Town Council of Merrillville
7820 Broadway Ave - Merrillville, IN 46410
Town Council Meeting Minutes of the Regular Meeting of
December 9, 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 Shauna Haynes-Edwards, Leona Chandler-Felton, Margaret Uzelac, Shawn Pettit, and Rick Bella. Clerk-Treasurer Eric January was present to memorialize the proceedings. A quorum was attained.

Councilors Rhonda Neal and Keesha Hardway were absent.

PETITIONS, COMMUNICATIONS, ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS, AND REMONSTRATIONS: ***NONE***

PUBLIC COMMENTS:
Public comments were made at the meeting. A copy of the video from the Town Council Meeting held on December 9, 2025, has been uploaded to the Town's website at:
https://www.merrillville.in.gov/government/town_council/town_council_meetings.php.

CONSENT AGENDA:

- Accounts Payable Register Voucher Approval for December 9th, 2025
- Approval of Town Council Meeting Minutes of November 25th, 2025

It was moved by Councilor Uzelac and seconded by Councilor Pettit to approve the consent agenda.

Councilor Pettit requested the removal of warrant number 69004 from the Accounts Payable Register Voucher until further information is obtained regarding warrant number 29004.

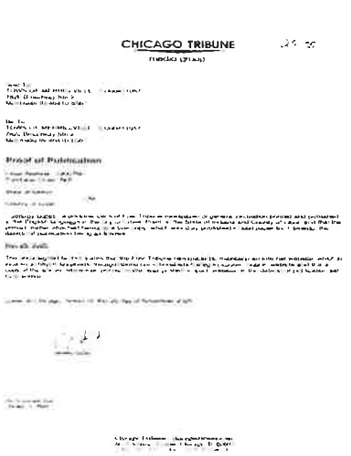
Upon a question from President Bella regarding Councilor Uzelac's second standing with the removal of warrant number 29004, Councilor Uzelac responded that her second still stands.

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 25-35 Additional Appropriation:

i. Verification by Town Attorney of the validity of proof of publication dated November 25th, 2025:


CHICAGO TRIBUNE

Proof of Publication


CHICAGO TRIBUNE

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.

Financial Advisor Hudson gave a synopsis of Ordinance 25-35.

ii. **Public Hearing Open:**
President Bella opened the hearing for Ordinance 25-35. There were no public comments.

iii. **Public Hearing Closed:**
President Bella closed the public hearing for Ordinance 25-35 and stated that action will be taken up under General Orders for this ordinance.

BZA & LARGE GATHERING ACTIONS:

Petitioner: Carie Bender
Owner: John Mathewson
Request: Special Exception Approval
Purpose: To allow a Photo Booth Event Space

Location: 100 West 79th Avenue
Zoning: C-2, Community Commercial Zoning District

Planning and Building Director Sheila Shine reported that the ABZA approved the special exception and gave an overview of the business.

The Petitioner, Carie Bender, explained the business.

Upon a question from Councilor Pettit regarding remonstration, Director Sheila Shine of Building and Planning responded that there were no remonstrators.

It was moved by Councilor Pettit and seconded by Councilor Uzelac to approve the BZA Special Exception.

Upon a question from President Bella regarding the Petitioner's address, Director Sheila Shine responded that the address is the mailing address. Still, the location of the business is a Broadway address. Director Shine will speak to John Mattheson, who manages the building, regarding the addresses.

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

Petitioner: Lucily Raram and Malourdes
Owner: Jun R. Aspiras
Request: Special Exception Approval
Purpose: To allow an Adult Day Care
Location: 4200 West Lincoln Highway
Zoning: C-3, Community Commercial Zoning District

Planning and Building Director Sheila Shine reported that the ABZA approved the special exception and gave an overview of the business. Director Shine also stated that there were no remonstrators.

The Petitioners, Lucily Rarama and Malourdes, explained the business.

Petitioners stated that there will be no bus service, and the clients will be picked up and dropped off.

It was moved by Councilor Uzelac and seconded by Councilor Pettit to approve the BZA Special Exception.

Upon a roll call vote, there were five affirmatives and no negatives. Councilors Shauna Haynes-Edwards, Leona Chandler-Felton, Margaret Uzelac, Shawn Pettit, 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 was absent.

Upon a question from President Bella regarding a report, Town Manager Griffin responded that there is nothing to report.

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

- **Snowplowing** – The Street Department was plowing the streets of Merrillville this weekend.
- **Speed Humps** – Weather permitting, the contractor will remove the speed humps. More snow will be coming, and the temperature will be dropping.to almost zero.

President Bella informed the council that the contractor had started to remove the speed humps, but inclement weather caused the removal project to be delayed.

Chief Nuses stated that several cars were towed and tickets were issued by Code Enforcement.

President Bella informed the council that Councilor Uzelac will speak with Director Steve King of the Street Department regarding weather permitting, about adding a leaf collection for January 2026.

COUNCIL AFFAIRS—PETTIT—Councilor Pettit reported that a Council Affairs committee meeting was held on December 2, 2025, at 5:00 p.m. There are several ordinances and resolutions on the agenda that were reviewed in the meeting.

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE- HARDAWAY- Councilor Hardaway was absent.

Upon a question from President Bella regarding a report, Town Manager Griffin responded that individual employee appraisals are being conducted, which are due December 15th.

Councilor Pettit informed the council that Resolution 25-46 regarding the Town Health Insurance for 2026 is on the agenda and asked Town Manager Griffin to give a synopsis of the plan.

Town Manager Griffin explained the plan increase of 5.9% received from Myers Garos and how it benefits the Town compared to other plans that had a much higher cost. The co-pays for employees, which must be done by ordinance, will be discussed at the next Council Work Study session.

ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS- UZELAC – Councilor Uzelac reported that the temperature will drop this weekend, and the following shots are available at Walgreens, CVS, and Meijer Pharmacies:

- COVID-19
- Pneumonia
- Flu

PUBLIC SAFETY—HARDAWAY—Councilor Hardaway was absent.

ELECTIONS, PUBLIC RELATIONS, & TOWN BEAUTIFICATION - NEAL- Vice President Neal was absent.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT-PETTIT – Councilor Pettit reported that a Redevelopment Commission (RDC) meeting was held earlier tonight.

Angie Chilcott, Economic Development Director, has had DD&F Consultants complete an analysis of all the tax abatements. There is an ordinance on tonight's agenda for the creation of a Redevelopment Department General Fund. This will be for the 15% abatements payback funds, and $610,000.00 will go into that fund.

President Bella requested that the report be made available and coordinated with Chas Reilly, Media Officer, to produce a visually pleasing 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 events:

- **Tree Lighting Ceremony** - The Town of Merrillville tree lighting ceremony was held on Saturday, December 6th, from 4:00 p.m. until 6:00 p.m. at the Dean and Barbara White Community Center. The turnout for this event was a success.

SEMI-QUINCENTENNIAL COMMITTEE - HAYNES-EDWARDS – Councilor Haynes-Edwards reported that emails regarding the committee meeting will go out next week.

DEPARTMENT & COMMISSION REPORTS:

STORMWATER MANAGEMENT RESOURCES-LAKE – Director Matthew Lake was absent.

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

LAKE COUNTY SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT - NEAL - Vice President Neal was absent.

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

FIRE TERRITORY BOARD - NEAL & HARDAWAY – Vice President Neal and Councilor Hardaway were absent.

CLERK-TREASURER OFFICE - JANUARY – Clerk-Treasurer Eric January had nothing to report.

SSCVA – DEANN PATENA - No Report

DEPARTMENT REPORTS/ TOWN MANAGER:

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

- **Tree Lighting Ceremony** – The event was well attended and successful based on feedback from the attendees.
- **Movie Night** – Adults and children showed up for the movie "Elf." We had 30 to 40 community members attend this event. Director McCartney, thank everyone for making this event successful.
- **Winter Basketball League** – After December 22, 2025, the registration fee will increase to $10.00.
- **Other Programs and Activities** – The list of programs and activities is available on the Town's website under Parks and Recreation and the mymerrillville app.
- **Tunnel Lights –** Tunnel lights for the Erie-Lackawanna bike trail are installed, and a ticket has been placed with Hammond Nipsco to restore some equipment to get power through the tunnel.
- **Snow Removal Community Center** – Michael Neal and his assistant keep the parking lots and sidewalks clear of snow.

Police Chief Nuses– Police Department
Chief Nuses reported that the holidays are coming, and the Police Department sees an increase in thefts and robberies, typically in retail department stores. In speaking to stores, some have chosen to contract with the Merrillville Police Department for off-duty Officers to work security for added safety.

Chief Nuses also thanked Director Sheila Shine for her help regarding several issues in the community.

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

Director King - Street Department
Director Steve King was absent.

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

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

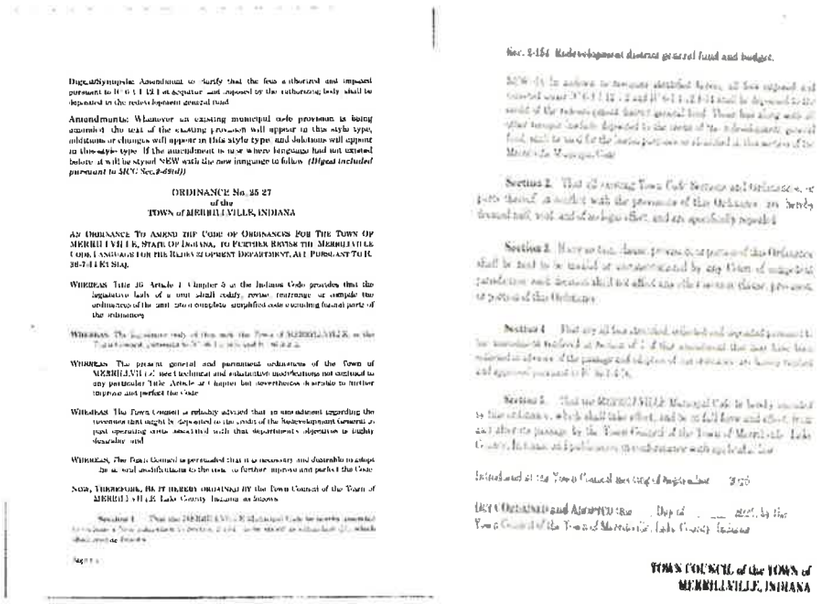
GENERAL ORDERS

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 25-27 (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.



Digestibly simple Amendment to clarify that the fees collected and imposed pursuant to IC 6-1.1-12.1 et seq are and imposed by the redevelopment authority 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 to use where language had not existed before it will be stated NEW with the new language to follow. *(Illegal included pursuant to SEC. Sec.8-49(d))*

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 I.C. 36-7-14 ET SEQ.

WHEREAS Title 36 Article 1 Chapter 5 of the Indiana Code provides that the legislative body of a unit shall codify, revise, rearrange or compile the ordinances of the unit into a complete simplified code containing found parts of the ordinances

WHEREAS The legislative body of the unit the Town of MERRILLVILLE in the Town Council, pursuant to IC 36-1-5-4 and IC 36-4-6-4

WHEREAS The present general and permanent ordinances of the Town of MERRILLVILLE need technical and substantive modifications not confined to any particular Title 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 revenues that ought to be deposited in the funds of the Redevelopment General purpose operating costs associated with that department's operation is highly desirable and

WHEREAS, The Town Council is persuaded that it is necessary and desirable to adopt the several modifications to the text 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 be hereby amended by [illegible] which shall take effect

Sec. 2-154 Redevelopment district general fund and budget.

NEW: It is ordered to [illegible] are repealed and enacted [illegible] and IC 6-1.1-12.1-11 shall be deposited in the [illegible] general fund. These fees along with other [illegible] deposited in the [illegible] general fund, shall be used for the [illegible] and budgeted in the manner of the 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 [illegible] 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 of the aforesaid repealed and amended provisions [illegible] to be [illegible] of Section 1 of this amendment the last time [illegible] in advance of the passage and adoption of this ordinance are hereby ratified and approved pursuant to IC 36-1-5-4

Section 5 That the MERRILLVILLE Municipal Code be hereby amended to the extent [illegible] 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, as [illegible] in accordance with applicable law

Introduced at the Town Council meeting held on the [illegible] day of [illegible] 2025

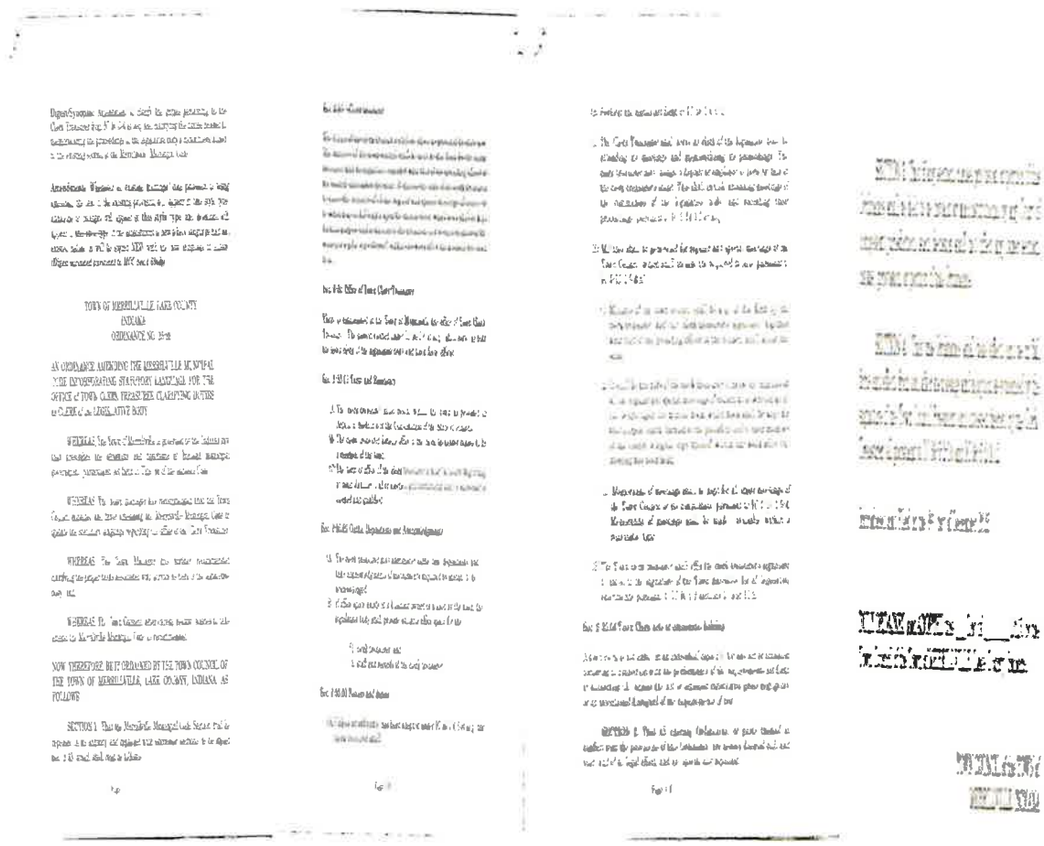
DULY Ordained and Adopted this [illegible] Day of [illegible], 2025, by the Town Council of the Town of Merrillville, Lake County, Indiana

TOWN COUNCIL of the TOWN of MERRILLVILLE, INDIANA

It was moved by Councilor Pettit and seconded by Councilor Uzelac to approve Ordinance 25-27 on first reading.

Upon a roll call vote, there were five affirmatives and no negatives. Councilors 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.

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



TOWN OF MERRILLVILLE LAKE COUNTY
INDIANA
ORDINANCE NO. 25-28

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE MERRILLVILLE MUNICIPAL CODE INCORPORATING STATUTORY AUTHORITY FOR THE OFFICE OF TOWN CLERK-TREASURER CLARIFYING DUTIES OF CLERK of the LEGISLATIVE BODY

It was moved by Councilor Pettit and seconded by Councilor Uzelac to approve Ordinance 25-28 on first reading.

Clerk-Treasurer Eric January stated that Ordinance 25-28 is unnecessary because the duties are already covered by state statute. The additional duties mentioned in Ordinance 25-28 need to be clarified before they are taken into consideration by the council.

Upon a question from President Bella regarding adding a comment, Town Manager Griffin responded that we should have a discussion. He also added that most of what is in Ordinance 25-28 was taken from state statute. Town Manager Griffin elaborated on the statutes and Ordinance 25-28.

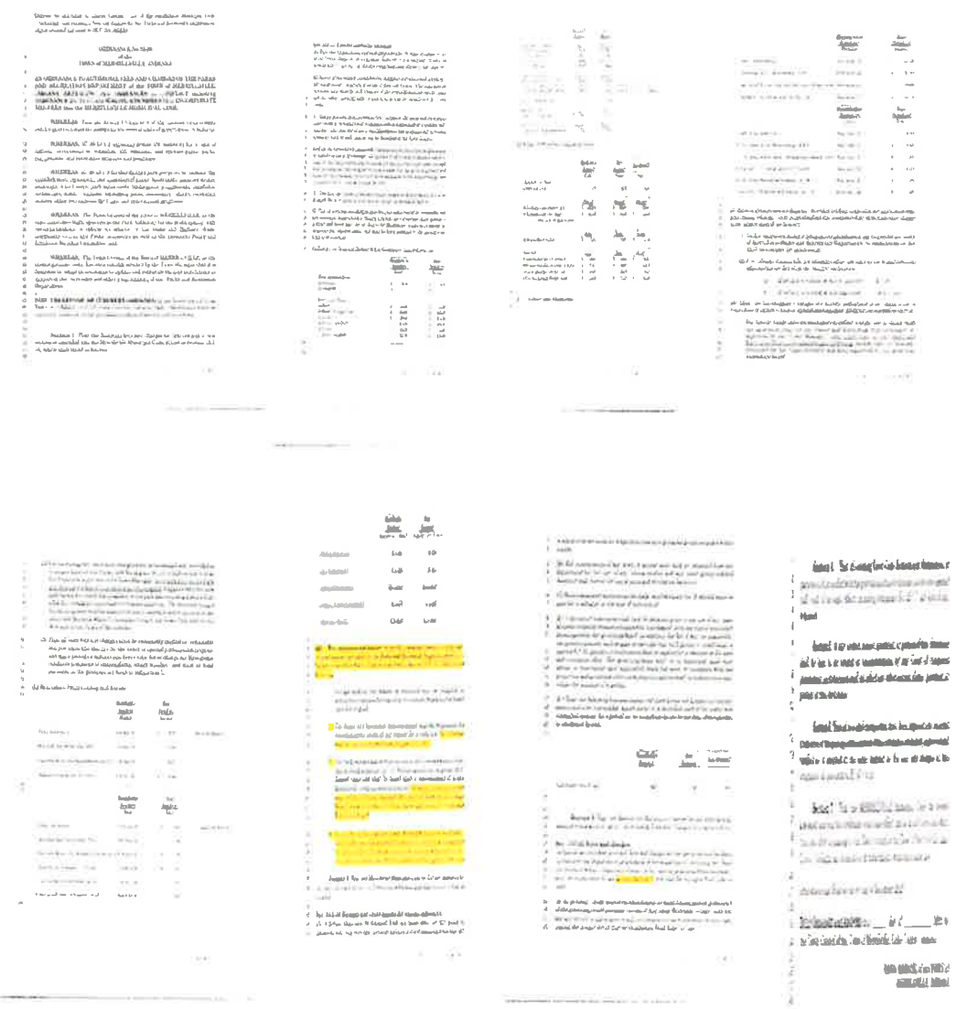
Attorney Svetanoff stated that it could be a topic of discussion at the next Town Council Workshop before the second reading.

It was moved by Councilor Haynes-Edwards and seconded by Councilor Chandler-Felton to table Ordinance 25-28.

Upon a roll call vote, there were five affirmatives and no negatives. Councilors Shauna Haynes-Edwards, Leona Chandler-Felton, Margaret Uzelac, Shawn Pettit, and Rick Bella voted in the affirmative. There were no negatives. The motion passed. Ordinance 25-28 was tabled.

Ordinance 25-36 (Discussion & Roll Call Vote)

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.

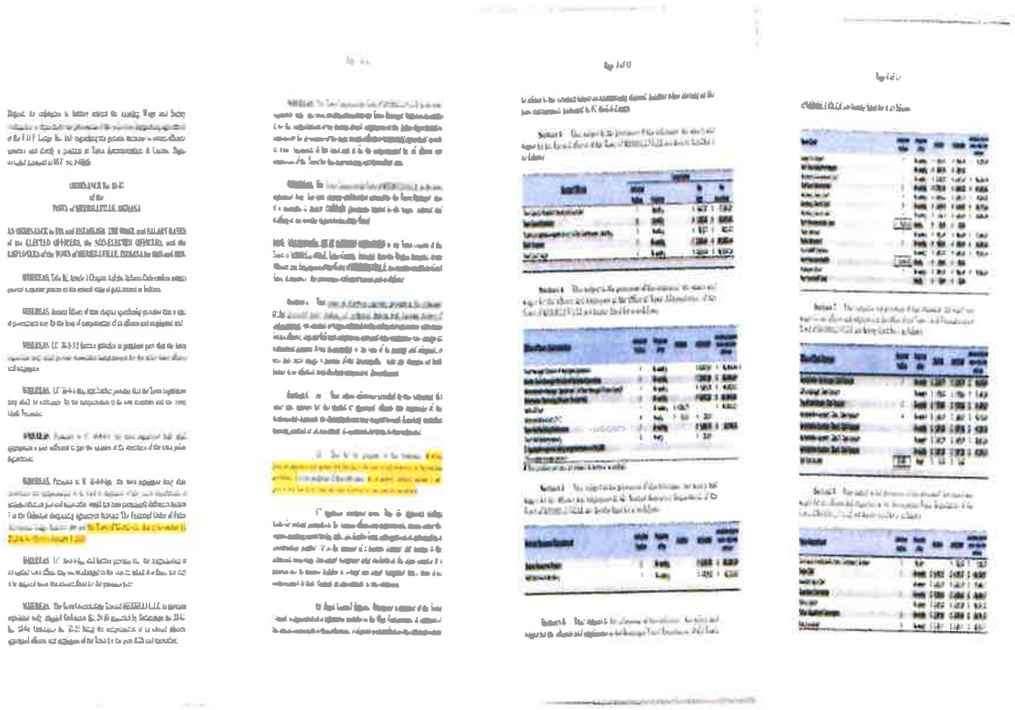


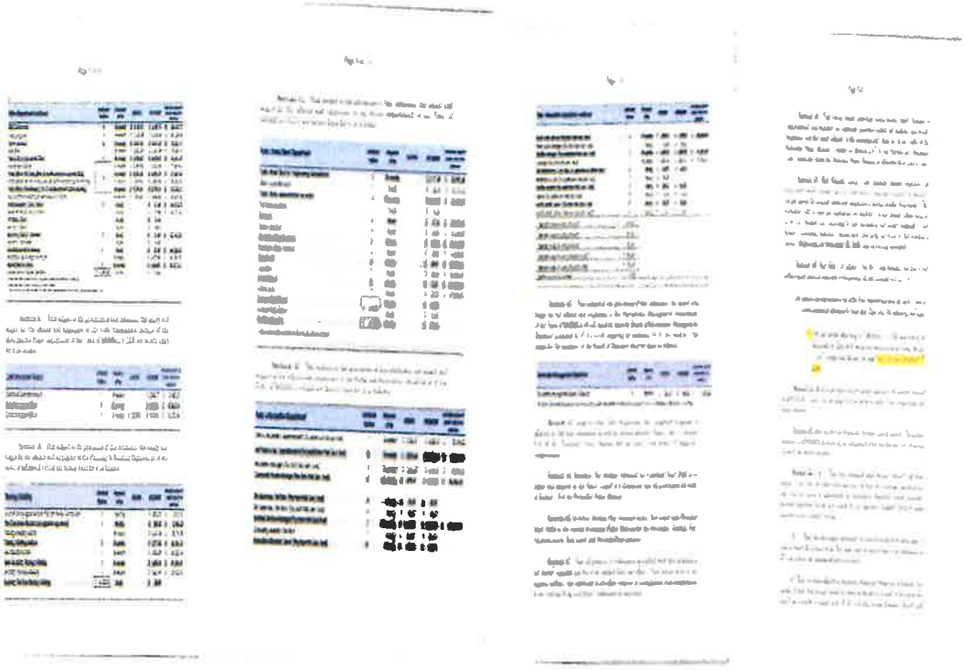
It was moved by Councilor Haynes-Edwards and seconded by Councilor Uzelac to approve Ordinance 25-36 on first reading.

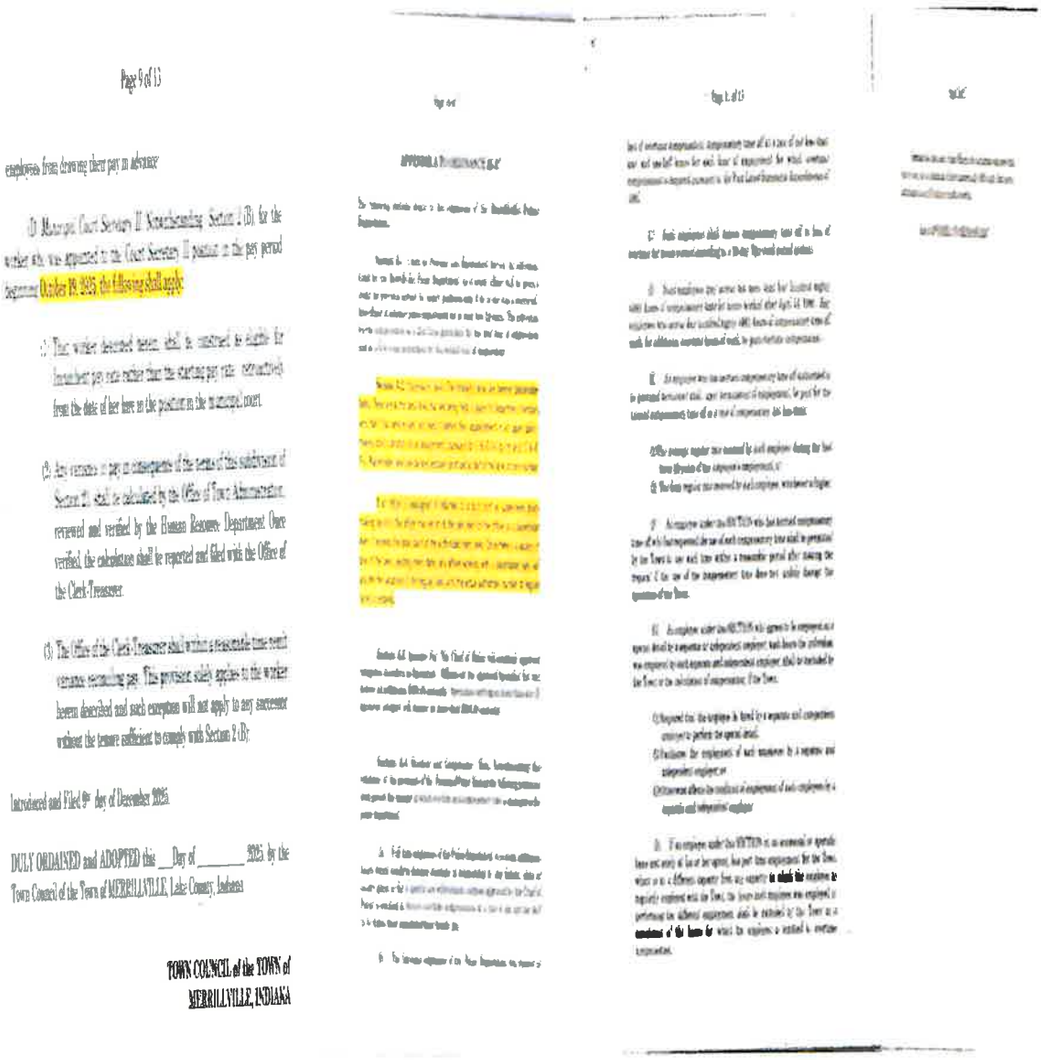
Councilor Pettit explained Ordinance 25-36 and stated that the ordinance may be modified before the second reading.

Upon a roll call vote, there were five affirmatives and no negatives. Councilors 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.

<u>Ordinance 25-37 (Discussion & Roll Call Vote)</u>
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.







Page 9 of 13

employees from drawing their pay in advance

(1) Municipal Court Secretary II Notwithstanding Section 2 (B), for the worker who was appointed to the Court Secretary II position in the pay period beginning October 19, 2025, the following shall apply:

(1) That worker described herein, shall be construed as eligible for Incumbent pay rate rather than the starting pay rate retroactively from the date of her hire in the position in the municipal court.

(2) Any variance in pay in consequence of the terms of this subdivision of Section 21, shall be calculated by the Office of Town Administration, reviewed and verified by the Human Resource Department. Once verified, the calculations shall be reported and filed with the Office of the Clerk-Treasurer.

(3) The Office of the Clerk-Treasurer shall within a reasonable time remit variance recounting pay. This provision solely applies to the worker herein described and such exception will not apply to any successor without the tenure sufficient to comply with Section 2 (B).

Introduced and Filed 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

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 Councilor Pettit and seconded by Councilor Haynes-Edwards to approve Ordinance 25-37 on first reading.

Clerk-Treasurer Eric January stated that he would like to adjust a couple of line-item positions on Ordinance 25-37 by decreasing one by $3,000.00 and increasing another by the same amount.

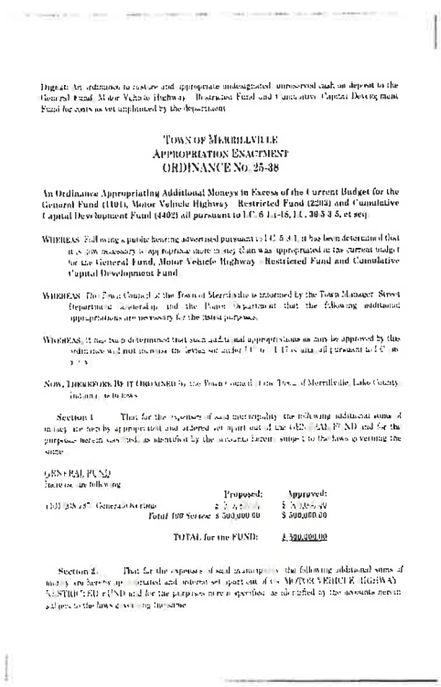
Upon a question from Councilor Pettit regarding whether the change was temporary or permanent, Clerk-Treasurer Eric January stated that the change was permanent.

President Bella stated the changes can be made before the second reading, and Clerk-Treasurer Eric January needs to make sure Town Manager Griffith has the changes for the ordinance.

Upon a roll call vote, there were five affirmatives and no negatives. Councilors 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.

<u>Ordinance 25-38 (Discussion & Roll Call Vote)</u>

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.



Digest: An ordinance to restore and appropriate undesignated unreserved cash on deposit to the General Fund, Motor Vehicle Highway - Restricted Fund and Cumulative Capital Development Fund for costs as yet unplanned by the department.

TOWN OF MERRILLVILLE
APPROPRIATION ENACTMENT
ORDINANCE No. 25-38

An Ordinance Appropriating Additional Moneys in Excess of the Current Budget for the General Fund (1101), Motor Vehicle Highway - Restricted Fund (2203) and Cumulative Capital Development Fund (4402) all pursuant to I.C. 6.1.1-18, I.C. 36-3-5, et seq.

WHEREAS: Following a public hearing advertised pursuant to I.C. 5.4.1, it has been determined that it is now necessary to appropriate more money than was appropriated in the current budget for the General Fund, Motor Vehicle Highway - Restricted Fund and Cumulative Capital Development Fund.

WHEREAS: The Town Council of the Town of Merrillville is informed by the Town Manager, Street Department Leadership and the Police Department that the following additional appropriations are necessary for the listed purposes.

WHEREAS: It has been determined that such additional appropriations as may be approved by this ordinance will not increase the levies set under I.C. 6.1.1-17 or any all pursuant to I.C. 36-3-5.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED 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 additional sums of money are hereby appropriated and ordered set apart out of the GENERAL FUND and for the purposes herein specified, as identified by the accounts herein, subject to the laws governing the same.

GENERAL FUND
Increase the following:

		Proposed:	Approved:
1101 [illegible]	General Overtime	[illegible]	[illegible]
	Total 100 Series:	$ 500,000.00	$ 500,000.00
	TOTAL for the FUND:		$ 500,000.00

Section 2. That for the expenses of said municipality, the following additional sums of money are hereby appropriated and ordered set apart out of the MOTOR VEHICLE HIGHWAY - RESTRICTED FUND and for the purposes herein specified, as identified by the accounts herein, subject to the laws governing the same.

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
2203.010.162	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:
4402.010.350	CCD/Public Safety	$ 120,000.00	$ 120,000.00
4402.010.394	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. 36-5-3-5, 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

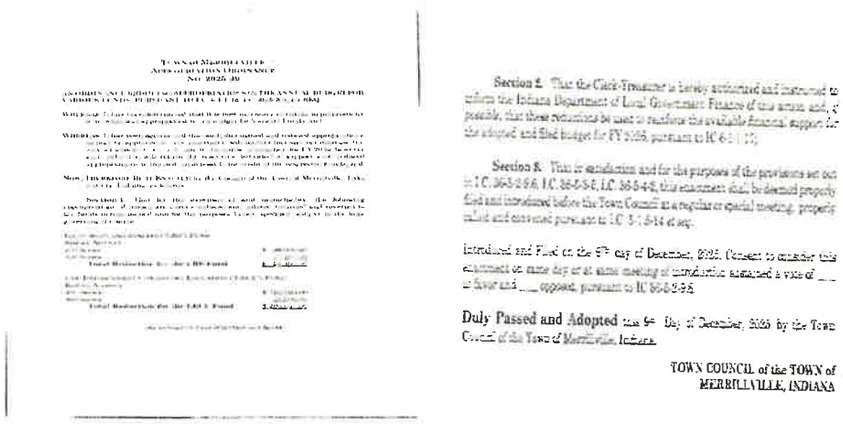
It was moved by Councilor Haynes-Edwards and seconded by Councilor Chandler-Felton to approve Ordinance 25-38 on first reading.

Financial Advisor Hudson explained Ordinance 25-38.

Upon a question from Councilor Pettit regarding a public hearing and legal notice, Financial Advisor Hudson responded that both would occur at the next Town Council Meeting.

Upon a roll call vote, there were five affirmatives and no negatives. Councilors 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.

Ordinance 25-39 (Discussion & Roll Call Vote)
An Ordinance Reducing Appropriation in the Annual Budget for Various Funds, Pursuant to I.C. 6-1.1-18, I.C. 36-5-3-5 et seq.



Section 2. That the Clerk-Treasurer is hereby authorized and instructed to inform the Indiana Department of Local Government Finance of this action and, if possible, that these reductions be used to reallocate the available financial support for the adopted and filed budget for FY 2026, pursuant to IC 6-1.1-17;

Section 3. That in satisfaction and for the purposes of the provisions set out in I.C. 36-5-2-9.6, I.C. 36-5-3-5, I.C. 36-5-4-2, this enactment 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. 5-14-1.5 et seq.

Introduced and Filed on the 9th day of December, 2025. Consent to consider this enactment on same day or at same meeting of introduction obtained a vote of ___ in favor and ___ opposed, pursuant to IC 36-5-2-9.6.

Duly Passed and Adopted this 9th Day of December, 2025 by the Town Council of the Town of Merrillville, Indiana.

TOWN COUNCIL of the TOWN of MERRILLVILLE, INDIANA

Financial Advisor Hudson explained Ordinance 25-39.

It was moved by Councilor Pettit and seconded by Councilor Uzelac to approve Ordinance 25-39 on first reading.

Upon a roll call vote, there were five affirmatives and no negatives. Councilors 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.

It was moved by Councilor Pettit and seconded by Councilor Uzelac to suspend the rules and hear Ordinance 25-39 on second reading.

Upon a roll call vote, there were five affirmatives and no negatives. Councilors Shauna Haynes-Edwards, Leona Chandler-Felton, Margaret Uzelac, Shawn Pettit, and Rick Bella voted in the

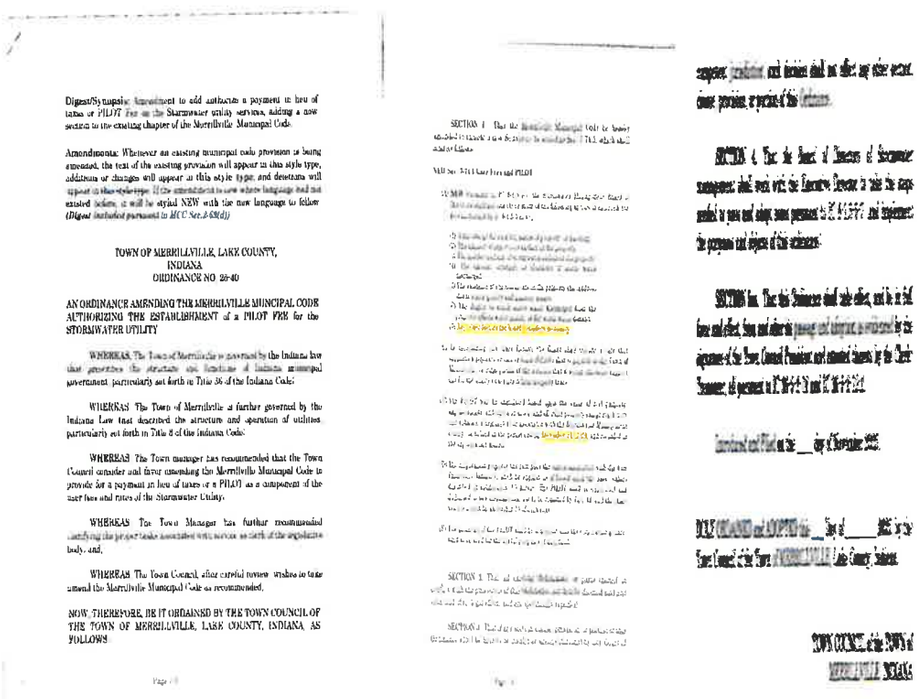
affirmative. There were no negatives. The motion passed. The rules were suspended to hear Ordinance 25-39 on second reading.

It was moved by Councilor Pettit and seconded by Councilor Uzelac to approve Ordinance 25-39 on second and final reading.

Upon a roll call vote, there were five affirmatives and no negatives. Councilors 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 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 authority 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: 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 did not existed before, it will be styled NEW with the new language to follow. *(Digest included pursuant to IC Sec.5-3(d))*

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 justifying the proper funds associated with services on behalf of the regulatory body; and,

WHEREAS The Town Council, after careful review wishes to now 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 be hereby amended to enact a new section to read as follows: Title 36 Article 3 Section 3.14 User Fees and PILOT

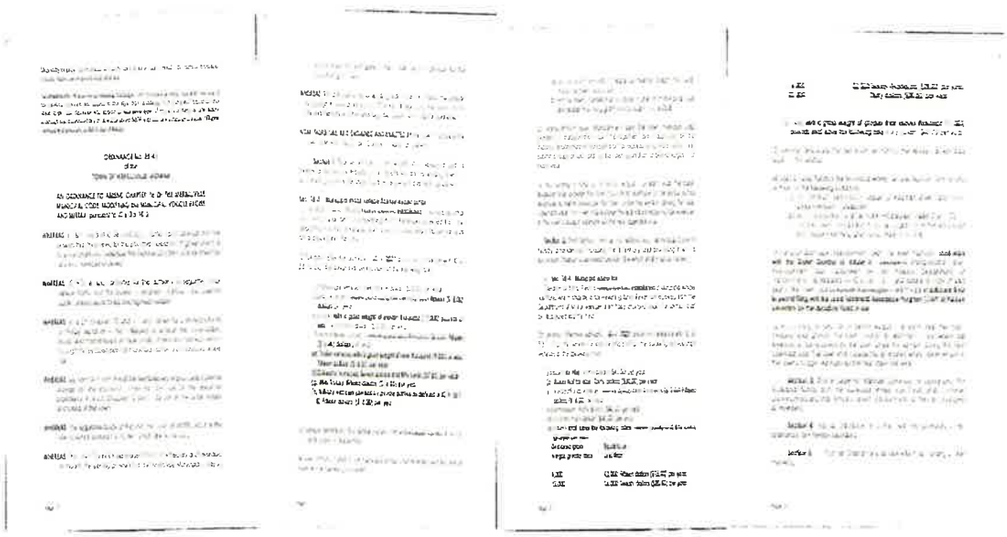
Town Manager Griffin explained Ordinance 25-40.

It was moved by Councilor Pettit and seconded by Councilor Uzelac to approve Ordinance 25-40 on first reading.

Upon a roll call vote, there were five affirmatives and no negatives. Councilors 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.

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 first reading.

Town Manager Griffin explained Ordinance 25-41.

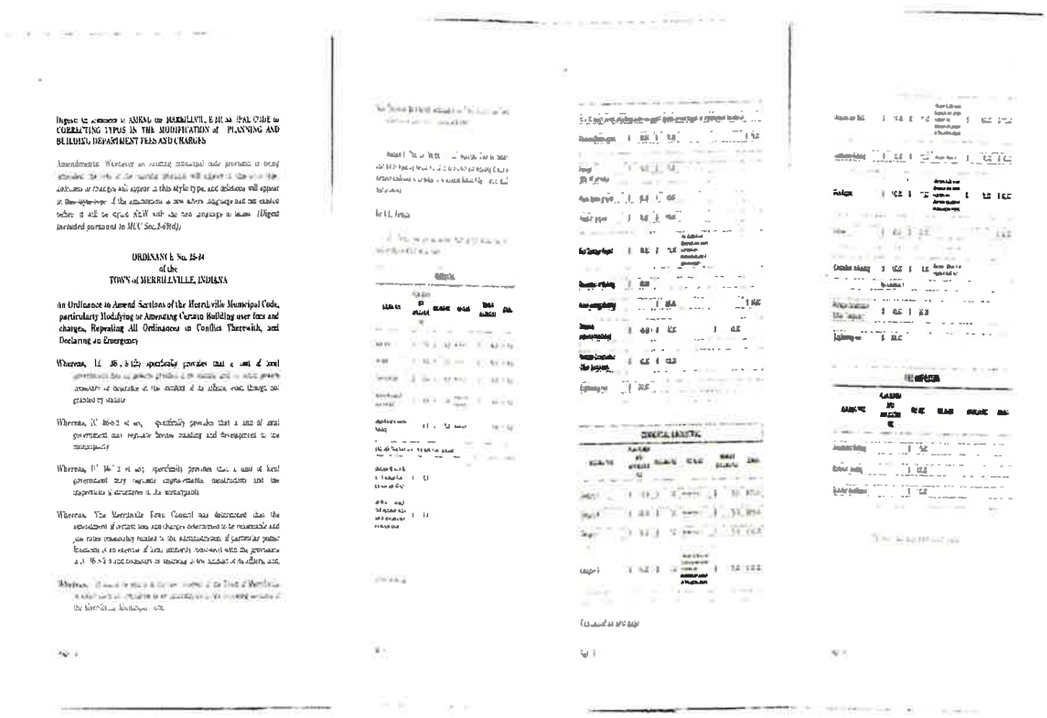
Upon a roll call vote, there were five affirmatives and no negatives. Councilors Shauna Haynes-Edwards, Leona Chandler-Felton, Margaret Uzelac, Shawn Pettit, and Rick Bella voted in the

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):

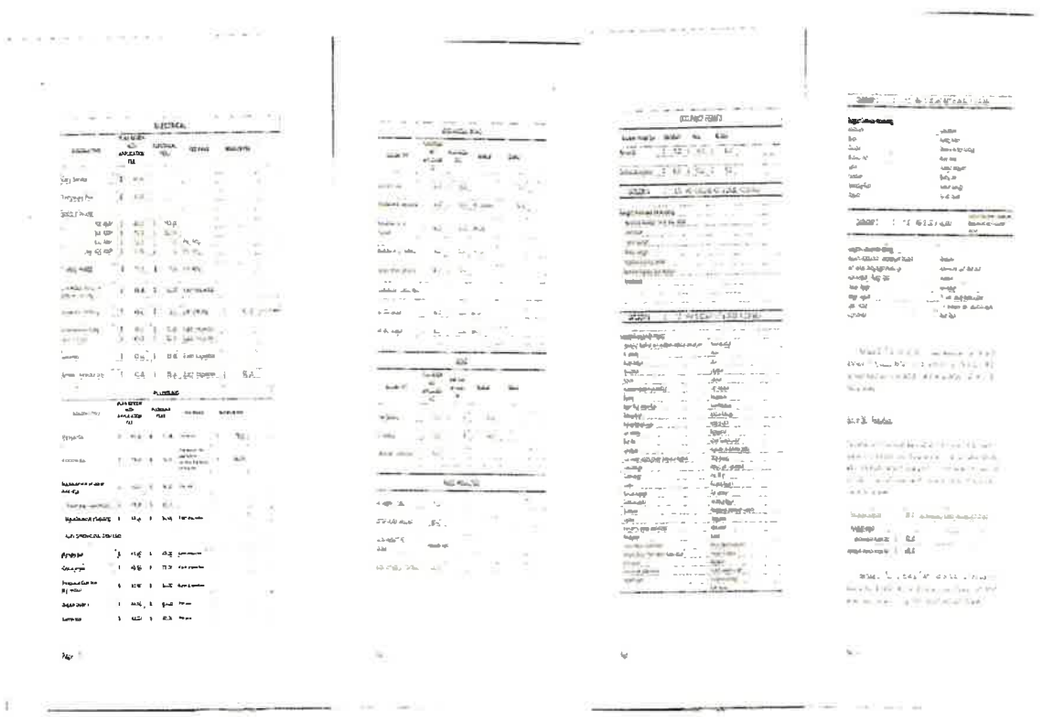
Ordinance 25-24 (Discussion & Roll Call Vote)

An Ordinance to Amend Sections of the Merrillville Municipal Code, particularly Modifying or Amending Certain Building user fees and charges, Repealing All Ordinances in Conflict Therewith, and Declaring an Emergency.



ORDINANCE No. 25-24
of the
TOWN of MERRILLVILLE, INDIANA

An Ordinance to Amend Sections of the Merrillville Municipal Code, particularly Modifying or Amending Certain Building user fees and charges, Repealing All Ordinances in Conflict Therewith, and Declaring an Emergency



Section 4. This ordinance shall become and be in full force and effect from and after the date of its adoption, passage and publication in the manner prescribed by law, until its subsequent amendment or repeal by proper ordinance, *provided, any increase in fees described herein shall not go into effect until at least ninety (90) days following their publication pursuant to IC 5-3-1, as set forth in IC 36-5-2-10(d),* and not sooner than provided in the amended schedules.

Section 5.: That this Ordinance 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 August 8th, 2025.

DULY ORDAINED and ADOPTED this _____ day of December 9, 2025, by the Town Council of the Town of Merrillville, Lake County, Indiana.

TOWN COUNCIL of the TOWN of MERRILLVILLE, INDIANA

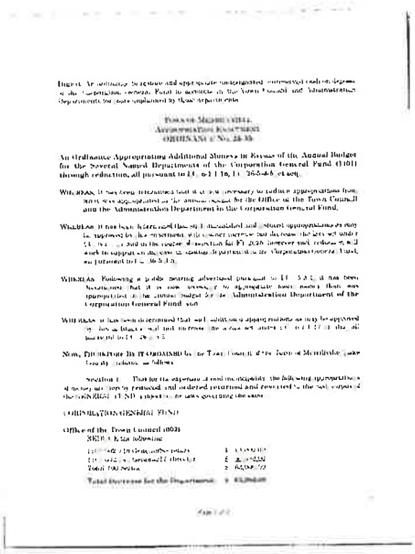
It was moved by Councilor Pettit and seconded by Councilor Uzelac to approve Ordinance 25-24 on second and final reading.

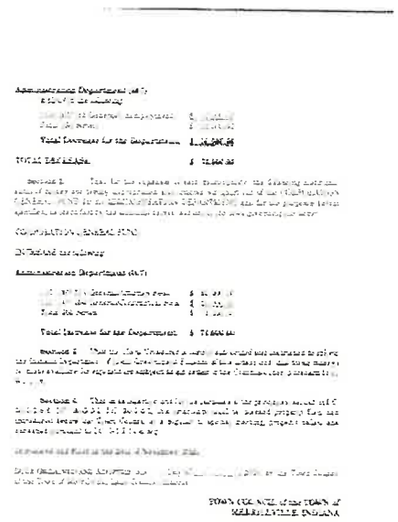
Director Sheila Shine explained Ordinance 25-24.

Upon a roll call vote, there were five affirmatives and no negatives. Councilors 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 second and final reading.

Ordinance 25-35 (Discussion & Roll Call Vote)

An Ordinance Appropriating Additional Moneys in Excess of the Annual Budget for the Several Named Departments of the Corporation General Fund (1101) through reductions, all pursuant to I.C. 6-1.1-18, I.C.36-5-3-5, et seq.





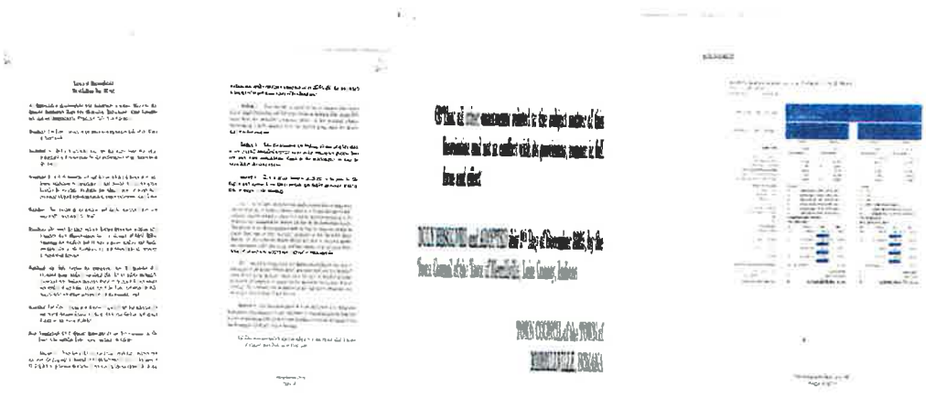
It was moved by Councilor Uzelac and seconded by Councilor Haynes-Edwards to approve Ordinance 25-35 on second and final reading.

Upon a roll call vote, there were five affirmatives and no negatives. Councilors 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 second and final reading.

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

Resolution 25-46 (Discussion & Roll Call Vote)

A Resolution Authorizing and Approving a Group Medical and Health Insurance Plan for Municipal Employees, Their Covered Spouses and Dependents, Pursuant to I.C. 5-10-8 Et Seq

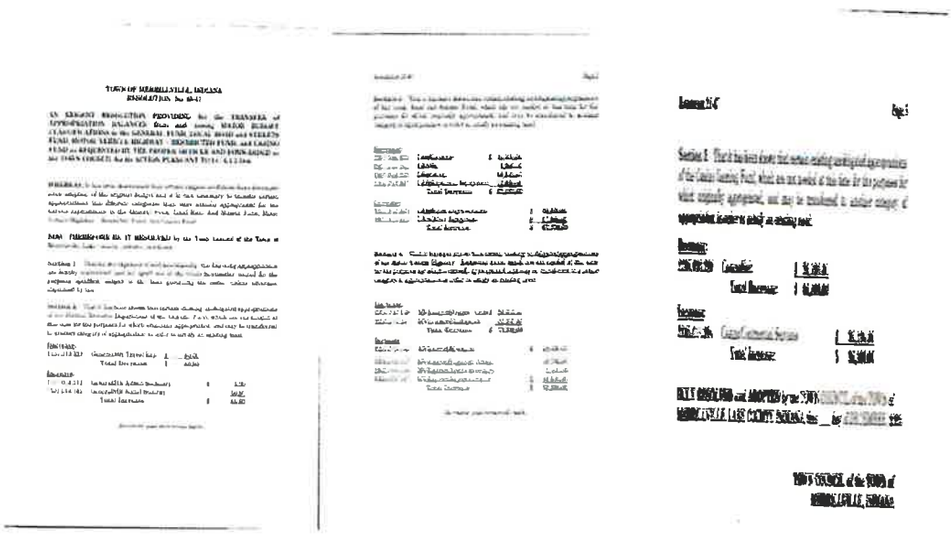


It was moved by Councilor Uzelac and seconded by Councilor Pettit to approve Resolution 25-46.

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

Resolution 25-47 (Discussion & Roll Call Vote)

An exigent Resolution Providing For The Transfer Of Appropriation Balances From And Among Major Budget Classifications In The General Fund, Local Road And Streets Fund, Motor Vehicle Highway-Restricted Fund, And Casino Fund As Requested By The Proper Officer And Forward To The Town Council For Its Action Pursuant To I.C.6-1.1-18-6.



It was moved by Councilor Pettit and seconded by Councilor Uzelac to approve Resolution 25-47.

Financial Advisor Hudson explained Ordinance 25-47.

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

Resolution 25-48 (Discussion & Roll Call Vote)
A Resolution for the Town of Merrillville, Authorizing A Transfer to the Park Non-Reverting Operating Fund.

TOWN of MERRILLVILLE, INDIANA
RESOLUTION NO. 25-48

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING A TRANSFER TO THE PARK NON-REVERTING OPERATING FUND

WHEREAS, The Town of Merrillville by proper legislative action has established a Park Non-Reverting Operating Fund, pursuant to IC 36-10 et seq.;

WHEREAS, The Town of Merrillville, by proper legislative action did establish a Merrillville Food and Beverage Tax and a Food and Beverage Tax Receipts Fund all pursuant to IC 6-9-54.5 et seq.;

WHEREAS, IC 6-9-54.5-9 provides that among the uses for the revenue received is for parks and recreation purposes;

WHEREAS, The Town Manager and Fiscal Advisor have advised that the Town Council favor the fiscal management outlined in this resolution, which recommendation the Town Council now desires to enact; and

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

Section 1. That the amount of Two Hundred Fifty Thousand Dollars ($250,000) be transferred from the cash balance on deposit to the Food and Beverage Tax Receipts Fund (4439) and be deposited to the credit of the Parks Non-Reverting Operating Fund (2211);

Section 2. That, pursuant to the foregoing, the Clerk-Treasurer be authorized and is hereby requested to transfer the amount identified herein;

Section 3. That the Clerk-Treasurer as the disbursing and fiscal officer of the Municipality, is hereby instructed, and authorized to take such steps as necessary to carry out the purposes of this resolution.

DULY RESOLVED and ADOPTED this ____ day of December, 2025, by the Town Council of the Town of Merrillville, Lake County, Indiana.

TOWN COUNCIL of the TOWN of MERRILLVILLE, INDIANA

Attest:

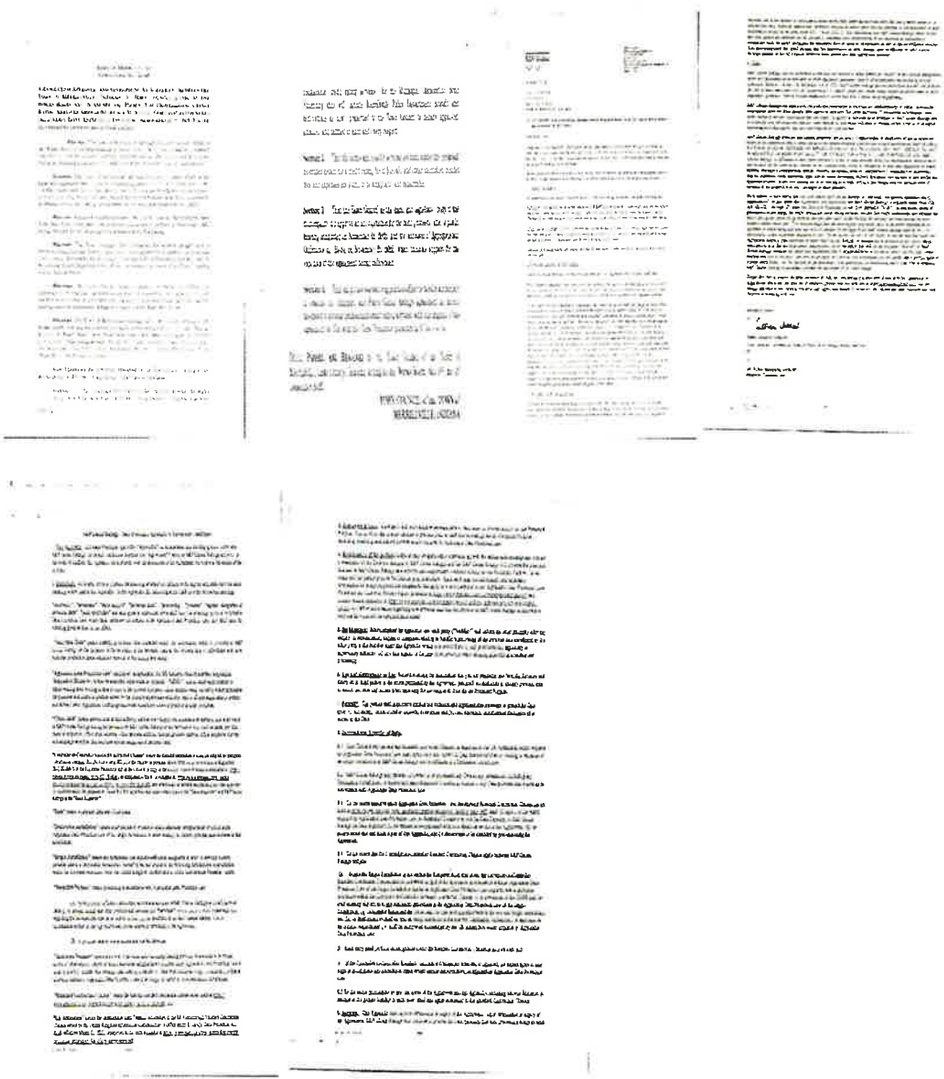
It was moved by Councilor Pettit and seconded by Councilor Haynes-Edwards to approve Resolution 25-48.

Councilor Pettit informed the council that this $250,000.00 tranfer is from the Food and Beverage Tax revenue.

Upon a question from President Bella regarding this expenditure being allowable, Town Manager Griffin responded that this expenditure is within the confines of the law and the statute supports it.

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

Resolution 25-49 (Discussion & Roll Call Vote)
Resolution Approving and Authorizing an Agreement Between the Town of Merrillville, Through its Town Council, acting as the Works Board and Standard and Poor's, For Professional Credit Rating Services Associated with a Municipal Corporation General Obligation Bond Especially Involving Renovations to the Police Department Offices and Other Things.

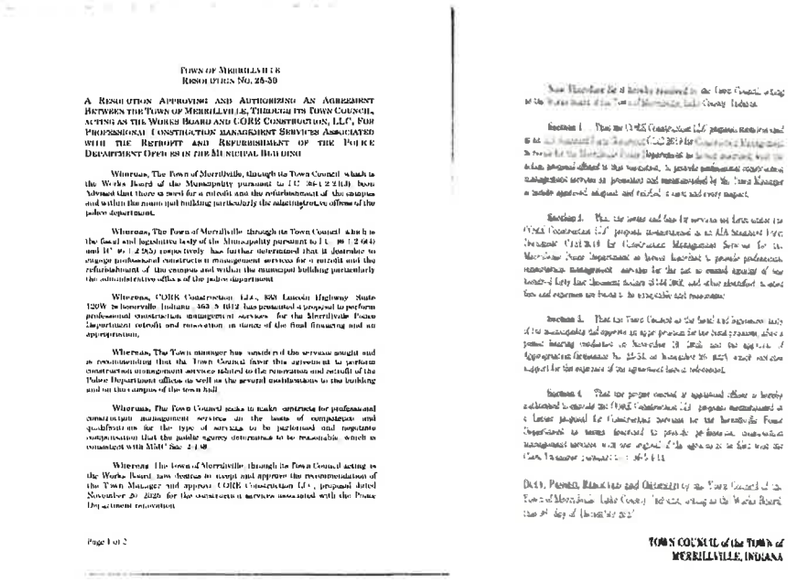


It was moved by Councilor Uzelac and seconded by Councilor Haynes-Edwards to approve Resolution 25-49.

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

Resolution 25-50 (Discussion & Roll Call Vote)

A Resolution Approving and Authorizing an Agreement Between the Town of Merrillville, Through its Town Council, acting as the Works Board, and CORE Construction, LLC, for Professional Construction Management Services Associated with the Retrofit and Refurbishment of the Police Department Offices in the Municipal Building.



TOWN OF MERRILLVILLE
RESOLUTION NO. 25-50

A RESOLUTION APPROVING AND AUTHORIZING AN AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE TOWN OF MERRILLVILLE, THROUGH ITS TOWN COUNCIL, ACTING AS THE WORKS BOARD AND CORE CONSTRUCTION, LLC, FOR PROFESSIONAL CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT SERVICES ASSOCIATED WITH THE RETROFIT AND REFURBISHMENT OF THE POLICE DEPARTMENT OFFICES IN THE MUNICIPAL BUILDING

Whereas, The Town of Merrillville, through its Town Council, which is the Works Board of the Municipality pursuant to I.C. 36-1-2-11(3), been advised that there is need for a retrofit and the refurbishment of the campus and within the main jail building particularly the administrative offices of the police department.

Whereas, The Town of Merrillville through its Town Council, which is the fiscal and legislative body of the Municipality pursuant to I.C. 36-1-2-6(4) and I.C. 36-1-2-5(3), respectively, has further determined that it desirable to engage professional consultants in management services for a retrofit and the refurbishment of the campus and within the municipal building particularly the administrative offices of the police department.

Whereas, CORE Construction, LLC, 850 Lincoln Highway, Suite 120W in Merrillville, Indiana, 463-5-1012 has presented a proposal to perform professional construction management services for the Merrillville Police Department retrofit and renovation in stance of the final financing and an appropriation.

Whereas, The Town manager has considered the services sought and is recommending that the Town Council favor this agreement to perform construction management services related to the renovation and retrofit of the Police Department offices as well as the several modifications to the building and on the campus of the town hall.

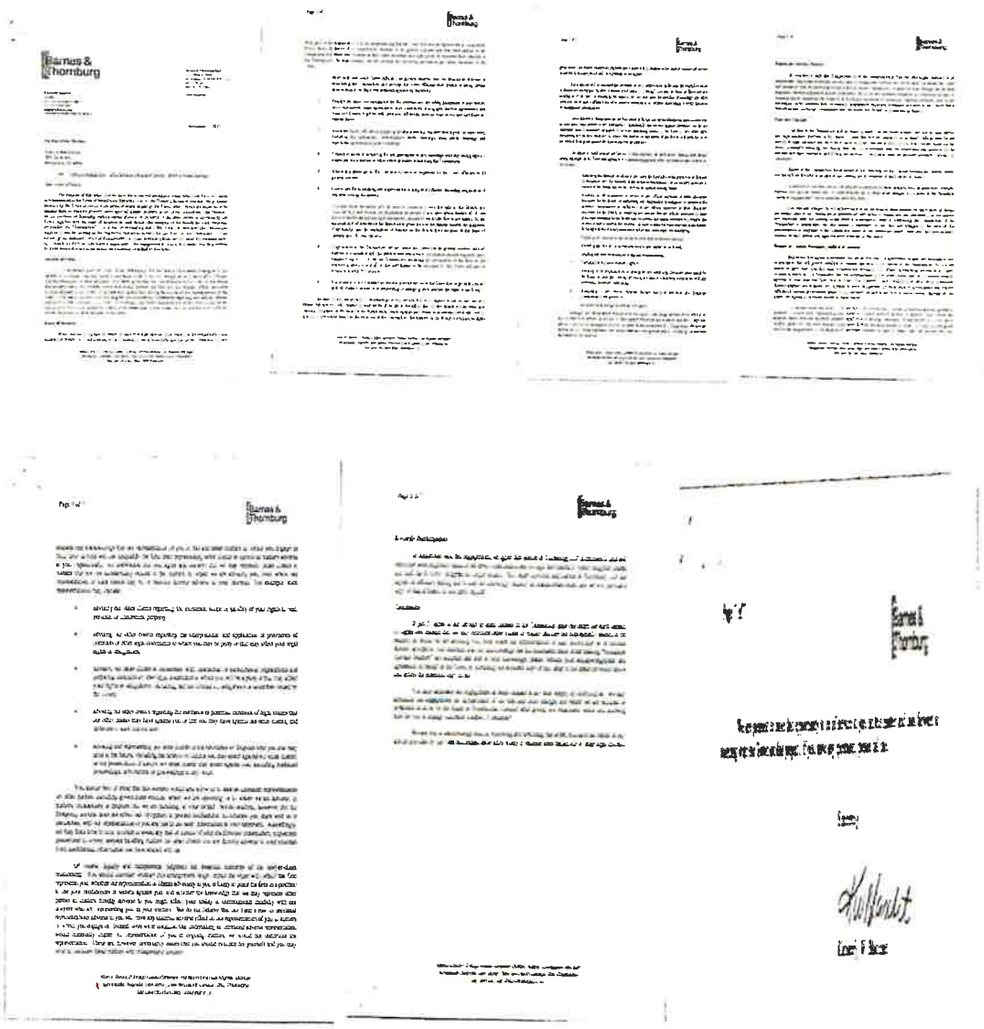
Whereas, The Town Council seeks to make contracts for professional construction management services on the basis of competence and qualifications for the type of services to be performed and negotiate compensation that the public agency determines to be reasonable, which is consistent with IC 5-1-11.

Whereas, The Town of Merrillville through its Town Council acting as the Works Board, now desires to accept and approve the recommendation of the Town Manager and approve CORE Construction, LLC, proposal dated November 20, 2025, for the construction services associated with the Police Department renovation.

Page 1 of 2

Now, Therefore, Be it hereby resolved by the Town Council acting as the Works Board of the Town of Merrillville, Lake County, Indiana:

Section 1. That the CORE Construction, LLC proposal, attached hereto and as an Addendum hereto, dated November 20, 2025, for Construction Management Services for the Merrillville Police Department offices in the municipal building, and other identified areas on the campus, as hereto described, to provide professional construction management services in connection with the retrofit and refurbishment of the police department offices in the municipal building, particularly the administrative offices of the police department, and other identified areas on the campus, as hereto described, to provide professional construction management services for the fee and manner as set forth in the proposal, attached as an Addendum hereto, dated November 20, 2025



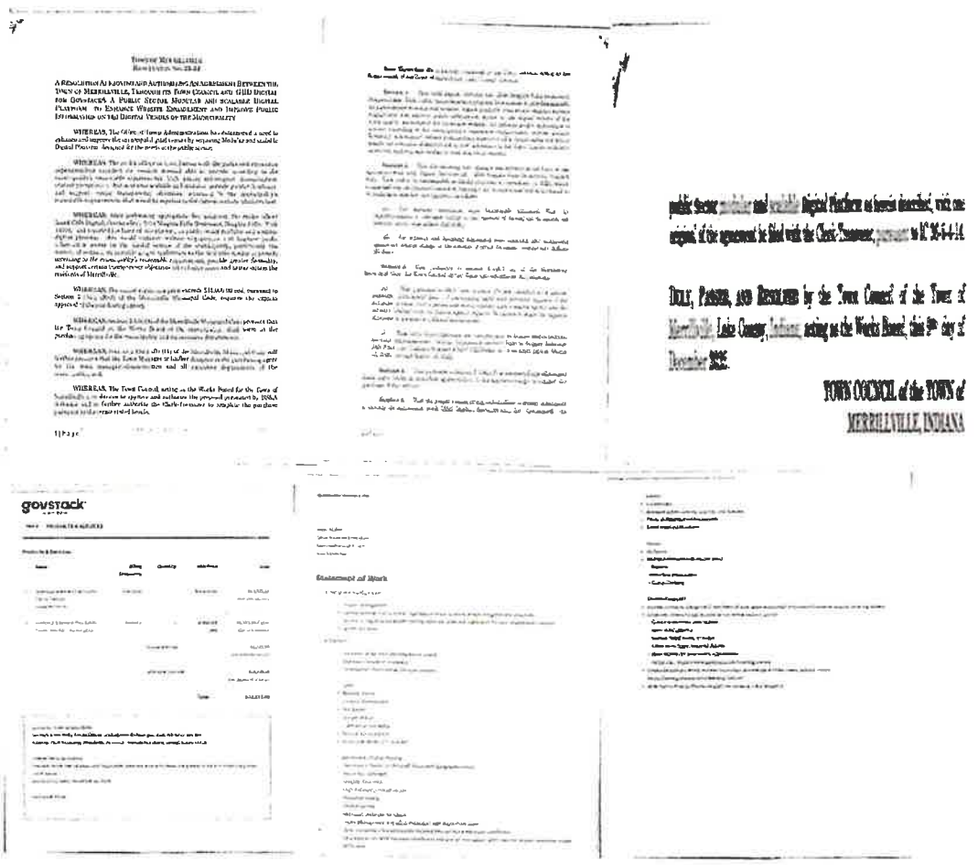
It was moved by Councilor Pettit and seconded by Councilor Uzelac to approve Resolution 25-51.

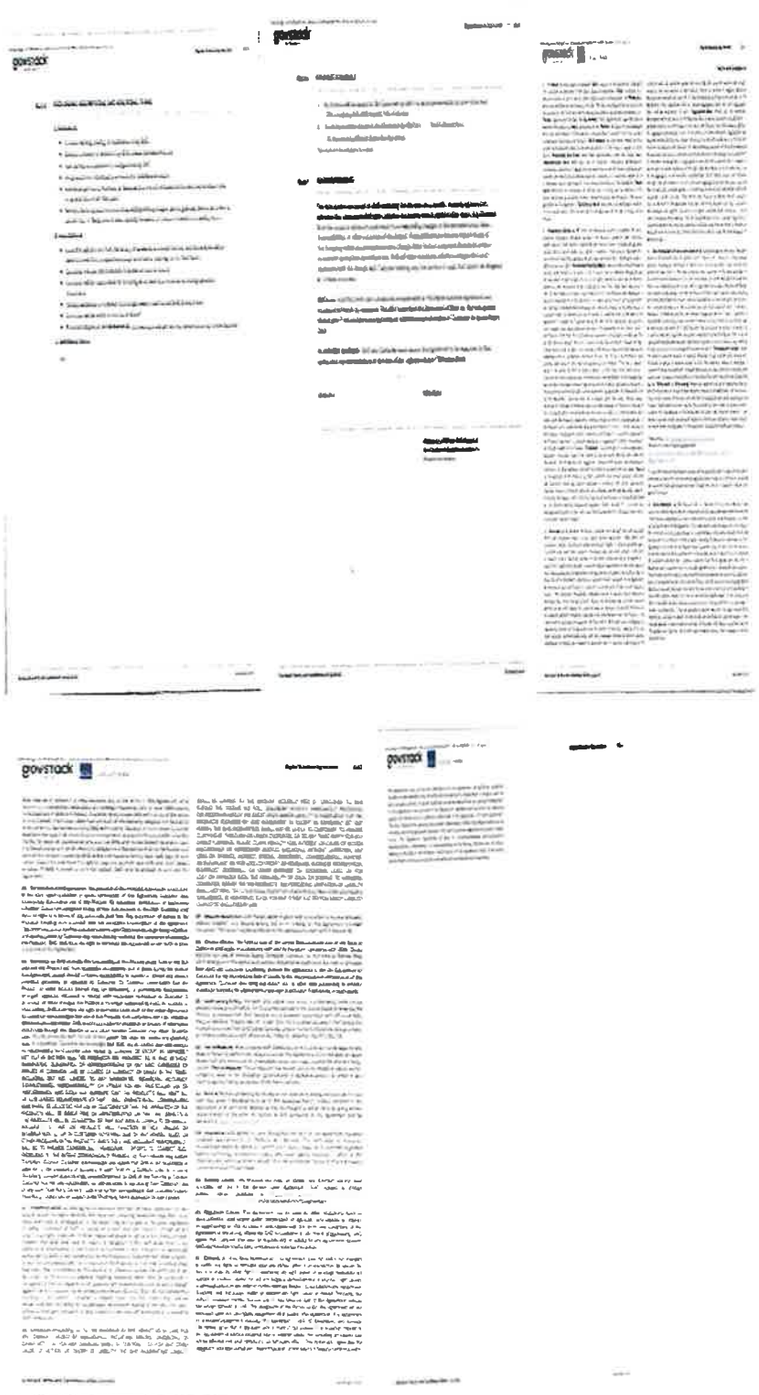
Town Manager Griffin explained Resolution 25-51.

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

Resolution 25-52 (Discussion & Roll Call Vote)

A Resolution Approving and Authorizing an Agreement Between the Town of Merrillville, Through its Town Council, and GHD Digital for Govstack, A Public Sector Modular and scalable Digital Platform to Enhance Website Engagement and Improve Public Information on the Digital Venues of the Municipality





It was moved by Councilor Pettit and seconded by Councilor Chandler-Felton to approve Resolution 25-51.

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

OLD BUSINESS:
Councilor Pettit reported on the Andrean High School and Merrillville High School State Championship games played over the Thanksgiving holiday. He also reported on the Indiana University game played on Saturday.

President Bella invited Honorable Judge Velazco and Court Administrator Chanda Flower to participate in the Council Workshop on Wednesday, December 17, 2025, at 5:00 p.m.

NEW BUSINESS: ***NONE***

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

The Town Council President announced the following:

- Town Council Meeting December 23rd at 6:30 pm
- RDC Meeting December 23rd at 6:00 pm
- Planning Commission Meeting December 16th at 6:30 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT:
Having completed all items on the agenda, the Town Council President announced the meeting had adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

Rick Bella, Town Council President

Eric O. January, Clerk-Treasurer

Respectfully Submitted By Angela Lewis