

Waterloo Town Council Meeting
February 11, 2025

A meeting of the Waterloo Town Council was held on February 11, 2025, at 6:00 p.m. at the Waterloo Historic Train Depot present were:

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| Josh Caudill | Ken Surber |
| Greg Iddings | James Garman |
| Russell Goodman | Pam Howard / Town Manager |
| Andrew Kruse / Town Attorney | Renee Duszynski / Clerk Treasurer |

The following business was discussed, and action was taken: Unless specified all votes were unanimous.

OCRA Planning Grant: Opened at 6:00 p.m.

Town Council President opened the meeting and turned it over to Renee Duszynski. Duszynski introduced herself and stated that she is a certified CDBG grant writer for OCRA. She explained that the Town of Waterloo did apply for an OCRA planning grant once before but was denied so the Plan Commission decided to go out for a second time, so this is the required public hearing for the application.

Duszynski explained that the goals and objectives of the CDBG program are to benefit people of LMI (low to moderate income.) This is federal money that is passed through to the states and to apply your town must meet HUD requirements for LMI. This either must be done through an income survey or it already must meet the minimum of at least 51%. The Town of Waterloo is at 51% according to the HUD website. OCRA does not announce the total amount of planning grants it will fund each quarter. They will award qualified grants until then they run out of funding, so you want to try to apply earlier in the year that way you are assured you're awarded. The Town of Waterloo is applying for a grant for a comprehensive plan. The comprehensive plan would be designed by an engineering firm with input from local leaders, official boards, department heads, businesses, and residents. The plan will be the guide for the growth and betterment of the town. As the board members change this plan will be in place to continue to allow the community's desires to be heard. The total amount of the grant the Town can receive is \$50,000 and will have to match 10% of that so it would be a total of \$55,000. She explained that 51% of that \$50,000 will benefit low to moderate income people which equals \$25,500. The Town's match of \$5,000 will be paid out of CEDIT with cash on hand. Duszynski will ask OCRA for permission to use a \$500 match in-kind for GA fees. She explained that since she works for the Town and is not collecting any fee for GA duties, she can ask permission to use her hourly rate as an in-kind match. That is the only discretionary fund that the Town has funds available. There will be no displacement of individuals due to this project as this is a planning project.

The Plain Commission headed this up. They chose a scoring committee that contained five individuals. They put out for request for qualifications following the federal requirements. They received back four applications. They were scored by the scoring committee, and then they were

interviewed by the scoring committee. And of those four, the highest scoring firm was HWC. And we have Allie here tonight from IIWC, she's going to review a little bit about how the process will look and what kind of input they're going to get from the community. Allie Daugherty introduced herself, she resides here in Northeast Indiana and works for HWC as a business development representative. She will be present and involved throughout the planning process. Throughout the process, there is a list of minimum plan requirements that the state puts out that will have to be followed. To obtain that data, HWC will do that through multiple different opportunities of public engagement, surveys, stakeholder meetings, and will be about a 12-month process. She asked if there were any questions. She highly encourages anyone to provide any questions or input that they'd like to have for the planning process. Through this planning process, public engagement is really one of the most key things for the whole process. The last comprehensive plan was done in 2014. The Town Manager, Pam Howard, spoke about the previous comprehensive plan process. "They started in 2013. It finished in 2014. So, the plan is 11 years old, and the Town has accomplished a lot of the things in there and a lot of things have changed. Times have changed. The town has changed. We have a very young population. I'm hoping to see a lot of those people come out and really put their input into what they want to see Waterloo move forward in the future. So that's positive. We've checked a lot about this. It's time to regroup and go back. We want to look at land use. We want to look at downtown development. We want to look at housing. We want to look at, there's, there's so much that the comp plan fulfills. You know, you just, there's a lot in it. And that's, and that's our roadmap. And part of the we've done so much, it's outdated, is part of the reason that we're not just going for an update. If we were just updating our comprehensive plan, it wouldn't require so much time, so much money. But because everything has been accomplished, which we should feel good about, that's why we need a whole new comprehensive plan. And also, a plan to make sure that we're sustaining our comprehensive plan into the future."

Redevelopment President, Sallie Pease, said "Well, I think there's the strong possibility that when you update it like this, that it will be a good look for developers and people looking to come to Waterloo and build and that sort of thing. Because they'll see, hey, you've invested in your future, in your plan, you've updated it. So, if anything, you should just push that impetus for growth and all of that. And DeKalb County is also doing their comp plan right now as a whole. So that's kind of nice that it coincides, so that they can make sure that they understand what Waterloo wants from our residents. Not from anybody else, but they draw from us." Councilman, James Garman, asked if HWC was working on other small towns in DeKalb County currently? Daugherty stated that they are working on the DeKalb County comp plan as well, but they don't have any other current open contracts with other communities in DeKalb County right now. He asked about Steuben County. She stated that they are working with their county-wide trails group to review a kind of visioning process. They are also working with the county government for a housing review study right now. And just finished a plan for Lagro in Wabash County.

Council President, Josh Caudill, spoke of the importance of the plan and the sustainability. He states "we'll review it every two years. I feel like the public hearing is probably best so you can have that community engagement beyond the initial meetings." Duszynski stated that it is a great plan. If we do this in the public every two years and can hold the public meeting and say look at what has been accomplished so far, and then if needed, it could be updated. She stated

that the Town turns in a plan to the County every 2 years with their plans for CEDIT funds. She stated that going forward \$5,000 would be built into the plan to continue to keep up the comp plan.

Garman asked Daugherty "What's your opinion of towns of this size where do you see them?" She said "I used to work for state government in little communities. So, you would be amazed with the number of things smaller communities can accomplish. when they put their minds forward with planning processes to be strategic about forward efforts. You look at some of these smaller communities and they've been doing wonderful things in their downtown to improve so really the planning process is that first step that can set you apart for that forward thinking and getting things done in the future." She went on to say that it is critical to look at funding applications for other things in the future. This will show that the Town has put thought and effort into creating a plan and not just seeking opportunities as they arise without forethought. Garmen went on to say that we have a hard time getting the younger generation to come help and really get involved. Daugherty stated that HWC has some unique ways to engage the community in the process. That is something HWC prides themselves on. "We would look at online surveys to engage in the younger population and providing that input as well as just kind of making sure that. That information is accessible for all we talked about some of the best ways of gathering and put it, people don't always come to public meetings."

Council President, Josh Caudill asked Clerk Treasurer Renee Duszynski "Essentially, we cannot move forward with this without the grant, we just don't have the funds. Correct?" Duszynski confirmed that there were no funds available to fund the entire project and that if not awarded they could not move forward. She went on to say "it is essential for us to be able to move forward and like Alli said, these plans are what drives little towns forward. It's the building blocks. It's not just used by the town council. It's used by the plan commission. It's used by the redevelopment commission. It incorporates public safety. Every working aspect of a municipality is guided by this comprehensive plan."

Caudill stated "To really set Waterloo up for the future, this is essential, and without the aid of OCRA and CDBG money, we would not be able to do it properly. Public comments are very welcomed and encouraged."

Sallie Pease, RDC president, stated "I was on the comp plan and by having that tool helps you to understand what needs are and where your money needs to go. What did you fund and how was that going to be beneficial to your community and what do they want? If you don't know, you might throw up some money here and say, yeah, oh yeah, everybody wants it, but then nobody participates. So, with that guidance, that gives you some concrete plans to get that developed. And we have tons of stuff to honor."

Duszynski asked the council to have anything else they would like to add. Daugherty stated that there are minimum plan requirements from OCRA, HWC can always add more. Caudill said "I would just reiterate that this is the roadmap. We want to make things better. When looking at the how, we use this as our map."

Duszynski presented the resolution. This resolution gives permission to submit the application, and it states that \$5,000 will be raised from CEDIT funds. Motion to approve the Resolution for

approval of submission and matching funds was made by Russ Goodman (James Garman second) passed with all in favor.

The hearing closed at 6:19 pm.

Caudill did roll call and the pledge was recited.

Communication from the President: None

Communication from Town Manager:

The town is currently accepting applications for the Citizen Academy and will launch in April. The program is aimed at helping residents better understand how local government works. The program consists of eight two-hour sessions. In the first session, participants will learn how the Town Council makes decisions and how the budget is managed, including how tax dollars are allocated. Additionally, they will visit various departments to understand how they operate.

A joint Redevelopment and Town Council meeting will be on Thursday at 280 N Wayne Street.

Hometown hero banners will be ordered this week and will go up from Memorial Day to Veterans Day. Banners will be hung for 2 seasons then returned to their owners.

Howard stated that she looked into a defibrillator grant, but United Way does not offer that for municipalities.

The town is going to start highlighting employees on the website.

Communication from The Cler Treasurer:

Duszynski explained that her email was hacked, she informed IT, and they went into the system and corrected the issue.

Duszynski reviewed the fund report. She stated that she met with Hjelm and Howard and appropriated Water & Sewer. Once those are entered the updated reports will be available.

Communication from Boards and Committees:

Duszynski stated Main Street needs committee members. There are 3 committees that need members: Design, Economic Vitality, and Promotion. Committees are a perfect way for people to get involved in one area if they feel they don't have a lot of time.

Approval of Minutes and Claims and Adjustments:

Minutes from January 8th reviewed. Motion to approve made by Garman (Goodman) passed.

Minutes from January 14th reviewed. Corrections reviewed. Motion to approve as amended made by Goodman (Garman) passed.

Minutes from January 30th reviewed. Corrections reviewed. Motion to approve as amended made by Surber (Iddings) passed. Caudill Abstained.

Claims reviewed. Motion to approve made by Goodman (Iddings) passed. Indiana Section, AWWA voucher 10599 needs to be voided as it is duplicate.

Adjustments reviewed. Motion to approve made by Goodman (Garman) passed.

New Business:

1. **Midwestern:** Mark Sullivan gave an update on the progress. They held a construction meeting, and the project is making good headway and will be better when the weather breaks. Sullivan reviewed pay claims. James J. Jackson App No 6 for \$33,250, API App No 2 for \$274,760.90 will be paid from SRF. Engineering \$31,387 will be paid from USDA. SRF holds 5% retainage until the end of the project. There will be a punch list and once it is verified funds will be released. Caudill asked if the project was on track. Sullivan confirmed and will update IDEM on the progress. Howard stated that USDA has forms that needed to be updated. \$625,000 was paid prior to loan. Alex Nott, USDA advised the town should take the payout reimbursement. If the funds are not used the town could lose grant money. The loan money is expended first before the grant. Pease wanted to express concern over the cut internet cable and being without internet. A neighbor of hers is elderly. She wears a necklace with a button. If she experiences a medical issue, she presses that button. Internet is required for the button to work. That's her lifeline in case of an emergency. When the internet cable was cut, she was without internet. Thankfully, the lady was okay during the outage, but Pease wanted to ensure that council was aware of the problem. Motion to approve made by Goodman (Iddings) passed.
2. **Reserve Officer:** Oberholtzer stated in January the council approved Elzy as a Part Time officer. He stated that the academy reviewed his credentials, and they do not recognize his time at the county as a confinement officer. He will need to remain a reserve. Drew Aguirres started with Fort Wayne Police Department and would like to remain a reserve. Oberholtzer will confirm he is able to do that.
3. **Garbage Contract:** Duszynski reviewed the extension from Washler. To extend the contract it would raise user rates to \$12.92 for trash and \$6.13 for recycling. The Town would have to absorb half the cost of the spring clean-up if they did the 6-month extension which would total \$9484.80. If the Town did a 1-year extension they would not have to absorb the cost of the spring clean-up. Duszynski explained that the cost for the spring clean-up is built into the user rates, so if the Town is only charging for half the year, they would have to pay the other half upfront. Caudill noted that the contract was up in December and now the council is forced to decide so that the citizens continue to receive trash collections. He asked Duszynski to implement a contract management system so that the Town would not be put into this position again. Motion to extend the current contract for 1 year was made by Surber (Garman) passed.
4. **A&Z on Call Contract:** Howard reviewed A&Z renewal contract. It is not to exceed \$50,000.00 over 2 years. It is used a lot for stormwater and street engineering. In 2023 and 2024 the Town didn't spend the full amount. Kruse reviewed. Garman noted the

dates needed updated. Motion to approve as amended was made by Goodman (Garman) passed.

5. **Parental Leave:** Duszynski reviewed. The Town currently only offers short-term disability compensation. FMLA is up to 12 weeks unpaid, which just ensures that the employee will not be terminated from their position. She presented a plan that was like the one in Zionsville. The policy would provide STD and supplement the employees' wages up to 100% of their pay. She stated that this number could be changed. It would also provide 2 weeks of paid parental leave. Parental leave would be available to birth mothers, fathers, and individuals who are adopting or fostering. Surber noted that the way it is written the mother could use both the STD and the parental leave. He stated that he did not feel that they should be able to be stacked. Caudill agreed and 2 weeks for parental leave could negatively impact departments if multiple people are off work for that long. He asked Duszynski to confirm the amount of compensation employees receive for STD. Caudill would like to cut parental leave and only offer STD and supplement the employee wages to be full pay. Duszynski will reach out to other municipalities in DeKalb to compare what they offer.
6. **Disposal of Property:** Garman wanted to confirm drives were taken out and configurations removed from routers. Oberholtzer will have a company pick up the computers at the Marshal Department. Duszynski stated that normally the IT company takes the items for the Town Hall but since this is such a large number they will not, she will reach out to the company Oberholtzer is using for picking up as well. Motion to approve list of property for disposal was made by Garman (Goodman) passed.
7. **DeKalb County Chamber:** Tracy Bell is now the director of the Chamber. She reached out to renew our membership it is \$1,100.00 per year. The town saves \$11,521.44 per year on health insurance. Bell will come next month to do a presentation. Tabled.

Floor:

Heimach Center will come in March or April.

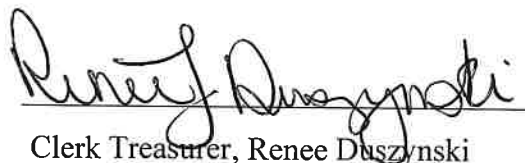
Other:

I, Renee Duszynski, the duly qualified Clerk Treasurer, do hereby certify that the above and foregoing is a true and exact excerpt of minutes of the meeting of the Waterloo Town Council, Waterloo, Indiana, at which a quorum was in attendance and acting throughout, and held February 11, 2025, and, as such appears in the official minutes of said Waterloo Town Council, in my custody.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:41 p.m.



President, Josh Caudill



Clerk Treasurer, Renee Duszynski