

TOWN OF GOODLAND, INDIANA

TOWN COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Date: July 20, 2026

Time: 7:00 P.M.

Location: Town of Goodland, Indiana

1. CALL TO ORDER

The regular meeting of the Goodland Town Council was called to order at 7:00 p.m. The Council proceeded with the scheduled business.

2. UNSAFE BUILDING MATTERS

The Council reviewed several properties subject to unsafe building or property maintenance matters.

502 South Newton Street

The Council reviewed the progress required of the property owner following the June 15 meeting. Required work included completion of the front porch steps, tuck-pointing of all four walls, maintaining the yard, repairing the garage shutters, patching the garage roof, completing landscaping near the sidewalk, and replacing the porch roof.

The property owner explained that progress had been delayed due to difficulty obtaining transportation and mechanical problems with a pickup truck. The property owner stated that the pickup would be repaired and that the required work, with the exception of the front porch roof, was expected to be completed by the next meeting.

A motion was made and seconded to allow additional time for completion of the work. The motion passed unanimously.

129 West Union Street

The Council reviewed outstanding matters involving remaining wood, a tire pile, vegetation, and a tree extending over the neighboring property.

It was reported that the yard had been mowed and that the previously identified tree overhanging the neighbor's property had been addressed. Remaining concerns included wood and vegetation.

The Council discussed requirements concerning debris and junk, vehicle movement, registration and insurance, and repair of the porch. The property owner indicated that the porch would be addressed by sealing the crack as previously discussed.

The property owner also raised concerns regarding repeated notices and disputed several statements previously made regarding the property, including the property's occupancy, vehicle licensing, vehicle location, removal of a boat, and the condition of the porch. The property owner requested that the Council review the conduct and statements of Building Inspector John Schwarz.

The Council advised residents receiving notices to appear before the Council and present their side of the matter. The Council clarified that no charge is imposed unless the Council takes action.

A motion was made and seconded to consider the remaining issues resolved except for the agreed-upon mortar/porch work and to review the matter at the September meeting. The motion passed unanimously. The September 21 meeting was identified for review.

The Council also discussed an ordinance concerning movement of vehicles and agreed that a copy of the applicable ordinance section would be provided to the property owner.

301 South Newton Street – HM Properties

The Council reviewed the sidewalk condition at 301 South Newton Street, specifically an approximately one-inch elevation difference creating a potential tripping hazard.

The property representative explained that the property is subject to a triple-net lease and that the tenant is responsible for maintenance. Several potential solutions were discussed, including grinding the concrete, epoxy or other repair materials, raising portions of the sidewalk, and installing planter boxes or other structures to eliminate the hazard.

The Council discussed whether the sidewalk is located within the Town's right-of-way and who owns or is responsible for the sidewalk. It was agreed that the matter required additional research, including review of the property plat and applicable law.

A motion was made and seconded to table the matter and allow additional time for a solution to be developed. The motion passed unanimously.

The Council agreed to research ownership and responsibility for the sidewalk while the property representative would continue working with Manuel to develop a solution.

3. RELEASE OF PROPERTY LIEN

The Council discussed the removal of the unsafe building located at **203 South Benton Street**. The building had been removed and the property was ready for release.

A motion was made and seconded to release the applicable lien. The motion passed unanimously.

The Council also discussed a release of lien for **419 West Jasper Street**. The document was available for signature and had been dated in June.

4. PROPERTY MAINTENANCE – MIKE SCHWAB

Mike Schwab appeared before the Council regarding a notice concerning weeds and property maintenance.

Mr. Schwab explained that work had been delayed by the extreme heat and air-quality conditions. He anticipated completing the work within approximately two weeks.

A motion was made and seconded to table the matter for review at the next Council meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

5. 219 EAST UNION STREET – TREE REMOVAL

The Council discussed a fallen tree and brush at 219 East Union Street. Previous notices had been sent to the property owner.

The Council discussed the required notice and citation process. It was determined that a deadline should be established before further enforcement action.

The property owner was to be given a deadline of **August 17, 2026**, to remove the tree. If the property owner failed to comply, the matter would be brought back before the Council for consideration of a citation.

The Council also clarified that the Building Inspector does not independently determine violations requiring enforcement action; such matters are brought before the Council.

6. SWIMMING POOL FENCE QUESTION

The Council discussed an anonymous complaint concerning a swimming pool located on a property in Town.

The discussion focused on whether the pool was required to have a four-foot fence or whether an approved safety cover could satisfy the applicable requirement.

The Council agreed that the applicable building code and state requirements would be reviewed before any action was taken.

7. FINANCIAL REPORT

The Treasurer presented the Town's financial balances as of the end of June:

- General Fund: **\$621,147.87**
- Water Operating Fund: **\$66,226.42**
- Sewer Operating Fund: **\$327,266.44**
- Trash Fund: **\$47,980.25**
- Total funds reported: **\$2,188,187.48**

8. FIRE DEPARTMENT / CALL REPORT

The Fire Department was not represented at the meeting.

The Council reviewed a report showing **37 total calls**, including **18 public service calls**. The report also included medical and similar calls.

The report indicated:

- 9 calls handled by the county;
- 10 calls handled by the Town;
- 10 calls handled by the reporting individual;
- 0 calls handled by deputies; and
- no tickets reported.

9. STREET, WATER AND SEWER REPORT

The Council reviewed the street, water and sewer report. No unusual matters were reported.

The Council discussed possible water-quality issues and a pipe-cleaning process involving crushed ice, commonly referred to during the meeting as an “ice pig.” The process was discussed as a possible method of cleaning sediment and biological buildup from water lines.

The Council agreed that Town personnel should investigate whether this process is viable for the Town and whether it could help address water-quality complaints.

The Council also discussed possible water testing. Ken Smith was identified as someone who may be willing to assist with testing. Staff was asked to contact him regarding possible testing locations and procedures.

The Council also discussed the Town’s dumping area near the ponds. Vegetation was reportedly obstructing access to the road. Residents were reminded that vegetation should be placed off the roadway on the east side of the dumping area. Only yard vegetation is permitted; construction materials, mattresses, appliances, and similar materials are not permitted.

10. PARK AND RECREATION BOARD

Representatives of the Goodland Park and Recreation Board appeared before the Council.

The Board thanked volunteers for assisting with the pond cleanup and announced another cleanup scheduled for **August 1 at 8:00 a.m.**

Fall for Goodland Festival

The Park Board discussed the second annual Fall for Goodland Festival, scheduled for **October 17 from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.**

The Board requested approval to use contained fire pits during the event. The event would involve closing South Newton Street from the railroad tracks to Ron and Joe's.

The proposed fire pits would be contained units rather than open fires directly on the roadway. The fire pits would be monitored by Park Board members, with a limited number of participants permitted at one time.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the proposed use of the fire pits subject to appropriate safety and monitoring procedures. The motion passed unanimously.

Foster Park Playground Equipment

The Park Board reported an opportunity to purchase used toddler playground equipment from the Remington Parks Department through a public sealed-bid process.

The minimum bid was \$1,000, with bids due August 6. The Park Board requested authorization to submit a **\$5,000 bid**.

Discussion included the Town's available reserves, the anticipated cost of dismantling, transporting, and reinstalling the equipment, and the possibility of using volunteers and contractors for the work.

A motion was made and seconded to authorize the Park Board to submit a bid of **\$5,000**, plus expenses necessary to dismantle, transport, reinstall, and install the equipment. The motion passed unanimously.

Town personnel were to work with the Park Board to submit the bid promptly and investigate installation and transportation costs.

11. PARK PLAYGROUND MAINTENANCE

The Council discussed weed growth around existing playground equipment.

It was noted that Town personnel had treated the area previously and that the vegetation-control fabric beneath the gravel had deteriorated.

The Council discussed the responsibility for maintenance and agreed that the weeds should be addressed. Town personnel were asked to take care of the vegetation using appropriate treatment procedures.

12. MOSQUITO CONTROL

Residents had contacted the Town regarding mosquito spraying.

The Council discussed the availability of mosquito-control equipment and noted that appropriate licensing is in place. Staff was asked to investigate the availability of the fogging equipment and possible mosquito-control measures.

13. SALT SPREADER EQUIPMENT

The Council discussed surplus salt-spreader equipment.

The salt-spreader vehicle had previously been determined to have no value and was to be junked. The remaining salt-spreader equipment had a potential buyer willing to pay approximately **\$500**.

A motion was made and seconded to authorize Dustin to proceed with the sale for \$500 if the interested buyer remains available. The motion passed unanimously.

14. ATTORNEY'S REPORT

The Town Attorney presented information regarding new state requirements affecting municipal funds.

Building and Construction Related Fees Fund

The Council reviewed a resolution establishing **Fund No. 2260 – Goodland Building and Construction Related Fees Fund**, effective July 1.

The resolution directs applicable building, construction, zoning, development, subdivision, inspection, application, processing, and related fees into the new fund. The funds are to be used for reimbursement of costs actually incurred by the Town relating to the imposition and amount of the fees.

The resolution also provides that money in the fund may not revert to the General Fund or another Town fund and requires the Town to maintain a ledger of revenues and disbursements.

A motion was made and seconded to adopt the resolution. The motion passed unanimously.

Public Records Requests

The Town Attorney discussed changes relating to public records requests, including provisions concerning requests from outside the local area and requirements regarding suspected commercial or marketing-related requests.

No ordinance was presented for adoption at this meeting.

Scott Rhodes Property

The Town Attorney presented a resolution concerning property associated with Scott Rhodes.

The property had failed to sell at tax sale, and the Town has a lien associated with costs incurred for removal of an unsafe building. The Attorney explained the process for requesting that the Newton County Commissioners transfer the property to the Town, followed by the applicable tax deed process.

A motion was made and seconded to adopt the resolution requesting transfer of the property. The motion passed unanimously.

The resolution was identified as **Resolution No. 2026-0720B**.

The Council was advised that the process would also involve requesting that the Newton County Council waive accumulated property taxes after the tax sale certificate is transferred.

15. LEASE AGREEMENTS

The Town Attorney reported that revisions had been made to the Town's lease agreements.

The proposed revisions addressed repair responsibilities, rent-increase notification requirements, emergency notifications, and response times for urgent and non-urgent repairs.

The Council discussed holding a public meeting concerning the leases and inviting the affected parties.

The Council agreed that members would review the proposed amendments before final approval. The leases were not formally approved at this meeting.

16. ABANDONED VEHICLES

The Council discussed the process for handling abandoned vehicles.

Questions were raised regarding whether the Town may remove vehicles from private property when the statutory requirements for removal have been satisfied.

The Town Attorney indicated that there is a process for removal when the applicable criteria and notice requirements have been met. The Council requested additional discussion with the appropriate county/prosecuting authority to clarify the Town's authority and procedures.

17. WATER LEAK CREDITS

The Council reviewed and approved the following water/sewer leak credits:

Dillon Hall: A credit was requested due to an outside faucet/furnace water issue in which water was left running for several days but did not enter the sanitary sewer. A motion was made and seconded to approve the credit. The motion passed unanimously.

John Denton, 610 South Newton Street: A credit was requested due to a leaking hot water heater that flooded the basement. It was determined that the water did not enter the sanitary sewer. A motion was made and seconded to approve the leak credit. The motion passed unanimously.

Trisha Jatta: A credit was requested after a water heater split and caused water to discharge into the basement. The water did not enter the sanitary sewer, and the water heater was subsequently replaced. A motion was made and seconded to approve the leak credit. The motion passed unanimously.

18. BASEBALL FIELD WEED CONTROL

A resident raised concerns regarding significant weed growth at the baseball fields and asked who was responsible for weed control.

Discussion indicated that Clark's had previously provided regular spraying and that the fields had been maintained more effectively during that period.

A motion was made and seconded to have Clark's provide weed-control spraying at the baseball fields. The motion passed unanimously.

19. TABLE OF GRACE

Representatives of Table of Grace presented a request to use a room at the Community Center for a nonprofit meal-bag program serving Goodland residents.

The organization explained that it is a separate nonprofit organization and intends to provide food to approximately 25–30 families or individuals initially, with the goal of expanding the program if demand increases.

The organization requested use of the room where senior meals had previously been served and requested access to the room for storing and distributing food.

A motion was made and seconded to allow Table of Grace to use the requested Community Center space, with the condition that the organization would be financially responsible for maintenance caused by its use or the use of the facility by participants. The Town would remain responsible for ordinary maintenance that would occur regardless of the organization's use.

The motion passed unanimously.

The organization also requested a key to the room, and the Council agreed to provide access.

20. TOWN CASH RESERVES AND PROJECT FUNDING

The Council discussed the Town's financial reserves and the possibility of using accumulated funds for future projects, including potential Department of Natural Resources projects.

The Council explained that the Town budgets annual expenditures based on anticipated annual revenues and that unspent funds remain in cash reserves. The Council discussed the Town's current cash position, investment income, and state requirements governing the use of cash reserves.

It was explained that expenditures from accumulated reserves are subject to applicable State Board of Accounts requirements and that the Town must maintain required reserve levels.

No formal action was taken on a specific DNR project during this discussion.

21. CLAIMS

The Council proceeded with signing claims.

22. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the Council, a motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Dina Ward

Town Clerk-Treasurer

Approved by the Goodland Town Council:

John Rudolph

Council President
