

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE TOWN COUNCIL OF  
THE CORPORATION OF LIBERTY, INDIANA  
October 7, 2024**

The Town Council of the Town of Liberty, Indiana had the first budget hearing on October 7, 2024 in the hallway in front of the Union County Commissioner's Chambers due to the room be locked for early voting.

Town Council President Kieth Bias called the meeting to order.

**ROLL CALL**

Present were: Ross Keasling, Derrek Jenkins, Dereck Tipton and Jerry Kahl.

Also in attendance was Melissa Shepler, Clerk-Treasurer; Matt Reuss, Todd Dickenson and Jim Barnhizer.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Mr. Tipton made a motion to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of September 16, 2024. Mr. Kahl supported the motion. Upon a vote viva voce, motion passed.

**ORDINANCES**

Ordinance 2024-12 was tabled until the next meeting.

Mr. Keasling made a motion to suspend the rules and vote on Ordinance 2024-13 on first reading. Mr. Tipton supported the motion. Upon a vote viva voce, motion passed. Mr. Keasling made a motion to approve Ordinance 2024-13. Mr. Kahl supported the motion. Upon a vote viva voce, motion passed.

Ordinance 2024-14, the 2025 Budget was automatically moved to second reading.

**RESOLUTIONS**

Mr. Tipton made a motion to approve Resolution 2024-15, Additional Appropriation. Mr. Jenkins supported the motion. Upon a vote viva voce, motion passed.

Mr. Jenkins made a motion to approve Resolution 2024-16 The 2025 Township Fire Budget. Mr. Tipton supported the motion. Upon a vote viva voce, motion passed. Mr. Keasling abstained due to being a member of the Volunteer Fire Department.

**DEPARTMENT HEADS**

Utilities Superintendent Matt Reuss reported to the Council that he did not have anything to report at this time.

Police Chief Todd Dickenson reported to the Council that he did not have anything to report at this time.

Fire Chief Jim Barnhizer reported that the new medic truck is in and having the new bed put on it. Ms. Shepler informed Chief Barnhizer that as soon as the truck is back, she needs to have it inspected. Chief Barnhizer informed the Council that the medic truck would replace Unit 64. Chief Barnhizer was asked as to what will happen to Unit 64. He stated that it would be parked behind station as piece of equipment will be taken off of it and put on other trucks. The Fire Department is hoping to get a broker to sell Unit 64. Ms. Shepler and Mr. Bias informed Chief Barnhizer that since the truck is owned by the Townships, the selling of it and the price would be up to the Township Trustees. Chief Barnhizer asked if the old bed could be sold. Ms. Shepler stated it was up to the Townships as to what is to be done with the old bed. The Fire Department will have to work with them.

**MISC. BUSINESS**

Discussion occurred regarding the salary of Officer Brian Jackson who started his first shift with the Town on October 6<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Bias stated to the Council that Officer Jackson was intending on receiving the pay that was set as the same for Officer Young when he joined with the idea that the Officers would be receiving pay increases in 2025. Mr. Bias informed the Council that the position was advertised that the salary was negotiable. Mr. Bias believed it was only fair to raise the pay since Officer Jackson came to the Town with experience and already completed Tier II at the Academy. Officer Jackson completed the Academy the session before Officer Moffett completed his session. After a brief discussion, it was decided that Officer Jackson would receive the same pay as Officer Moffett retroactive to his full time start date since there will be a pay date before Ms. Shepler can get an amended salary ordinance to the Council.


Ms. Shepler asked the Council to place a no trespass order on David Gesell. Mr. Gesell is a frequent unmetered water customer who takes months to pay his bill in full every year. Mr. Gesell hauls water for pools and so his amounts he runs behind are quite substantial. Ms. Shepler says that she has to threaten him every year to pay, however, he still takes his time. The no trespass order will give her the leverage to get him to pay on time. Mr. Bias

suggested that Ms. Shepler write Mr. Gesell a letter stating that if his balance is not paid in full by the end of the month, at the first meeting of November the Council will grant the no trespass order. If he does pay, Mr. Bias wants him to know that if he runs late on his account at any other time, they will grant the no trespass order and he will have to get his water somewhere else.

Mr. Keasling informed the Council that Olivia Chewing, Union County Foundation Director and Tyler Clavell, Foundation member approached him with the information that they had someone in mind for the Special Projects Coordinator position that has been unoccupied. Ms. Shepler stated that the position was not funded in the 2025 Budget. Mr. Bias stated that he was not interested in funding the position as the Town spent \$ 40,000.00 on that position and got nothing out of it. Mr. Keasling said he would inform Ms. Chewing and Mr. Clavell.

**ADJOURN**

There being no further business, on a motion made by Mr. Kahl and supported by Mr. Tipton the meeting was adjourned.

  
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Keith Bias, President

ATTEST:   
Melissa Shepler, Clerk-Treasurer