Town of Winona Lake
Council Meeting Minutes
January 20, 2026

The Town Council of Winona Lake, Indiana met in a regular session on January 20, 2026, in the Town Hall at 6:00 p.m.

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT: Ashley McGinnis, Austin Reynolds, Jim Lancaster, Jason Zaugg, and Barry Andrew

ABSENT: None

OTHERS: Clerk-Treasurer Heather James, Town Manager Pam Howard, Parks Director Holly Hummitch, Street Superintendent Shane Parrett, Police Department Joe Hawn and Attorney Adam Turner

Council Appointments
Ashley opened the floor for nominations for council president and vice president. Barry nominated Ashley for president and Austin for vice president. Jason seconded the nominations. Hearing no further nominations, Ashley closed the floor. Barry motioned to approve the nominations. Jason seconded. With a vote of 5 ayes, and 0 nays, the motion carried.

OPENING: At 6:05 p.m. Ashley opened the meeting. She said prayer and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Resolution 2026-01-03 Retiring K9 Grimm
Marshall Hawn presented a plaque to K-9 Officer Grimm and Officer Leeper. Hawn also read the statics from June 5, 2020, to January 1, 2026, that Grimm worked for the town. Hawn thanked Officers Leeper and Grimm for their service. Jim motioned to approve the resolution. Jason seconded. With a vote of 5 ayes, and 0 nays the motion carried.

Public Comment on Agenda Items
Ashley opened the floor for comments on agenda items. Hearing none she closed the floor

Approval of Minutes
Heather presented the minutes from October 28, 2025, and November 18, 2025, meetings. Jim motioned to approve. Barry seconded. With a vote of 5 ayes, and 0 nays, the motion carried.

Approval of Claims
Heather presented the claims for approval. Austin motioned to approve. Jason seconded. With a vote of 5 ayes, and 0 nays, the motion carried.

"Winona Happenings"
January 31st 7:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m. Pajama Party in the Village
February 13th 5:00 p.m.-9:00 p.m. Gallentine at MSP Ice Rink- "Swifty Skate"

February 14th 12:00 p.m.- 9:00 p.m. Valentine at MSP Ice Rink BOGO half off
February 14th 12:00 p.m.-3:00p.m. Farmers Market at Winona

Resolution 2026-01-01 Transfer of Appropriations
Heather presented Transfer of Appropriations. She explained it was part of the end of year process. The resolution transfers appropriations within a fund to other appropriations in the same fund. Austin motioned to approve. Jim seconded. With a vote of 5 ayes, and 0 nays the motion carried.

Resolution 2026-01-02 Approving and Adopting Rental Agreement for Pier Spaces
This resolution updated the fees for pier rental spaces along the canal. The previous 2019 ordinance did not list the fees. The fee was updated in the past few years, but the ordinance did not reflect the updated fees. Jim motioned to approve. Jason seconded. With a vote of 5 ayes, and 0 nays the motion carried.

Appointments
Boards and Commissions appointments for the year were held.

Park Board

Joe Collins was appointed to the Park Board. He will finish Meghan Smith's term. Jim asked if this appointment fills the Park Board. Ashley said they are working and updating all boards and commissions. She is hoping to have something next month. Barry motioned to approve. Jason seconded. With a vote of 5 ayes, and 0 nays the motion carried.

Barry asked if the council needs to approve Denny Duncan as the school board member. Barry motioned to accept the school board appointment of Denny Duncan. Jason seconded. With a vote of 5 ayes, and 0 nays the motion carried.

Art Commission

Rick Swaim, Al Disbro, Janet Ludwig, Retha Hicks, and Terry White were all appointed to the Art Commission. This is a one-year term. All were renewed for another year. Jim motioned to approve. Barry seconded. With a vote of 5 ayes, and 0 nays the motion carried.

Council Appointments to town/county boards: Discussion was held on the various boards and committees and those willing to serve on each one.

KEDCO

Jim Lancaster served the past 2 years on KEDCO. The council discussed having Jim serve on the board again this year. Jason motioned to approve. Austin seconded. With a vote of 5 ayes, and 0 nays the motion carried.

Solid Waste Management District

Ashley McGinnis has served on the Solid Waste Management District for the past few years. She was not interested in serving again. Barry was willing to serve this year. Jason motioned to approve. Jim seconded. With a vote of 5 ayes and 0 nays the motion carried.

Miller Sunset Pavilion Committee

Austin Reynolds, Ashely McGinnis, and Diane Wulliman will serve of the Miller Sunset Pavilion Committee. Diane will be the Clerk-Treasurer designee. Barry motioned to approve. Jason seconded. With a vote of 5 ayes and 0 nays the motion carried.

Budget Committee

Jim Lancster and Barry Andrew will serve on the Budget Committee. Jason motioned to approve. Austin seconded. With a vote of 5 ayes and 0 nays the motion carried.

Ordinance Review Committee

Discussion was held that this committee was not active and should be considered for abolishment. Jim motioned to abolish the Ordinance Review Committee. Barry seconded. With a vote of 5 ayes and 0 nays the motion carried.

KCCRVC Grant

Brittany would like to apply for the KCCRVC Grant but has asked the Kosciusko County Community Foundation to house the money. She would like to apply for $500 to advertise The Farmers Market. It will cost $20.00 for the Foundation to house the money which would be taken out of the grant money. Barry motioned to approve to apply for the grant and for the Kosciusko County Community Foundation to house the money. Jim seconded. With a vote of 5 ayes and 0 nays the motion carried.

Farmers Market Application

The MSP Committee approved the dates for the market and other fees to stay the same. A fee was added to the Market application for electricity use. Jason motioned to approve. Jim seconded. With a vote of 5 ayes and 0 nays the motion carried.

Police Department Cars

Marshall Hawn would like to purchase two new vehicles, 2026 Durangos, at the price of $41,063.70 each. He said he likes to purchase local and got the state bid for these vehicles. Discussion was held on where the revenue for these cars would come from. Also discussed was the price of the new cars, upfits and striping for both. Joe said the insurance company will be reimbursing $24,4731.21 for the accident he had in October. The check has not been received yet. The reimbursement will be used to help purchase new vehicles, upfits, and striping. The town will receive $12,000 trade-in for Leeper's truck. The uplift for one Durango will cost more due to a cage being installed. The remaining money will come from the CCD Fund. After the purchase of both vehicles, upfits for both, and striping there will be $4,200.97 left in the (CCD) fund. Austin motioned to approve the purchase of two new vehicles and the trade in of the truck. Jim seconded. With a vote of 5 ayes and 0 nays the motion carried.

Baker Tilly Agreement

Heather presented the agreement with Baker Tilly. Heather explained this agreement would allow her to work with them if needed for projects like AFR and budget. Barry motioned to approve. Jason seconded. With a vote of 5 ayes and 0 nays the motion carried.

VS Engineering Contract

In November Pam requested SOQs for a Town Engineer. Six engineering firms applied. Mike, Shane, and Pam reviewed the SOQs and then chose three firms to interview. They recommended VS Engineering. Ashley asked why VS Engineering. Pam shared that VS will be one point of contact for storm, wastewater, and street as they handle all three areas. Pam also shared the town currently has no design standards for building new houses and this is something VS can help with. Barry asked if the work with Wessler and A&Z Engineering will continue for the trails and roundabout. Barry was told that yes this would continue. Barry also thanked Mike, Pam, and Shane for their work in selecting the new engineering firm. Jim motioned to approve. Barry seconded. With a vote of 5 ayes and 0 nays the motion carried.

Street Department Salt Spreader and V Blade
The Street Department needs to purchase a new Salt Spreader and V Blade for the 2020 truck. Shane has been spending a lot of money on repairs for the current salt spreader and blade on the truck currently. It will cost $26,324.11 to purchase both pieces. The money will come from the MVH Equipment fund. We will only have $20,000 left after purchasing the Skid Steer. Austin asked for the benefit of the V blade. Shane said it is better for snow removal. Barry motioned to purchase the salt spreader and V blade. Jason seconded. With a vote of 5 ayes and 0 nays the motion carried.

Nepotism
Ashley explained the nepotism policy and that each council member and Clerk-Treasurer would sign the nepotism form after the meeting.

Skid Steer Purchase
Discussion was held regarding the purchase or lease of a new Skid Steer. Expense will be taken out of multiple funds from Wastewater, Storm, and MVH. Discussion was held on purchasing from Fort Wayne Bobcat. The Skid Steer would be 1-year-old machine at a cost of $3,500 annually which includes a track machine. If the town goes over in hours will be $25 per hour. Shane and Pam discussed the hours of usage. Jim motioned to approve the purchase agreement. Barry seconded. With a vote of 5 ayes and 0 nays the motion carried.

Amendment to Employee Handbook
The following amendments were discussed:
The Police Department Administrative Assistant was added to the org chart.
Policy 301 – Removed bullet point for training and professional development
Policy 311 – "County Prosecutor" was added
Policy 516 – "without prior consent" was added
Policy 702 – All references to random testing was removed
Policy 704 - Wording regarding calling in for an absence was not consistent. Change to two hours prior to shirt. Also updated in sick leave benefits policy.
Final paragraph in PTO policies that referred to eight-hours to "times the number of hours the employee was scheduled to work in their shift."

Jim motioned to approve the handbook amendments. Austin seconded. With a vote of 5 ayes and 0 nays the motion carried.

Amendment to Historical SOP
The new historical time policy states that at separation an employee would get 50% of their historical time. The old policy stated that an employee would be paid 50% of their (banked PTO) historical time if they had 10 years or more of service at separation. The question was asked what date defines the 10 years of service. Discussion was held whether it would be

December 31, 2025, the end date of the previous handbook or December 31, 2028, the date when the historical time off policy ends. It was also discussed that after the three-year use period is up the payout would happen then. Jim motioned to approve of the change in language as related to historical policy that upon separation 50% will be paid out IF the employee has 10 years of service at the time of separation. Austin seconded. With 5 ayes and 0 nays the motion carried.

Donations
Kip Shuter (Kosciusko Emergency Management Agency) - Donated two weather radios for the park to use.
Masons and Paddock Springs - Donated bingo prizes and supplies for the first quarter of 2026.
Jim motioned to approve the donations. Barry seconded. With a vote of 5 ayes and 0 nays the motion carried.

Supervisor Reports

Street Department: Shane shared they are working on repairs, snow removal, and oil changes in police cars, and picking up brush. Barry asked what triggers snow removal. Shane answered a combination of the forecast and being called out by the Police Department.

Park Department: Holly nothing additional to report.

Police Department: Joe shared he is working with Mike Wilson on street signs.

Ashley shared that Mike Wilson is doing a great job. Mike said there is a good relationship with contractors and renters. He completed 67 inspections in December. He said the team on this side of the building is doing a good job and great to work with.
Heather said Mike is doing a great job and she has seen a lot of activity in the front office related to the work he's doing.

Town Attorney: Adam commented that Town Hall has a great team and is a pleasure to work with.

Discussion was held on the terms of the Art Commission. Adam confirmed they were 4-year terms. Jason motioned to approve the terms for Art Commission. Jim seconded. With a vote of 5 ayes and 0 nays the motion carried.

Floor Topics
Mike Cox questioned why Kevin Gellbaugh was not on the list of appointments. Ashley replied that council had already appointed Kevin in the December meeting.

Kevin Gellbaugh was absent, so Mike Cox reported for the Fire Department. In December they had 12 runs, 1 training, 2 special events, and 4 meetings totaling 354 man hours for the month.

Jon Brenneman shared that one year ago wastewater pumps froze, and sewage went into his crawl space. Jon Brenneman said Craig told him to bill the town for a repair company to clean up the crawl space area. Brenneman said he wanted to do the clean-up himself, and the town has purchased some clean-up supplies. Craig told Jon to keep track of man hours and submit them to the town. Jon gave information to Pam, and she told Jon to come to council to request reimbursement. Jon said the work is not completed yet he wants to add pea gravel, but the space is "sanitary". He is seeking reimbursement for approximately $1,100. Council members said they would consider the request.

Adjournment: At 7:15 meeting was adjourned.

Ashley McGinnis, President

Heather James, Clerk-Treasurer

*This is a summary of the meeting.