

**TOWN OF WAYNETOWN
TOWN COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
JANUARY 15, 2025**

ROBERT COX**Call to Order**

Bob called the meeting to order at 6:30 P.M.

Prayer

Bob said the prayer.

Pledge

The Pledge of Allegiance was said.

Roll Call

Bob Cox, Randy Phillips, Doug Harris and Barry Lewis were present. Aaron Benghe was not present. David Peebles, Town Attorney, was present.

Room Capacity

Bob said the Community Room holds 30 people and because of the large number of people attending, due to the Land Use Study, if anyone else shows up they will have to go to the hallway or leave.

2025 Town Council Election**Vote for Town Council President & Vote for Town Council Vice President**

Barry made a motion Bob stay on as President. Doug seconded. Motion passed 4-0.

Randy made a motion Barry stay on Vice President. Doug seconded. Motion passed 4-0.

BOB COX - APPROVE CONSENT AGENDA**CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS**

- A. December 11, 2024 - Regular Town Council Meeting Minutes
- B. December 23, 2024 - Special Town Council Meeting Minutes
- C. Claims Paid Prior to Town Council Meeting
- D. Claims to be Paid
- E. Payroll Reports for December 2024
- F. Clerk-Treasurer Financial Reports - November Closed & December Not Closed
- G. Clerk-Treasurer Utility Report for December 2024
- H. Utility Superintendent Report for December 2024
- I. Town Marshal Reports for December 2024 & Yearly Reports for 2024

Barry made a motion to pass the Consent Agenda as presented. Doug seconded. Motion passed 4-0.

CITIZEN COMMENTS**WCI Donation for Christmas in the Park - Last Year \$3,000 for Displays (Moved from Council New Business to here)**

Steve Proctor said the Town has been wonderful in supporting this Festival. Darren Forman said Santa is at the park at different times, depending on the weather, during the event. The Friday before Christmas there was 250 cars, Saturday over 400 cars and Sunday around 300 cars. Darren gave a shoutout to all the other donors and volunteers that made this event possible. Darren commented that people really like the displays are not only municipal but businesses and families as well. Phil Pirtle said we had people coming from all over and mentioned Ft. Wayne, Zionsville and Illinois. Darren said a lot of people heard about Christmas in the Park on the Crawfordsville Radio Station and Steve said the Radio Station donates \$600 every year. Steve said if WCI orders before Valentines Day they get 40% off. Bob said last year the new display was the 12 days of Christmas. Darren said the Committee will be

meeting soon to decide what to purchase for this year.

Randy made a motion to give WCI \$3,000 from the Promotion Funds for Christmas in the Park. Doug seconded. Motion passed 4-0.

Phil Pirtle - Street Fair

Phil said the Street Fair will be Saturday 5-17-2025 from 9 AM to 6 PM and requested Vine Street be shut down from Washington Street to Walnut Street on Friday 5-16-2025.

Barry made a motion allowing the Street Fair and closing Vine Street. Doug seconded. Motion passed 4-0.

Phil Pirtle - Fire Department Fundraiser

Phil requested to use the Park for free for a Fire Department Fundraiser on Saturday 8-23-2025. Phil mentioned a band and a mountain oyster/rabbit fry.

Barry made a motion allowing the Fire Department to use the Park for Free on 8-23-2025. Randy seconded. Motion passed 4-0.

Phil Pirtle - Merchants Fish Fry

Phil said the Fish Fry will be the 2nd weekend in September and they will need the Park from September 8th through September 14th. Bob asked Phil if the new Carnival was booked and Phil said yes.

Doug made a motion allowing the Merchants to use the Park for the Fish Fry from September 8th through September 14th. Barry seconded. Motion passed 4-0.

Phil Pirtle - Merchants Fish Fry Cooler Truck Issues

Phil said the Merchants is having problems with the cooler truck and they have to keep putting belts on it. Phil said Scott Ferling moved the cooler truck to the sewer plant but said he would not move it again. Phil wanted to know if the Town could come up with some money to put a cooler by the kitchen. Bob asked Phil if he had an estimate and Phil said no. Bob said this would be a permanent cooler put on cement outside the kitchen area. Sandy asked Phil if he would look into renting a truck for a few days and Phil said the cost would be \$1,200 a week.

Waynetown Interchange Corridor - Land Use Study

Bob said he knows there are people here who are interested in the Waynetown Interchange Corridor Project with the Rural Development Commission. Bob said each person will have 3 minutes to speak and then we will move on. Bob said before you talk please state your name and address. Bob asked how many people here tonight do not live in Waynetown or Wayne Township and there were a few. Bob said most people in attendance live in Wayne Township and not Waynetown.

Carrie Runyon - 5295 N SR 25, Waynetown - Just outside the desired land use study

Carrie said she is confused on how there can be a survey for development at Exit 25 if all the land around Exit 25 is privately owned and what people might want there is irrelevant if that land is not for public development or for sale. Carrie said this is a quote from a well-respected Waynetown Citizen who does not own land in the desired land use study area.

Carrie said in the beginning from when they were invited with Bob's Facebook post to the Land Use Study Meeting they had some questions. 1. Why weren't they asked. 2. Why weren't we notified. 3. Who is on the steering committee. 4. Whose idea was this. 5. How much money is being spent on this study.

Carrie said they have been able to get a few of the answers. Carrie said she will not be rude and tell everyone's name who is on the steering committee. Bob said recently there were two more people added so he was not sure if Carrie had the most current list. Carrie said from the Rural Development Committee Minutes from July 23, 2024, in the heading under Other Business, Mr. Dickerson stated that

recently a meeting was held with himself, Mr. Frey, Mayor Barton, Waynetown Town Councilmen Barry Lewis and Bob Cox and Attorney Dan Taylor to discuss developing the Waynetown Exit off of I-74. Mr. Dickerson stated that he approached Chris Hamm from HWC to ask him for recommendations on the next steps for this type of potential development. Mr. Hamm recommended the RDC create a TIF District for the one-mile area to engage a study. Mr. Dickerson stated that WHC will be presenting the RDC with a proposal to do an analysis of the one-mile area from Waynetown to I-74, the Town of Waynetown may have to annex the area to encourage local businesses to move to the area. If the Town supports the idea of potential development the project would be a joint with the RDC.

From the meeting minutes of the Montgomery County Redevelopment Commission of Tuesday, September 24, 2024, heading under New Business, HWC agreement to provide services I-74 for SR 25 Interchange Strategic Plan \$84,500. Carrie said these minutes are accessible online.

However, after the meeting on December 12, 2024 (at the Church), it seems apparent that their opinions, the landowners, don't matter so much. They were told they would personally have a meeting with a HWC Representative after the Holidays yet to date no one has reached out to them.

Bob said he would have an open forum question and answer session and even after they contacted Commissioner Frey to urge Bob to do so, they heard nothing.

Carrie said since their land is not and will not be for sale, other people opinions on the future of our land is a moot point. Therefore, at yesterday's RDC meeting (2-11-2024) they respectfully asked the RDC to remove their land from the desired Land Use Study and they are asking the Town Council to do so as well. In addition, you may have seen they are asking the Community and anyone who supports property rights, anyone who believes in the preservation of small towns, anyone who believes in government transparency to sign their petition online. In less than 24 hours they had overwhelming support and thousands of signatures, so if your focus was to focus attention on our little Town then congratulations you have done so.

Carrie said she is not a Town Board Resident so I cannot add things to the Agenda but for the next meeting she would urge that you have a place where more than 30 people can meet at one time.

Bob thanked Carrie for her comments. Bob said the RDC told him about their meeting. Bob told Carrie she is missing one meeting in there and Carrie said there are more meetings she just talked about two of them. Bob mentioned out of the blue the RDC invited Bob and Barry to meet to see if they would be interested and said Chris Hamm was not contacted until after that meeting. Bob said there was another meeting where the RDC asked for all five Town Council Members to be there to discuss the project and the RDC received 100% support from all five Town Council Members. Bob said there is only two people in the room that have been to all of the meetings and that is him and Barry.

Bob said some of the posts he has read on Facebook are not true. Bob has never heard the word land grab be used at these meetings. Bob asked what the Town could gain by taking farmland from someone. Bob said some of the acquisitions and some of the personal attacks on him and Barry are almost liable. Bob said he thinks the truth got twisted and got everyone in a frenzy. Bob said Chris Hamm said several times at the meeting that no one was going to make you sell your property.

Carrie told Bob a lot of these questions could have been answered at the open forum which did not happen. Bob said Chris Hamm said many times before we went up and put the stickers on the boards that if the owner would ever sell what would you like to see there. Bob said no one in Waynetown is going to tell the Runyons they have to sell. Bob said the people on the East Side are not wanting to sell but the people on the West Side (4 landowners) are interested in what the study would say.

Bob mentioned the Town has never done anything sneaky and Carrie asked Bob why he did not tell them about the study. Bob said he had asked Chris Hamm if he was going to call the landowners before the public meeting. Carrie said some landowners knew about it. Bob said he was going by Chris's instructions, and the reason they knew about it was because they were asked to be put on the steering

committee. Carrie suggested, in the future, you might talk to members of the Montgomery County Commissioners because all of those that they have gone to individually said this was done exactly the wrong way. Bob said that is right and he agrees that it was done the wrong way and why he questioned Chris Hamm about it more than once. Bob said they have been told time and time again at every one of the meetings that the East Side is not interested doing anything.

Bob said they all thought the Land Use Study was just going to be from the solar park to the Interstate and had no idea it would include Phil's property on the other side of the Interstate. Bob said the Town did not know the contract was signed until 3 or 4 weeks after the fact.

Bob did apologize for not telling the landowners about the study and said he was following instructions and said the best thing we can do now is move on. Carrie asked when the next meeting will be and Bob said Chris contacted him last night and said they will be reaching out to get meetings set with property owners in the area over the next couple of weeks. Bob said Chris asked him if he wanted to sit in on the meetings or would it be okay if HWC just did it and Bob said he did not care. Bob asked Carrie if she wanted him at their meeting and Carrie said no. Also, the Eads and Wilkersons do not want Bob at their meeting. Bob told Nancy Sennett to let him know if she wanted him at their meeting.

Doug said when he went to the very first meeting he told everyone that the East Side of the Road was off and the Runyons are in bad health and we need to leave that alone, it is off and now is not the time to think about the East Side of Road.

Carrie thanked Doug and Bob for their opinions and realizing they are not going to sell and asked if they are going to talk to the RDC to remove their land from the Land Use Study. Bob said the Town Council has no authority to say that and said the RDC is paying to the Land Use Study. Bob said this is what he knows and hopes this clears things up on how things went. Bob said he wishes HWC would have contacted them before the meeting and Carrie said it would have been a whole different outcome on how they feel they have been treated and Bob said he would agree.

Karen Fruits said when she talked to three different people yesterday at the RDC they all acted totally unaware about all of this. Karen said Mr. Booth stayed after and talked to her. Carrie said they were shocked that they were not supportive of the Land Use Study because they heard that Waynetown was supportive of it. Carrie asked how they can be lumped into Waynetown when they are not part of Waynetown. Bob said he does not know why they would be shocked because it has been told many times that you were not in favor of this. Carrie said she does not think they understand the depth of how this impacts them and it is not just vacant land and that you are talking about it is their family homes, grain bins, cattle facilities, feed lot, seed storage, calving facilities, all of it. Bob said you do agree that it is all a moot point if you do not sell and Carrie said but it is aggravating. Carrie mentioned Waynetown having to annex to encourage local businesses. Barry said in the State of Indiana it is voluntary annexation. Carrie asked about involuntary annexation and Bob said that would be for a public service.

David Peebles was asked to explain. Dave said if the Town wanted to put in something like a police station then yes the Town can take your property, which is eminent domain. However, there is really no more involuntary annexation. Karen asked what control the County has over them and David said a lot because you are in the County and the Town has none since you are not in Waynetown.

David explained that anyone, including him, could pay for a land use study to find out what is the best use of your property is. Bob explained the money the County is using to pay for the Land Use Study came from \$500,000 in investment interest the County chose to use for economic development in Montgomery County outside the Nucor Corridor.

Phil Pirtle said this mess all started when HWC did not contact the landowners about the Land Use Study prior to having a public meeting about it and Bob agreed. Phil said the since the contract was signed the Land Use Study is going to happen and Bob said he does not know if they have a provision to get out of it or not.

Karen asked if they could get their land off the study and Bob told her that is a question for the RDC because they are paying to the Land Use Study. Bob said it is his understanding the RDC was asked about this yesterday and Carrie said yes and they were told they would not be responding to their questions.

Randy said when he went to the meeting the first words out of his mouth were, I am only going to do what the people in Waynetown want and that is why he got on the Town Board.

Keith Fruits said it looks like they could have saved \$84,000 by doing some preliminary work. Bob said there is still going to be value in the Land Use Study, it will go on a shelf until someone shows an interest in selling their property.

Bob said 30 years ago sitting on the Town Council development at the I-74 exit was talked about so this is not a new idea. Bob said about 20 years ago he talked to Henthorn, one of the property owners, and he told Bob if you have anyone that wants to do economic development he would be interested.

Doug said it is hard for some people, including him, to fathom the area being fully developed.

Bob asked if anyone knew that Waynetown was included in Boone County's Water Study. That study went from the mouth of the Wabash River down to Fountain County.

Bob mentioned that Whitestown was grabbing all the land they could get and there was not law to stop them and Senator Phil Boots wrote the first bill to stop involuntary annexation.

Property can only be annexed if it is contiguous.

Bob said running utilities over or under an Interstate is almost impossible unless you have a lot of money.

Bob said Bobby Campbell needed Phase-3 Electric and Tipmont can only supply single phase so Tipmont said Waynetown can have that service area. Bob said the Town paid for new electric poles on SR 25.

Karen said the Town is not taking any responsibility for any of this and Bob said the Town Council Members 100% back the RDC do the Land Use Study.

Carrie asked if she could be contacted if the Town was going to talk about the Land Use Study at a future Town Council Meeting. Bob said he would but at this point there is nothing for the Town to talk about because they are waiting on HWC. Bob said in his opinion that nothing has changed since the meeting at the Church.

Several people commented on how disrespectful it was the landowners were not notified and thought Bob should have contacted them.

Bob read a list of all of the Businesses Waynetown had back in the day.

Someone mentioned all of the empty buildings in Waynetown and saw a post on Facebook where people are wanting to buy or rent and the response is the properties are not for sale or rent. The person was told to contract the owner of the properties.

Someone said new development is not going to bring back what the Town had back in the day.

Tye Phillips said he owns two small businesses in Crawfordsville and the reason he would not put them in Waynetown is because no one would support them. Tye said as a community we need to come together and support each other's businesses.

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Someone said Craig Runyon, as a farmer, is probably one of Waynetown's biggest businesses supporters. Craig mentioned all of the businesses that Bob mentioned and said more houses does not generate more business in Town.

Craig said the problem is when he walked into the meeting at the Church as saw his farm up on the screen and did not know anything about it and I am telling you the feeling that ripped through him it just like if he walked into your house and sat at your kitchen table and said what is for supper and then said no I am going to tell you what is for supper. Bob said he had nothing to do with the meeting other than open up the doors.

Bob stopped the comments and told everyone he would let the RDC know about this meeting.

COUNCIL OLD BUSINESS

Holiday Meal

Bob said the Holiday meal is to celebrate our employees and retirees. Bob said the Mustard Seed wants to change \$1,500 for 40 meals and he thinks that it is too many meals and more expensive than the Beef House was last year. Bob said they are going to relook at this and get back with him.

Update on Live Steaming Town Council Meetings by 7-1-2025

Bob said he has contacted Preston Meihls who has a Company that can do this and he will put together a bid for us. Preston also knows Chris from RahmTech, the Towns IT person.

Update on a Different Solution to sharing Internal Data instead of DropBox * Laptop or iPads or ?

Sandy said Aaron was going to take the lead on this and he is not here tonight.

COUNCIL NEW BUSINESS

Posting Town Council Meeting Minutes to Town Website

Bob asked if anyone had a problem with posting the Town Council Meeting Minutes to the Town Website. Bob said the Minutes will not be posted until they are approved so they will always be a month behind. Bob said we will start doing this.

AIM Legislative Dinner - Hyatt Downtown Indy - 2-5-2025

Bob said the AIM Legislative Dinner is in Indy on 2-5-2025 and if anyone wants to go he will help you get registered. Bob said you will sit at a table with your legislators and talk with them. Bob said it is free for AIM Members to attend.

WCI Donation for Christmas in the Park - Last Year \$3,000 for Displays

This was moved to Citizen Comments

Resolution 01-2025 Naming Streets in Tremaine Park - Community Crossings Grant

Bob said they came up with the name Old School Lane at the last meeting. Sandy said the Resolution is not ready and said she needs to get with Mike Davis at the County and Ken Smith who will be writing the Community Crossings Grant and make sure we get the to and from street names correct due to the looping of the street.

AT&T Demand Letter - \$1,535,00 * AT&T Line Hit on North S.R. 25

John said CEL&P was here and an AT&T Line got hit on North S.R. 25. John said he was 36 inches fromUSIC locate marks and the line was hit. Bob said so the locate people were off and John said yes but they are still within tolerance, but when they came back out and relocated after the line was hit, they were right on it. John said his name was on the dig locate. John asked how much is it going to cost the Town to fight the claim.

Barry made a motion to pay AT&T \$1,535.00. Randy seconded. Motion passed 4-0.

COMMENTS FROM DEPARTMENT HEADS & CLERK-TREASURER
John Warren - Utility Superintendent - No Comments

Kyle Proctor - Town Marshal - No Comments

Bob said it is interesting to look at the Annual Police Reports and people do not realize just how much has been done.

Sandy Proctor - Clerk-Treasurer - No Comments

COMMENTS FROM COUNCIL MEMBERS

Barry Lewis - Rate Study

Barry said he has been in contact with Jarrod Hall of Krohn & Associates to do a rate study for our electric. Barry said last year we started off with \$165,000 and ended the year with \$88,000. The electric rates have not increased since 2007. Barry said currently we are losing 3 cents per kilowatt, meaning we are paying more for electricity than we are charging the customer. Barry said the cost of the study rate will be between \$6,000 and \$8,000, depending on the amount of information Sandy can provide. Barry said once the rate study is done they would give the Council a short-term and a long-term plan for raising the electric rates. Barry said he does not expect the rates to double like the water rates did but the rates have to go up.

Doug wanted to clarify that the Town could not apply for a Grant to upgrade our Electric Utility because we are losing money. Barry said he remembers we were not charging enough for our water and we had to raise the rates to apply for a Grant. Sandy said basically with our cash flow no one is going to give you a loan.

Barry said Jarrod does the rate studies for around 45 of the 61 IMPA Communities and mentioned Advance was in a dire situation and now after a couple of years they are back on track.

Doug made a motion allowing Barry to contact Jarrod Hall to get a contract for a rate study for the electric utility for between \$6,000 and \$8,000 and gave permission for Bob to sign the contract. Randy seconded. Motion passed 4-0.

Aron Benghe - Not Present

Doug Harris - No Comments

Randy Phillips - No Comments

Bob Cox - No Comments

ADJOURN

Barry made a motion to adjourn.

The following page is a copy of the sign in sheet.

Bob Cox - Town Council President

Bob Cox 2/12/25

Sandy Proctor - Clerk-Treasurer

Sandy Proctor 2-12-2025

TOWN OF WAYNETOWN
TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
JANUARY 15, 2025

THIS MEETING IS BEING RECORDED

SIGN IN SHEET

Town Council & Clerk-Treasurer

- 1. Bob Co
- 2. Don Amis
- 3. Ben Lee
- 4. Sandy H. [unclear]
- 5.
- 6. Sandy Proctor

Please Sign Your Name

- 7. Kjet
- 8.
- 9. John Adams
- 10. J. Buss
- 11. DAVID PEEBLES
- 12. [unclear]
- 13. J. Phillips
- 14. Eric Runyan
- 15. Angie Runyan
- 16. Rod Webster
- 17. Karen Fruits
- 18. Faith Fruits
- 19. [unclear]
- 20. [unclear]
- 21. [unclear]
- 22. Robin Purie
- 23. Nancy Bennett
- 24. [unclear]
- 25. Drew Runyan
- 26. Angela Sibron
- 27. [unclear]
- 28. [unclear]
- 29. [unclear]
- 30. [unclear]

- Lori Barton
- Grey Legg Young
- [unclear]
- Sarah Kessinger
- Tyler Criswell

- 31. Kyle Campbell
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