Town Council of Merrillville
7820 Broadway Ave - Merrillville, IN 46410
Town Council Meeting Minutes of the Regular Meeting of
July 8, 2025, 6:30 P.M.

CALL TO ORDER: Councilor 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 Councilor Bella.

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

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

Councilors Keesha Hardaway and Leona Chandler-Felton were absent from the roll call.

Councilor Chandler-Felton came in at 6:36 p.m.

PETITIONS, COMMUNICATIONS, ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS, AND REMONSTRATIONS:

- **SWEARING IN OF POLICE OFFICERS:**
  - Colin Arndt
  - Joseph Briggs
  - Christopher Bartholomew
  - Nico Galindo

  Police Chief Nuses gave a brief introduction of each officer.

  Clerk-Treasurer Eric January administered the oath to each of the officers, and Chief Nuses passed out the badges.

PUBLIC HEARING:

1. **Town Attorney Svetanoff review of Proof of Publication(s): Add Proof of Publication with a public hearing date of July 8th, 2025, Re: Ord 25-21 Additional Appropriation.**


CHICAGO TRIBUNE


CHICAGO TRIBUNE

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

Public Hearing: Re: ORD 25-21

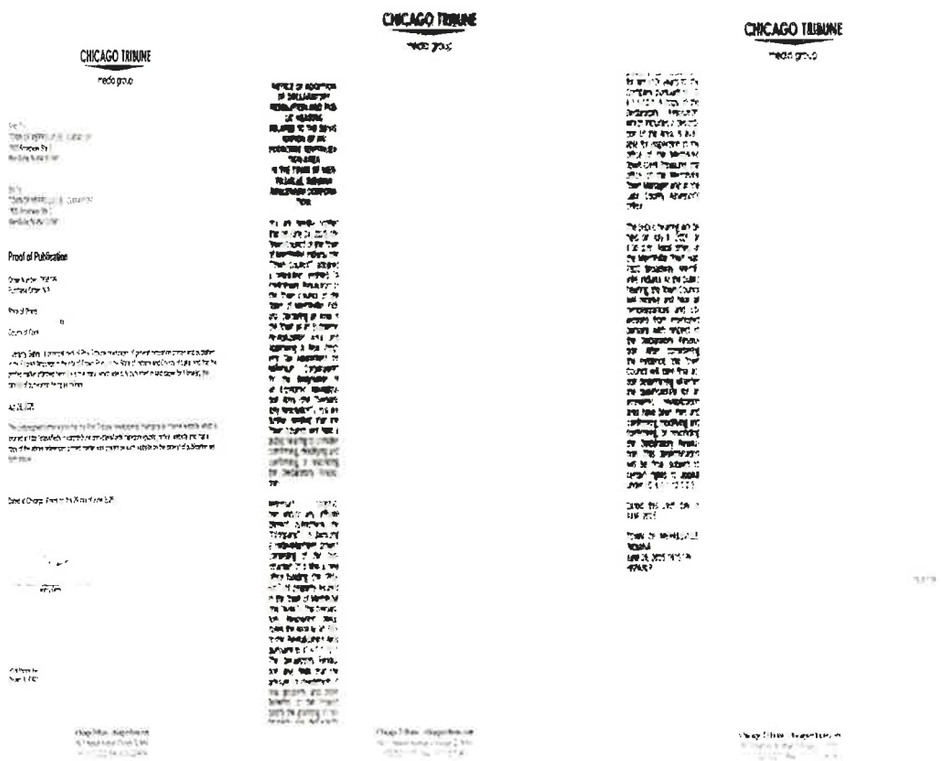
- Public Comments:
  No Public Comments were given.

Action on Proposed Ordinance:

It was moved by Councilor Uzelac and seconded by Vice-President Neal to approve Ordinance 25-21.

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

2. **Town Attorney Svetanoff review of Proof of Publication(s): Add Proof of Publication with a public hearing date of July 8th, 2025, Re: Res 25-30 - Tax Abatement**


CHICAGO TRIBUNE

media group

Proof of Publication

CHICAGO TRIBUNE

media group

CHICAGO TRIBUNE

media group

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

Public Hearing: Re: RES 25-30

- Public Comments:
  No Public Comments were given.

  Clerk-Treasurer Eric January commented on section one of Resolution 25-30. He stated that the area referenced in Resolution 25-30, Section 1, is one of the most

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

Public Hearing: Re: RES 25-30

- Public Comments:
  No Public Comments were given.

  Clerk-Treasurer Eric January commented on section one of Resolution 25-30. He stated that the area referenced in Resolution 25-30, Section 1, is one of the most developed areas in the Town of Merrillville, and he objects to the language in Section 1 of this resolution.

Action on Proposed Resolution:

It was moved by Councilor Pettit and seconded by Vice President Neal to approve Resolution 25-30.

Upon a roll call vote, there were six affirmatives and no negatives. Councilors Rhonda Neal, Shauna Haynes-Edwards, Leona Chandler-Felton, Margaret Uzelac, Shawn Pettit, and Rick Bella voted in the affirmative. There were no negatives. The motion passed. The resolution was approved.

3. **Town Attorney Svetanoff review of Proof of Publication(s): Add Proof of Publication with a public hearing date of July 8th, 2025, Re: Res 25-31 - Tax Abatement**



CHICAGO TRIBUNE
media group

Proof of Publication

CHICAGO TRIBUNE
media group

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

Public Hearing: Re: RES 25-31

- Public Comments:
  No Public Comments were given.

Action on Proposed Resolution:

It was moved by Councilor Pettit and seconded by Councilor Uzelac to approve Resolution 25-31.

Upon a question from Councilor Pettit regarding building permits for the projects, Director Sheila Shine responded that the permits have been applied for, and the two projects have state releases.

Upon a roll call vote, there were six affirmatives and no negatives. Councilors Rhonda Neal, Shauna Haynes-Edwards, Leona Chandler-Felton, Margaret Uzelac, Shawn Pettit, and Rick Bella voted in the affirmative. There were no negatives. The motion passed. The resolution was approved.

MOTIONS ON THE TABLE: ***NONE***

CONSENT AGENDA:

- Accounts Payable Register Voucher Approval for July 8, 2025
- ARPA Accts. Payable Register Voucher Approval for July 8, 2025
- Approval of Town Council Meeting Minutes June 24, 2025
- Approval of Work Study Minutes from June 18, 2025

President Bella informed the council that the ARPA Accts. Payable Register Voucher Approval for July 8, 2025, will be removed from the consent agenda at the request of Town Manager Griffin.

It was moved by Councilor Uzelac and seconded by Vice-President Neal to approve the consent agenda with the omission of the ARPA Accts. Payable Register Voucher Approval for July 8, 2025.

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

PRESENTATION OF DECLARATIONS: ***NONE***

STANDING & SPECIAL COMMITTEES REPORTS:

***BUDGET & FINANCE*—NEAL**—Vice-President Neal reported that the committee has scheduled the budget meetings for the 2026 budget.

STREET DEPARTMENT & PARK MAINTENANCE - UZELAC– Councilor Uzelac reported the following:

- **Branches** - The branches accumulated throughout the Town are being picked up.
- **Local Parks and Bike Trails** – The local parks and bike trails in the Town of Merrillville are being mowed and maintained.
- **Street Sweeping** – Street Sweeping is still ongoing throughout the Town.
- **Potholes** – The potholes are being prepared throughout the Town of Merrillville.

Director Steve King added that the Town's staff did a great job with all the preparation work and cleanup for the Town's Fourth of July Celebration.

COUNCIL AFFAIRS—PETTIT—Councilor Pettit reported that a committee meeting will be held on Tuesday, July 15, 2025, at 5:30 p.m. There will be several ordinances on the agenda from Town Manager Griffin to be reviewed.

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE- HARDAWAY- Councilor Hardaway was absent.

Upon a question from President Bella regarding a report, Town Manager Griffin responded that Councilor Hardaway authorized him to report that the Street Department has an opening for a Labor 1 position available until July 13th and a Park Maintenance position available until July 8th. Information for both positions is available at https://www.merrillville.in.gov/departments/human_resources.php.

ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS- UZELAC – Councilor Uzelac reported that the following drainage ponds are completed:

- Sedona Pond
- 69th Connecticut Street Pond

Hickory Ridge and Fillmore Boulevard ponds have one more item to finish. Director Lake added that the seed and blanket are left to do regarding these ponds.

PUBLIC SAFETY—HARDAWAY—Councilor Hardaway was absent.

President Bella informed the council that Town Manager Griffin will announce for Councilor Hardaway.

Town Manager Griffin reported that some dates are needed from Chief Nuses to call a public safety committee meeting.

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

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT-PETTIT – Councilor Pettit reported that an Interlocal Agreement must be developed between Hobart and Merrillville on the 80/20 participation of the following two roundabouts:

- 69th Mississippi
- 79th Mississippi

The funds for these town roundabouts will be allocated from the Mississippi Allocation Area, and Town Manager Griffin has submitted this to the Redevelopment Commission (RDC) for consideration. Councilor Pettit informed the council that this will be considered at the July 22, 2025, RDC meeting.

Upon a question from President Bella of how much federal funding the Town of Merrillville will receive for these two roundabouts, Councilor Pettit responded $7,000.000.00. $3,000.000.00 will go to 69th Mississippi and $4,000,000.00 to 79th Mississippi . It's an 80/20 match from the Northern Indiana Regional Planning Commission (NIRPC).

President Bella informed the council that he had received a call from Mayor Josh Huddlestun of Hobart, who stated he would expedite getting the agreement signed.

Councilor Pettit requested to go back to Public Safety. President Bella granted the request.

Public Safety

Councilor Pettit informed the council that due to Attorney Svetanoff's hard work, the Town of Merrillville has the donation agreement to present on July 22nd regarding the 6-acre property being donated to the Town of Merrillville by the owner of Polycon Industries for the new fire station on Colorado Street. This is a $1,000,00.00 investment in the Town of Merrillville.

Attorney Svetanoff informed the council that the documents will be presented at the July 22nd meeting.

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

PARKS AND DEAN & BARBARA WHITE COMMUNITY CENTER - PETTIT – Councilor Pettit reporte that Director Gerry McCartney had a basketball accident and is rehabilitating at home. The next meeting will b on Thursday, July 24th at 5.00 p.m. to discuss topics including the flooring at the Dean and Barbara White Community Center.

SPECIAL COMMITTEES

ABANDONED-BLIGHTED PROPERTIES - HAYNES-EDWARDS & CHANDLER-FELTON– Councilor Haynes-Edward reported on the following for June:

- Total Calls – 299
- Warnings – 73
- Tickets Issued – 35
- Vacant and Abandoned Properties – 3

Councilor Haynes-Edwards also informed the council that properties that have been permitted have been paid and have a zero balance.

SPECIAL TOWN PROJECTS - NEAL – Vice-President Neal reported on the following events:

- **July 4th** – The Fourth of July had over 60 participants this year, and the online voting had over 1,700 votes for the floats. The winners for first, second, and third place will be announced at the next Tow Council Meeting.
- **Town of Merrillville Mobile App** – The app is now available for download in the Google Play and Apple stores. Town Manager Griffin explained the new Town of Merrillville App.

Vice-President Neal added that, when activated, the notifications feature will let residents know about what is going on in the Town of Merrillville, from road construction and street closures to the Town's events.

- **Ready Set Hire** – The Ready Set Hire event will take place on Wednesday, July 9th, at the Dean and Barbara White Community Center (D&BWCC). This event will help candidates prepare for the Job Fair with resume writing and other preparation workshops for the Job Fair.

- **Job Fair 2025** – Job Fair 2025 is the Town of Merrillville's biggest event. The Job Fair will be on Wednesday, July 30th, at the D&BWCC.

SEMI-QUINCENTENNIAL COMMITTEE - HAYNES-EDWARDS – Councilor Haynes-Edwards had nothing to report.

DEPARTMENT & COMMISSION REPORTS:

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

- **Projects** – Several drainage pond projects are wrapping up, and we are receiving reimbursements for these projects for the Little Calumet River Basin.
- **Taney Ditch Maintenance** – Quotes are being solicited for contracts for this project.
- **Chapel Manor Ditch –** Director Lake informed the council that he did a walk-through to evaluate, and the results were as follows:
    - Trash Racks need some work.
    - Some wood growth was discovered.

  Stormwater Management will address the issues.
- **Stormwater Master Plan –** The Master Plan is being updated, and a meeting is scheduled with Christopher Burke Engineering, who is going through the H & H analysis and studies.
- **Volunteer Compliance** – We have received a lot of volunteer compliance with the unpermitted field entrances. Farmers were notified and are complying.
- **69th Connecticut Project –** This project is wrapping up.
- **Sedona Retention Pond Project** – After the blanket and seeding, this project will be completed.

NORTHERN INDIANA REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION-HARDAWAY – Councilor Hardaway was absent.

Upon a question from President Bella regarding a report, Town Manager Griffin reported that the next meeting is August 21, 2025.

LAKE COUNTY SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT-NEAL– Vice-President Neal reported that the July 17th meeting will be postponed until September 18th.

THE SHARED ETHICS ENTITY-HARDAWAY – Councilor Hardway was absent.

Upon a question from President Bella regarding a report, Town Manager Griffin reported that the Joint Board of Delegates will meet on July 9th, and there is nothing to report on the meeting for the Shared Ethics Advisor Commission's next meeting.

FIRE TERRITORY BOARD - NEAL & HARDAWAY – Vice-President Neal had no report.

CLERK-TREASURER OFFICE - JANUARY – Clerk-Treasurer Eric January reported on the following:

- **Fiscal State of the Town of Merrillville** – Clerk-Treasurer Eric January thanked everyone for coming out and those who participated in the event. The video from the event will be made available to Chas Riley, Content Manager, to upload on the Town's website. There will be several more financial events from the Clerk-Treasurer's Office this year.
- **June Reports -** The monthly financial reports will be given at the next council meeting.

SSCVA – DEANN PATENA - No Report

DEPARTMENT REPORTS/ TOWN MANAGER:

Asst Director Lisa Roberts – Parks Department
Asst. Director Roberts reported on the following:

- **Flooring at the Dean and Barbara White Community Center (D&BWCC)**– The flooring for the four rooms is a problem we hope to work out at the next committee meeting for Parks.
- **4th of July Parade** – Asst. Director Roberts thanked eight of the Parks staff for helping with the lineup and other areas during the parade.
- **Job Openings** – There are a couple of positions open for Front Desk Attendants, and interviews with start next week.
- **New Signage** – New signage will be put up throughout the D&BWCC informing the residents and visitors of the rules and regulations of each section of the building, including the fitness center, walking track, and gym.
- **Programs** – New programs will be starting up this September.

Chief Nuses– Police Department
Chief Nuses reported on the following statistics for June:

- **Calls for Service** - 2436 (which equals 4.356 Officer Response)
- **Extra Patrol Assignments** – 75
- **Adult Arrest** – 112
- **Juvenile Arrest** – 4

Chief Nuses also reported that there has been a spike in domestic-type calls and disputes. This is something our department has been working on this year. By the middle or end of August, the traffic unit, which is going to consist of two officers, will be solely focused on traffic enforcement and accidents. After the four officers sworn in tonight finish their field training, two of them will be released for traffic enforcement.

Chief Nuses thanked Councilor Haynes-Edwards for setting up and facilitating a meeting with the City of Gary's Code Enforcement Officers. The meeting was productive. The City of Gary has some of the same issues as the Town of Merrillville. We are looking to collaborate more with them in the future and learn from one another.

Upon a question from President Bella regarding the spike in domestics during the hot weather, Chief Nuses responded that we do see a spike during the hot weather, but the current spike is out of the norm. This kind of spike we have never seen in the Town of Merrillville. We are looking at solutions we can present to the council.

President Bella informed Vice-President Neal that we should discuss funding a Counselor or Social Worker position for the Police Department in our 2026 budgetary meetings.

Clerk-Treasurer Eric January added that the Town's Job Fair is a good step in addressing the financial issues of domestic disputes.

Director Shine – Building and Planning

Director Shine reported that she has the BZA and Large Gathering Petitioners on the agenda later.

Director, King Street Department
Director King added the following to the Street Report:

Beautification – The beautification of the Town with flowers is ongoing, and you can see all the hard work on 93rd Avenue or here at Town Hall.
Hanging Basket – We had to take the hanging basket down and back to Niemeyer to have more plants added to the baskets.

Upon a question from Councilor Pettit regarding the Forest Hills and Indiana American Water update, Director King responded that the project should be completed in the next two weeks.

Town Manager Griffin – Town Administration
Town Manager Griffin reported that the two reports, including the staff report, have been given to the council members and Clerk-Treasurer Eric January under section 2-339.1 of the municipal code.

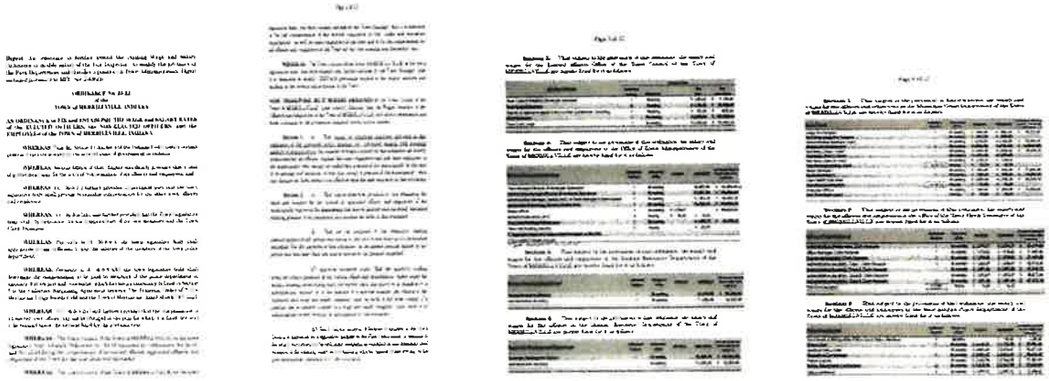
GENERAL ORDERS

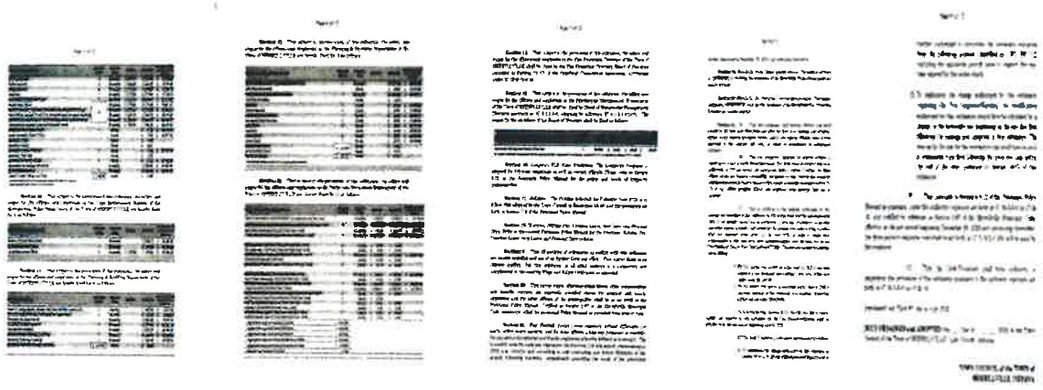
A. **Ordinances: (Discussion and Roll Call Vote):** ***NONE***

Zoning: (motion to adopt or reject; confer IC 36-5-2-10(d)

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

1. **Ordinance 25-22 (Discussion & Roll Call Vote)**
   An Ordinance to Fix and Establish the New Wage and Salary Rates of the Elected Officers, The non-Elected Officers, and the Employees of the Town of Merrillville, Indiana.





It was moved by Councilor Uzelac and seconded by Vice-President Neal to approve Ordinance 25-22.

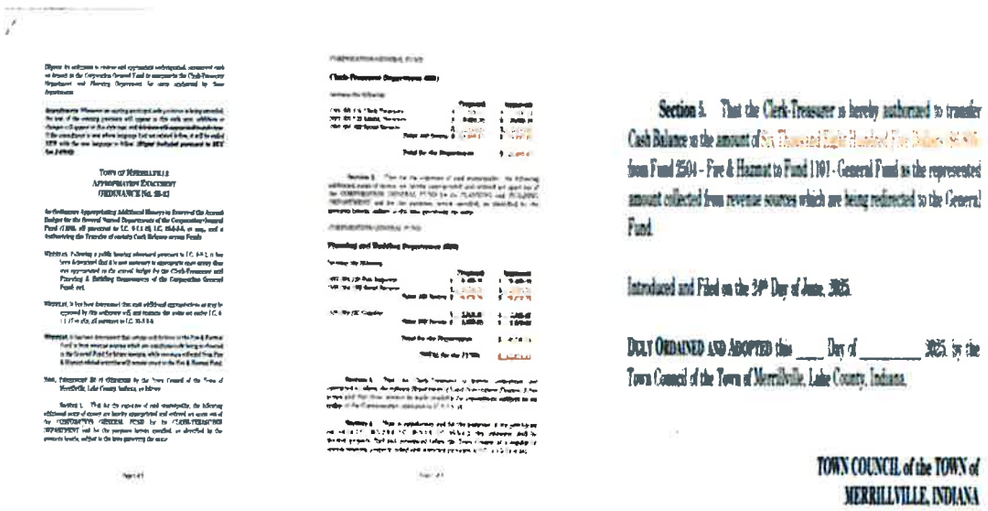
Upon a question from President Bella regarding anything to add, Town Manager Griffin responded that he hopes the ordinance goes to Council Affairs or a Work-Study session for markup.

President Bella stated it would be on the agenda for the Council Affairs or Council Workshop next week.

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

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

1. **<u>Ordinance 25-21 (Discussion & Roll Call Vote)</u>**
   An Ordinance Appropriating Additional Moneys in Excess of the Annual Budget for the Several Named Department of the Corporations General Fund (1101), all pursuant to I.C. 6-1.1-18. I.C. 36-5-3-5, et seq., and Authorizing the Transfer of Certain Cash Balance across Funds.



TOWN OF MERRILLVILLE
APPROPRIATION ENACTMENT
ORDINANCE No. 25-21

Section 5. That the Clerk-Treasurer is hereby authorized to transfer Cash Balance in the amount of Six Thousand Eight Hundred Five Dollars ($6,805) from Fund 2504 - Fire & Hazmat to Fund 1101 - General Fund as the represented amount collected from revenue sources which are being redirected to the General Fund.

Introduced and Filed on the 3rd Day of June, 2025.

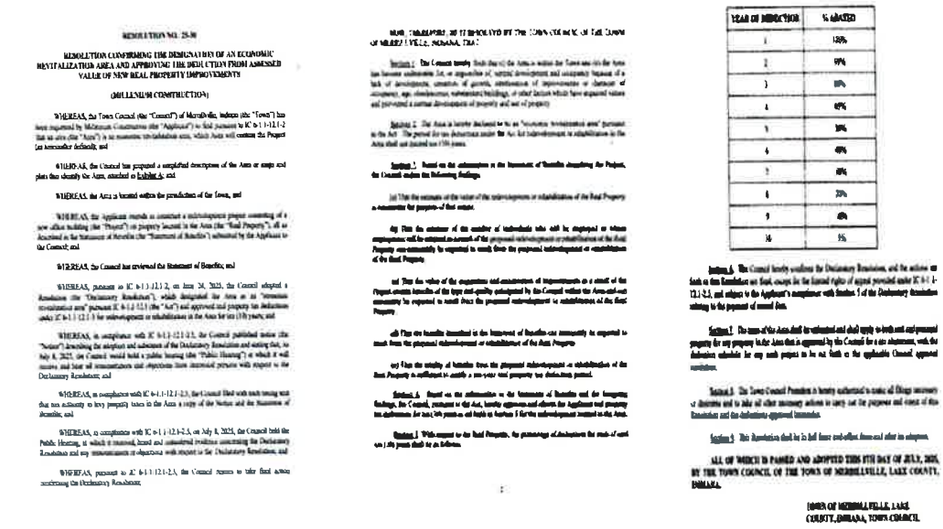
DULY ORDAINED AND ADOPTED this ____ Day of _____ 2025, by the Town Council of the Town of Merrillville, Lake County, Indiana.

TOWN COUNCIL of the TOWN of
MERRILLVILLE, INDIANA

Action on the ordinance was taken up under the Public Hearing section of the agenda.

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

1. **<u>Resolution 25-30 (Discussion & Voice Vote)</u>**
   A Resolution Confirming The Designation Of An Economic Revitalization Area And Approving the Deduction From Assessed Value Of New Real Property Improvements.



RESOLUTION NO. 25-30

RESOLUTION CONFIRMING THE DESIGNATION OF AN ECONOMIC REVITALIZATION AREA AND APPROVING THE DEDUCTION FROM ASSESSED VALUE OF NEW REAL PROPERTY IMPROVEMENTS

(MILLENIUM CONSTRUCTION)

WHEREAS, the Town Council (the "Council") of Merrillville, Indiana (the "Town") has been requested by Millenium Construction (the "Applicant") to find pursuant to IC 6-1.1-12.1-2 that an area (the "Area") is an economic revitalization area, which Area will contain the Project (as hereinafter defined); and

WHEREAS, the Area is located within the jurisdiction of the Town; and

WHEREAS, the Applicant intends to construct a redevelopment project consisting of a new office building (the "Project") on property located in the Area (the "Real Property"), all as described in the Statement of Benefits (the "Statement of Benefits") submitted by the Applicant to the Council; and

WHEREAS, the Council has reviewed the Statement of Benefits; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to IC 6-1.1-12.1-2, on June 24, 2025, the Council adopted a Resolution (the "Declaratory Resolution"), which designated the Area as an "economic revitalization area" pursuant IC 6-1.1-12.1 (the "Act") and approved real property tax deductions under IC 6-1.1-12.1-3 for redevelopment or rehabilitation in the Area for ten (10) years; and

WHEREAS, in compliance with IC 6-1.1-12.1-2.5, the Council published notice (the "Notice") describing the adoption and substance of the Declaratory Resolution and stating that, on July 8, 2025, the Council would hold a public hearing (the "Public Hearing") at which it will receive and hear all remonstrances and objections from interested persons with respect to the Declaratory Resolution; and

WHEREAS, in compliance with IC 6-1.1-12.1-2.5, the Council filed with each taxing unit that has authority to levy property taxes in the Area a copy of the Notice and the Statement of Benefits; and

WHEREAS, in compliance with IC 6-1.1-12.1-2.5, on July 8, 2025, the Council held the Public Hearing, at which it reviewed, heard and considered evidence concerning the Declaratory Resolution and any remonstrances or objections with respect to the Declaratory Resolution; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to IC 6-1.1-12.1-2.5, the Council desires to take final action concerning the Declaratory Resolution.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF MERRILLVILLE, INDIANA, THAT:

Section 1. The Council hereby finds that (a) the Area is within the Town and (b) the Area has become undesirable for, or impossible of, normal development and occupancy because of a lack of development, cessation of growth, deterioration or improvements or character of occupancy, age, obsolescence, inadequate buildings, or other factors which have impaired values and prevented a normal development of property and use of property.

Section 2. The Area is hereby declared to be an "economic revitalization area" pursuant to the Act. The period for tax deductions under the Act for redevelopment or rehabilitation in the Area shall not exceed ten (10) years.

Section 3. Based on the information in the Statement of Benefits concerning the Project, the Council makes the following findings:

(a) That the estimate of the value of the redevelopment or rehabilitation of the Real Property is reasonable for purposes of that statute.

(b) That the estimate of the number of individuals who will be employed or whose employment will be retained as a result of the proposed redevelopment or rehabilitation of the Real Property is reasonable or reasonable for similar projects.

(c) That the estimate of the annual salaries of those individuals who will be employed or whose employment will be retained can reasonably be expected to result from the proposed redevelopment or rehabilitation of the Real Property.

(d) That the value of the redevelopment and construction of improvements as a result of the Project exceeds benefits of the type and quality anticipated by the Council within the Area and such community has requested to result from the proposed redevelopment or rehabilitation of the Real Property.

(e) That the benefits described in the Statement of Benefits are reasonably expected to result from the proposed redevelopment or rehabilitation of the Area Property.

(f) That the totality of benefits from the proposed redevelopment or rehabilitation of the Area Property is sufficient to justify a ten-year real property tax deduction period.

Section 4. Based on the information in the Statements of Benefits and the foregoing findings, the Council, pursuant to the Act, hereby approves and allows the Applicant real property tax deductions for ten (10) years as set forth in Section 5 for the redevelopment located in the Area.

Section 5. With respect to the Real Property, the percentage of deductions for each of such ten (10) years shall be as follows:

YEAR OF DEDUCTION	% ABATED
1	100%
2	95%
3	85%
4	65%
5	50%
6	40%
7	30%
8	20%
9	10%
10	5%

Section 6. The Council hereby confirms the Declaratory Resolution, and the actions set forth in this Resolution are final, except for the limited rights of appeal provided under IC 6-1.1-12.1-4.5, and subject to the Applicant's compliance with Section 7 of the Declaratory Resolution relating to the payment of annual fees.

Section 7. The name of the Area shall be submitted and shall apply to both real and personal property for any property in the Area that is approved by the Council for a tax abatement, with the deduction schedule for any such project to be set forth in the applicable Council approved resolution.

Section 8. The Town Council President is hereby authorized to make all things necessary or desirable and to take all other necessary actions to carry out the purposes and intent of this Resolution and the declaratory approved hereunder.

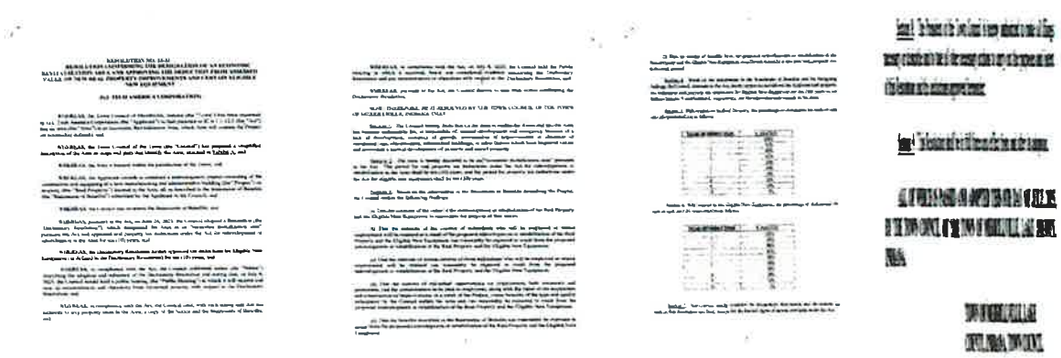
Section 9. This Resolution shall be in full force and effect from and after its adoption.

ALL OF WHICH IS PASSED AND ADOPTED THIS 8TH DAY OF JULY, 2025, BY THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF MERRILLVILLE, LAKE COUNTY, INDIANA.

TOWN OF MERRILLVILLE, LAKE COUNTY, INDIANA, TOWN COUNCIL

Action on the resolution was taken up under the Public Hearing section of the agenda.

2. **<u>Resolution 25-31 (Discussion & Voice Vote)</u>**
   Resolution Confirming The Designation Of An Economic Revitalization Area And Approving The Deduction From Assessed Value Of New Real Property Improvements And Certain Eligible New Equipment.



Action on the resolution was taken up under the Public Hearing section of the agenda.

C. **BZA & LARGE GATHERING ACTIONS*:***

1) **Petitioner**: Lena Kessel
   Owner: Renee Doughman
   Request: Special Exception Approval
   Purpose: To Allow A Massage Therapy Business
   Location: 8396 Mississippi Street
   Zoning: C-3, Highway Commercial Zoning District

Planning and Building Director Shine reported that the ABZA was approved.

The Petitioner explained the business.

Upon a question from Councilor Pettit regarding remonstrations, Director Shine responded that there were no remonstrations.

It was moved by Councilor Pettit and seconded by Councilor Haynes-Edwards to approve the ABZA.

Upon a question from Councilor Uzelac regarding pricing, the Petitioner responded with the following:

- Swedish Massage - $80.00
- Therapeutic Massage – $85.00
- Deep Tissue Massage - $90.00
- Sport Massage - $100.00

The Petitioner added that the session can be one hour or ninety minutes, and it is a private practice with no other employees.

Upon a roll call vote, there were six affirmatives and no negatives. Councilors Rhonda Neal, Shauna Haynes-Edwards, Leona Chandler-Felton, Margaret Uzelac, Shawn Pettit, and Rick Bella voted in the affirmative. There were no negatives. The motion passed. The ABZA was approved.

2) **Petitioner**: Who Brew Il III LLC
   Owner: Merrillville Broadway Center
   Request: Special Exception Approval
   Purpose: To Allow A drive-thru Coffee Shop
   Location: 71 West Lincoln Hwy
   Zoning: C-3, Highway Commercial Zoning District

Planning and Building Director Shine reported that the ABZA was approved.

It was moved by Vice-President Neal and seconded by Councilor Uzelac to approve the ABZA.

Upon a question from Councilor Pettit regarding investment in the site, the Petitioner responded about $1,700,000.00.

Upon a roll call vote, there were six affirmatives and no negatives. Councilors Rhonda Neal, Shauna Haynes-Edwards, Leona Chandler-Felton, Margaret Uzelac, Shawn Pettit, and Rick Bella voted in the affirmative. There were no negatives. The motion passed. The ABZA was approved.

3) **Petitioner**: Tumi 4 Health
   Owner: Tumi 4 Health
   Request: Variance of Use Approval
   Purpose: To Allow A Crematorium Funeral Services
   Location: 8560 Broadway
   Zoning: C-3, Highway Commercial Zoning District

Planning and Building Director Shine reported that the ABZA was approved.

The Petitioner's Attorney explained the business and state licensing.

The Petitioner also elaborated on the state licensing.

Upon a question from Councilor Uzelac regarding the cost of cremation, the Petitioner responded from $700.00 to $5,000.00.

Upon a question from President Bella regarding the building investment, the Petitioner responded that the investment is around $1,700,000.00.

It was moved by Councilor Uzelac and seconded by Councilor Chandler-Felton to approve the ABZA.

Upon a roll call vote, there were six affirmatives and no negatives. Councilors Rhonda Neal, Shauna Haynes-Edwards, Leona Chandler-Felton, Margaret Uzelac, Shawn Pettit, and Rick Bella voted in the affirmative. There were no negatives. The motion passed. The ABZA was approved.

4) **Petitioner:** Fr Mikoloaj Markiewicz SDS
   Owner: Salvatorian Fathers
   Request: Approval of Large Gathering Permit
   Purpose: Polonia Pilgrimage
   Location: 5755 Pennsylvania Street
   Dates and Times: August 10th from 10:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.

Planning and Building Director Shine explained the Large Gathering.

Upon a question from President Bella regarding problems at this event, Chief Nuses responded that once the issue regarding toilet accessibility along the route was resolved, there hadn't been any other problems.

It was moved by Councilor Uzelac and seconded by Councilor Vice-President Neal to approve the Large Gathering Permit.

Upon a voice vote, the motion passed. The Large Gathering Permit was approved.

5) **Petitioner:** Vince Mancich
   Owner: Sam Roknich

Request: Approval of Large Gathering Permit
Purpose: St. Save Serbfest
Location: 9191 Mississippi Street
Dates and Times: August 1st , 12 pm -12 am, August 2nd , 12 pm-12 am, and August 3rd , 12 pm -9 pm

Planning and Building Director Shine explained the Large Gathering.

Upon a question from President Bella regarding problems at this event, Chief Nuses responded that no incidents had been reported.

It was moved by Councilor Uzelac and seconded by Councilor Chandler-Felton to approve the Large Gathering Permit.

Upon a voice vote, the motion passed. The Large Gathering Permit was approved.

OLD BUSINESS :
NONE

NEW BUSINESS:
NONE

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

There were several public comments, and a copy of the video from the Town Council Meeting held on July 8, 2025, has been uploaded on the Town's website at https://www.merrillville.in.gov/government/town_council/town_council_meetings.php.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Town Council President announced the following:

- Town Council Meeting Tuesday, July 22nd at 6:30 p.m.
- RDC Meeting of July 22nd at 6:00 p.m.
- Pre-Job Fair Ready Set Hired Training Event July 9th at the D&BWCC
- Job Fair July 30th from 11:30 – 2:30 at the D&BWCC.

ADJOURNMENT

Having completed all items on the agenda, the Town Council President announced the meeting adjourned at 7:41 p.m.

Rick Bella, Town Council President

Eric O. January, Clerk-Treasurer

Respectfully Submitted By Angela Lewis