

## **Town of Pines Meeting**

### **July 5, 2023**

The regular meeting of the Town of Pines, Town Council, was called to order at 6:30 PM. This meeting was a regular Council Meeting held at the Town Hall. The next meeting will be Wednesday, August 2, 2023, at 6:30 P.M.

James led us in the Pledge of Allegiance. In attendance were James Prast, Janice Lowe, Vicki Kuzio, and Philip Orlando.

### **MINUTES**

Janice presents June Meeting Minutes. There are no questions from Council. Janice makes a motion to accept minutes, Vicki Seconds. Janice votes Yes, Vicki votes yes, James votes yes. Carried 3-0.

### **CLERK TREASURER**

Shelby puts in a request to repair the door in the garage. This being the man door on the side by the hall. We are having issues with this doorframe and door. This needs replaced for security reasons.

Shelby informs that the Water Department has begun their work. Jan states that from her understanding it should be completed within three weeks.

Shelby brings up that it is Budget Season. She has an appointment with Wayne on Friday July 28<sup>th</sup> regarding this. She requests that we schedule the Budget Workshop before this meeting. The other two may follow with the next meetings August 2 and September 6 at 6:00 pm, Unless there are any issues or concerns that cause a need to change this. Council are fine with these suggestions. The workshop is decided to be Wednesday July 26<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 PM.

### **FIRE DEPARTMENT**

The Fire Department had 28 Calls.

Multiple accidents at 520 and 20 including an accident with an antique fire truck and an SUV.

This area is still a large issue with accidents.

## **STREET DEPARTMENT**

Vicki states that there is garbage on Ardendale that has been piled up and left. Council discusses other possible solutions to protect and patrol the area. Lights and cameras that have been placed have been shot out.

Barrels were cleaned at Illinois Ave some are remaining on Rail Road Ave but it is on the side of the County. County needs called.

Looking for mulch still. Waiting to hear back from the company that usually works with the Town, Watsons. Vicki is having difficulty finding mulch for the playground. Shelby asks about the possibility of replacing the mulch with the turf style playground matting. This might be a more sustainable result for our parks.

Vicki is still waiting to hear from the woman she was working with for the Narcan and Opioid assistance training. Hopefully we will hear back soon. Reminders that the County Health Department does give free Narcan for people to carry to help save others from potential overdoses.

## **BUILDING AND ZONING**

3860 W Dunes has a permit, this is the Old Dark Star, it will become a Thai and Sushi restaurant.

2702 & 2752 W Dunes on County Line where garbage and everything is piled up. There is an issue with finding the current property owner. Phil is working with the Lawyer on this property.

Phil brings up looking at the Cars with invalid plates on them. There are about 30 cars currently that do not have plated cars. He asks what type of restrictions are on this. Such as if they have a business is allowed to have un-plated cars. The exception is a car repair shop and car sale shop.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

James brings up the Porter County Recycling program and where residents can take things for disposal. This is listed on the Porter County website, but James requests we post this at the Town Hall for reference for residents as well.

Janice asks about the quotes for the ADA compliance work. Phil states that a man stopped today for an estimate and he hopes to have the numbers by our next meeting in August.

Jan also asks if EPA has come and checked the properties. Phil states that they should be coming later this week.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

Janice brings to the table the contract with Republic Services for the next 3 years. She suggests that we continue on with them as their rates are still reasonable and they have been a good garbage service to the Town thus far. Vicki makes a motion to renew the Republic Contract, Janice Seconds. Vicki Votes yes, Janice votes yes, James votes yes, Carried 3-0.

James explains the upcoming roadwork that will be done. He discusses the chip and seal that will be happening in some areas. We are hoping this will be a feasible solution to potentially aid in properly paving Railroad Ave and Birch across 20. We are hoping this work will be finished by the end of August.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

David Newmann questions the process of checking untagged cars. He states that the board will be causing more problems than helping them if they do this. He states his objections to this and that he does not think it is okay for the Town to do. Council reiterates that this is not a new policy or rule happening within the Town. Nothing is changing. This is an ordinance that has been in place for a long time and is just being followed, as the Town is trying to clean up all residences and make sure everyone is in compliance across the board.

Another resident has stood and spoken regarding the water that is coming in on Pine and Poplar, He is upset that they are getting “free” water when he had to pay for his. Janice explains that we had received a COVID Grant that was very specific. She lists the choices of what we could use this for. If the funds weren’t used then we had to send the money back to the government. This was not Town funds. This was the only use that council felt could best benefit at least some residents, and was all we could use the funds for. He understands with this explanation and is okay with this.

The same resident asks if we can put speed bumps in the streets to prevent people from speeding down the road so fast. James informs him that the town is trying to do what they can to fight google maps and things with these side street directions from them and speeders. We are not able to place speedbumps in a town road/street by state standards this is not allowed. He also voices concerns over the plated cars and the town taking action.

A resident stand and asks about leash law in the Town of Pines and what living areas are deemed acceptable for occupancy. He states that there is a home without water that has been occupied by for 2 years. He states that this same neighbor has a vicious unleashed dog. One got hit and was shot by the owner, but they often have another dog at large. Council tells them to call Porter County Animal Control and Porter County Sheriff’s and to ensure they know the animal is aggressive if it is.

Alex from 2<sup>nd</sup> place stands and is complaining of the statements made in public comment by residents about him. Council explains that this is public comment that residents have said and we just have to have record of what is said. He also states that he has no issue as claimed with his dogs and that they do not cause issues for anyone. Phil states that the last 3 meetings there are complaints about his dogs being aggressive and loose. Shelby explains again that Porter County has a leash law and under that law that dogs must be leashed or contained even on private property. He argues more and states that we (council have never had a problem with them) Shelby states no it is not just residents council has had issues with the dogs as well and that she has personally almost hit them multiple times because they are running free in the street. Shelby and Janice each reiterate that they need to be in a fence or on a lead. He is arguing that it is too hard and takes time. Shelby asks again that it is too hard to buy a leash? He eventually admits to agreeing to keeping his dogs leashed or caged. He complains more about comments made by the public regarding him. Vicki states again this is public comment no one has said anything from council these are statements form residents.

The business owner from the garage and UHAUL on 12 by burtons, asks why he can be proceeding to be harassed by residents about his property that he pays a large sum to rent. He has an abandoned vehicle that he cannot get the county to remove and he has an issue with people coming into his business area and causing safety issues. He asks why Michigan City and Porter County police will both not help with the situation. He asks why we can get no help in the Town.

Newmann stands again and complains about the easement rules from Highway 12. He states that this is unfair and will mean peoples homes and business buildings are on easement and then out of code and a problem. Council reminds this is an ordinance that was requested by the state as this is a state highway.

Rodney stands and states that if they are going to be setting these standards for businesses and easements that this needs to be across the board and for everyone or no one and that they cannot nit pick and that the Murrays should not have input.

### **CLAIMS**

Janice makes a motion to pay the June 2023 Claims, Vicki Seconds. Janice votes yes. Vicki votes yes. James votes yes. Carried 3-0.

*As there was no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:00 P.M*

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James Prast, President

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Shelby Mashburn, Clerk Treasurer