

Recent Council Actions

- Appointment of an *ad hoc* committee to study to the pros and cons of building a town hall. This committee had their first meeting in early November and their report was presented to the Council during the November meeting. These reports will be posted on the Town's website on the Administration page.
- Council passed an ordinance establishing a Tree Board, whose members will work with the Council to preserve the health of our trees and resident safety.
- Council discussed and presented for first reading at the December 11 meeting, a tree ordinance governing both the Town's and property owner's roles and responsibilities regarding the care and management of trees on public and private property. Trees impact every property in our Town in one way or another, so in order to understand the issues, positions and policies stated within, everyone is encouraged to read through this ordinance, which was adopted at the February 12 Town Council meeting.
- Mark your calendar for the following Town Council meeting dates for 2024:

| | | | |
|-------------|---------|-------------|-------------|
| January 8 | April 8 | July 8 | October 14 |
| February 12 | May 13 | August 12 | November 11 |
| March 11 | June 10 | September 9 | December 9 |



Our Town Matters

Winter 2024

1st Quarter Meetings

January 8
February 12
March 11
@ 6:00 pm

Trail Creek Town Hall
211 Rainbow Trail

Council Seat and Clerk-Treasurer Elections in 2024

The Council seat held by councilman, Vince Miller, will expire at the end of 2023, as will the term of clerk-treasurer, Susan Tochell. The election for candidates for the two positions will be in November of 2024. Anyone aspiring to step up and serve should begin now to consider their course.

Renew Dog Licenses

Licensing your dog contributes to human and pet safety in our neighborhood. A license renewal form is enclosed.

There Still May Be Snow

Congratulations all for making it through our monster snowstorm back in early January! Now that we've had a reprieve, please recheck your snow stakes, which should be out at the edge of your property by now. Many of them were knocked over in the first round and relocated, and there is

always the possibility of more snow this season.

Also, please refrain from parking any vehicle in the roadway for any duration during a snow event. Our roadways are not wide enough for our snow removal service to maneuver around obstacles in the road.

When shoveling, the snow on your driveway's apron should also be shoveled to the sides of your driveway and not out into the street.

Thank you for your cooperation!

When it snows, you have two choices: shovel or make snow angels.

~ Anonymous

Law Enforcement: Voice Your Choice

A recent discussion at the February 12 Town Council monthly meeting focused on the Town's choices in providing for law enforcement within our community. Longtime residents know that we've had it two ways—the services of a part-time marshal and the services of an outside agency, specifically, the Michigan City Police Department.

Currently we are engaged in a month-to-month contract with Marshal Jason Yagelski, which means that options for a permanent contract with Marshal Yagelski, an alternate marshal, or an agency are open. This being the case, the Council is seeking resident comment as to their preference—if they have one. Please make this known, either by direct contact with a council member or by attending the March 11 meeting. What follows are a few thoughts to consider when deciding which option you consider best for our community.

The first consideration is our needs.

- 1) We need a forceful response to any true emergency.
- 2) We need a strategic response to non-emergency events that disturb the peace and create a sense of vulnerability in residents.
- 3) We need a calculated response to ordinance violations that impact our quality of life by someone having appropriate police powers, who is trained in conflict resolution and who cannot be intimidated by a negative response.

In addition, we **want** a trained, compassionate response to domestic and mental health issues.

As discerned by the Council, these are the options we have for meeting those needs:

Option 1: Outside agency

Pros

- Minimal direct supervisory oversight is required, since that all happens on the agency side. In this scenario, the agency meets our first two needs by responding to calls for service—911 or non-emergency.
- The agency's officers come fully equipped—a vehicle, communication tools, clothing, etc., are all provided for by the agency.
- Required training is provided by the agency.

Cons

In this scenario, the benefit of not requiring supervisory oversight also means having minimal supervisory control, meaning that the Town is unable to set priorities or direct officer's activities. As such, our community's needs are subservient to the greater population served by the agency, which could include commercial entities requiring more police presence.

In addition, due to jurisdiction issues, any other agency will not enforce our Town's ordinances, thus necessitating separate personnel for that purpose.

Finally, agency costs range from \$45,000 to \$60,000 per year.

Option 2: Town marshal

Pros

In this scenario, Town officials have supervisory control and are able to set community policing priorities that are unique to our circumstances.

In addition to meeting our first two needs by ensuring a response to calls for service—911 or non-emergency—a Town marshal is able to focus on bespoke prevention measures.

A Town marshal is able to enforce our ordinances.

The annual cost is somewhat less.

Cons

Having a marshal is a personnel commitment that requires supervisory oversight, regulatory knowledge and insurance, thus placing more responsibilities on the Council's police liaison and our Clerk-Treasurer.

The Town must provide all equipment.

The Town must provide opportunity for the marshal to fulfill training requirements.

Your Council Is Here for You

Please contact any Town Council member with any questions or concerns regarding this information:

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