

Town of Darmstadt, Indiana

SETTLED 1822

INCORPORATED 1973

Minutes of March 18th, 2025

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

Clerk-Treasurer's Report

Mallory Lowe reported that all annual reports were completed and submitted by their due dates, including both the town's annual report and the RDA's annual report. These reports were submitted via the Gateway system to the state. Last month, Lowe reported, the town received tax revenues totaling \$30,812, while expenditures amounted to \$31,615, resulting in a deficit of \$803. For the Sewer Utility, sewer bill collections totaled \$52,472, but expenditures reached \$57,493, leading to a shortfall of \$5,021.

Lowe advised that the second autopay for the sewer department went more smoothly than the first. We had four autopay transactions returned by the bank, mostly due to incorrect account or routing numbers submitted. I have contacted these four individuals and received the correct information. Old National Bank charged us \$43 for the January auto pay transactions. Lowe has also been updating well user fees based on the affidavits that Aaron Enlow has approved.

Additionally, Lowe noted that we received a new sewer tap payment from Jeff Hatfield for a new home being constructed behind his property, which will be accessed from Fleener Court. Lowe advised that she submitted our annual Video Franchise Fee Report to the Indiana Utility Regulatory Commission by the March 1st deadline.

Mallory Lowe stated that both mass mailings were completed last week: one for the 61 well users and another for all 550 sewer customers. She sent out the well user affidavits and "wipes letters" to all 550 sewer customers. This mailing took several days to complete, costing approximately \$500. Lowe stated that Aaron and Mick have reported to her, that they finished the annual inventory of all sewer accounts that they are to review each year to ensure that every property is billed correctly for flat fees, city water fees, and well user fees. The Superintendents also check any vacant homes with wells for occupancy and ensure that properties comply with our regulations to guarantee accurate billing. They provided Mallory with a list of about 20 accounts for updates. Today, Mallory received inquiries from two customers regarding their bank payments from Liberty that were returned due to address issues. Their banks attempted to mail their sewer payments to us, but Liberty returned the checks, claiming that our P.O. Box address is not active. Mallory noted that one of the customers plans to contact Liberty Headquarters to resolve the situation, as our address has been the same for decades, and we have never had problems receiving payments from banks until now.

Fire Dept Report

Brandon Zimmer was unavailable tonight. Eric Gries read aloud the fire department report that Brandon sent to the town. Gries read that the fire department had 5 EMS Transport Calls, 2 Motor Vehicle Accident with Injury Calls, 2 Power line down/Electrical Calls, 2 Severe Weather-Related Calls, 2 Smoke Alarm/HazMat Investigation, 1 Community Paramedic call. Average response time for the month was 6m 34s.

Sheriff's Report

Sheriff Deputy Johnson, stated that there was an animal complaint at St Joseph Ave and Orchard Road, 7 business checks, 4 accidents, 1 hit & run, 2 security checks, 1 death investigation, 1 accident with injury, 4 paper services and 2 burglar alarms. The VCSO had 58 extra patrols in Darmstadt, 2 traffic enforcements, 1 felony warrant and 1 citation.

Maintenance Dept Report

Cecil Poag read aloud the superintendents' maintenance report of 34 locates, 14 service calls, patched potholes, and worked on septic tank inspections. They have been working on GIS for the sewer department. Mick and Aaron will remove manholes to help cut down on our inflow and infiltration into our sewer system. They have been receiving well user affidavits from eligible residents. Aaron & Mick are still on schedule for septic tank pumping.

Old Business

1. EWSU Mandate Charges Update

Josh Claybourn stated he has had communications with EWSU, the accounting firm and about the mag meter calibration issues.

2. 2nd Reading Portable Meters Ordinance 2025-1

Josh Claybourn stated this will be the second reading for the portable meter ordinance. Poag made a motion, seconded by Kahre. Motion passed by 4-0 voice vote.

3. Well Users Affidavit and Ordinance adding admin fees 2025-2

Poag made a motion, seconded by Engler, motion carried by 4-0 voice vote.

4. Sewer Electric Flat Fee proposed rate hike to match CenterPoint's hike

Poag made a motion, seconded by Engler, motion carried by 4-0 voice vote.

New Business

1. 11214 N St Joseph Ave – Extreme leak 57,700gals Jan & 324,970gals (policy is one sewer adjustment per year) council must vote to make an exception. Lowe stated the first leak was 57,700 gallons for \$1,500.46 and the 2nd month of water leak was 324,970 gallons for a total sewer bill that month of \$8,347.92. Council made an exception to the town policy of only one adjustment per year since this leak was confirmed by Sewer Superintendent Aaron Enlow that it did not go into the sewer system. Poag made a motion, seconded by Engler, motion to passed by 4-0 voice vote.

2. Cell Phone Town Proposal, RDA, RDC Old State Property

Council discussed and decided were not interested in an offer for a cell phone tower on Old State Land. Lowe will contact agent and let them know we will decline offer.

Attorney Comments

No further comments

Board Members Comments

Eric Gries mentioned that we need to look into the Community Crossings grant for possible milling and repairing roads.

Meeting adjourned at 7:48pm

Attest:

Mallory Lowe

Clerk-Treasurer
