hardaway, and Rick Bella voted in the affirmative. There were no negatives. The rules were suspended to read Ordinance 25-28 on second and final reading.

It was moved by Vice President Neal and seconded by Councilor Haynes-Edwards to approve Ordinance 25-28 on second and final reading.

Upon a roll call vote, there were six affirmatives and no negatives. Councilors Shauna Haynes-Edwards, Leona Chandler-Felton, Shawn Pettit, Keesha Hardaway, and Rick Bella voted in the affirmative. There were no negatives. The motion passed. The ordinance was approved on its second and final reading.

Second Reading: (Discussion, Public Comments Only If Required & Roll Call Vote):

Ordinance 25-27 (Discussion & Roll Call Vote)
An Ordinance to Amend the Code of Ordinances for the Town of Merrillville, State of Indiana, to Further Revise the Merrillville Code Language for the Redevelopment Department, all pursuant to I.C. 36-7-14, et seq.



Digest/Synopsis: Amendment to clarify that the fees authorized and imposed pursuant to IC 6-1.1-12.1 et seqnitur, and imposed by the authorizing body, shall be deposited in the redevelopment general fund.

Amendments: Whenever an existing municipal code provision is being amended, the text of the existing provision will appear in this style type, additions or changes will appear in this style type, and deletions will appear in this style type. If the amendment is new where language had not existed before, it will be styled NEW with the new language to follow. (Digest included pursuant to MCC Sec.2-[illegible])

ORDINANCE No. 25-27
of the
TOWN of MERRILLVILLE, INDIANA

AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE CODE OF ORDINANCES FOR THE TOWN OF MERRILLVILLE, STATE OF INDIANA, TO FURTHER REVISE THE MERRILLVILLE CODE LANGUAGE FOR THE REDEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT, ALL PURSUANT TO IC 36-7-14 ET SEQ.

WHEREAS: This 36, Article 1, Chapter 5 of the Indiana Code provides that the legislative body of a unit shall [illegible] or compile the ordinances of the unit into a complete, unified code containing formal parts of the ordinances.

WHEREAS: The legislative body of this unit, the Town of MERRILLVILLE, is the Town Council, pursuant to IC 36-1-2-9(b) and IC 36-5-2-2.

WHEREAS: The present general and permanent ordinances of the Town of MERRILLVILLE, used behavioral and substantive modifications not confined to any particular Code, Article or Chapter but nevertheless desirable to further improve and perfect the Code.

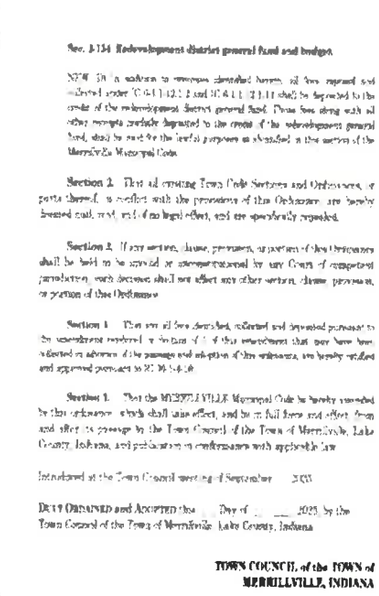
WHEREAS: The Town Council is reliably advised that an amendment regarding the provisions that might be deposited to the credit of the Redevelopment General to post operating costs associated with that department's objectives is highly desirable and,

WHEREAS: The Town Council is persuaded that it is necessary and desirable to adopt the several modifications to the code, to further improve and perfect the Code.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY ORDAINED BY the Town Council of the Town of MERRILLVILLE, Lake County, Indiana, as follows:

Section 1. That the MERRILLVILLE Municipal Code is hereby amended to include a New subsection to Section 2-134 to be styled as subsection (D), which shall read as follows:

Page 1 [illegible]



Sec. 2-134 Redevelopment district general fund and budget.

NEW: In addition to revenues identified herein, all fees imposed and collected under IC 6-1.1-12.1 2 and IC 6-1.1-12.1-11 shall be deposited to the credit of the redevelopment district general fund. These fees along with all other receipts credible deposited to the credit of the redevelopment general fund, shall be used for the lawful purposes as identified in this section of the Merrillville Municipal Code.

Section 2. That all existing Town Code Sections and Ordinances, or parts thereof, in conflict with the provisions of this Ordinance, are hereby deemed null, void, and of no legal effect, and are specifically repealed.

Section 3. If any section, clause, provision, or portion of this Ordinance shall be held to be invalid or unconstitutional by any Court of competent jurisdiction, such decision shall not affect any other section, clause, provision, or portion of this Ordinance.

Section 4. That any all fees identified, collected and deposited pursuant to the amendment rendered in section 2-1 of this amendment that may have been collected in advance of the passage and adoption of this ordinance, are hereby verified and approved pursuant to IC 36-5-4-10.

Section 5. That the MERRILLVILLE Municipal Code be hereby amended by this ordinance, which shall take effect, and be in full force and effect from and after its passage by the Town Council of the Town of Merrillville, Lake County, Indiana, and publication in conformance with applicable law.

Introduced at the Town Council meeting of September [illegible] 2025

DULY ORDAINED and ADOPTED this [illegible] Day of [illegible] 2025, by the Town Council of the Town of Merrillville, Lake County, Indiana

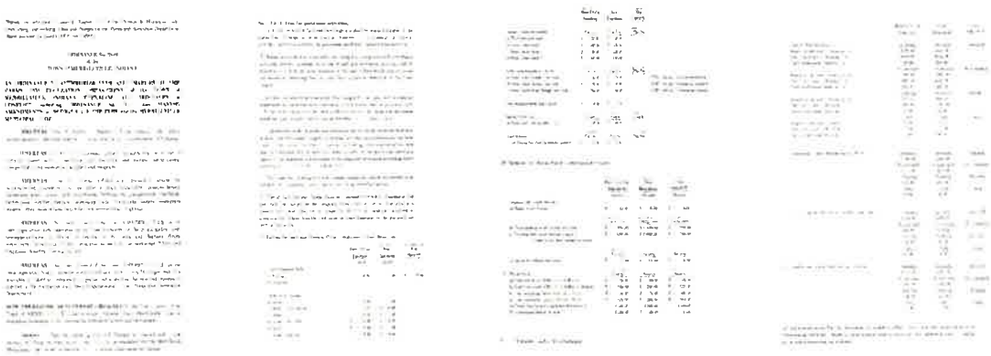
TOWN COUNCIL of the TOWN of
MERRILLVILLE, INDIANA

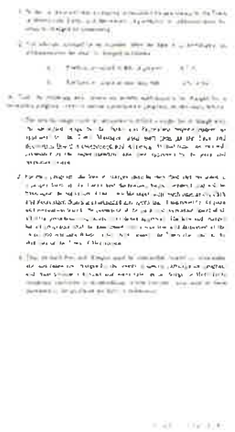
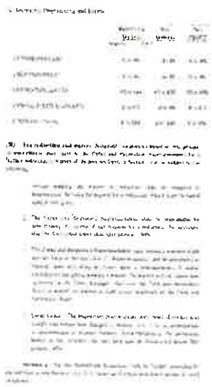
It was moved by Councilor Pettit and seconded by Councilor Haynes-Edwards to approve Ordinance 25-27 on second and final reading.

Upon a roll call vote, there were six affirmatives and no negatives. Councilors Shauna Haynes-Edwards, Leona Chandler-Felton, Shawn Pettit, Keesha Hardaway, and Rick Bella voted in the affirmative. There were no negatives. The motion passed. The ordinance was approved on second and final reading.

<u>Ordinance 25-36 (Discussion & Roll Call Vote)</u>

An Ordinance to Authorize Fees and Charges of the Park and Recreation Department Of the Town of Merrillville, Indiana, Repealing All Ordinances in Conflict, Including Ordinance No. 25-17, And Making Amendments to Incorporate the Fees Into the Merrillville Municipal Code.





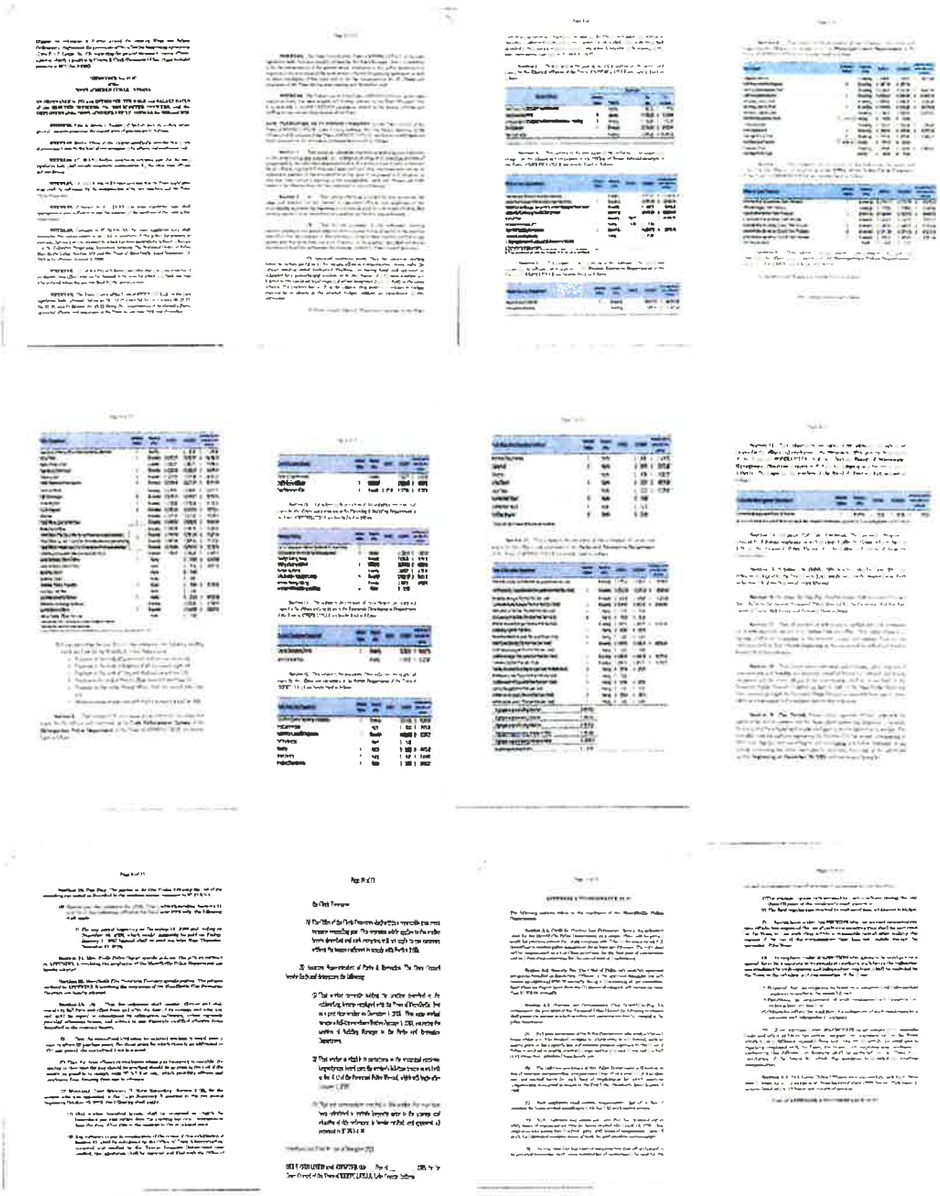
DULY ORDAINED and ADOPTED this _____ day of _____ 2025 by the Town Council of the Town of Merrillville, Lake County, Indiana.

TOWN COUNCIL of the TOWN of
MERRILLVILLE, INDIANA

It was moved by Councilor Haynes-Edwards and seconded by Councilor Chandler-Felton to approve Ordinance 25-36 on second and final reading.

Upon a roll call vote, there were six affirmatives and no negatives. Councilors Shauna Haynes-Edwards, Leona Chandler-Felton, Shawn Pettit, Keesha Hardaway, and Rick Bella voted in the affirmative. There were no negatives. The motion passed. The ordinance was approved on second and final reading.

Ordinance 25-37 (Discussion & Roll Call Vote)
An Ordinance to Fix and Establish the Wages and Salary Rates of the Elected Offices, The Non-Elected Officers, and the Employees of the Town of Merrillville, Indiana, for 2025 and 2026.



APPENDIX B TO ORDINANCE 25-37

The following sections relate to the employees of the Merrillville Fire Protection Territory.

Section B-1. *Additional Compensation.* The Fire Chief and Deputy Fire Chief are authorized to fill in any open duty rig positions that are available. These positions need to be filled due to call-offs, vacations, compensatory days, or lack of part-time firefighter/EMT's to fill in. This is necessary to have adequate staffing to provide service. When the Fire Chief or Deputy Fire Chief fills in, the Fire Chief or the Deputy Fire Chief will be compensated at the part-time firefighter/EMT rate for hours worked beyond the daily respective schedule, which is additional compensation to the respective salary listed herein.

End of APPENDIX B TO ORDINANCE 25-37

It was moved by Vice President and seconded by Councilor Chandler-Felton to approve Ordinance 25-37 on second and final reading.

Clerk-Treasurer Eric January requested that one of the positions in the Clerk-Treasurer Office be retroactive to November 30, 2025.

Upon a question from President Bella regarding the opinion of the Budget and Finance Chair, Vice President Neal, the Budget and Finance Chair, Vice President Neal did not agree with the request and stated that it should have been dealt with before tonight's meeting.

Upon a roll call vote, there were six affirmatives and no negatives. Councilors Shauna Haynes-Edwards, Leona Chandler-Felton, Shawn Pettit, Keesha Hardaway, and Rick Bella voted in the affirmative. There were no negatives. The motion passed. The ordinance was approved on second and final reading.

Ordinance 25-38 (Discussion & Roll Call Vote)

An Ordinance to Appropriating Additional Moneys in Excess of the Current Budget for the General Fund (1101), Motor Vehicle Highway-Restricted Fund (2203), and LOIT 2016 Special Distribution Fund (2248), all Pursuant to IC 6.1.1-18, IC 36-3-5 et seq.



Ordinance 25-38 Page 2

MOTOR VEHICLE HIGHWAY - RESTRICTED FUND
Increase the following:

		Proposed:	Approved:
2203.010.141	MVRestrict/Foreman	$ 4,700.00	$ 4,700.00
2203.010.146	MVRestrict/Senior Operator	85,500.00	85,500.00
2203.010.1b2	MVRestrict/Social Security	9,600.00	9,600.00
	Total 100 Series:	$ 99,800.00	$ 99,800.00
	TOTAL for the FUND:		$ 99,800.00

Section 3. That for the expenses of said municipality, the following additional sums of money are hereby appropriated and ordered set apart out of the CUMULATIVE CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT FUND and for the purposes herein specified, Body Cameras, as identified by the accounts herein, subject to the laws governing the same:

CUMULATIVE CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT FUND
Increase the following:

		Proposed:	Approved:
4102.010.350	CCD/Public Safety	$ 120,000.00	$ 120,000.00
4102.010.391	CCD/Contractual Services	45,000.00	45,000.00
	Total 300 Series:	$ 165,000.00	$ 165,000.00
	TOTAL for the FUND:		$ 165,000.00

Section 4. That the Clerk-Treasurer is hereby authorized and instructed to inform the Indiana Department of Local Government Finance of this action and that these moneys be made available for expenditure subject to an order of the Commissioner, pursuant to IC 6-1.1-18.

Section 5. That in satisfaction and for the purposes of the provisions set out in I.C. 36-5-2-9.6, I.C. 36-5-4-5, I.C. 36-5-4-2, this ordinance shall be deemed properly filed and introduced before the Town Council at a regular or special meeting, properly called and convened pursuant to I.C. 5-1.5-14 *et seq.*

Introduced and Filed on the __ day of December, 2025.

DULY ORDAINED AND ADOPTED this ____ Day of _____, 2025, by the Town Council of the Town of Merrillville, Lake County, Indiana

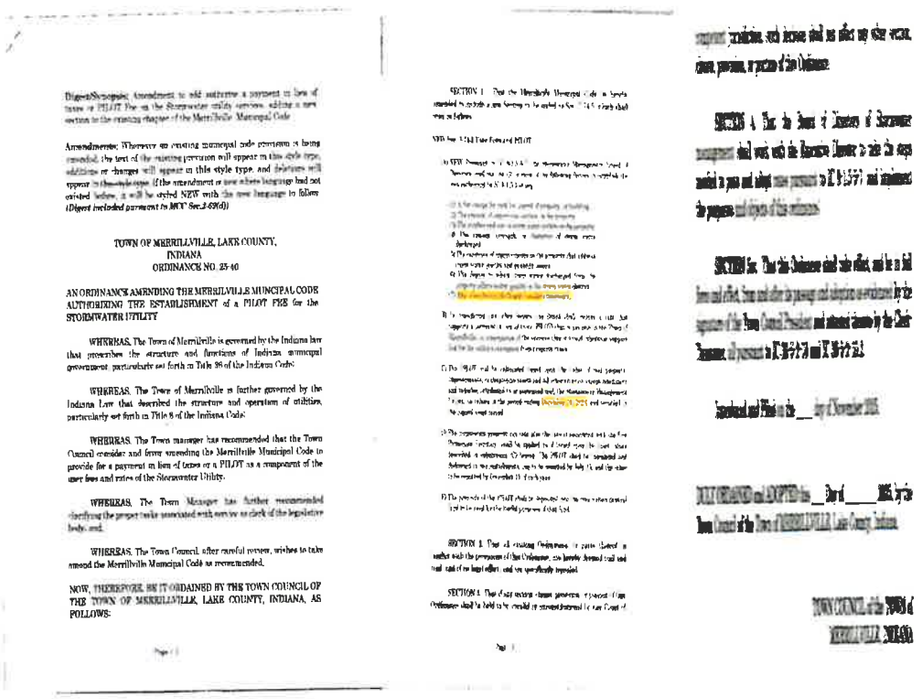
TOWN COUNCIL of the TOWN of MERRILLVILLE, INDIANA

It was moved by Councilor Haynes-Edwards and seconded by Councilor Pettit to approve Ordinance 25-38 on second and final reading.

Upon a roll call vote, there were six affirmatives and no negatives. Councilors Shauna Haynes-Edwards, Leona Chandler-Felton, Shawn Pettit, Keesha Hardaway, and Rick Bella voted in the affirmative. There were no negatives. The motion passed. The ordinance was approved on second and final reading.

Ordinance 25-40 (Discussion & Roll Call Vote)

An Ordinance Amending the Merrillville Municipal Code Authorizing the Establishment of a Pilot Fee for The Stormwater Utility.



Digest/Synopsis: Amendment to add authorize a payment in lieu of taxes or PILOT Fee on the Stormwater utility services, adding a new section to the existing chapter of the Merrillville Municipal Code

Amendments: Wherever an existing municipal code provisions is being amended, the text of the existing provision will appear in this style type, additions or changes will appear in this style type, and deletions will appear in this style type. If the amendment or new subsection language had not existed before, it will be stated NEW with the new language to follow (*Digest included pursuant to IC 36-7 Sec.5-4(6)*)

TOWN OF MERRILLVILLE, LAKE COUNTY,
INDIANA
ORDINANCE NO. 25-40

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE MERRILLVILLE MUNICIPAL CODE AUTHORIZING THE ESTABLISHMENT of a PILOT FEE for the STORMWATER UTILITY

WHEREAS, The Town of Merrillville is governed by the Indiana law that prescribes the structure and functions of Indiana municipal government particularly set forth in Title 36 of the Indiana Code

WHEREAS, The Town of Merrillville is further governed by the Indiana Law that described the structure and operation of utilities, particularly set forth in Title 8 of the Indiana Code

WHEREAS, The Town manager has recommended that the Town Council consider and favor amending the Merrillville Municipal Code to provide for a payment in lieu of taxes or a PILOT as a component of the user fees and rates of the Stormwater Utility.

WHEREAS, The Town Manager has further recommended clarifying the proper tasks associated with service as clerk of the legislative body; and,

WHEREAS, The Town Council, after careful review, wishes to take amend the Merrillville Municipal Code as recommended.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF MERRILLVILLE, LAKE COUNTY, INDIANA, AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. That the Merrillville Municipal Code is hereby amended to include a new Section to be added as Sec. 13.43 which shall read as follows:

13.43 Pilot Fee and PILOT

(a) SW Manager ... Stormwater Management Board ... Stormwater and the ... a new ... the following Section is created to be numbered 13.43.1 et seq.

(1) ... charge for and the ... payment of existing ...
(2) The amount ... stormwater service ... the property
(3) The assessed value ... same within the property
(4) The amount ... which ... Stormwater ... of storm water discharged
(5) The existence ... impervious ... the property that allows ... storm water ... and quantity issues
(6) The degree ... which ... storm water discharged from the property affects water quality in the storm water district
(7) ... the Stormwater Utility Ordinance.

(b) In consideration ... other owners ... as listed above, which ... shall support a payment ... an in lieu PILOT ... to pay to the Town of Merrillville ... a component of the stormwater user fee ... and for its utility stormwater Pilot program fees.

(c) The PILOT ... shall be calculated ... upon the value of real property improvements, ... impervious ... and all other ... storm water ... and facilities ... attributable to or associated with, the Stormwater Management ... as ... in ... of the permit ruling ... and compiled ... the annual ... issued.

(d) The components ... that ... the ... associated with the Fee ... section ... shall be applied ... if charged ... the ... shall be ... described ... reference ... of Section ... The PILOT ... shall be ... and ... the ... and ... to be ... by ... in ... this ...

(e) The ... of the PILOT ... shall be ... over ... the ... owners ... and ... to be ... with the ... program ... this ...

SECTION 2. That all ... Ordinances ... in ... hereof ... another ... with the ... of this Ordinance ... are ... hereby ... and ... and of ... legal effect ... and ... are ... repealed.

SECTION 3. That ... of ... section ... phrase ... of ... Ordinance ... shall be held to be ... invalid ... or ... by ... Court of ...

Page 1

... constitution, and ... shall ... after ... with ... statute, ordinance, or provision of law in Indiana.

SECTION 4. That the Board of Directors of Stormwater ... shall ... with the Stormwater Ordinance ... to ... the steps ... in ... and ... same ... pursuant to IC 36-9-27 ... and ... the ... and ... of this ordinance.

SECTION 5. That this Ordinance ... after ... and ... in full force ... after ... from ... after ... in accordance ... by the ... of the Town Council ... and ... by the Clerk-Treasurer, ... pursuant to IC 36-9-27 and IC 36-5-2-11.

... and Passed ... the ___ day of ... 2025.

... ORDAINED and ADOPTED ... ___ ... and ___ ... by the ... Council of the Town of ... Lake County, Indiana.

... COUNCIL of the ... of ...

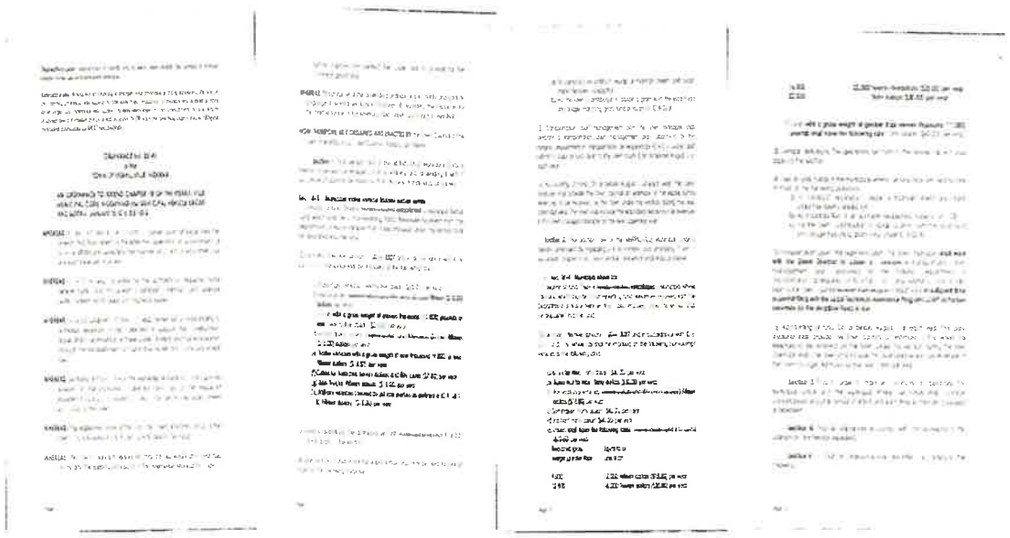
It was moved by Councilor Pettit and seconded by Councilor Haynes-Edwards to approve Ordinance 25-40 on second and final reading.

Town Manager Griffin explained Ordinance 25-40.

Upon a roll call vote, there were six affirmatives and no negatives. Councilors Shauna Haynes-Edwards, Leona Chandler-Felton, Shawn Pettit, Keesha Hardaway, and Rick Bella voted in the affirmative. There were no negatives. The motion passed. The ordinance was approved on second and final reading.

Ordinance 25-41 (Discussion & Roll Call Vote)

An Ordinance to Amend Chapter 18 of the Merrillville Municipal Code, Modifying the Municipal Vehicle Excise and Surtax, Pursuant to I.C. 6-3.5-10-2



(A) The amounts amended that represent a new amount established by this ordinance, adopted after September 1 but before January 1 of the following year, shall apply to motor vehicles registered after December 31 of the year following the year in which the ordinance is adopted, all pursuant to IC 6-3.5-10-5 and IC 6-3.5-11-7;

(B) Further the new fees and this ordinance shall be in full force and effect, from and after its passage and adoption as evidenced by the signature of the Town Council President and attested thereto by the Clerk-Treasurer, all pursuant to IC 36-5-2-10 and IC 36-5-2-10.2.

Introduced and Filed on the 9th day of December 2025.

DULY ORDAINED and ADOPTED this _____ Day of _____ 2025, by the Town Council of the Town of MERRILLVILLE, Lake County, Indiana.

TOWN COUNCIL of the TOWN of MERRILLVILLE, INDIANA

It was moved by Councilor Pettit and seconded by Councilor Haynes-Edwards to approve Ordinance 25-41 on second and final reading.

Town Manager Griffin explained Ordinance 25-41.

Upon a roll call vote, there were six affirmatives and no negatives. Councilors Shauna Haynes-Edwards, Leona Chandler-Felton, Shawn Pettit, Keesha Hardaway, and Rick Bella voted in the affirmative. There were no negatives. The motion was approved on second and final reading.

B. **Resolutions (Discussion and Voice Vote):**

<u>Resolution 25-53 (Discussion & Roll Call Vote)</u>

A Resolution of the Town of Merrillville, Lake County, Indiana Concerning the Holiday Schedule For The Calendar Year 2026.

RESOLUTION 25-53
TOWN OF MERRILLVILLE, INDIANA

A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN OF MERRILLVILLE, LAKE COUNTY, INDIANA, CONCERNING THE HOLIDAY SCHEDULE FOR THE CALENDAR YEAR 2026

WHEREAS, The Merrillville Town Council has authority for Employees of the Town of Merrillville; and

WHEREAS, The Merrillville Town Council wishes to establish legal holidays for the Town of Merrillville.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Merrillville Town Council, that the following holidays are established for the employees of the Town of Merrillville:

New Year's Day	January 1st	Thursday Closed
Martin Luther King, Jr.	January 19th	Monday Closed
President's Day	February 16th	Monday Closed
Good Friday	April 3rd	Friday Closed
Memorial Day	May 25th	Monday Closed
Juneteenth	June 19th	Friday Closed
Independence Day	July 3rd	Friday Closed
Labor Day	September 7th	Monday Closed
Columbus Day	October 12th	Monday Closed
Veterans Day	November 11th	Wednesday Closed
Thanksgiving Day	November 26th	Thursday Closed
Day After Thanksgiving	November 27th	Friday Closed
Christmas Eve	December 24th	Thursday Closed
Christmas Day	December 25th	Friday Closed
New Year's Eve	December 31st	Thursday Closed

*Dates of some Holidays are the day before or after they are Observed per the Personnel Policy Manual

DULY ADOPTED BY THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF MERRILLVILLE, LAKE COUNTY, INDIANA, THIS DAY OF DECEMBER 2025

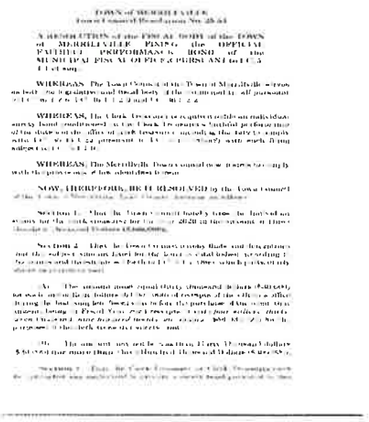
President Bella informed the council that the Town of Merrillville has fifteen paid holidays that are given to employees.

It was moved by Vice President Neal and seconded by Councilor Haynes-Edwards to approve Resolution 25-53.

Upon a voice vote, the motion passed. The resolution was approved.

Resolution 25-54 (Discussion & Roll Call Vote)

A Resolution of the Fiscal Body of the Town of Merrillville Fixing the Official Faithful Performance Bond of the Municipal Fiscal Officer Pursuant to I.C. 5-4-1 Et seq.



resolution and that the proper officers take such steps as necessary to carry out the objects and purposes of this resolution;

Section 4. That the Clerk-Treasurer-elect furnish the bond pursuant to the forgoing provisions, and that such bond be paid from the proper appropriation of the Town's General Fund, pursuant to IC 5-4-5-2.

Section 5. That the signature of the proper officer engrossed upon on the surety bond, shall represent the approval by the legislative body as set forth in IC 5-4-1-8(a)(6).

DULY RESOLVED and ADOPTED this 23rd Day of December 2025, by the Town Council of the Town of Merrillville, Lake County, Indiana.

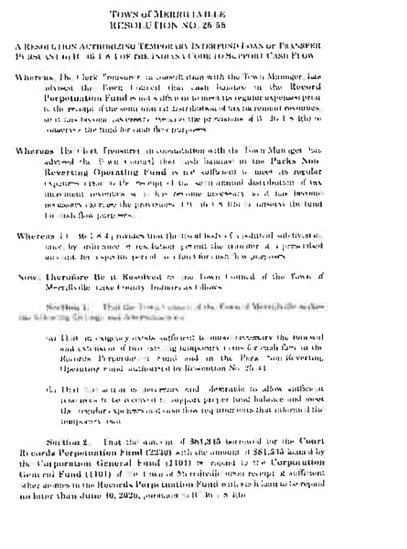
TOWN COUNCIL of the TOWN of
MERRILLVILLE, INDIANA

It was moved by Vice President Neal and seconded by Councilor Chandler-Felton to approve Resolution 25-54.

Upon a voice vote, the motion passed. The resolution was approved.

Resolution 25-55 (Discussion & Roll Call Vote)

A Resolution Authorizing Temporary Interfund Loan or Transfer Pursuant to I.C. 36-1-8-4 of the Indiana Code to Support Cash Flow.



Section 3. That the amount of $200,000 as part of a larger temporary loan in the amount of $450,000, borrowed for the Parks Non-Reverting Operating Fund (2211) with the amount of $200,000 loaned by the Municipal Cumulative Capital Development Fund (4402) be repaid to the Municipal Cumulative Capital Development Fund (4402) upon receipt of sufficient other monies in Parks Non-Reverting Operating Fund (2211) with such loan to be repaid no later than June 30, 2026, subject to IC 36-1-8-4(b).

Section 3.5. That the amount of $250,000 as part of a larger temporary loan in the amount of $450,000, borrowed for the Parks Non-Reverting Operating Fund (2211) is to be repaid to the Municipal Cumulative Capital Development Fund (4402) concurrent with this Resolution passage.

Section 4. That copies of this resolution be forwarded to the Indiana State Board of Accounts and the Department of Local Government Finance, all pursuant to IC 36-1-8-4(b).

Duly Passed and Adopted by the Town Council of the Town of Merrillville, Lake County, Indiana, this 23rd day of December, 2025.

TOWN of MERRILLVILLE,
LAKE COUNTY, INDIANA

It was moved by Councilor Chandler-Felton and seconded by Vice President Neal to approve Resolution 25-55.

Upon a voice vote, the motion passed. The resolution was approved.

Resolution 25-56 (Discussion & Roll Call Vote)
An Exigent Resolution Providing for the Transfer of Appropriation Balances From and Among Major Budget Classifications In The Various Departments of The General Fund and In Other Funds of The Town As Requested By the Proper Officer And Forwarded To The Town Council For Its Action Pursuant To I.C. 6-1.118-6.

RESOLUTION No. 25-56
TOWN OF MERRILLVILLE, INDIANA

AN EXIGENT RESOLUTION PROVIDING for the TRANSFER of APPROPRIATION BALANCES from and AMONG MAJOR BUDGET CLASSIFICATIONS in the METROPOLITAN POLICE DEPARTMENT (DEPARTMENT 5) in the GENERAL FUND as REQUESTED BY THE PROPER OFFICER AND FORWARDED to the TOWN COUNCIL for its ACTION PURSUANT TO I.C. 6-1.1-18-6.

WHEREAS, It has been determined that certain exigent conditions have developed since adoption of the original budget and it is now necessary to transfer certain appropriations into different categories than were initially appropriated for the various functions of the Police Department (Department 5) in the GENERAL Fund;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Town Council of the Town of Merrillville, Lake County, Indiana, as follows:

Section 1. That for the expenses of said municipality, the following appropriations are hereby transferred and set apart out of the funds hereinafter named for the purposes specified, subject to the laws governing the same, such sums herein transferred unless otherwise stipulated by law;

Section 2. That it has been shown that certain existing unobligated appropriations of the Police Department (Department 5) of the GENERAL Fund, which are not needed at this time for the purposes for which originally appropriated, and may be transferred to a newly authorized category of appropriation in order to satisfy an existing need and further that a new a as follows:

		Decrease	Increase
1101.005.361	General/Repairs to Equipment	$ 10,032.00	
1101.005.111	General/Chief of Police		$ 10,032.00
1101.005.221	General/Gasoline	11,000.00	
1101.005.314	General/Polygraphs...	6,000.00	
1101.005.112	General/Assistant Chief of Police		17,000.00
	Totals:	**$27,032.00**	**$27,032.00**

Section 3. That the Clerk-Treasurer shall take steps needed to execute the changes set forth in this appropriation transfer resolution as this is a change to the budget.

DULY RESOLVED and ADOPTED by the TOWN COUNCIL of the TOWN of MERRILLVILLE, LAKE COUNTY, INDIANA, this 23rd day of DECEMBER, 2025.

TOWN COUNCIL of the TOWN of MERRILLVILLE, INDIANA

It was moved by Councilor Pettit and seconded by Councilor Chandler-Felton to approve Resolution 25-56.

Upon a voice vote, the motion passed. The resolution was approved.

Resolution 25-57 (Discussion & Roll Call Vote)
A Resolution of The Town of Merrillville, Lake County, Indiana, Encumbering Monies of The 2025 Budget Into The Year 2026.

Town Manager Griffin requested that Resolution 25-57 be withdrawn from the agenda.

Resolution 25-57 was withdrawn from the agenda.

OLD BUSINESS: ***NONE***

NEW BUSINESS: ***NONE***

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

The Town Council President announced the following:

- Town Council Meeting January 13th at 6:30 pm

ADJOURNMENT:
Having completed all items on the agenda, the Town Council President announced the meeting had adjourned at 7:33 p.m.

Rick Bella, Town Council President

Eric O. January, Clerk-Treasurer

Respectfully Submitted By Angela Lewis