



**ZIONSVILLE TOWN COUNCIL  
MEETING MINUTES  
FOR  
MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 5, 2023  
AT 7:00 P.M. EST  
ONSITE MEETING**

This meeting was conducted onsite. All Councilors participated in person.

Council Members Present: Jason Plunkett, President; Brad Burk, Vice-President; Joe Culp, Josh Garrett, Bryan Traylor, and Craig Melton

Absent: Alex Choi

Also Present: Heather Harris, Town Council Attorney; Andy Pickell, Deputy Mayor; Tim Berry, Cr5owe; Assistant Chief Josh Frost, Zionsville Fire Department; Jarod Logsdon, Superintendent of Parks & Recreation; Mia Riley, Deputy Director of Finance & Records; Amy Lacy, Municipal Relations Coordinator; and other Town Department Staff

**OPENING**

**A. Call meeting to order**

**B. Pledge of Allegiance**

Burk                    President Plunkett is not with us yet so we're going to go ahead and get the meeting started. If we could call this meeting to order. Please join me in the Pledge of Allegiance.

All                     Pledge of Allegiance.

**APPROVAL OF THE MEMORANDUM OF THE AUGUST 15, 2023 EXECUTIVE SESSION MEETING**

Burk                    The first item of business is the approval of the August 15, 2023 Executive Session Meeting Minutes. Can I have any discussion or a motion for approval of the minutes from that meeting?

Garrett                I'll move to approve.

Melton                Second.

Burk                    First by Councilor Garrett, second by Councilor Melton. All in favor say aye.

All Aye.

Burk Opposed same sign.  
[No response]

It passes 6-0.

Garrett 5-0.

Culp 5-0.

**APPROVAL OF THE MEMORANDUM OF THE AUGUST 21, 2023 REGULAR MEETING**

Burk Second item, approval of the Memorandum of the August 21<sup>st</sup> Regular Meeting Minutes of this body. Any discussion?

Traylor Move to approve.

Culp Second.

Burk Motion to approve by Councilor Traylor, second by Councilor Culp. All in favor say aye.

All Aye.

Burk Opposed same sign.  
[No response]

Passes 5-0.

Mr. President, you ready to take back control?

Culp Our fearless leader is back. Good job Brad.

Burk All right.

Garrett Good job Brad.

**APPROVAL OF THE SEPTEMBER 5, 2023 CLAIMS**

Plunkett All right. I apologize for keeping everyone waiting. Up next is the Approval of the September 5, 2023 Claims. Are there questions from Councilors?

Traylor Move to approve.

Plunkett I've got a first from Councilor Traylor.

Burk Second.

Plunkett Second by Vice President Burk. All those in favor signify by saying aye.

All Aye.

Plunkett All those opposed same sign.  
[No response]

Motion passes 6 in favor, 0 opposed.

### **REQUEST TO SPEAK**

Plunkett Up next is the Request to Speak on Agenda Items. Amy, do we have any requests to speak?

Lacy No, we do not.

### **MAYOR/ADMINISTRATION UPDATE**

Plunkett Okay. Up next would be Mayor/Administration Update and we did not receive one of those.

### **TOWN COUNCIL UPDATE**

Plunkett Are there any updates from Councilors?

Traylor I've got one quick update just because I know it's something that's been on peoples' minds. The 875 and 400 intersection we, the Town did a, hired out an engineering study to help improve the safety of that intersection. Mr. Lantz is not, not here today to give the update so I'll give a quick one. Did get some recommendations from the engineering firm. Essentially they were fairly simple signage moves and additions. It would be an additional 40 mph speed limit sign to the north of 400 on 875. Also, on 400 the coming from the west to the east moving the stop, stop sign bar, so the painted bar on the ground, from behind the sidewalk crosswalk to beyond the sidewalk crosswalk so that'll make them have to stop twice because there will also be a new yield to pedestrian sign before that crosswalk. So, essentially, if there's somebody in the crosswalk, they'll have to stop there and then again at the, at the stop sign bar. And the, really the, and then there's one additional sign that says cross traffic does not stop in addition to the stop sign. So, some fairly easy things to implement. I know they're starting to work on that and if the trend of accidents picks back up it's been, knock on wood, fairly quiet of late but if the, if accidents pick back up after these things are done there's additional steps that can be taken but just wanted to give a public update. I know it wasn't on the agenda but this was something we just got in the last couple of days.

**PRESENTATION – Zionsville Chamber of Commerce Executive Director  
Introduction/Budget Request**

Plunkett All right, appreciate that update. Anything else from Councilors? Next, we have a presentation from the Zionsville Chamber of Commerce Executive Director. This is an introduction/budget request from Mike Hanlon.

Hanlon Good evening and thank you, President Plunkett and members of the Town Council for time on the busy agenda this evening. My name is Mike Hanlon. I serve as Executive Director of the Zionsville Chamber of Commerce. I'm also a proud Zionsville resident of 15 years and I'm also a proud non-profit executive, husband, dad and active in the Zionsville community.

Tonight I will be sharing more about the Chamber including our 2024 Priorities and the budget request we are asking the Town Council to consider. Our mission at the Zionsville Chamber of Commerce is to represent our members' interests, the local business community and drive economic impact in Zionsville and beyond. Established in 1961, we've been dedicated to creating Zionsville as an economic leader in Central Indiana. Today we are proud to have nearly 500 members and we promote Zionsville's visibility contributing to economic development in a thriving business community. The Chamber of Commerce is led by a Board of Directors who play a crucial role in guiding the vision for our Chamber, many of whom are sitting in the audience here as my cheering section, and who are leaders in the Zionsville business community.

And turning now to 2024, we have five key priorities to advance our mission:

1. Member engagement. We aim to retain at least 85% of our members and expect new ones by offering high-value engagement opportunities.
2. Marketing. We will allocate funds to reduce and maintain marketing materials to attract businesses, visitors and investors to Zionsville.
3. We'll actively monitor legislation that may impact Zionsville businesses and support pro-business policies to government officials.
4. We plan to invest in economic development initiatives to foster local business growth.
5. We will continue to support and organize the community events that we all love and have come to love including the Brick Street Market, Street Dance and Christmas in the Village that encourage community engagement and highlight our Chamber member businesses.

A snapshot in, of our finance is, is included in your Board packet or in your agenda but briefly, a, our 2023 budget is \$273,000. We are grateful to have received \$68,000 from the Town of Zionsville. The difference is made up of membership dues, sponsorships and events. Briefly, on the revenue sources, the majority is made up of membership dues but we do rely heavily on our events that everyone throughout Zionsville has come to know about Street Dance, Brick Street Market and Christmas in the Village which the Town has come to support in the past and we are very appreciative of that. Underwriting those events greatly helps drive economic activity to Zionsville and raised member, raised awareness of the Zionsville business community as well.

Turning now to the budget request for 2024, as in 2023, we are, our budget request is broken into two main categories including Community Events and Marketing and Technology. We have increased our ask for 2024 slightly for Community Events requesting \$75,000 and Marketing and Technology slightly to \$45,000. There's a breakdown on the slide packet included in your agenda. The Community Events, the majority of the request is to produce the events which I referred to earlier including Brick Street Market, Street Dance and Christmas in the Village. We are also exploring the feasibility of Main Street Zionsville to further enhance the and cultivate Main Street and ultimately produce those aforementioned events. And, finally, under the Community Events category, we are exploring hosting a leadership summit to bring together thought leaders from across Central Indiana to shape Zionsville's ideal business environment as we continue to grow and thrive.

For Marketing and Technology, as we did last year, we, or this year rather, we are seeking funding for video and photography services to really attract more businesses and visitors and investors to Zionsville and, additionally, Marketing and Technology services to facilitate those events such as Street Dance which are greatly help with the user experience when you are signing up for events and so forth.

In summary, we respectfully request \$120,000 in unrestricted funding from the 2024 Town of Zionsville budget to support vital initiatives to attract new businesses, visitors and investors to Zionsville contributing to the prosperity of our community and the region. At this point, I will open the floor up to questions or discussions. If there's none, the contact information is included on the back. Feel free to reach out at any point. Thank you for consideration of this proposal.

- Plunkett            Thank you. Are there any questions for Mike?
- Traylor            Just a little clarification – on the Main Street Zionsville, can you talk about what that is just to help me understand?
- Hanlon            Yes, thank you for that question Councilor. So, the Main Street Zionsville we are very early in the process but it, that is part of Indiana Main Street which is also a part of Main Street America. There are several local communities here, Lebanon has a Main Street, Noblesville has a Main Street, which produce these events such as Street Dance, Brick Street Market and so forth. So we are exploring as part of our strategic vision for the future, having an organization, Main Street Zionsville, focused entirely on Main Street so the Chamber can then focus our efforts on the 70 square miles outside of Main Street.
- Traylor            Just, and this isn't a pro or a con but just a little background – I know that maybe gosh, it was probably 12 years ago or so, I see a member of the audience that would probably remember this with me back there – Candace – but that there were two different organizations, the Zionsville Merchants Association and the Chamber, and I just at one point they, they kind of merged into, into one. I just, I'd be reluctant to see the split so I don't know exactly how what you're talking about would work but I just hate to see it split back out into two different organizations when we've got one that works really well.

Hanlon Understood and those are great questions and thank you again for the question. Those are all questions that we are exploring with the Indiana Main Street folks and that is part of the funding request, respectfully, because we are early in the process. Ultimately, it would be a separate organization, from what I understand, but it would be the initial planning and groundwork would be led by the Chamber including who would be on the Board of Directors for the organization.

Traylor From – I had one more question. From your, the other towns that you mentioned that do this –

Hanlon Yep –

Traylor Are they ordinarily municipality driven or like what you're talking about, Chamber driven?

Hanlon Yes, it really is important to have a close collaboration between the Chamber and the Town, otherwise, it will not be successful. So that is one thing that has been emphasized from the contacts we've been working with at Indiana Main Street so for that reason I'm planting the seed early with the Councilors and I'm asking for your support as we go through this process.

Traylor Thank you.

Melton I got a couple quick questions too and I know we just talked about a few of those –

Hanlon Yes –

Melton Out in the hallway which was great but I believe, I believe what you were talking about was back in 2000 when there was the Merchants Association or just early 2000's and I heard about that today actually but just thinking through some of that real quick and you don't have to answer it now but I'd like maybe an email sent. I'd like to know how many Zionsville Chamber members are in the Town of Zionsville and how many are outside of the Town of Zionsville and I'd also like to know how many members are downtown Zionsville and then just throughout the rest of Zionsville.

Hanlon Okay.

Melton And I don't need names, I just need maybe a pie chart at your convenience and I think that'll help me kind of understand both, all the requests as we move forward so, please and thank you.

Hanlon Certainly. We can get that information to you.

Melton Great! Thank you, sir.

Hanlon Happy to.

- Burk            Hey Mike I appreciate the presentation. Thank you. We'd be happy to lend our support. I did have a question though, I think Councilor Traylor makes a great point on, on, on your mention of Main Street. I know enough to be dangerous about it but, so what you're, you're saying is that it's a separately incorporated 501(c) something, right?
- Hanlon        It's a 501(c)(3).
- Burk            It is a (c)(3)?
- Hanlon        Yes.
- Burk            And so it seems a little strange that the Chamber would be the group setting it up as opposed to their own charter and Board coming in and setting up a chapter in Zionsville. Are you working with another group that would then incorporate that or is it that you see the folks from the Chamber bringing this to life and then having it run by a separate Board?
- Hanlon        Exactly as you, to your latter point. Ultimately, it is an economic development initiative as the Chamber is, so to get legs and the Chamber is a 501(c)(6) organization. It's a membership organization. The 5, Indiana Zionsville Main Street would be open to everybody, open to the general public and so forth to support these Main Street initiatives but I get it, to have legs and because of the economic development initiatives, interests we share, we would, that's really the way the role of the Chamber to, to get it started.
- Burk            Yes, I'm not opposed, I just was curious how it would come to be and I didn't know maybe that's the norm that that Chamber groups are the ones who really get these launched but happy to hear more about it in the future. Thank you.
- Hanlon        Thank you. Thank you for your time.
- Plunkett      Are there any questions for Mike? Any other questions for Mike?
- Hanlon        Thank you.
- Plunkett      Thank you. Actually, Mike, I do have a question – sorry to make you walk back up there. So this is a request to increase from last year by \$120,000. I see that we've already got the \$60,000 in the budget. The, we have an unreconciled TIF District Fund that has about \$2.8 million dollars in there and I believe in the TIF District is Main Street and this might – my question would be do you need \$120,000 on January 1<sup>st</sup> or if we approve the \$60,000 and then go back and look at maybe some of these TIF dollars or additional food and beverage fund money, I know you're doing this for budgeting purposes but would, would you be okay getting it in two tranches should this Council and/or the next Council approve that?
- Hanlon        Yes, I believe so. Yes. I'm trying to understand your question and –
- Plunkett      Yes, I think, I mean I think we've got, just looking the budget –

Hanlon Yes –

Plunkett That we're going to talk about here shortly, we've got a pretty big, pretty big –

Hanlon I understand, yes.

Plunkett Shortfall there.

Hanlon Yes.

Plunkett But I'm also looking at if TIF District, if TIF District money can be used specifically, for example, a Comprehensive Plan for Main Street –

Hanlon Okay –

Plunkett Or would we work with the Town to include, I think a Comprehensive Plan is in this next budget as well for the Town, so would we include something like that for, from the Town's perspective also? I'm just trying to see if there's, if there's overlap or if we can find different, different places to find money to, to support this if that's what the Council decides to do.

Hanlon I think we're, we're, we're flexible in terms of the budgeting process. And, I mean ideally we were requesting the unrestricted funds for the projects that are outlined but if the, I understand the budgeting process is very complicated so if there is a solution that the Town can come up with to make these projects a reality, I would be all for that.

Plunkett Okay, thank you. Any other questions for?

Melton Do we know, do we know if TIF dollars could be used for that or is that still up in the air? I'm just –

Plunkett Well, I mean, it's in the district, Main Street is in the TIF District so we should be able to use it within the TIF District. I don't see Tim – is he back there? We should be able to use money in the TIF District if Main Street is in the TIF, right?

Berry (Inaudible off microphone.)

Plunkett Yes, yes.

Melton Okay.

Plunkett Thank you.

Hanlon Does that help?

Plunkett Yes, that helped.

Hanlon Thank you for your question.

Plunkett Thank you.



I would assume there'll be more discussion here later around that.

**OLD BUSINESS**

**Consideration of an Ordinance Regarding Solicitation Permits Ordinance 2023-15  
(Final Reading)**

- Plunkett            We'll move on to Old Business. The first item up on Old Business is a Consideration of an Ordinance Regarding the Solicitation Permits. This is Ordinance 2023-15. This is a final reading and I know both Craig and Heather have put a lot of effort into this so if either one of you guys would like to take the, take the reins here –
- Harris              Councilor Melton –
- Melton              Well, actually, I'm going to go ahead and let you –
- Harris              Okay, no worries.
- Melton              I'm going to lean on you on this but we have. We've done a lot of work and this has been a continued request by people all around Zionsville, not just in my district so, I hope we set it up and teed it off right and properly to move forward so that the end goal is that we protect the Zionsville residents and we're still business friendly as well as friendly to the Girl Scouts and all the other local allowable solicitors. So, aside from that, I think the Ordinance is, we finally got it tweaked. I don't know, we've, we've had it on the docket so everybody's seen it for the second reading now and other than that I think I'd like to also thank Captain Sterling for his, his help with this as well for sure so.
- Plunkett            Perfect.
- Harris              Great.
- Plunkett            Take it away.
- Harris              So just as a reminder, this is for house-to-house solicitations. Indiana state statute allows the local units of government to regulate individuals who are performing their business doing house-to-house solicitations. We did have a couple of requested amendments from first reading to second reading. One was just some non-substantive amendments to kind of clean up the Ordinance and make it a little bit easier to read and then there are a couple of substantive amendments that I did want to point you to. One of them is in, on page 3, section 7.2 – we did add a 30-day business permit which would cost \$100 for a processing fee. This was inadvertently not requested as part of the Ordinance originally but was included in the proposed fee schedule that we considered at the last meeting so we're just aligning those so there would be an opportunity for someone to have a 10-day permit, a 30-day permit or a 120-day permit, so you'll see those three listed. We clarified that it would be an additional \$3 in a nonrefundable license fee for the actual application. That's just to help offset the cost to the department having to

manage this process and then one other substantive revision that we made is on page – let me find it here – page 5, section 9.1. We included in the Prohibited Actions that an individual could not solicit from any individual property owner who had been listed on the Town’s Do Not Solicit List. So you’ll recall that one of the things we’ve added to this new regulation is to make sure that if an individual homeowner or business owner did not want people to solicit their home or business, they could simply sign up once a year to be on the Town’s Do Not Solicit List. That would be then given to these door-to-door solicitors at the outset of their license and they would not be able to go there. So this is just another way for us to make sure the homeowners or business owners who do not want solicitation can have a proactive way of making sure that doesn’t happen on their property.

And then we did clarify just above that, we already had included it but we wanted to make sure it was included is that this no longer going to apply to non-commercial activities. So if you’re a Boy Scout or a Girl Scout or you’re selling popcorn or whatever you’re doing door to door in your neighborhood, previously you had to notify the Town under the Ordinance that you were going to engage in those activities. We wanted to make sure it was clear that this is not really what we think is in the best interest of the Police Department’s time to be, to be monitoring so we’re really focusing on the commercial activities and no longer requiring those groups to come to the Town and actually say they’re going to go out and sell Girl Scout cookies so we think that’s a good change for the community as well. And that is it.

Burk Yes, I like it. Heather, just to confirm – we talked about this last time but so the, if a, if a citizen signs up for the non-solicit list with the Town that can be provided to commercial providers, that would not apply to these exempted charities –

Harris Correct.

Burk Potentially they’re going door to door, right? So, I think it’s got to be super clear because some people don’t event want people, kids knocking on their doors to sell cookies if they have a no solicitation tag so –

Harris Yes –

Burk We just have to make sure they understand –

Harris Yes –

Burk What’s exempted and what’s not because it’s a little complicated.

Harris That’s an important point. So this in no way infringes on any individual homeowner’s property rights to exclude people from their property. One of the things we were trying to accomplish with the No Solicitation List is sometimes those signs are hard to see and you’re already up at the doorway before you see the “do not solicit” or “we don’t know individual soliciting at our property” so this was, we thought, another opportunity for those that are doing the door-to-door solicitation to know upfront these people, these addresses don’t want you to

come to their home which, we think, will be safer for the individuals who are soliciting as well as the individual homeowners and property owners. So, everyone still needs to be mindful that Indiana has very strong property rights and those remain regardless of this Ordinance.

Burk Right. Thank you.

Plunkett Any questions for Heather or Councilor Melton? Otherwise, I would entertain a motion.

Melton I would like to make a motion to introduce, well this is the final, on the final reading for Ordinance 2023-15 for the, regarding solicitation permits, ask for approval.

Harris Can I ask for a slight modification? Would you be willing to ask for approval with amendments?

Melton Oh, absolutely.

Harris Thank you.

Melton I would like to make a motion to approve Ordinance 2023-15 with the amended, attached amendments for approval.

Burk Second.

Plunkett I got a first by Councilor Melton and a second by Vice President Burk. All those in favor signify by saying aye.

All Aye.

Plunkett All those opposed same sign.  
[No response]

Motion passes 6 in favor, 0 opposed.

### **Consideration of an Ordinance Amending the Fee Schedule of the Town of Zionsville **Ordinance 2023-16** (Final Reading)**

Plunkett Up next is a Consideration of an Ordinance Amending the Fee Schedule for the Town of Zionsville. This is Ordinance 2023-16. This is also a final reading. We have Heather Harris, Captain Sterling and maybe Josh Frost too, yes.

Harris Josh Frost is here from the Fire Department. Captain Sterling, I believe, is on vacation today and then we have Chief Spears and others here if there's questions about the Police Department.

Plunkett Sorry, I just read what they write so –

Frost            It's pretty straightforward – a simple proposed fee revision. This is actually an additional fee, so for clarification – what we're looking at is for the large buildings, the big box buildings that have a, the some cross-section on the initial build and it's a spec build. Right now we have our fee structured to base it on the per square foot of the building. We're proposing to do it based on the perimeter. I provided, and you should have in your packet, an example. It's a rather large sum for a simple building and we're trying to align our fee, the work that we do on the front end during the plan review, to be more commiserate with the effort that relays into it. So we have just, this is just intended for the large spec building, if you will, that has the same cross-section at each column line. It does not include the buildout for the interior that requires a more robust review. This is just an attempt to look at basing the fee, the review fee based on the perimeter of the building as opposed to the square foot of the building. So we would take the perimeter multiply it times 50 cents and it would be a more equitable fee for that plan review. Right now it's based on the perimeter. One of the calculations that was provided for the good of all is that a 702,000 square foot building at 10 cents per square foot would yield a \$70,200 review fee. We're proposing that we use the perimeter and multiply that by 50 cents and that would yield a \$1,870 review fee. So it's more commiserate with what effort goes into it on the front end. It does not preclude the ability to collect the fee for a buildout, an interior buildout later. That would still be present but this is just more equitable for the effort that goes into it. I'd be happy to answer any questions.

Burk            Just curious how this correlates with with neighboring communities? Have, do, do you know how they calculate?

Frost            It's very similar to the way it's structured in the Town of Fishers. I'm afraid I don't know about many others. We used the Fishers model as our sample and tried to adjust the fee based on how we were performing those reviews internally and that seemed like a fair, equitable way when we were looking at some existing buildings that we we're under, that were under review.

Garrett        Josh, as we're looking at the budget here a little bit later – assuming this passes, do you have, does this have any sort of measurable impact on revenues relative to what we're seeing or would be seeing with this change?

Frost            Potentially but we did not incorporate that into our projections when we were looking at the revenues.

Garrett        Okay.

Frost            We used a much more conservative number when we were looking at it, assuming that this would be brought into the fold, that it would be a reasonable consideration so we did not use, for example, if we have a million square foot building coming in, we did not use \$100,000 for that review fee, we used the anticipation of total number of permits based on projections that we're looking at and it would be more equitable for what the revenues were that we projected based on past years as opposed to really the big box. It's relatively small for our total number of reviews but it would be a significant impact if we did not make that change and we have some unanticipated revenue from it.

- Garrett Got it.
- Plunkett Any other questions from Councilors? I'll make a motion to approve on final reading Ordinance 2023-16.
- Traylor Second by Vice President Traylor. All those in favor signify, I'm sorry – by Councilor Traylor.
- Garrett Upgrade!
- Traylor All right.
- Culp You are doing a good job here tonight.
- Burk Hey, come on man.
- Plunkett Second by Councilor Traylor. All those in favor signify by saying aye.
- All Aye.
- Plunkett All those opposed same sign.  
[No response]
- Motion passes 6 in favor, 0 opposed.

**Consideration of a Resolution Regarding the Appropriation of Additional Funds (Parks) Resolution 2023-15 (Public Hearing held 8/21/2023)**

- Plunkett Up next is a Consideration of a Resolution Regarding the Appropriation of Additional Funds. This is for the Parks Resolution 2023-15. I would note that we held a public hearing on 08/21 of this year. Jarod is here to answer any questions.
- Logsdon All right, thank you President Plunkett. This evening I just want to have a conversation and provide any information I can to help inform your decision for this final piece of funding necessary to complete the Big 4 Rail Trail widening and expansion projects.
- In 2022, within our existing allocations, we had the funding necessary to complete all these projects and, unfortunately, in 2023 we failed to appropriate some of those funds for the Parks capital projects so. We have been working together throughout the year to identify and appropriate those along the way and this would be the last piece of that puzzle to acquire that funding necessary to complete it.
- Throughout this year, we've been monitoring the program to ensure that as construction continues to avoid delays it could stay on schedule but also we would have the ability to pause any sections necessary so that should we not acquire this funding we could still open the trail up for public utility while we await those capital improvements. Originally that section was going to be Town

Hall to Starkey but after conversing with the construction company they began at Oak Street and worked in that Starkey to Town Hall area and instead we paused Bloor to Mulberry. Now, unfortunately, between Bloor and Mulberry the subgrades were in the poorest condition so just the egress of that equipment going to the tunnel and back, being a linear trail there's limited access on where you can access the project, has destroyed that existing trail. So, we had the excavation and the stone and the paving paused for that portion but ultimately just the movement of that equipment over it has degraded that trail to the point that if we were to open it up now it would not be safe for public transit so, we are kind of in a bind right now.

The option one would be for your consideration of this additional funding and to complete the project in 2023 as planned and intended or, alternatively, to remove that work from the 2023 planned activities and either work with that contractor in 2024 to complete it or re-bid that remaining scope of work with a new contractor. So, happy to answer any questions. It is unfortunate that this segment of trail between Bloor and Mulberry did fail. Of our 5-mile corridor, this was the only portion of our 100-year railroad ballast that failed in this capacity.

Melton Jarod, quick question – in, in, in the future I guess how long will what we've done, excuse me – say we finish this with this vote – how long will that last essentially? I mean, I know it should last a long time with foot traffic right, bicycles, etc.?

Logsdon Yes, so really our heaviest equipment that should be on there in the future is an F250 say for the occasional Bobcat or something conducting tree work or something like that. So, just like the trail that was put in in the '90s, the life of asphalt is 15 years plus so we're hoping for a 15-to 30-year investment and with proactive maintenance and the drainage improvements we've had along the way, we're hoping to get towards the latter end of that.

Melton Well, that's fantastic. So, I guess, in the future we know that these, these heavy pieces of equipment deteriorated the trail at those certain points. Is there anything we can do in the future, either in 15 years or if should we have to do, make, make a repair to avoid using that size of equipment or bringing it from a different perspective to, excuse me, a different angle to try and reduce damaging good trail in the future?

Logsdon I think the challenges are defining the means and methods of your contractor. Certainly you can probably list what equipment is applicable for a project but I assume that would have additional cost so really we have to have the balance of suggesting things but not ultimately informing and directing some of those activities so. I can say in this segment between Bloor and Mulberry with the undercuts planned, we'll go from about 4 inches of stone to 12 so that'll certainly reinforce it and extend the life of that asphalt into the future but, ultimately, time, erosion and drainage can all impact the integrity of these bases.

Melton And these trails are low so, so you're going to have moisture that falls there and then you're going to have the freezing and thawing and there's, there's a lot to it but I'm just, kind of disappointed that we tore up what might have been usable just to repair or reconstruct new material at a different area but I think that's a,

that's, I see it all the time. So, I do understand that perspective of it. So thank you for sharing that.

Burk Jarod, it's my understanding that we would've resurfaced that part of the trail anyway, right? So, I understand that you're saying now that maybe some of the equipment tore it up but you would've had to – how much extra cost on this is because of the damage caused by the equipment versus you would've already had to tear this up and repave anyway?

Logsdon At this point no extra cost. So the simple egress, they're still working. There's no penalties now for delays or anything so if your consideration of this appropriation, if this is funded, there'll be no delay and no additional cost because that was going to be excavated anyways.

Burk That's –

Logsdon That segment of trail was at end of life regardless –

Burk Right. You were going, you were going to repave that anyway.

Logsdon Yes.

Burk And just to confirm, there, no construction has been halted to date? You're continuing to move forward. Obviously, you need this final allocation to finish the job but you have not paused or have you stopped?

Logsdon Correct, yes. So we've, we've had the contractor continue. If you've looked out of Town Hall there was initially a bed of stone laid. They were able to fine grade that and get it closer to ready for asphalt. So we still have plenty of time this year to get this project sealed up and complete.

Melton They're not working on a roundabout are they?

Logsdon Not my guys, nope.

Burk The only other question I had for you and we've talked about this a few different times. I think we both agree that it would've been, would've been ideal to have this in the budget and this is not the best way to do this but you do have dollars in the 403 budget which, I believe, is what \$615,000?

Logsdon \$651,000.

Burk \$651,000? And if, obviously, the trail is tore up, we need to get it done. I mean so that needs to happen but if you, if you would – like say it wasn't tore up and you wanted to have this trail done we could've obviously put it in the 2024 budget but \$651,000 that you have in that bal, in that budget would you have wanted to use that for another project or do you see that this still would've been the priority project for you to tap into that, those 403 dollars? Does that make sense?

Logsdon Yes, the Rail Trail is the central spine of our park system and I feel it is one of the highest priorities that we have to date to maintain and manage and we see

hundreds of people a day throughout its corridor and that's only going to increase as we connect to Whitestown and beyond and become more of a regional destination for trail users so, certainly the highest priority, especially as there was some concerns with the condition of the pavement in those segments as it was before the project and the potential liabilities with upkeep of that.

Burk So even if this wasn't kind of a crisis priority at this point, you would still, even if we budgeted this for next year, you would still want to use the, that \$651,000 balance to finish this particular work?

Logsdon Absolutely.

Burk Thank you.

Garrett So this whole thing really annoys me. I, so I want, I want to sort of go through your schedule again here right because I agree with some of the facts you laid out there, right? This was in the 2022 budget and for whatever reason it wasn't spent. There were other priorities. The money then was failed to be presented to the Council when we went over this September of 2022 for the 2023 budget which was a deficit budget and we worked long and hard to get that to a balanced budget. I would argue had this been found there would've been other things in your program that would have been cut if this was a higher priority because I agree it's something that is needed for the Town.

As I sort of went back through all the old meetings then, this seemed to be noticed in like February of 2023 where then you came back to us and said you failed to encumber the money, it wasn't in the budget, we'd like the appropriation and this Council didn't say yes. So, in my mind then this project moved along anyways without adequate funding, the contractor, and I don't know construction so I don't know what fault they may have, messed up even more stuff while working on this stuff and now you're coming back to us for more money and I feel like the Parks Department is the only department that keeps coming back for more money for projects. I don't feel that any other department does that. Now you are more capital intensive than Police and Fire but Roads doesn't come back and do that and while I agree it needs to get done, I'm just beyond frustrated that there should have been a partnership to fully fund this to get started and not to the point where there's just gravel and people understand what's going on, right? They just want their budget done. We're the fiscal body here, now we're backed into a corner. I don't like being backed into a corner, Jarod. So, I don't disagree this needs to get done but –

Traylor It should've never started.

Garrett It shouldn't have ever started. That's the problem, right? Like this should've been a discussion for February 25<sup>th</sup> or February 15<sup>th</sup> when we had our conversation and it wasn't funded it should've been put in the 2024 budget so it could've been done completely. So, I just don't understand why it's Parks that keeps coming back for additional appropriations after we balance the budget because this appropriation will further make the 2023 budget unbalanced and we're going into a '24 budget that is \$10 million dollars, right now, in the red. So, that's not a



question necessarily, it's just more of a statement that it's not a good position to be in as the fiscal body of the Town.

Traylor Right, yes. I mean, I agree with that we're kind of in a position where we have no real choice. Like we've been painted into a corner that okay, now we've got a torn-up trail fund it or people are just going to be upset where it should've really, I agree, it should've never been started without having the full funding in place. I do have a couple of questions then and I'll get to why I'm asking this question but you didn't – did you provide the bullet points or the talking points for the emailed campaign that has hit the Council?

Logsdon No, I did not.

Traylor Thank you. All right, I want to make sure of that because somebody provided bad information and intentionally trying to paint us in a bad light. Just for the public's knowledge, this we don't come for additional appropriations if items are budgeted and appropriated. We come to the Town Council when things are not budgeted and need additional appropriation. So whoever has been spreading word that this was a budgeted item is inaccurate. I will, I will be supporting this today but this is, to Councilor Garrett's point, I did the math – this will make a grand total of \$1,013,167.75 of additional appropriations year-to-date for the Parks Department.

Garrett You know one, one of the reasons why this Council pushed back from the original request, Jarod, and this is not your fault, was we didn't have the appropriate reporting to understand the fund balances to even have a conversation. So, that has gotten better which makes voting on it a little more easier but, again, like this is a domino effect of these things need to be in place. We have to have the right information to make the right decisions fiscally for the Town, right? From Parks' standpoint, I would have every neighborhood in this community with trails everywhere, right? No one ever says I want less trails but we've got to be able to afford them and knowing if we can afford them is a key part of that discussion and so I know we keep harping on the finances but that was another indicator, it was in the notes, as to why we pushed back on that. So, again, I'm just disappointed it just kept going forward come hell or high water when we didn't have the information to actually sit at the table and have that conversation.

Traylor And, if not for the Mayor having just signed for the control audit of the Finance Department, I would be voting no on this again but she, she did after months so –

Pickell (Inaudible off microphone)

Traylor Mr. Pickell, is there something you'd like to say? Come on up.

Pickell (Inaudible off microphone)

Traylor All right, then please refrain.

Pickell [coughing]

- Traylor Oh yes, convenient cold. Thank you. But, this is – where was I? Sorry – I got interrupted there by a convenient cold.
- Garrett I got interrupted too.
- Traylor All right, well –
- Garrett You were talking about the signing of the –
- Traylor Yes, yes –
- Garrett The financial audit.
- Traylor She signed the –
- Plunkett The Baker Tilly contract –
- Traylor She finally signed the, after months of asking, she finally signed the control audit for the Finance Department that we've been asking for so, and, I feel like actually, I don't feel like – I know that she was aware that that was the reason that many of us were not approving additional appropriations so, the word was put out that we, everybody needed to contact the Council and this is not against you, Jarod, so I apologize you're in the cross here or in the crossfire here but bad information was put out by the Mayor to try to make us look like the bad guys here and we are, we're just trying to get through this year with, with minimal, as, as little additional damage as can be done so I think voting for this will minimize the additional damage that can be done.
- Plunkett Yes, I mean, I think, yes, from my perspective I've been, I feel like I beat you up when you come up here Jarod and I don't intend to do that. You know the, just so that it's on, on record I mean the initial request for the Baker Tilly contract started in December of last year and was finalized and forwarded to the Mayor in May of this year with the hopes that we could approve all of these additional appropriations that are coming through. My, my frustration with this particular appropriation is that I sent an email on March 31<sup>st</sup> saying that the money hasn't been approved and we should stop the construction of that particular phase. Every alternative so to speak was that the, that part of the trail would be removed and we would just do the rest. Obviously finding out from Jarod this afternoon that the trail has essentially been destroyed as a result of the equipment is a little frustrating because then that backs us into the corner of, of not having any alternative which is frustrating. I tend to agree with Councilor Traylor. I mean, at this point I'd just try to mitigate as much as we can here and, obviously, it's important, the trails are important, we want to get them done. If we don't get them done, somebody will get them done. I mean, it's going to happen. So, I don't like, I don't like being held hostage by poor budgeting but I think that's what happened last year so but we'll go through the budget here in 15 minutes so. We'll figure that out. Any questions for Jarod?
- Traylor Move to approve.
- Burk Second.

Plunkett First by Councilor Traylor, second by Vice President Burk. All those in favor signify by saying aye.

All Aye.

Plunkett All those opposed same sign.  
[No response]

Motion passes 6 in favor, 0 opposed.

Logsdon Thank you.

Plunkett Thanks Jarod.

**Consideration of a Resolution Regarding the Appropriation of Additional Funds (READI Grant) Resolution 2023-16 (Public Hearing held 8/21/2023)**

Plunkett Up next is a Consideration of a Resolution Regarding the Additional Appropriation or the Appropriation of Additional Funds. This is the READI Grant, Resolution 2023-16. Also, a public hearing was held in August, yes, on August 21<sup>st</sup> of 2023. We have Mila or Mia here to speak if anyone has questions.

Riley This was a \$1.9 million dollar grant that was awarded to us. It is only for the projects listed. It cannot be used for anything else. It's for engineering design surveys. It is reimbursable so we will get an invoice, we'll pay that invoice and then we'll request from the State, reimbursement. Funds have to be committed to by December 31, 2024. They have to be spent by December 31, 2026.

Garrett Can you clarify that real quick? You said we get invoices, we pay the invoices, we and we get reimbursement from the State? I thought we already had the funds?

Riley No, the funds are not going to come to us. We're not going to get those. We are going to get, pay the expenses then we'll submit information to the State, they will reimburse us for those expenses. So if we –

Garrett So who's floating the dollars?

Riley I'm sorry?

Garrett Who's floating those dollars between payment and reimbursement and what's the timeline of that?

Riley That's a good question. I don't know if that is coming from RDC. I don't know where those funds are being paid from. I'm sorry.

Garrett Because we're sort of appropriating cash we don't have so I'm just trying to figure out where the float for that cash then comes from in the meantime.

- Riley Yes – I, there’s nobody here to support me on this so –
- Garrett No, no, no – it’s fine. It’s a question. I’m not, I mean, if you don’t know, you don’t know, I just –
- Riley I do think that there is a plan, I don’t know if it would possibly come from a contractual services. I don’t know. I do know that’s not going to take very long for the expenses to be reimbursed so it should not be an issue. We’ll pay the expense and then we’ll get it right back so it’s a negative cost essentially to us.
- Garrett You just don’t know how long the gap is between reimbursement and payment?
- Riley Yes, it generally is not a very long time once you submit the reimbursement you generally get it back pretty quickly.
- Garrett And then, well, it’d be helpful to know what fund it’s coming out of because of what fund the cash would go back into –
- Riley We would put it back into wherever we take it from. I believe, actually, I do believe, there’s going to be a READI, a line, a fund that is specifically READI grant so when we first pay the first expense it’s going to be in the negative. We’ll get reimbursed which will bring that line to zero.
- Garrett So we’ll just pay it out of the general cash dollars –
- Riley Yes.
- Garrett It’ll be a credit on the, on that and then it’ll –
- Riley Yes.
- Garrett General, okay.
- Riley Yep.
- Garrett It’s just a journal entry.
- Riley Yep.
- Garrett Is there any risk that the vendor based on the, like can we get assurances that the invoices come in are going to get approved before they’re paid? Like I would just worry that we’d pay a \$300,000 invoice and the State, for some reason, says yes, no that didn’t qualify and then we’re suddenly out that money.
- Riley I believe Lance is going to be in charge of this and if I know Lance, he is going to make sure that he is not going to submit anything that is not reimbursable.
- Garrett Got it. Okay.

Burk I guess I was under the impression that this was one of those that the grant came in and we'd already deposited it and then we were using money out of that fund –

Garrett That's what I thought too.

Traylor I think that was what was conveyed. It must've just been a misunderstanding.

Plunkett I mean that's why we opened the account, right? That's why we opened the –

Harris We do have an account. I do recall – Amy and I were just chatting that we already set up for the Town –

Burk Right –

Harris The READI fund account which will receive all dollars which is required by contract –

Plunkett Yes –

Harris With, with the State through the Indiana Economic Development Corporation to be eligible to start receiving funds back in from the State. I don't believe, to our knowledge, that there's been any funds deposited into that account so the contract, which I've reviewed just last week, it does say that it's reimbursable so it gives you know, you sort of approve for whatever was in the original grant proposal and then as long as you're submitting claims against those approved items, the State then reimburses those dollars up to the total monetary amount of \$1.9 million.

Burk It just seems unique that it's a receiptable payment as opposed to an upfront grant.

Harris Sort of similar, I think, to how we do Community Crossings which is why the State set it up this way at the legislature. So Community Crossings typically there's a portion of the funds that the community is allocating and then they're, they're drawing down that 50% matching grant from the State but those funds are not disbursed until you provide an invoice to the State saying here's what funds we need from you that you've committed to us then typically the funds are deposited back into the fund. The way we've handled Community Crossings is then we do an additional, we reappropri, deappropriate and reappropriate back to the funds where the money was originally spent from.

Burk Yes, it makes perfect sense. I just thought that maybe when we, when we passed legislation to open that account that it meant the dollars were flowing in but it was just a misunderstanding.

Harris Yes, there's, this, this is a little bit unique because we're a part of the economic development consortium so the State READI program splits the State up into regions. Ours is called CIRDA so, technically, the Town will take the invoices, they'll send them to CIRDA, CIRDA will sign off on them and then send those along to the State, the State will then pay the money that gets reimbursed back to the Town. There's kind of a dual layer of approval.

Garrett            So, in, in theory, I'll just use \$1 million dollars. A \$1 million dollar invoice comes in, Heather, we pay it out of general funds but it's out of the appropriation that we are potentially, that we are voting on here today. When the money comes back in though, someone needs to remember to take that money out of that fund and not just encumber it to the next year because it really needs to go back to, and it's not necessarily a deappropriation because the money's been spent at that point, right? It's really more just a journal entry to get that cash back into general?

Harris            Yes, and I don't, I –

Garrett            Amy, you used to do this, does this make sense?

Harris            Yes, yes.

Lacy              Yes.

Harris            But I don't know where the money is being pulled from currently. I'm assuming somewhere out of the DPW budget but I don't know that we've been – I was looking to see if we'd been given a –

Riley              I don't –

Garrett            Is it important that we get that voted on today? It is kind of an important question, I feel, to understand where, where – is there stuff backed up to do with this?

Riley              I know at the last meeting Lance had said that he has got contractors that are ready to start. So, I do think there's a little bit of urgency to it. I will say that we've not spent anything for this project yet. It's up to you. It can wait until maybe somebody can give further explanation.

Traylor           I would not want to see this continued. Just to point out – we've had nothing but financial struggles with the current Administration. It is September 5<sup>th</sup>. I have zero desire to add additional financial responsibility to the current Administration when we've got less than four months until the new Administration comes into office. So, I, kicking it down the road, continuing it for 30 days does not seem, it's not going to change my vote.

Plunkett          So I guess my question to Councilor Traylor's point, if we, if we, if we vote on this and this does not get approved, can we come back, can we bring this back later? If we've been awarded the money, can we come back, can we bring it back later? Because the other, the other thing that I would point out is when we first, when this application went through and when we first started listening to thoughts of the Gateway Project, the properties that were, that are in the Gateway Project were owned by different people. I mean that's now a different deal. There's, there's different folks engaged and involved. There were questions about whether or not we really want a park in the middle of two roads or a grassy area for people to, to walk through traffic. If we're going to improve traffic, it seems like we wouldn't want them walking through it. But my question would be

it says the \$1.9 million dollar grant, it says DPW will engage engineers and landscape architects to design the realignment of First Street south of Sycamore Street including considerations for a future public plaza in the ZGA. Can the next Administration use it for the same thing?

Garrett I think they can only use it for that.

Traylor It's the only thing they can use it for.

Riley They can only, yes –

Melton So, I think we might be missing something. I think that that plan needs to be paid for and that, this is –

Traylor No, she's saying there's no, there's no outstanding debt right now.

Melton Well –

Plunkett We haven't spent anything on this.

Traylor Right.

Melton How'd we get that?

Traylor We appropriated money for that in, in the budget last year.

Garrett That was the Gateway study.

Melton My understanding this is going towards the engineering and infrastructure –

Traylor Beyond this. This is a very general plan.

Garrett So I did speak to Lance about this –

Traylor Okay –

Garrett And it is a very narrow set of parameters that you go down. This is not an open checkbook to go do whatever you want. It is effectively doing what you're seeing here, right which is engineering around what to do with whether it's roundabouts, intersections, expansion of streets, whatever it may be. In, in speaking with Lance and I have a lot of confidence in Lance and how he runs his department and his budget, I came away with that feeling comfortable that whether we do it now or do it later it's going to be effectively the same result so why delay it? Your point is well taken Councilor Traylor but It's such a narrow definition. You can't just take this \$1.9 million dollars and if you don't and I know, I know –

Traylor I don't trust any, I –

Garrett I trust Lance.

Traylor I trust Lance but Lance is not the boss.

Garrett But you can't take this money and use it for anything else because you won't get the reimbursement for it.

Harris Right.

Traylor But it could be something that is an alteration.

Garrett Is, is the appropriation specific to expenses on, related to the READI grant?

Riley Yes.

Garrett I mean, that's my understanding, right?

Riley Yes.

Harris Yes. Yes, so the request is to begin to appropriate funds. I don't know – I was trying to look to see what fund –

Riley I believe it's 276.

Harris It's being appropriated out – the monies are being appropriated out of. So the READI grant, just for everyone who's here, the language is for preliminary engineering, design, survey, permitting, environmental engineering and right-of-way engineering associated with Gateway Road realignment, Sycamore Street road modification and a new pathway and plaza grounds for open, outdoor spaces. I think to President Plunkett's question – if I understood the question you were asking – you're asking within that framework, how can the Council or the next Mayor be able to make sure that they approve of the design? So, whatever this design ultimately looks like for this pre-engineering and I think the answer could be yes. I mean, I think you could approve this with a caveat that any final design must be approved by the Council before it is finalized and because I don't see anything in the READI proposal other than sort of a big picture on the Gateway Project that was included as an attachment or any specific language included in terms of the design itself in the actual READI proposal that I can view online or in the contract that I was given by the Administration to review. So I don't see anything that says it has to look like – a park is here and the road is here. I think this is really the pre-design for engineering work. I think what you were asking, President Plunkett, is can the next Mayor or can Council make sure they are comfortable with where the design is headed before any additional funds were spent from the Town.

Plunkett Yes, I mean, I think my, the only, I mean we sat in a budget meeting last month and the Mayor said she wasn't going to encumber the new Administration with contracts and those kinds of things. Like why would we put her plan on the new Administration? Why wouldn't we give the new Administration a clean slate to look at the –

Garrett But it's not a clean slate, right? I mean –

Plunkett Well but for purposes of engineering –



Garrett If, if – it, yes but my understanding and, again, this may be a good thing to continue because I don't want to speak for Mr. Lantz but in having that conversation with him it is not \$1.9 million dollars and a blank slate to do what you want.

Plunkett Right.

Garrett It is \$1.9 [million] dollars to engineer what you submitted. So even if the new Administration says this is a terrible plan and I want to do something totally different, they can't use the READI grant money for it and that money will just go away, right? So it's not like – and I asked this specific question – does delaying this, because I want the new Administration, I want the next Council to have more input on it than this Council and this Administration because they're the ones that are going to have to deal with it and my understanding is it will be virtually unchanged regardless of us approving it or the next Council approving it. They, they have to stay within those, those guidelines.

Traylor I do not trust that that will happen.

Garrett Sure –

Traylor We have, I would not challenge this Administration to find a way to screw this up.

Burk But they're going to – this is the plan that everybody has put forward. This is the plan they want to study. This is the plan what the engineers will lay out for. To your point, there's, there are things in this plan that other folks may not like. I may not like parts of this particular plan but once the engineers get started on this project, if they start next month, they are building an engineering plan for that map that we're looking at right now. So, that's already going to happen no matter what.

Traylor All right, that big yellow square – what exactly is going there? What exactly is going there?

Plunkett Nobody knows.

Traylor That big blue square what exactly is going there? Detail.

Plunkett Oh, well that's grass. That's grass.

Traylor I'd like detail on what's going to be there. These are the details –

Plunkett Yes –

Traylor That they can screw up. The, can, can they open Main Street back up instead of making it a walking path? Probably not because this is a very generic map that has a lot of flexibility to it. You can screw this up and I, from a financial standpoint, I do not wish to give this Administration any additional financial responsibilities because we don't know – like you're, you're saying I can't think

of a way that they could screw it up. We don't have to think of a way. They'll find it.

Burk If we don't, if this Council doesn't pass this then this READI grant just basically (inaudible) –

Traylor No.

Plunkett Yes, we can always, we can it back –

Traylor We, you can vote on it again in January with the Council and the new Mayor.

Burk There's not a time restraint that will run out on this, this year?

Traylor December, by December 24<sup>th</sup> or by December of, 31<sup>st</sup> of 2024 the dollars have to be allocated. By December 31<sup>st</sup> 2026 they have to be spent. So, no – there is no rush on this.

Garrett I think it would be good for this Council if – given your concerns – to at least hear from also Mr. Lantz who may have those additional answers to see – it may not change your answer and I totally understand that but I also want to understand delaying it until next year, which I understand the rationale for that – what are the implications of that? That I don't know. I just don't know.

Plunkett Do you have anything you'd like to add?

Harris Well I will, I will say the way it was worded I did not draft this resolution. It was confusing to me because it is indicating here that it's being appropriated – like it says appropriated out of the fund's name and for the specified purposes. So, it's saying it's being appropriated out of the READI grant fund –

Plunkett But there's no money in it.

Harris But – right. But my understanding it's a reimbursable, to Mia's point. So, the way it was drafted is confusing. There's also a couple typos that we'll want to get an amendment on before we pass it. But that was my confusion, I think, in terms of the money is already there not I understand from reviewing the contract I agree with Mia that it is not already (inaudible).

Riley So essentially, we're going to pay for something and that line is going to be in the negative from the get-go.

Plunkett Yes.

Riley We will get reimbursed, bring it to 0. The next time there's an expense, the same thing until we spend the \$1.9.

Burk Mia, if we pass this, how soon would they probably begin doing some work? Do you have any sense of are, are they ready to roll?

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- Riley From the last meeting, Lance said that there's people ready to start on this. So, does that mean in a couple of weeks? A month? I'm not sure. But I do know that he did say that people are ready to start working.
- Burk Thank you.
- Garrett If you're up for a motion I'd make one President Plunkett but if you need more time, I'll wait.
- Plunkett Yes, I was just trying to look over one more time just to see if there's anything in here about, to Mia's point, where the money is going to come from, the initial fund.
- Riley Didn't you guys set up a fund at a prior meeting?
- Plunkett Well I mean –
- Traylor Right –
- Plunkett The money that goes out first before we get reimbursed where that, where that money is coming from.
- Riley So –
- Harris I think we set the fund's name and established the account but I don't know that any money was ever receipted into the fund.
- Riley No.
- Harris That's what this is doing –
- Riley Yes, no –
- Harris So it's a zero balance currently.
- Riley Right.
- Plunkett Right.
- Harris So what this is doing is saying you're appropriating \$1.9 million in READI grant funds which would then put this at a negative \$1.9 million dollar balance unless you're taking money from somewhere else and putting it into the fund.
- Traylor Are, are we permitted to take a fund negative intentionally?
- Harris I don't know the answer –
- Riley So –
- Harris I think maybe Tim or someone else would know. I don't really know the answer.

- Riley            So I don't think you would want to make it negative \$1.9 million. You would make it negative the expense that you're paying. So if I'm paying a \$1,000 engineering fee, I'm going to pay that bill which is going to make that line negative \$100,000.
- Traylor        No, I understand how, how –
- Riley            Yes, I don't – yes.
- Traylor        It would work, I'm just saying are we, from a fiscal body –
- Riley            I think from –
- Traylor        Are we allowed to intentionally –
- Lacy            We have been – Tim can answer this better – but in the past I've never, I never dealt with a READI grant but I dealt with some reimbursable grants with the Police Department and the Fire Department and they would go into the negative and then as soon as –
- Traylor        Okay –
- Lacy            The money came in, it would be positive and that's something that when State Board of Accounts comes to you have to explain to them it's a reimbursable grant.
- Traylor        Okay.
- Plunkett        Amy –
- Traylor        And I see a nod from Tim back there so that's, I'm comfortable with that.
- Garrett        In those cases were those specific funds that were then created for those grants?
- Lacy            Yes.
- Garrett        Okay. Personally, I would like to continue this because I feel there's a lot of open information. I know others may want to deny it but if you're ready, I'd make a motion –
- Plunkett        Go ahead –
- Garrett        To continue.
- Melton        Second.
- Plunkett        So I got a motion to continue first from Councilor Garrett, a second from Councilor Melton. All those in favor signify by saying aye.
- Plunkett, Culp, Aye.  
Burk, Garrett

Melton

Plunkett All those opposed same sign.

Traylor Aye.

Plunkett Motion passes 5 in favor, 1 opposed.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **2024 Budget Presentation**

Plunkett All right, moving along to New Business. The first item of New Business is the 2024 Budget Presentation and we have Tim Berry and department heads available.

Pickell Good evening Councilors.

Plunkett Good evening.

Pickell We are here to introduce the 2024 budget. We have several Town department heads and Tim Berry from Crowe.

Plunkett Andy, could you hold on one second? We've got –

Culp Hey Joe – I can't see anything on the screen. I've been trying to get it on the whole time.

Melton We have it down here just FYI.

Culp Oh, I know.

Melton Okay.

Culp But neither, none of us do down here. My old eyes can't see that far man.

Pickell Yes.

Plunkett Are you good Heather? Are you good?

Harris Yes, my young eyes can see it.

Plunkett All right, we'll get back. Andy, if you wouldn't mind, just state your name and position for the record please.

Pickell Andy Pickell, Deputy Mayor. The budget leverages Town strong fund balances to support several key initiatives. Obviously, pathways continue our effort to create safe, safe routes around schools, the quality of life initiatives, parks and expanded connectivity for our residents, i.e. the Oak Street pathway beginning,

Elm and Lions connection, refresh Lions Park, and fix the Turkey Foot bridge approach.

Long-term strategic planning – obviously, a Comprehensive Plan which you’ve talked about tonight. There will be an updated transportation and thoroughfare plan we have budgeted and our most important which, I believe, is investing in our employees. We’re making a key investment in public safety. We’re trying to hire four Police Officers, six Firefighters/EMTs, three Administration staff for ZFD and then several departments need additional staff. We’re looking at 53% of our budget is spent on public safety and departments, a good investment and those are needed investments. We propose to invest in our employees through a 4% increase and we aim to continue to invest in our employees by continuing the longevity plan, pay plan which is important and it is an item that most every one of our neighboring communities actually have at varying levels but it is an incentive that we find has, has helped employees feel more rewarded for being long-term employees. Do you have any questions for me?

Burk Just in general – thank, thank you and welcome Andy. Amy, I don’t know, I don’t know, I think maybe I saw them online but I don’t have an email, I don’t believe from you with the new details on this particular enhanced, amended budget from the last one.

Garrett Are you talking about the budget or the?

Burk Specific documents.

Garrett Oh –

Plunkett You should.

Garrett You should have those. We just don’t, we don’t have the details like the employees he was talking about –

Burk Oh right, I understand that. I’m just, I’m still trying to find just the update to, to the change that we made from the 21<sup>st</sup>.

Garrett So, Andy, I guess – I appreciate you coming up and I know, I think, for public and Council, it’s sort of, it’s awkward timing – it’s sort of needed timing to do this because of some appeal stuff we want to get through –

Pickell Yes –

Garrett So we’re going to blame it on that that because of the holiday we’re missing Chief VanGorder, DPW Director Lantz, CED Director Dale, Director of Finance Poore, so it’s, it may not be a complete discussion here today. I think one of the themes that this and Councilor Choi who has sort of been coordinating with me on the budget stuff, one of the themes that I think we’re sensing from the Councilors and ourselves represented is sustainability and getting a better understanding of fund balances and what of those are one-time requests from department heads for capital projects, consulting, whatever they might be, and what are recurring-type requests?

Pickell Yes –

Garrett And so, you sort of talk about public safety and maybe we can, we can dive in there or dive in however you want – as I sort of look at this budget, right now it's got a deficit of \$8.6 million dollars, now not all of that is recurring –

Pickell Right.

Garrett But, personnel makes up about \$29 million dollars of this budget and when you add in debt service of \$2 million bucks you're already at \$31 of the, what's the revenue at? Kind of a \$41, \$42 million dollar revenue budget? What I, started striking me as concerning from a sustainability standpoint is public safety deficits that seem to be in this budget. So as I sort of looked through the funds, like the Fire Fund 102 has a deficit of \$2.1 million dollars, the Public Safety LIT 249 has a deficit of \$67,000, Police – I know I'm throwing a lot at you here – but Police 271 has a deficit of \$619,000, Cumulative Fire 426 has a deficit of \$1.69 million dollars. So that's a \$4.476 million dollar deficit in expenses relative to corresponding revenues that I've seen from there. So I'm trying to get a sense and maybe Tim can help as well in a general standpoint of how we're, is that consistent with other communities in terms of pulling from other revenue sources to fund public safety deficits or are our public safety deficits something that we've got to think through in a different way? That's, I think, the biggest concern I have. You know, you look at the pay increase, that makes sense, the longevity pay, I mean, I think that was something folks wanted last year, supportive of – did the 401(k) match stay at 5% or did that change?

Pickell No. Dropped to the 2% ask –

Garrett 2%?

Pickell Went back to 3%.

Garrett Okay.

Pickell And so it's staying the same.

Garrett So, I can, I've got questions sort of department by department or if we wanted start big picture if Tim's willing to come up as well to sort of talk – if you're okay with that Deputy Mayor Pickell?

Pickell Yes, I think you could go big picture and Tim can come up and help and then if we need to dig down into the department heads we can go there.

Garrett Yes, that'd be great.

Pickell Okay.

Berry Thank you Councilors. Tim Berry, financial advisor to the Town with Crowe. The budget that is presented to you did have some changes. I think you did go through most of those from what you saw at the budget workshop. We did firm

up final revenue numbers on local income tax. Unfortunately, that did not go in the Town's direction that we were hoping.

Garrett Yes.

Berry But it does call for a 5% increase over this year's certified amount, less than what the Town received overall because of the \$3 million dollar supplemental local income tax distribution the Town received in May. And it does take into account all other revenues with respect to the cum funds we still do not have the assessed values and that is a tax rate driven fund so the exact dollar amount that is expected to be realized from both the Cum Cap Development and Cum Fire is not specific but it is still an estimated number at this point in time.

Garrett Do you have a, I mean is it close? We're not expecting wild swings in that, correct?

Berry We wouldn't expect wild swings –

Garrett Yes –

Berry But we have seen wild swings in assessed values over the last few years. Certainly your assessed value in Zionsville, I think, increased 24% last year and so we have estimated an increase in 10% as we've continued to see certainly the residential side continue to see increases in their assessments. We believe a 10% assessed value growth is consistent with and pretty conservative from that perspective.

Garrett Yes.

Berry Strange that we would say that but based on what we've seen around the state and around the region.

Traylor Did the 7% blanket raise for all employees still on, in this?

Garrett It's 4 now.

Berry It is 4 in this current budget that has been presented. So that is what, part of what reduced that deficit. DPW cut \$640,000. There was a cut of \$1.5 million from Fire, \$800,000 of that was land and \$750,000 of that was from the six Firefighters that were cut from the original request of 15. There are still nine new Firefighters in this proposed budget. Parks made a cut of \$35,000 but I believe those are the only cuts that you would've seen from this point, from what you saw at the budget workshop.

Josh, you certainly talked about sustainability and while there are some one-time expenses, this would take what we would, where we estimate your year-end 2023 funds for your levy generated funds or your DLGF funds at nearly \$30 million dollars down to \$21.3 million.

Garrett Tim, do you guys ever do – it's probably an impossible task – but if we're going from \$30 to \$21 but \$10 of it is one-time charges, it's not a big deal. If we're



going to \$30 to \$21 because it's recurring charges, then the next year we're going to \$21 to \$12 that's a problem. Is, is there an analysis that can be done on the sustainability of, you know, if Chief Spears comes and says we need four new Fire or four new Police Officers it's, I think it's hard for this Council to say yes or no except from a pure monetary standpoint but it's easier to say yes if we know that in five years those officers are still going to be compensated, trained, all those sort of things. I think that's probably the, I don't want to call it the elephant in the room because I think it's a pretty known fact but I think it's, as I looked through every single fund, it's sort of the hard thing to digest.

Berry Well, when you look at the difference between your 2023 adopted budget and your 2024 current proposed budget, there's a difference of just over \$10 million, \$10.5 million to be exact. Half of that is coming from your 100 series, your personal services line. Those are recurring costs. So you will see that \$2.5 million of that does come out of capital but you also realize that there are ongoing capital requests every year.

Garrett Yes.

Berry They may be one-time –

Garrett Yes.

Berry Capital expenditures but there are always needs for roads, for replacement of vehicles, for those types of expenditures. Maybe not to the same level that you have in this year's budget but certainly you always have those needs.

Garrett Do, do most communities borrow – this is probably too strong a term but – use general funds or other funds to supplement public safety because as I was going through with Deputy Mayor Pickell, it's an interesting budget because, for example, Parks has a pretty big increase in ask and I know Jarod thinks I pick on him but I don't because I sort of look at the revenue coming in for him and that's really just a deficit of \$182,000. So even though his ask is way up, the revenues as I could see are also way up so all right, that's pretty reasonable but when I tallied up all the public safety revenue funds and expense funds, it's almost a \$5 million dollar deficit which I feel is mostly structural and not sustainable, especially if you talk about things like land being cut out. You know, that's something that's, that's different than a fire truck, for example, that needs to be replaced. So, is, is that how most communities do it because public safety is a bigger expense because of the personnel but also needed because of the personnel?

Berry Certainly public safety is always the largest expenditure of local governments, certainly cities and towns. It is not rare, just as you are doing today, utilizing local income tax dollars from your certified shares –

Garrett Yes –

Berry To also supplement your public safety dollars in addition to the public safety local income tax dollars that the Town receives. That is not rare but it's not always done as well.

- Burk Tim, I have a quick question and I mentioned this to Cindy. We had a conversation a couple of weeks ago. I was trying to get an exact number of what is in our reserves balance and it seemed like there were a number of different funds. It was hard to get a full, accurate answer. Do you what the, what the specific sum of our reserves?
- Berry So we anticipate you ending 2023, based upon the numbers that we have here, we have, we estimate \$29,881,986 in these funds that are listed – your general, your fire, your parks, MVH, LRS, MVH-Restricted, public safety LIT, police, food and beverage and the bond funds as well as CCI, CCD and cum fire, your cum funds. We anticipate that you will end the year, this year, at that dollar amount. So, that’s how you get to the \$21,322,231 at the end of 2024 and that’s because as of now, there’s a deficit within those funds of a little over \$8.5 million.
- Burk So your recommendation is that we overspend by \$8.5 million in a deficit knowing that those dollars are going to be paid for out of the \$29 million dollar surplus? Is that your recommendation?
- Berry That is not my recommendation.
- Burk Is that not what the numbers are recommending?
- Garrett Says your report.
- Berry That’s what I am reporting based upon the budgeted dollars. I will tell you – I, personally, in my experience, do not believe this is a sustainable budget in its current form.
- Burk Let me ask you –
- Berry Last year I did believe what you passed was a sustainable budget even though it was a deficit budget. As you will note, last year you passed a budget that I believe was \$5.5 million dollars deficit at the time you passed it. I’m waiting to get those confirmations of the nod back there – I think the numbers are right but, but since that point in time you, obviously, all the departments did not spend all of their money that had been appropriated to them by the end of the year. There were balances leftover and, in addition to that, you received a supplemental LIT distribution this year of \$3 million dollars. So, and, of that \$5.5 million dollars, there was a sizable amount of that that were one-time expenditures that we did not anticipate to be ongoing costs. I believe if you were to get into that range again in, in assuring that you had one-time expenditures making up part of that deficit, you would be in a comfortable situation. You also have to note and I don’t want to be the Debbie Downer here but you approved a reimbursable grant last year from the State for six Firefighters. You pay those dollars out, you get reimbursed by the SAFER grant. That’s to the tune of about \$650,000 annually. Those costs will be coming in at increases a little every year. Those dollars will be coming online in 2025. So, as a Council, it is also responsible to be looking towards the 2025 budget and how you will be able to not only be sustainable today but how can you be sustainable with those expenses you know today are coming online there.

Burk Right, absolutely. Is there, in your professional opinion, if you're looking at say an approximate \$50 million dollar budget and you have reserves of \$29 million, I mean, I'm not opposed to tapping some of those reserves –

Berry Right –

Burk But is there a standard in your mind – 50% of a budget that's kind of in, in reserves – is there, is there a formulaic number that you're looking for that it gives you the safe zone?

Berry GFOA –

Burk Does that make sense?

Berry The Government Finance Officers Association will tell you that local government budgets should have reserve balances anywhere from 10 to 40% depending upon the fluctuations of your revenues. Usually in most cases they look at that 10-20 range. You are a Town that has experienced, because you are growing, you're experiencing a lot of pressure with that growth on providing the services that are necessary that your Town residents expect and so there is that, when you bring it on you don't always – you know, when do you get the revenue for it? I do believe that is why it is important for the Town to look at and analyze the additional excess levy appeal. Those are both in these figures – the excess levy for the urban or the rural to urban that I believe will be brought before the Council in the next few weeks for approval as well as the excess levy for excess growth. If your assessed value as a Town grows greater – 2% faster than the state average, you are eligible to appeal to the Department of Local Government Finance for an excess levy appeal. Zionsville met that this year and there is a calculation based upon how much over that 2% and that is roughly \$860 million dollars – \$860,000, excuse me –

Burk Yes, thank you.

Berry That is eligible in levy for the Town. I'd solve all your problems if I made it million – maybe not your taxpayers' problems but –

Melton Those aren't guaranteed, right? That's, those –

Berry Those are not guaranteed.

Melton There's no guarantee so we can talk about numbers but we don't know if we're going to get that or not, right?

Berry What you would do is you would approve it and then we would make the appeal to the DLGF based upon the parameters that they've provided and then they would respond to that appeal. They would either respond on both appeals that they would provide them in full, partial or not at all.

Melton So you're saying we kind of would budget that we have it in there, then appeal and we may or may not get it so it may create (inaudible)

- Berry And then if not then you would have to come back, which not always happens but sometimes does happen, when you would pass a budget that DLGF does not believe is sustainable, they may come back and request a cut from the budget.
- Garrett That's why we're doing this accelerated scheduling –
- Berry Right –
- Garrett To accommodate that.
- Berry Because that has to go to DLGF by October 19<sup>th</sup> –
- Garrett Yes –
- Berry And that will take some time to prepare, prepare the documentation that goes with that to DLGF. And the other thing on top of that is that excess levy is something that then becomes a part of your base for years to come and so that's how you can get out of this growth, the growth happens, the demand for services here, you know, you've got developers talking to Planning, talks, they need additional staff members to respond to the – it's, when that revenue comes in, oftentimes is later, so that's why it's necessary to look at that and consider that as a Council.
- Culp I just want to make sure I heard something correctly – so, you're saying that the current cut down version is not sustainable at \$8+ million over deficit, right? And you're saying we should be closer to what we were last year if I heard you correctly? In that \$5, \$5.5 million range?
- Berry And maybe it's \$6 or \$6.5 depending upon the one-time expenditures.
- Garrett Yes, because it's not just the deficit but it's the what the deficit encompasses, right? If we cut all one-time costs and left all the recurring costs, we're still not a sustainable budget –
- Culp Right.
- Garrett Right?
- Berry Right.
- Culp I'm just saying like the next Administration wouldn't be sitting here next year with all these appropriations again where, I mean – shoot, with all the appropriations we're past that \$5.5 million deficit from last year. Well, some of that's accounted for but –
- Berry But with the additional appropriations that you have passed, those are taken into account in the estimated –
- Culp Thank you. That's what I was asking.

- Berry Year-end balances.
- Plunkett So Tim, I want a, just a point of clarification and –
- Berry Yep.
- Plunkett And I appreciate your voicemail I had asked you this last week. This appeal, this is not revenue that's sitting with the State that we're asking to get. This is an additional tax to people in Zionsville, correct? If we ask for this appeal.
- Berry So those areas in the proposed neighborhoods to be brought in according to the reorganization document under the rules of the reorganization, they today do not pay a tax levy for DPW or Police. In essence, you would be, they would be added, those levies into their property tax bill.
- Plunkett Right.
- Garrett But, getting those services, I mean, my understanding is –
- Berry And, as, as a result getting those services.
- Garrett Yes, Chief Spears needs more officers because there's more patrol area –
- Plunkett Sure, right.
- Garrett Lance needs additional people to sweep up leaves because there's more neighborhoods that now get that service so it's a, it's almost kind of a wash I feel – more revenue but more expense too to support those, those citizens.
- Berry There's definitely more expense to –
- Garrett Yes.
- Berry Associated with those areas, yes.
- Plunkett But that's to – I'm sorry, just real quick – that's just to bring, that's to transition from urban to rural or sorry, vice versa, rural to urban. The –
- Berry Those three neighborhoods.
- Plunkett Yes, but the, the request to go back to the State and ask for an appeal, that's an additional tax –
- Berry That is an additional tax –
- Plunkett So that's not like they've got cash that we just haven't received –
- Berry No, no –

Berry That would be an additional levy that you would be eligible to levy your property taxes. Today Zionsville has the lowest tax rate in the County, the lowest between Hamilton and Boone –

Plunkett Yes –

Berry There's one tax rate, I believe, that's less than yours in Hendricks County but you have a very low tax rate compared to your neighboring communities.

Plunkett From a Town, we still have – 73% of our property taxes are tied up with, with, with the schools. So, I mean, that's the other thing we have to think about when we go through here. If we're going to add an additional tax, that's just something to be cognizant of.

Garrett Well it's – it's a levy appeal but if I'm correct – if you are still cap, it's still capped at 1%?

Berry Correct.

Garrett If you're already capped now, this isn't going to impact it.

Berry Correct. If you were at the cap, you are not impacted.

Garrett Right.

Berry I will say there are very few properties in Zionsville that are at the cap today because of your low tax rate.

Garrett You're right. If –

Berry And we're seeing less pressure on the property tax caps because the assessed values have been growing faster than your –

Garrett Yes –

Berry Levy has been able to grow.

Garrett Yes. So, you said in your professional opinion this is not a sustainable budget. Councilor Culp maybe alluded to this – could you give maybe an estimate of how much recurring costs would need to be taken out to make it sustainable? Did I hear about \$3 million dollars? Is, is that a rough estimate?

Berry I'd like to look at it a little bit closer.

Garrett Okay. It would be helpful to know how to back into that –

Berry Yes –

Garrett Math, right?

- Berry And I think that's something we can discuss maybe in more detail September 18<sup>th</sup> at the public hearing –
- Garrett Okay.
- Berry On the budget.
- Burk That's what I was looking for too and, Tim, can you remind folks watching the timeline on when this budget needs to be passed by this Council?
- Berry Thank you Councilor, yes. The proposed budget timeline is introduction tonight. Department heads will be here at the September 18<sup>th</sup> meeting which is the advertised public hearing for the budget and currently proposed adoption of the budget is at your October 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting, I believe, which would be your first meeting in October. So we still have nearly a month to take where we are today to get to that final point.
- Burk Yes.
- Garrett Deputy Mayor Pickell, you in your introduction talked about different departments and what their revised personnel changes are. When we got the budget information, all that was available was just the dollar amount increase and not the number of people increase. So, for example, I didn't know until today it was nine Fire Department members instead of 15, all I could see was the dollar amount. Is that something that could be produced and provided to the Council? Just a, you know, IT wants to go from two to three people, Fire from –
- Pickell Sure.
- Garrett 50 to 60 – I think that'd be helpful to understand –
- Pickell Yes.
- Garrett Because I think that's where most of the, unfortunately, most of the sustainability is going to be coming from. I agree with the Administration wanting to take care of the people we have, I even maybe would want to look at taking care of them, especially from the 401(k) match thing to encourage that savings. I know we're assuming everyone will participate. Everyone traditionally doesn't but if there's a higher match maybe that will, they'll thank us in 20 years.
- Pickell Absolutely.
- Garrett But, but I think that's something that will help get a better understanding of, of where that's sustainable versus non-sustainable is.
- Pickell I, thank you. It's exactly right. I appreciate that Councilor. I did want to mention on the rural to urban we are on a calendar deadline for that and I'm pretty sure that you guys have an October 15<sup>th</sup> meeting or did you cancel that meeting? Because that's the week of Zionsville's fall break, I believe.
- Garrett Hmm – it is.

- Pickell And in that week we, kind of hoping we would hit the 15<sup>th</sup> and be just fine for the 19<sup>th</sup> and that doesn't look like that's going to work so there may -- depending on how things work, we have to have or I may need you to schedule a special meeting if that's where we go.
- Plunkett I think Amy -- we may have moved that to the 23<sup>rd</sup>. I think Amy is taking a quick look here.
- Lacy Yes, we did.
- Plunkett Yes we did?
- Lacy The 23<sup>rd</sup>.
- Pickell Because that would be behind the deadline.
- Burk That'd be too late for the 19<sup>th</sup>, correct?
- Pickell The 19<sup>th</sup> is our -- so I --
- Garrett And we can't do it on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Andy? We can't --
- Pickell I believe that we can if we get through the readings and, but I think you're going to be having people miss the first reading --
- Garrett Oh, okay so we --
- Pickell The first on the 2<sup>nd</sup> --
- Garrett Yes I gotcha. I gotcha.
- Pickell So, yes you need seven so it may have to be, depending on how things go, a special meeting if you're available for that.
- Garrett I think that needs to be done this year so.
- Pickell I would agree. It's a --
- Melton We lose it if we don't do it this year, right? The opportunity?
- Plunkett We just don't get it this year.
- Melton Just don't get it this year? Okay.
- Plunkett Yes. We could, Heather, if we did have Councilors missing, we could have one or two dial in?
- Harris Correct.
- Plunkett I mean our, our policy allows for that.



- Harris            It does. Yep, you're right.
- Plunkett         So that could be something –
- Harris            Because we have an electronics meeting policy which would allow up to three of you to call or Zoom in.
- Plunkett         Yes. So that's something to keep in mind, Andy, if we could just make sure we're –
- Pickell          Yes, you – so all seven to do both readings, right?
- Harris            Yes –
- Plunkett         Yes.
- Harris            To be able to suspend the rules –
- Pickell          Okay.
- Harris            You need all seven but we could have three members joining electronically if they were traveling.
- Pickell          Great. That would be superb yes. Thank you.
- Plunkett         Perfect.
- Burk             I guess a comment I would just make to the department heads as we look forward to the next meeting – as you're crunching numbers, last year I and others on the Council really championed investing in our current staff and with some ARPA funds but also a 7% pretty much across the board raise where Jo had done some really incredible work about midline pay and trying to get everybody to a particular level. I think we need to continue to invest in our current staff. I know we're \$8.5 million over and we need to trim that down a few more million it sounds like. I'd love to continue to invest in our current staff. I think it's important and I don't know that we'll get to 7%. I do agree with Josh that the increased match I'd love to see that back in. A question for department heads – you can't have it all so, if we want to continue to invest in our current staff and you may have a couple of extra new staff or maybe you have other, other costs and we can't, we can't do both. So if everybody is comfortable with it – I know you're, you're saying this so are we okay with 4% because when I talked to department heads I feel like they're still staying I'd rather have more than 4% even if I have to give up something else. So, I don't know if we're settling on 4% if we, but if we move forward from here on saying 4% and now we have to continue to make cuts from there, I just want to make sure everybody feels like they're done at 4% and that, they don't want it to be 5 or 6% because if they do I'd be inclined to support that and would be ask, asking everybody to find additional dollars somewhere else that could be cut.

Traylor And I think the total effective raise last year ended up being closer to 10%, Tim? I'm getting a nod, so, yes. So it ended up being 7% plus 3% so we ended up giving like a 10% raise to everybody last year and I've been a supporter of trying to get into merit increases rather than just across the board raises but that hasn't been done to date. I think 7% after a 10%, we did 10% last year which I supported to bring everybody up the median. I think to do a 7% across the board this year which was the original proposal would be I think it would be irresponsible to the taxpayers that have paid these dollars in.

Garrett Each, each 1% is \$243,000.

Traylor Yes.

Garrett Just so you know.

Traylor Yes.

Garrett As we sort of think about a path forward, right? I mean, I think there's, there's two paths we could go. One is we could have this same budget presented to us as is and I think that gets very messy because you've got seven Councilors with different priorities, you have different department heads with different priorities. I don't know and, Deputy Mayor Pickell, I'm going to ask you this as well – I don't know if it makes sense once Mr. Berry comes up with a more accurate number of what is the sustainability – does it make sense for the departments to sit amongst themselves if the number – I'm making up a number – if it's \$3 million dollars, how do we collectively, the department heads, find \$3 million dollars in what they're asking that are recurring costs to cut or do they want us to do that? I feel they are better qualified to do that. I think myself and Councilor Choi have, have been nominated by President Plunkett, I think we missed a meeting, to lead all this stuff so we're happy to join that or we're happy to see what comes out of that backroom brawl. Is, is that a, is that a reasonable next step or would you rather this just be done at the next meeting which might be less surgical knife and more axe?

Pickell I'll entertain it with the staff and go from there. I mean –

Garrett Okay.

Pickell You've been pretty clear here but we'll sit down and roll it around but I'll leave it at that.

Garrett I mean there's, there's not a lot of – I don't feel like there's a lot of fluff in here, right? There's not silly things that are being asked for. Everything I could see getting justification for but I just don't want my legacy on Council walking out at the end of the year to leave a problem for the next Council, the next Administration that is recurring. So, I trust the department heads more than I do myself for them to figure out where that horse trading happens and, again, we're happy to participate if you want us and we're happy to stay out of the way if not. I'd rather that happen enough to have to try to figure this out in the next meeting. That's just my two cents. If department heads don't want to do that, if the

Administration doesn't want to do that, I understand and we can go forward but I'd appreciate your consideration of it.

Pickell I'll also – we'll, we'll give you an answer within this week.

Garrett Okay. Thank you.

Pickell No problem.

Garrett And Tim too if you can give that answer on what you think is a sustainable – how far off we are in sustainability that would be very helpful to me and I think the other Councilors too.

Plunkett Yes, I'd agree with that. I feel like we went, we've gone from past budgets where all department heads would kind of get together and say maybe the Police Chief needed new cars or the Fire Chief needed new equipment and Lance needed something they would all kind of get together and say well, okay well this is my year, I get this and next year and that's kind of gone away. It just kind of feels like there's a lot of, everybody's asking for everything which maybe that's the answer but – I mean, I'd like to know just even sitting up here and Tim and Deputy Mayor Pickell like, we don't need to know this like right now but some of the places I look for are, for example, there's \$115,000 worth of transfer funds from food and beverage. What does that go to? \$270,000 transfer funds from the CCD, \$350,000 from the CCD, there's \$1.3 million in Parks construction and contractual services. So, basically, there's, there's \$2.1 million dollars' worth of stuff that we just don't know what it is, right? So, maybe, maybe the answer for me so that I feel better about it is, you know, what, what's in that? What are we building through the Parks Department for \$900,000?

Garrett That actually came today – just like, like late this afternoon. We got that detail but it'd be good to have it all in one place that Parks piece.

Plunkett You have that?

Garrett It came from Cindy. The Parks budget breakdown.

Berry Cindy did send emails today with all of the contractual requests from each of the departments.

Plunkett Perfect.

Berry It might've come in a couple of different emails. There were a few departments that might've been separate but she did compile that information based on your request at, at the budget hearing or at the town hall.

Plunkett All right, great. I'll look forward to that. Anything else for Tim or Deputy Mayor Pickell?

Garrett I got what I needed. Thank you.

Traylor Just, I don't see that email.

Garrett           It was on –

Plunkett          Yes, I don't see it either, I was looking here.

Traylor          I – okay. Oh, okay.

Plunkett          Did you just send it Josh?

Garrett          There's an attachment but not listed in the detail.

Traylor          Got it.

Garrett          It was a, it was a weird like one-off thing. That's just the Parks operating budget breakdown. Everything else is in the body of the message.

Traylor          I thought somebody has sent it today –

Garrett          I had said, I originally thought it came today but that was the –

Traylor          Okay.

Garrett          The consulting pieces –

Traylor          All right.

Garrett          That came today.

Traylor          All right. I was looking for a new email from today –

Garrett          Yes.

Traylor          And I didn't have that. Okay, got it.

Plunkett          All right. All right, no more questions about the budget?

Garrett          No vote right? We're just, we were just talking about this today?

Plunkett          Are we introducing this or is this just a discussion?

Traylor          No.

Plunkett          This is just a discussion, correct?

Harris           I think we need to move for introduction formally with a motion to introduce the budget.

Burk             So moved.

Garrett          Second.

Plunkett            So we have a first by Vice President Burk, a second by Councilor Garrett. And this is to introduce the budget and then, obviously, all the edits and anything else we want to do can come –

Harris             Yes, absolutely.

Plunkett           Later.

Traylor            It's to introduce, not an endorsement.

Harris             Correct.

Burk                Thank you.

Plunkett           All right, so I got a first from Vice President Burk, a second from Councilor Garrett. All those in favor signify by saying aye.

All                  Aye.

Plunkett           All those opposed same sign.  
[No response]

Motion passes 6 in favor, 0 opposed.

### **OTHER MATTERS**

Plunkett           Is there anything from Other Matters from Councilors? I would just say a couple of things real quick – as many have indicated here in this meeting, I was pleased to get a notification from Deputy Mayor Pickell that we do have the Baker Tilly contract for that audit approved or the internal controls approved. I think that's really important. I appreciate the Mayor working on that. I also received a voicemail on August 31<sup>st</sup>. I had been in communication with the Mayor via email regarding the Form Based Code and I was informed by Mike Dale on August 31<sup>st</sup> that the Form Based Code has been removed so we will no longer be moving forward with the Form Based Code. So, that's, I think that was a wise decision. I appreciate the Mayor's work on that as well and just wanted to make sure everybody was updated.

Garrett            That's interesting.

Plunkett           Anything else from Councilors?

### **ADJOURN**

Garrett            I'd make a motion to adjourn.

Plunkett           First by Councilor Garrett. I'll second that. All those in favor signify by saying aye.

All                  Aye.

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Plunkett            All those opposed same sign.  
                         [No response]

Motion passes 6 in favor, 0 opposed.

The next regular Town Council meeting is scheduled for Monday, September 18, 2023 at 7:30 a.m. in the Zionsville Town Hall Council Chambers. Public notice will be posted in compliance with the Indiana Open Door Law. Thank you.

Respectfully Submitted,

Amelia Anne Lacy, Municipal Relations Coordinator  
Town of Zionsville