FLORA TOWN COUNCIL
September 5, 2023

The Flora Town Council met Tuesday, September 5, 2023 in the Board Room of the Flora Town Hall. Those present were; Susan Scholl (Carroll County Comet), Todd Trent, Steve Catron, Trevor Ayres, Dustin Gutierrez, Breezy Land, Randy Hoffman, Bob McKnight, Malinda Blocher, Samantha Miller, Tom Helvie, Susie Alwine, Tim Alwine, Robyn Flanagan, Eddie Flanagan, Judy Ayres, Jack Begley, Kristi Butler, Rich Heemstra, Frank Hillegonds, Aric Van Weelden, Kirby Dunagan, Mike Lentinl, Cindy Durl, Rob Kauffman, Darrell Yoder, Vince Seward, and Pam Beck Clerk-Treasurer.

Darrell opened the meeting with welcome. Rob moved to approve first reading of 2024 Budget 2023-06. Vince Seconded. Motion carried. Rob moved the minutes of the previous meetings (August 7th and August 18th) be approved as presented; Vince Seconded. Minutes approved. Budget adoption will be at the next Council meeting Monday, October 2, 2023.

OLD BUSINESS:

A. American Tower- Annual buy-out offer- American Towers LLC offering two options to adjust the financial terms of the tower site's contract. The current lease is for 99 years. The Council tabled the proposal.

NEW BUSINESS:

A. Sealed Trash Bids- The trash contract for the next three years was awarded to the low bidder, Waste Management, for the total cost of $357,472. The three other sealed bids were from: On Point Waste Services, Logansport for $469,800, Apex Waste, North Judson, for $542,574, and Trash Kans, Lafayette, for $473,364. The bids were based on 900 households and 8 rolls off dumpsters of Spring Clean-Up.

B. The Children's Garden- Letter of Intent- Tom Helvie, Samantha Pickens Miller, & Malinda Blocher- The Children's Garden is a non-profit corporation formed by the Flora First Christian Church. This facility is an early childhood center for 0 to 6 with the maximum capacity of 85 children, including infants and toddlers, and would employ 20 individuals. Staff would include full-time classroom teachers, aides, and executive director, a secretary, custodial and kitchen staff. Miller said they have been actively seeking a location in and around Flora for some time. After due diligence the ideal location is the former Brethren's Home property. The Children's Garden Committee is asking for this property to be gifted from the Town of Flora. The project is expected to cost $1.2 million. This location has a three-phase electric, water lines, and little work needs to done on the sewage end, Trevor reported. The Children's Garden Committee told Council members they would give back any property they did not need for their project. Rob moved to gift the property and to sign the Letter of Intent. Vince Second. Motion carried.

C. Chicken Ordinance- Robyn Flanagan Flora resident presented a petition signed by 150 other residents and non-residents requesting the Town of Flora to allow the raising of chickens within town limits. Flanagan said she would like the ordinance to allow up to 8 chickens, but no ducks or roosters. Town Ordinance 1-A-76 prohibits the harboring, keeping or maintaining cattle, hogs, sheep, horses, livestock or poultry withing limits of the Town of Flora. Flanagan said she knew in February that they were in violation of the ordinance, but said since others in town had chickens they believed it was implied the ordinance was not enforced. Susie Alwine, who works with the 4-H poultry program would like the council to consider allowing households to have two Bantams so 4-H members could participate. Alwine said, chickens are for pets, not for egg production or meat. The Council all agreed they were not ready to make a decision and will take the matter under advisement.

REPORTS:

A. Police Department – Officer Steve Catron submitted Chief James Bishop's report. There were, 3 felonies, 1 misdemeanor arrest, 9 citations, 34 warnings, 131 calls for service, and 3 accidents, and 1 warrant served.

B. Fire Department – Todd Trent reported the department had 5 fire-related calls and 5 EMS runs. Todd reported the first public event application had been received and it was for Depot Days. Ladder truck is fixed. The cost of the repairs was $9,500. Still waiting on the new North door.

C. Plan Commission- 2 permits were issued for August- Nicholes Hickner- fence. Wayne Riffey- garage.

D. Park Department– no one present- Darrell reported the tennis and pickle ball courts at the park have been redone.

E. Airport- Board president Debbie Lowe resigned her position effective September 1, 2023. Jack Begley, representing the Board, announced a public fly-in event on September 16, 2023 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

F. Utility Manager/Water Superintendent – Trevor reported the culvert at First Financial Bank was changed due to the old culvert causing a sink hole. Trevor said the town has a contract with the State Highway Dept. to sweep SR 18 seven times per year. With the town's street sweeper not working, the Council approved having Complete Sweep of Lafayette to sweep SR 18 two more times this year at a cost not to exceed $3,000. Quotes for a more versatile piece of equipment that could be used in various ways by all departments was presented to the Council. RPM Machinery cost of $74,675. Bobcat cost of $73,430.92. The old street sweeper will be sold to help with the cost of the new equipment. The purchase of this equipment will be decided at a later date.

G. WWTP Superintendent- Randy Hoffaman reported 7 manhole risers were installed at East 150 South, Bringhurst. The plants generator's battery is getting weak. Vactor truck was out on multiple jobs for water department and electric department. Complaints were received about the sup-pump at 407 W. Walnut. Randy is working with Trevor on this matter.

OTHER BUSINESS

1.None

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

1. The next Town Council Meeting will be Monday, October 2, 2023.
2. The Town Office will be closed on Monday, October 9, 2023 for Columbus Day.
3. Portions of W. Main St. downtown will be closed for Depot Days, September 23-24.

Vince moved to adjourn, Rob seconded; motion carried.

TOWN OF FLORA

Darrell Yoder, President

Robert Kauffman, Vice President

Vincent Seward, Finance Chairman

ATTEST:

Pamela J. Beck, Clerk-Treasurer