

**Winona Lake Town Council
Meeting Minutes
May 16, 2023**

The Town Council of Winona Lake, Indiana, met in a regular session on Tuesday, May 16, 2023, at 6:00 p.m. – some attending in person, others by Zoom (video conference).

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT: Rick Swaim, Heather James, Austin Reynolds, Ashley McGinnis, and Jim Lancaster

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT (ZOOM):

ABSENT:

OTHERS PRESENT: Craig Allebach, Tim Goshert, Holly Hummitch, Kevin Gelbaugh, Joe Hawn, Adam Turner, and Aaron Carl

OTHERS PRESENT (ZOOM):

Opening – Rick Swaim opened the meeting with prayer and the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of Minutes

- Rick called for approval of the April 13, April 18 and April 21, 2023, meeting minutes.
- Rick said he had sent in corrections for the 21st meeting and Jim said he had some corrections on the 18th.
- Heather moved to approve the April 13, 2023, meeting minutes, and Ashley seconded. Hearing nothing further, April 13, 2023, meeting minutes stand approved as presented.

Approval of Claims

- Rick called for approval of the May 16, 2023, claims.
- Rick confirmed that he had signed 4 or 5 claims outside the claims schedule. Jim asked if they had been mailed out because one of them has not been received. Craig said he presumed they had since that would have been why they were signed ahead of time.
- Ashley asked why K & J Operations would have been included in the ones Rick approved. Rick said there's nobody here from the clerk's office to answer to that and offered to table the approval of the claims. Craig said let's look to approve and if there are questions on the 5 that were approved to be mailed early, those can be addressed at a different time.
- Austin made a motion to accept the May 16, 2023, claims, and Ashley seconded. Motion passed.

“Winona Happenings”

- May 19 to 21 – Fat & Skinny Tire Fest
- May 26 – School's Out for Summer Party in the Park
- June 3 & 4 – Village Art Fair
- June 5 – Summer Program Kickoff in the Park
- June 10 – Family Health & Fitness Day in the Park
- June 23 – Inflatable Friday in the Park

Resolution 2023-5-2 Appointment of Police Reserve

- Joe Hawn said he is excited to have Mike Wilson join them as a reserve officer and recommended his appointment. Mike is a former fire chief, former coroner, and now managing partner at McHatton Sadler.
- Jim made the motion to approve Resolution 2023-5-2 Hiring of Office Personnel and

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Austin seconded. Motion passed.

- Adam Turner swore Mike Wilson in as police reserve officer.

Resolution 2023-5-3 Hiring of Police Officer

- Joe Hawn said several months ago they started a process with Lakeland Christian Academy to have a school resource officer. Ashley, Craig, and Joe met with Joe Elrod at Lakeland Christian to get this process going. To be able to fund, we do have some opioid money that we got from the state last year that we don't have anything to appropriate or be able to use those monies for because it's specific what they want those monies to be used for. The agreement is to use opioid monies through the beginning of the year and then Lakeland Christian will take over the pay for the officer, minus 20%, so we would have this officer for 10 weeks. Adam wrote the resolution or agreement with Lakeland Christian that we're going to work through and make this work.
- Adam stated what the agreement attempts to hash out is that each party is kind of bearing their cost of the use of the officer and allows Winona Lake to add an additional officer without having all the salary and that kind of stuff to go with it.
- Craig added this is something that recently surfaced because of the climate we see in our country today, but he was involved in discussions with Lakeland back in 2019 about their concerns about the safety of their students. The whole project was on hold because we had to have resources in order to make it happen but when the recent shootings took place in Louisville, Joe reached out and said we needed a resource officer full time. There are about 6 officers that do go out there on a part time basis for just a few hours a day. We are glad to support the safety of the students in our community and we're glad they're going to help us out 80% and we'll pay 20.
- Ashley said because of the opioid money, some of this does involve DARE and so the officer is not just school resource officer but will also be teaching DARE to the kids out there as well.
- Joe said he checked with DARE to see when they could start the program and they said June 12 because that's when the DARE training starts.
- Ashley made the motion to approve Resolution 2023-5-3 Hiring of Police Officer and Heather seconded. Motion passed.
- Adam Turner swore Philip Hawks in as police officer.

Agreement with Lakeland Christian Academy

- This is an agreement between the town and LCA for a resource officer as we've discussed
- Austin moved to approve the appointment as presented and Heather seconded. Motion passed.

Report from Town Engineer

- Aaron reported he has been working on several drainage projects, easements, roads. The watermain is fully installed. They are working on clean up and testing right now.

Report from Town Attorney

- Adam reported he has been working on a the SRO contract for tonight and agreement for the farmers' market.

Reports from Supervisors

- Street Dept./Tim Goshert – Playing catch up with the start of summer.

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- Park Dept./Holly Hummitch – The launch for the kayaks will be installed tomorrow. Striping on the pickleball court is happening today. Tim said they should have the grass planted at this time next week.
- Fire Dept./Kevin Gelbaugh – We have unfortunately been busy. Pump tests have been completed. Fluids have been changed in all but one of the trucks. The tanker is out of service in the non-hydrant areas. A leak was found and is scheduled to be repaired.
- Police Dept./Joe Hawn – Have officers ready to roll and are getting ready for the art fair and all the other events.

Floor Topics

- Ken Nisely said he has concerns about his sewer bill doubling and he recently visited the clerk treasurer's office and noticed their cameras are covered up. Adam said from the legal perspective, the clerk has control over their area and has some say in that but said that he and Craig and everybody are working on a resolution that works for everybody. Craig spoke on the sewer bill stating 6 months of coupons were sent out at the beginning of the year with the anticipation of going to a new system for their billing but obviously that didn't occur, and so they had to get the 2nd 6 months out. There have been many questions and so it was put on the website that there is no change in the cost, it's just that the 2nd set hadn't been included. Your bill didn't go up, you're not paying more and if you have already paid it then you can start a fire in the fall with it.
- Cindy Hepler said I think what you're saying is they don't know who paid and who has not paid. Craig said they do. Cindy asked why they got rebilled and Craig said it was easier and then said he doesn't think there was a way for them to sort that. Cindy also asked if we, the taxpayers, are still paying for people to come in and help them learn their jobs. Craig said he couldn't speak to that. Cindy asked if Jenny is still coming in. Craig said she has been working with CJ on the monthly but she hasn't been in in the past week or so. Cindy asked if we ever got an answer on how much we paid an outside firm to do the year end for 2022 because it wasn't done. Jim said he had a partial answer and had reached out to Laurie today and when we get a definitive answer we could include that part of the minutes going forward. Rick said they did get some of that information.

Meeting adjourned – Ashley motioned to adjourn. Meeting adjourned at 6:34 p.m.

RICK SWAIM
PRESIDENT

LAURIE RENIER
CLERK TREASURER