

Town of Darmstadt, Indiana

SETTLED 1822

INCORPORATED 1973

Minutes of August 20th, 2024

These minutes are not intended to be a verbatim transcript.

TOWN COUNCIL

Eric Gries, Council President
Ray Engler, Council Member
Cecil Poag, Council Member
Crystal Kahre, Council Member

CLERK-TREASURER

Mallory Lowe
P.O. Box 20
Darmstadt, In 47618

Darmstadt Town Council President Eric Gries called the town meeting to order on Tuesday at 6:30pm. In attendance were Clerk-Treasurer Mallory Lowe, council members Ray Engler, Cecil Poag, Crystal Kahre and attorney Josh Claybourn.

Engler made a motion, seconded by Kahre to accept the minutes from last month's meeting. Motion passed 4-0 voice vote.
Engler made a motion, seconded by Poag to accept last month's financial report. Motion passed by 4-0 voice vote.
Engler made a motion, seconded by Poag to approve the accounts payable claims. Motion passed by 4-0 voice vote.

Clerk-Treasurer's Report

Mallory Lowe stated the budget workshop went very well this morning with Robert Norris from the DLGF, the Department of Local Government Finance. Council member, Crystal Kahre joined the meeting and sat in on the workshop which Lowe stated she appreciated. Lowe advised this meeting is every year with our rep from the DLGF, who reviews all of our budget numbers, levies, balances, and funds for accuracy and approval from the state to be able to spend what we need. Lowe stated they went over every fund, the balances, revenues, disbursements, and levies and Robert Norris let us know everything was in good shape and our funds and budget numbers look good and in line for 2025. After the workshop was complete, Lowe stated the DLGF sent the checklist of 14 more steps to complete before budget season is over including our public hearing next month and our adoption hearing in October. Lowe stated she forwarded all the information to council as usual for complete transparency. Lowe advised will have our public budget meeting September 17 and our adoption meeting on October 15th. Lowe stated she has also been working with our insurance agent, Torian for the last couple of months to renew our policies coming due in October. Lowe stated that the agents are trying to get us back in with a normal municipal insurance policy again since our insurance company dropped us after the previous council president, committed crimes and was proven to be a high liability to the town. Lowe advised, that Torian has been working on applications and trying to get us back to normal coverage again, so the town doesn't have to keep paying the additional high-liability coverage any longer. Torian required a list of the new officials on all boards for confirmation to send to the underwriters.

Lowe noted that she continues to work with CenterPoint to get the town's 101 electric bills back onto our online account after CenterPoint deleted most of them when they changed all of our account numbers. Lowe stated that after several hours on the phone with them and several weeks later, CenterPoint finally corrected our town accounts.

Lowe advised that the council agreed to waive all late fees in July since the USPS did not deliver most of the mail until almost 3 weeks later. Lowe mentioned she has heard many complaints from residents that they are having trouble with all their mail. Salem church sent out a large mailing which none of it was delivered either and the USPS refunded them their money. Lowe stated this is happening in many towns and has made the news.

Lowe advised the next conference is the Annual AIM Ideas Summit in Fort Wayne this year for 3 days Oct 8-10th. The 3-day event is for Council members, clerks, mayors, and maintenance. Lowe also noted that the Indiana ADA and Title 6 coordinators association will be at the Summit event along with the Redevelopment Association of Indiana.

Fire Dept Report

Brandon Zimmer reported there were 38 runs, 14 Ems, 7 paramedics runs, a gas leak, and 2 public service runs last month.

Sheriff's Report

Sheriff Noah Robinson noted that they ramped up their traffic enforcement and gave out speeding citations. Sheriff Robinson announced that Darmstadt will have a dedicated Deputy Sheriff for our town who may contact directly. He will give us the information as soon as its available. Sheriff Robinson also mentioned he had MPO put out traffic counters on Martin Road. Sheriff reported there were 77 home checks, 3 burglar alarms, 1 family violence and one suspended license driving within the

town last month. The Sheriff answered resident's questions and explained further details on the traffic counters and speeding in town.

Maintenance Dept Report

Cecil Poag read aloud Aaron and Mick's maintenance report that there were 55 locates and 45 service calls, there was a sewer line break on Jordan Lane and they moved a pump station on Fleener Road to a better position. There is a new sewer tap on Hoing Road, another lot sold on Shadow Bluff and the guys are mowing with the new tractor. The GIS system is going into phase 3 and maintenance will have a meeting tomorrow with GeoSpatial. The phase 3 is going to be ground penetrating radar. Poag made a motion, seconded by Engler to continue with a Phase 3 contract that will cost about \$75,000. Lowe asked if we would have a signed contract in writing for this Phase 3 with costs outlined for assurance, since this money will be coming directly out of the sewer dept fund and not ARPA grant anymore. Poag stated they will sign a contract tomorrow. Motion passed.

Poag stated there is an estimate from Elite striping for \$42,334.00 to re-stripe the town roads. Lowe stated we could perhaps pull this cost from the Town's Local Road & Street Fund which would leave us about \$17k for rest of the year. Poag made a motion seconded to Engler to approve re-striping roads in town. Motion passed.

Old Business

1. EWSU Mandate Charges Update

Josh Claybourn stated that he has had conversations with the city of Evansville about the huge mandate fees that Evansville Water & Sewer charges to Darmstadt on top of the normal sewer charge. Lowe mentioned the bills are outrageous now, at over \$25,000 a month we pay, with about 1/3 added mandate fees on top. Council discussed.

2. Tractor and Backhoe Replacement Update

Ray Engler stated that we received the John Deere tractor and its working great. Engler noted that the Mahindra is still broken, they are trying to repair the problems in the dash now. Engler is working on getting appraisals since two are required, and needs approval from council to spend up to \$100 for an appraisal if he can't get them for free. Engler will also send the Mahindra, to Juncker to sell the tractor for a minimum of \$45k minimum. Engler made the motion, seconded by Kahre. Motion passed.

New Business

1. USPS Mail delivery failures

Eric Gries stated that we are having problems with the USPS not delivering the sewer bills in June and July. Gries stated they have spoken to local postmaster and Lowe has reported the issues. USPS is aware and that this is happening to several towns now. Lowe noted that USPS is working on it.

2. Ordinance Codification Legal Review

Josh Claybourn stated that he has reviewed this and forwarded his answers and comments to clerk and council.

Attorney Comments

No further comments

Board Members Comments

Poag stated that he still wants our town to give out discounts on sewer bills to some residents, like a summer averaging and asked the council if they could research it before next year.

Meeting adjourned at 7:44pm

Attest:

Mallory Lowe
Clerk-Treasurer

