

The Santa Claus Town Council met in regular session on July 14, 2025, at the Santa Claus Town Hall located at 90 N Holiday Blvd Santa Claus, In. The meeting was called to order by President, Kevin Burke

Pledge of Allegiance

YouTube- YES- @townofsantaclaus7938

Audio Recording- Yes, Clerk-Treasurer & Media

Town Council Members Present: Kevin Burke, Michael Johannes, Patricia Vaal, Brian Warran and Jason Little

Absent: None

Also, Present: Clerk-Treasurer; Jane Lindsey, Town Attorney; Kevin Patmore, Park Superintendent; Zach Tischendorf; Police Chief, James Faulkenburg, Fire Chief, Max Meyer and Building Inspector, Todd Hayes

MINUTES

Patricia Vaal made a motion to approve the June 9, 2025, and Jason Little seconded the motion.

Ayes: 5 Nays: None

Motion carried: 5-0

Patricia Vaal made a motion to approve the June 9, 2025, executive meeting minutes. Brian Warran seconded the motion.

Ayes: 3 Nays: 1 Abstain: 1 (Jason Little was not present at the executive meeting)

Motion carried: 3-1-1

COMMENTS FROM THE FLOOR-

Brooke Blair representing the Spencer County Arts Commission spoke on the Christmas Tree project. Blair is looking for a commitment from the Council on placement of the Christmas Tree on town property. Blair stated the tree will require a 20 X 20 concrete pad and will need to be tied into the Town Hall electric. Blair stated they will be working with Don's Machine Shop to construct the tree. Blair asked the Council to make a formal commitment on the property placement so the Arts Commission can move forward with the project.

Michael Johannes made the motion to allow the Spencer County Arts Commission to use Town property to construct the community Christmas Tree if all the Town requirements, safety considerations and proper staking are done. Jason Little seconded the motion.

Ayes: 4 Nays: 0 Abstain: 1 (Patricia Vaal abstained due to sitting on the Spencer County Arts Commission committee).

COMMENTS FROM THE COUNCIL

Kevin Burke spoke on the new vibrating strips on the road at the Holiday World employee entrance. Burke stated he would like to see the same strips placed at the Kaspar entrance.

Extensive sign ordinance review was requested by Council member Patricia Vaal due to multiple business inquiries and enforcement concerns. Vaal stated she does not feel that the current sign ordinance is written for our unique town and is complicated to understand. Vaal engaged in a lengthy discussion addressing several parts of the current ordinance. Martha Crews from Impressions Hair Salon spoke on her experience with understanding the current process and legal terms within the ordinance. Crews requested help in determining whether her sign would be considered permanent or temporary so Crews could complete the application correctly. Todd Hays, building inspector/planning & zoning administrator invited Crews to attend the next APC meeting for further assistance. Clint Roos from Midwestern Engineering suggested that the Town offer a pre-application meeting with persons who have questions and need assistance prior to the actual APC meetings for better flow of the meeting. Vaal voiced her concern regarding the way complaints are being received. Vaal stated this has been discussed in prior meetings and the current policy is for community members or board members be directed to complete the complaint form. Jane Lindsey, Clerk-Treasurer agreed and stated that we have a process and expressed her concern that her office is not being given the official complaint for public record. Lindsey stated this is a prime example of risk involved considering the post was shared over 200 times and she has no official complaint on file to provide for the community who wants to view the complaint as a record of public access. The Council stated that the complaint was made by a member of the public by text message. Kevin Patmore stated that text messages are legal records, and he has used them in a court setting multiple times. Lindsey stated that when a complaint is made by text that she should be given a copy for the public record. Patmore agreed that any complaint received by text message to a Council or board member should be printed and made available for public access. Lindsey stated that she has brought this concern to the Council multiple times and yet the procedure is not being followed.

JUNE REPORTS FROM DEPARTMENT HEADS

Department reports were given to the Council prior to the meeting.

FIRE DEPARTMENT MAX MEYER

The annual BBQ dinner was a huge success with dinners being sold out by 11:30 am. Max Meyer thanked all the community members who came out to support the BBQ dinner. Max Meyer stated the funds received from the dinner will be used to furnish the upstairs of the fire station after renovation is complete. Meyers reported that the renovation is approx. 50% completed. Painting is completed, flooring is halfway done, and the window challenges have been resolved. Meyer stated that they have two interior windows in the rooms that will be used as offices.

Meyer announced that Touch-a-Truck will be held on August 16th from 10:00 am -1:00 pm at Yellig Park.

Meyer presented invoice #3503 from HD Construction which is for 1/3 of the bid price. Meyer stated that this is a good faith payment to the contractor for the labor and supplies that have been completed thus far. The Council tabled approving the invoice stating the invoice was not itemized to their satisfaction. The Council requested that Meyer contact the contractor for an itemized invoice for their review prior to approving.

Kevin Burke inquired if the fire department would be live streaming their meetings. Meyer stated that although they have the cameras set up and capability, they would not fall under the requirement to live stream and will not live stream the meetings. Kevin Patmore stated that the fire department is a separate entity and are not required to live stream their meeting under the new law that took effect July 1. Burke stated that he understood that under the law they are not required to however expressed his desire for the fire department to offer the live streaming in an effort for transparency and public awareness.

PARKS & RECREATION/COMMUNITY CENTER ZACH TISCHENDORF

Zach Tischendorf reported on the repairs being made on the Bermuda field. Tischendorf stated despite the extra care needed to keep the field looking nice it was a good decision by the Council and is a benefit for the community.

Attorney Kevin Patmore presented Ordinance 2025-02 AN ORDINANCE ALTERING SECTIONS OF THE MUNICIPAL CODE CONCERNING PARKS AND RECREATION FEES for the 2nd reading.

Michael Johannes made the motion to approve the second reading and adoption of Ordinance 2025-02 AN ORDINANCE ALTERING SECTIONS OF THE MUNICIPAL CODE CONCERNING PARKS AND RECREATION FEES. Patricia Vaal seconded the motion.

Ayes: 5 Nays: None

Motion carried: 5-0

Tischendorf reported that he is receiving appraisals from two firms in Evansville on the property adjoining the park.

Tischendorf informed the Council that Brad Scales was still interested in bringing mountain bike tracks to the land in the Industrial Park. Scales is wanting to apply for some grant money for the construction of the bike park and was following up on the land commitment assurance from the Town. Scales is willing to assist with the grant writing and construction match. Jane Lindsey, Clerk-Treasurer asked if the Town could donate the property with a reversion clause. The reversion clause would state that if the property would not be used for mountain biking by Brad Scales company that the land would revert the Town. The Council stated they would be willing to consider this option however first the land would need to be rezoned for recreational use as it is currently zoned as industrial.

Patricia Vaal thanked Zach Tischendorf for keeping his park social media page current.

BUILDING INSPECTOR TODD HAYS

Todd Hays reported that permits have been slowing down.

POLICE DEPARTMENT JAMES FAULKENBURG

Chief James Faulkenburg reported that it has been a rough start to July with two fatalities and a serious injury to a four-year old on a bicycle. Faulkenburg said one of the calls resulted in an officer taking some mental health days. Faulkenburg reported continued mutual aid with neighboring departments within the county.

UTILITY SUPERINTENDENT-RUSS LUTHY

TRAILS

Jane Lindsey, Clerk-Treasurer presented Invoice # 202407900-01 from Midwestern Engineering in the amount of \$81,530.45 for Next Level Trail engineering services.

Jason Little made the motion to approve Invoice # 202407900-01 from Midwestern Engineering in the amount of \$81,530.45. Patricia Vaal seconded the motion.

Ayes: 5 Nays: 0

Motion carried 5-0

Kevin Patmore began the bid opening for the Next Level Trail project. There were 4 bids submitted in total. Patmore opened the sealed bids as listed:

| | | |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|
| JB I from Evansville, IN | \$1,121,979.75 Base | \$12,665.00 Man. Alt. |
| C & R Construction from Corydon, IN | \$1,274,251.75 Base | \$23,744.00 Man. Alt. |
| Knies Construction from Jasper, IN | \$1,031,408.77 Base | \$11,894.30 Man. Alt. |
| Omni Earthworks from Huntingburg, IN | \$1,370,796.95 Base | \$17,526.00 Man Alt. |

Clint Roos and Russ Luthy will review the bids to verify all specs were met and make the recommendation.

Michael Johannes made the motion to table the decision pending review of the bids by Clint Roos from Midwestern Engineering and Russ Luthy. Patricia Vaal seconded the motion.

Ayes: 5 Nays: 0
Motion carried 5-0

STREET DEPARTMENT

Jane Lindsey, Clerk-Treasurer presented Invoice #202406200-03 from Midwestern Engineering in the amount of \$1,913.21 to be paid from the Community Crossings Grant fund.

Jason Little made the motion to approve Invoice # 202406200-03 in the amount of \$1,913.21 for Midwestern Engineering to be paid from the Community Crossings Grant. Brian Warran seconded the motion.

Ayes: 5 Nays: 0
Motion carried 5-0

WASTEWATER

Jane Lindsey, Clerk-Treasurer presented an invoice from Midwestern Engineering for pipeline construction inspections. Invoice # 202305902-14 in the amount of \$5,220.25 was presented to the Council. Jason Little made the motion to approve Invoice # 202305902-14 in the amount of \$5,220.25 to Midwestern Engineering to be paid from Wastewater Capital. Brian Warran seconded the motion.

Ayes: 5 Nays: 0
Motion carried: 5-0

Kevin Patmore began the bid opening for the lift station control panel replacement for lift station 7 & 18. Patmore opened the sealed bids as listed:

| | | |
|----------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Straeffler Pump & Supply | \$23,156 for lift station #7 | \$23,156.00 for lift station #18 |
| Xylem Water Solutions Inc. | \$25,640.38 for lift station #7 | \$26,850.00 for lift station #18 |
| Jochim Technology Co. | \$5,557.00 for lift station #7 | \$5,557.00 for lift station #18 |

Michael Johannes made the motion to accept the lowest bid subject to Russ Luthy review and approval. Jason Little seconded the motion.

Ayes: 5 Nays: 0
Motion carried 5-0

OSHA

No lost time injuries

WATER RUSS LUTHY

Jane Lindsey presented Midwestern Engineering Invoice #202408000-03 in the amount of \$24,990.00 to be paid from the County's ARPA funds. This invoice is for the Mariah Hill line extension project.

Jason Little made the motion to approve Midwestern Engineering Invoice #202408000-03 in the amount of \$24,990.00 to be paid from the County's ARPA funds. Michael Johannes seconded the motion.

Ayes: 5 Nays: 0

Motion carried 5-0

Jane Lindsey will forward the invoice to Melissa Bunner for payment.

Kevin Patmore, Attorney presented Ordinance 2025-03 AN ORDINANCE ADDING SECTION 10.04.800 TO THE MUNICIPAL CODE OF THE TOWN OF SANTA CLAUS, INDIANA ESTABLISHING A PROGRAM FOR PROTECTING THE PUBLIC WATER SYSTEM FROM CONTAMINATION DUE TO BACKFLOW OF CONTAMINANTS INTO THE PUBLIC WATER SYSTEM for the first reading. Jane Lindsey, Clerk-Treasurer stated that the ordinance has been reviewed by Russ Luthy and the Water Board, and they have recommended the Council consider this ordinance for approval. This ordinance is at the recommendation of IDEM.

Jason Little made the recommendation to approve the 1st reading of Ordinance 2025-03 AN ORDINANCE ADDING SECTION 10.04.800 TO THE MUNICIPAL CODE OF THE TOWN OF SANTA CLAUS, INDIANA ESTABLISHING A PROGRAM FOR PROTECTING THE PUBLIC WATER SYSTEM FROM CONTAMINATION DUE TO BACKFLOW OF CONTAMINANTS INTO THE PUBLIC WATER SYSTEM. Patricia Vaal seconded the motion.

Ayes: 5 Nays: 0

Motion carried 5-0

INDUSTRIAL PARK

Kevin Patmore spoke on the two proposals presented on the sale of a 6-acre parcel of land in the Industrial Park. The bids were opened last month and listed below.

Shannon Gehelhausen bid \$28,500 with contingencies for surveying and appropriate zoning for winery/retail use.

Dylan Warran bid \$31,000 with contingencies for appropriate zoning for residential/commercial zoning.

Patmore has informed the Council that they could consider allowing the two bidders to each submit higher bids to increase the revenue. Patmore disclosed that Gehelhausen has offered to increase his bid amount. The Council has declined to open the bids up for increased amounts. The Council stated that since both parties will require zoning changes that this be tabled until the APC reviews the zoning requests.

Patricia Vaal made the motion to table awarding the bid and send to the APC for consideration on zoning requirements. Michael Johannes seconded the motion.

Ayes: 4 Nays: 0 Abstain: 1 (Brian Warran abstained due to conflict with his son Dylan Warran submitting one of the bids).

TOWN ATTORNEY KEVIN PATMORE

Attorney, Kevin Patmore encouraged the Town to establish a Wheel Tax. Patmore stated that this will be a future requirement for Community Crossing eligibility. Patmore stated that the town relies heavily on Community Crossing grants and recommended the Town have an ordinance establishing a wheel tax. Michael Johannes made the motion to permit Kevin Patmore to write an ordinance establishing a wheel tax. Patricia Vaal seconded the motion.

Ayes: 5 Nays: 0
Motion carried 5-0

CLERK TREASURER JANE LINDSEY

June Fund Balances:

General-\$7,650,001.24

Water-\$1,379,296.52

Wastewater-\$1,498,899.19

TIF-\$1,174,393.33

Clerk-Treasurer, Jane Lindsey reported that budget season is here and asked the Council to set a date for the 2026 budget workshop. Lindsey stated she will be meeting with the DLGF on August 15th. The Council chose July 28th beginning at 5:00 pm for the 2026 budget workshop with department heads.

Lindsey informed the Council that she will be attending the annual Clerk-Treasurer conference from Aug. 10th-Aug. 14th. Lindsey stated that her deputy will be at the August town council meeting in her absence.

VOUCHERS

Jason Little made a motion to approve General vouchers in the amount of \$53,618.69 and Michael Johannes seconded the motion.

Ayes: All Nays: None Motion carried 5-0

Jason Little made a motion to approve Payroll vouchers in the amount of \$96,825.43 and Patricia Vaal seconded the motion.

Ayes: All Nays: None Motion carried 5-0

Jason Little made a motion to approve Wastewater vouchers in the amount of \$130,348.72 and Brian Warran seconded the motion.

Ayes: All Nays: None Motion carried 5-0


Michael Johannes and Kevin Burke stressed the importance of completing the section of trails from Kaspar to Heritage Hills High School. Due to lack of grants made available the cost of completing the trails will fall on the Town. The expected cost will be between 3-4 million dollars for 2.2 miles of trails. Johannes stated that funds need to be made available to complete this. The Council is mixed on this as other members feel that money should be spent on the Community Center, park or other wish list items. Jane Lindsey, Clerk-Treasurer stated that funds are available for some of these projects however the Town cannot fund them all and the Council needs to decide on which project is the most important and beneficial to the Town and focus on one project at a time. No decisions were made at this meeting.

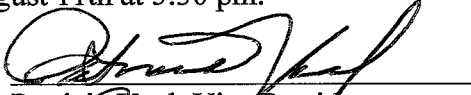
ADJOURNMENT

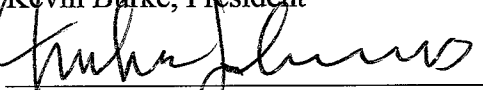
Jason Little made a motion to adjourn the town council meeting at 7:54 P.M. and Patricia Vaal seconded the motion.

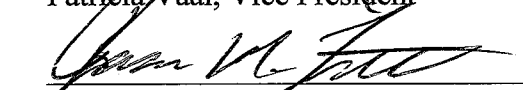
Ayes: All Nays: None Motion carried 5-0

The next Town Council meeting will be August 11th at 5:30 pm.



Kevin Burke, President


Patricia Vaal, Vice President


Michael Johannes


Jason Little


Brian Warran

ATTEST:

Jane Lindsey, Santa Claus Clerk-Treasurer