

MINUTES OF THE WORK SESSION MEETING OF INDIANA BOROUGH COUNCIL
HELD TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 2022, AT 7:00 PM, IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER OF
THE MUNICIPAL BUILDING.

PRESENT: President Broad, Presiding: Council members Collazzo, DeBuyser, Ford, Herring, Kratsa, Lancaster, Newell, Smith, Steelman, Warnock; Mayor Simmons; Chief of Police Schawl; Manager Sipos; Communications & Grants Coordinator Mudry; Solicitor Dougherty, Pat Cloonan, Indiana Gazette; Josh Widdowson, Renda Broadcasting; members of UWUA 580 and nine (9) members of the public.

President Broad called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

There was no roll call taken.

There were no additions or changes to the agenda.

The following occurred during Public Comment:

- Tammy Curry, resident of 30 McLain Road, spoke to Council regarding a proposed ordinance to decriminalize marijuana in the borough.

There was no Executive Session.

The following action occurred during Presentation:

- Chief Schawl opened his presentation with remarks of gratitude for retired officer Jenny Lenhart for her years of service to the community.
- Schawl highlighted letters from the community and awards for officers in the review.
- Schawl also reviewed the statistics from years 2019 through 2021 in Indiana Borough. Schawl remarked figures from 2021 are more similar to 2019 than 2020 due to the nature of the pandemic and how events unfolded.
- Officer Hoag from the department spoke regarding the Comfort Dog program while K9 Axel greeted various attendees of the meeting. Hoag remarked the program has been well-received by the community, especially in school zones and by victims of crime.
- DeBuyser asked Schawl how Council can help with regards to instances of overdose and drug-related calls for service. Schawl thanked DeBuyser for the question and remarked he'd like to gather documents and prepare a more formal answer at a later date.

The following occurred during Committee Reports / Council Action Items:

- DeBuyser inquired if the Public Works Committee compiles data regarding weather-related events. Smith and Schawl responded there are some means of communication in certain instances, but routinely there is not much data keeping on the topic.

The following occurred during Manager Sipos' Report:

- Sipos highlighted the change in agendas and why there are a more than usual number of topics under New Business. Sipos remarked this is due to recent changes in the Sunshine Act.
- Sipos was officially appointed as a Borough representative at the last Indiana County Solid Waste Authority meeting.
- Mudry updated the website to include minutes from Committee meeting from 2019 onward.

The following occurred during Chief Schawl's Report:

- Schawl thanked the Council for continuing to let him serve the community as Police Chief.

The following occurred during Solicitor Dougherty's Report:

- Dougherty is continuing to work on property issues with staff
- Dougherty is continuing to work with the County on language regarding LERTA.
- Dougherty elaborated on the changes in the agenda as they relate to the Sunshine Act. A conversation was had by Council as to what exactly needs to be put on the agendas to be able to deliberate during meetings.
- Ford asked for clarity regarding deliberation and official action. Mudry responded that the language of the bill amending Sunshine Act states that any matter that "will be or may be the subject of deliberation or official action" should be included on the agenda.
- Dougherty stated the Council can also vote at the beginning of meetings to add items to the agenda with a simple majority. Dougherty further elaborated that matters can be referred to committees without requiring said matters to be placed on the agenda beforehand.

The following occurred during President Broad's Report:

- Broad read aloud a letter sent to Borough Council from Indiana County's District Attorney.
- Collazzo stated she spoke with multiple persons in various professions to assess their initial feelings on the decriminalization of marijuana. Collazo remarked there is a lot of genuine interest and questions and concerns regarding the matter.

- Council deliberated the process of gathering public input and how to discuss the proposed ordinance most effectively. Council decided to include the subject as a Discussion Item at the March 2022 Work Session meeting and to invite the District Attorney to the meeting as well.

The following occurred during Mayor Simmons' Report:

- Simmons and Schawl met with White Township staff and State Representative Struzzi.

The following occurred during Old Business:

- Sipos stated the topic of municipal reapportionment will be undertaken by the Administration Committee.
- Ford remarked that the details are being finalized regarding LERTA and an ordinance will be brought in front of full Council soon.
- Sipos announced that materials are being included in the agendas for Committees in February to help discuss American Rescue Plan funding ideas.
- Dunkin Donuts updates will be discussed at Public Works and Administration Committee meetings in February.
- Collazzo further clarified why she was out gauging community feedback of a proposal to decriminalize marijuana in the borough prior to the meeting.

The following occurred during New Business:

- DeBuyser inquired if there is any recognition from the Council when an officer retires after so many years. Schawl remarked a ceremony will take place at Public Safety and Councilmembers are always welcomed.
- A conversation was had regarding potential future letters from Council when an employee retires after so many years.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:11 PM, upon a motion by Newell.

A recording of the full meeting can be viewed and downloaded by clicking the link below:

https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/KG9hfxRp7Wua28VXRcHPhW8_jrwIK_yGuuflumX4YWhh90MKxInx7cJi6BpHhgJN.FWem4cZWfXcu7HYq