Town Council of Merrillville

7820 Broadway Ave - Merrillville, IN 46410

Town Council Meeting Minutes of the Quadrennial Special Meeting of January 01, 2024 – 12:00 P.M.

INVOCATION: A brief invocation was given by Pastor Robert Szoke of Impact Church

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Led by Chief Nuses

OATH OF OFFICE: Lake County Superior Court Judge, the Honorable Gina L. Jones, administered the Oath of Office to the following Officers Elect and Town Court Judge:

Rhonda Neal, Ward 1
Shauna Haynes-Edwards, Ward 2
Leona Chandler-Felton, Ward 3
Margaret Uzelac, Ward 4
Rich Bella, Ward 5
Shawn M. Pettit, Ward 6
Keesha Hardaway, Ward 7

Eric O. January, Clerk-Treasurer

Honorable Judge Eugene M. Velazco, Town Court Judge

CALL TO ORDER: Acting Chair Clerk-Treasurer Eric O. January called the meeting to order at 12:00 P.M.

ROLL CALL: By leave of Acting Chair Clerk-Treasurer Eric O. January, roll call was taken by Interim Town Manager Michael Griffin, acting clerk. Present at the meeting were Councilors Rhonda Neal, Shauna Hayes Edward, Leona Chandler-Felton, Margaret Uzelac, Rick Bella, Shawn Pettit, and Keesha Hardaway. Clerk-Treasurer Eric O. January was present to memorialize the proceedings. All seven members were present. A quorum was attained.

SPECIAL ORDERS:

1. **Election of Town Council President for 2024**

Under Section 2-34 and Section 2-40 of Merrillville Municipal Code, the Clerk-Treasurer elect shall call the meeting to order for the purpose of electing Town Council President.

Acting Chair Clerk-Treasurer Eric O. January opened the floor for nominations for President of the Town Council of Merrillville 2024.

Councilor Uzelac nominated Councilor Bella for President. After allowing sufficient time, asking for any other nominations 3 times, and receiving no further nominations, Acting Chair Eric January directed that a vote be taken to elect Rick Bella as the President of the Town Council.

Acting upon the sole nomination, upon a roll call vote to elect Councilor Bella to the office of Town Council President for 2024, there were seven affirmatives and no negatives. With Councilors Neal, Hayes-Edwards, Chandler-Felton, Uzelac, Bella, Pettit, Hardaway, and Bella voting in the affirmative, and no negatives, the motion passed. Councilor Bella was elected President of the Town Council of Merrillville for 2024

Acting Chair Clerk-Treasurer Eric O. January, congratulated President Bella and tendered the gavel to him.

2. **Election of Town Council Vice President for 2024** Pursuant to Town Council Resolution No. 23-50, the office of Vice President was in order.

Town Council President Bella opened the floor for nominations for Vice-President of the Town Council of Merrillville for 2024.

Councilor Pettit nominated Councilor Rhonda Neal for the office of Vice President.

After allowing sufficient time, asking if there were any other nominations, and receiving no further nominations, President Bella invited from the membership a motion to close nominations and cast a unanimous vote to elect Councilor Rhonda Neal as Vice President of the Town Council for 2024.

It was moved by Councilor Pettit and seconded by Councilor Uzelac, to close nominations and elect Councilor Neal for Vice-President of the Town Council of Merrillville for 2024.

Upon a voice vote, the motion passed. Councilor Neal was elected [removed the word 'as'] Vice-President of the Town Council of Merrillville for 2024.

Each Town Council member, Clerk-Treasurer Eric O. January, and the Honorable Judge Velazco all offered remarks and thanked the Town of Merrillville.

The Town Council President then issued the Civic Pin of Merrillville for each member of the Town Council, Clerk-Treasurer, and Town Judge to wear and identify their association with the Town government of Merrillville.

ADJOURNMENT

Having completed all items on the agenda, the President declared the meeting adjourned at 12:33 p.m.

Rick Bella, President

Eric O. January, Clerk-Treasurer

Respectfully Submitted By Angela Lewis