

**MINUTES**  
**Goshen City Council**  
**December 12, 2023 at 6:30PM**  
**Goshen Community Building, 244 Clark Street**

**Call to Order:** Mayor Stroud called the meeting to order at 6:30PM.

**Roll Call:** Paula Anderson, Colton Martin, Shawn Mayfield, Max Poye, John Vaillancourt and Birch Wright were present. Attorney Brian Hogue and Recorder/Treasurer Marjorie Vaillancourt were present.

**Approval of Agenda:** Marjorie Vaillancourt made a change under Reports, Item F, Adam Walker will present instead of Ken Smith. Brian Hogue added under New Business Item G. Discussion of Non-Employee access at City Hall. Motion made by Birch Wright to approve the agenda with the edits. Seconded by Max Poye. All in favor. Yay (6). Opposed (0) The motion carried.

**Public Input:** None offered.

**Approval of Minutes:** Approval of the minutes for November 14, 2023. John Vaillancourt made a motion to approve as written. Seconded by Colton Martin. All in favor. Yay (5) Opposed (0). The motion carried. All in favor. Yay (6). Opposed (0). The motion carried.

**Approval of Financial Report:** Mayor Stroud presented. Balances as November 30, 2023 are General Fund \$810,833.78. Street Fund \$263,355.69. 988 Act \$3,312.35. Certificates of Deposit \$988,757.91. Brich Wright motioned to approve the financial report for November 2023. Seconded by John Vaillancourt. All in favor. Yay (6). Opposed (0) The motion carried.

**Reports for November 2023:**

- A. Police Department Report:** Report is in Council's packet. Chief Travis reported.
- B. Street Report:** Report is in Council's packet. Mayor Stroud presented.
- C. Goshen Fire District:** Report is in Council's packet. Mayor Stroud presented.
- D. Planning Commission:** Lacie Lawson presented. Report is in Council's packet. November fees collected \$600.00. Bearing Fruit Farms \$200.00 Lot line adjustment. Jean-Claude & Carmen Rodriguez, Jason Calk & Leslie Calk \$200.00 Lot line adjustment. Jean-Claude & Carmen Rodriguez Minor Subdivision \$200.00. Total to date is \$3,600.00.
- E. Building Inspection Report:** J.D. Demotte presented. Report is in Council's packet.
- F. Park and Recreation Report:** Adam Walker presented. Report is in the Council's packet.
- G. Arbor Board Report:** Mary Smith presented. Report is in Council's packet.

### Old City Business:

- A. Amending Ordinance 194:** Brian Hogue presented. John Vaillancourt motioned to table until January 2024 meeting to comply with the correct language. Seconded by Birch Wright. All in favor. Yay (6). Opposed (0). The motion carried.
- B. 2024 Budget/Salary Appendix:** Mayor Stroud presented. This is the 2024 budget that we are proposing. We have been working on the same budget, for the last three months, bringing it back and revising it. Mayor: Are there any line items that are specific that need to be addressed? Paula: We are just trying to clarify in the general fund individual salary and liability appendix for example, which includes Alan Barber for the recycling, but then that is a separate line item in the proposed budget. And then somehow even when we include that, there is still like \$1400 difference between that. So that is what we are trying to figure out is the \$1400 difference between the payroll and benefits section. Mayor: Alan does not receive payroll benefits. Alan is contracted and receives 1099. Birch: Two general questions, very good job this has come leaps and bounds since last year., so thank you everyone for working on that. Under the revenue excess funds allocated for 2023. \$350,000 in the proposed budget we have \$100,000? Mayor: Are you talking about from what we had last year moving forward, to this year moving forward? Birch: Yes. Mayor: we will not have \$350,000. The other thing was that it was not truly \$350,000. When we looked at that rolling that revenue forward from last year, what was not included because it was not in the budget where all the accruals, all the things that were already spent. That checks had not been cut, but there were already approved. When we roll this \$100,000 forward, it is going to be more than that, but that is unallocated funds, those are funds that are completely free. That number will be closer to \$150,000 to \$175,000, if you look at the budget, our year-to-date budget, we are right now at about \$220,000 under budget. Birch: The \$100,000 is under representative. Mayor: It is, and I and I know that it is underrepresented, but I do not want to go above because we still have some significant projects. Birch: My other question, last month we rolled back the Milage to 2.9. Is that accounted for? Mayor: Yes. Shawn: Did the retirement rates change? Mayor: No. Lopfi requires that we take out a certain percentage when we pay. It is often more than what is required for us to be taking out, and they reimburse us. Birch: Last question I have under expenses under the street fund. Road resurfacing, \$160,000 for the budget this year, we only got 80,000 for next year. Mayor: This year we rolled over a bunch from last year. That was a prior allocation, so we would not have had that much. But there was a year and a half that there was not a lot of that money that got spent for resurfacing. And I can see that when you do a street project, it is difficult to resurface much for any \$80,000. So, we may end up rolling that forward to the next year and then just doing it all at once. There is quite a list of streets that need to be done. John: Why do we need 4-wheel drive ATV? Mayor: There are areas we cannot get. It will be purchased out of the General Fund as a capital expenditure. John: That answers my question, I thought in the past if we purchased something for Parks and Streets, we could not use it for city. Mayor: I would like to get a preliminary approval of what we have right now for the 2024 budget. Birch Wright, I will make a recommendation we approve the budget as presented. Seconded by Paula Anderson. All in favor. Yay (6). Opposed. (0). The Motion carried.

### New City Business

**A. Year End Bonus:** Colton Martin presented. Years past we've done \$2000.00 and \$1000.00. That was due to the Covid money we had coming in. This year I would recommend no less than \$1000. And \$500.00. I wanted to hear everyone's thoughts. Paula: We need to clarify elected officials. John: What we did was the mayor and part-time employees were given \$500.00 and full-time employees \$1000.00. Birch: it is grossed up, so the net is \$1000. And \$500. Shawn for clarity again, Colton, \$1000. For full-time staff. For part time \$500 and then \$500. for recorder and Mayor. Jerry Johnson how many part timers are there? Marjorie: there's Lacie, (Mayor Lacie's the only part time staff) Marjorie: no J. DeMotte, I am part time, and the mayor is part time. Colton Martin motioned to give \$1000.00 to full-time staff and \$500.00 to part-time staff including the Mayor and Recorder/Treasurer. Seconded by Birch Wright.

**Public Comment:** Citizen asked why it is going down, are there funds to keep it at \$2,000. and \$1,000.? John that was part of the covid money. Betty Nichols: please give the m the same as last year if we have the money. Colton: do we have the money? Colton Martin amended the motion to \$2,000. for full-time employees and \$1,000. for part time employees and mayor and recorder. Seconded by Paula Anderson. Jerry Johnson, can I get clarification for KaSeana, I am taking notes for her. The mayor and recorder \$1,000.00 and part-time employees and full-time employees \$2,000.00. Vote on the first motion of \$1000.00 and \$500.00. All in favor. Nay (5). Second motion for \$2000.00 and \$1000.00. All in favor. Yay (5). John Vaillancourt abstained. The motion carried.

**B. State of the City Address:** Mayor Stroud presented. The State of the City Address, and this is my address to the city. So, the year started off with significant turmoil and has over the course of the year improved. We started off understaffed with an office that was in chaos. City staff have rallied together and consistently are united, serving the citizens with dignity and respect. Our police force is now fully staffed and continues with training and certifications to protect the city in the best of their ability. We admire and we salute them for their efforts. The city office staff, as a team, have done a tremendous job of tackling any new hurdle that has been thrown their way. They continually surpass my expectations and perform at a level that is unrivaled by other cities of our size. This year, we started off with a confusing and disorganized budget. The city has had a lack of forward management with finances, leaving the city with excess funds not being utilized to the full extent. We have added \$600,000 in CDs this year and provided the city with a complete asset liability statement and proper fund accounting. Computer systems are now finally up to date. We also transitioned our building and planning to be online via added technologies to be more efficient and decrease waste. The city has established control of its website, allowing our staff to make updates regularly. We have established a Facebook, and tonight we are having our first live stream of our city council meeting. We have utilized last year's excess capital to renovate the interior of City Hall and the community building, with plans to renovate the exterior in 2024. The city has strived for full transparency and inclusion of all citizens. The budget, which has never been online, is now available for all to review. The website is continuing to undergo growth and development. However, all minutes and ordinances are up to date and posted. The Parks Commission has worked diligently to apply for a state grant, as well as working to fulfill all current grant obligations. We were also able to purchase an additional 4.98 parcel to allow for better south side access to Mill Branch Park. The Planning Commission has begun to look at a way the Board of Zoning Adjustment can better fashion the city's zoning code for future growth and development. This has been in part due to the planning subcommittee established this year. This year, the City Streets Department has utilized over 1,200 tons of gravel to maintain city streets that had been left without

gravel for several years. We also resurfaced two city streets that had needed resurfacing for several years. We also trimmed trees along city streets that had not been maintained. The Street Department is currently working on clearing all city culverts to ensure proper drainage, especially with the rising of our flood zones. We have passed 12 ordinances, 34 resolutions, showing an inordinate amount of work that was accomplished this year. Even though this year started off rocky through extreme determination and unsurpassed hard work, we are ending the year with tremendous accomplishments that will benefit the citizens of Goshen for many years to come. I would like to personally thank all our City Council, Parks Commissioners, Planning Commissioners for all their hard work and dedication to the City of Goshen. I would also like to thank all our citizens for being so involved in our city government. Thank you, guys.

- C. 2024 Council Goals:** Mayor Stroud presented. Councilman Martin wants to finalize the purchase of Mill Branch Park. Complete renovations to city buildings, increase amenities for citizens. Bring sewer system to Goshen. Improve access to White River. Protect Goshen water sources. Reduce payroll expenses to revenue, annexation, lighting and or noise ordinances. Councilman Wright. Greater tax base. Expanded communications, Future infrastructure and planning, Future growth planning, Fire department. Councilman Mayfield, annexation of private roads, Business development, Designated commercial areas. Park pathway Composition. New City Hall, Center. Annual Celebration Festival. Councilman Vaillancourt. Transparency of all City business with City Council. There was much discussion on all topics.
- D. Appointment of Parks Commissioner:** Mayor Stroud presented. Ken's term is expiring. I would like to nominate Mike Nimmo. We do not have a resolution for Mike Nimmo. Birch: just a question, Ken are you term limited and have no desire to continue? Ken: correct after this month, four years as chair, time to move on and do something different. The plan would be to present Mike tonight and then we bring the resolution next in January. John: he would be on the parks Commission, as a parks commissioner Who's going to be the chairman? Adam will be Chairman. I'll have to appoint Adam in January to be the parks Chairman. Then the parks commissioner will have to decide who to appoint as secretary.
- E. Animal Shelter Contract Discussion:** Lacie Lawson presented. If you look at the contract, that is between the City of Goshen and the animal shelter. I called the animal shelter. Absolutely nothing on their end or as far as the contract is going to change. When an animal is surrendered, if the owner claims that animal, the owner is supposed to pay that \$150. This coming year, we would like to look more at what a stray animal is versus what a surrender animal is. When a citizen wants to surrender their animal, they come to the city of Goshen and get a letter, anytime that happens the city of Goshen is responsible for that \$150.00 fee. We are just asking for your approval to let City Staff make the call between a stray and a surrender animal, on a case-by-case bases. No motion needed at this time. City staff are good at making their own judgement.
- F. I.T. Contract:** Mayor Stroud presented. We have a contract with Preferred Office Technologies, and it has been a very rocky road getting that established and up and running. They brought me a laptop that was not at all the specs that I had given them. Jason has had issues with getting the police on the server. There have been, few hurdles. We have been on them for the last month. I have said we are severing the contract for cause if you do not get into alignment. They did bring the computer that I had

put in the specifications, with everything on it. I still do not have Adobe on it. They failed to come and set it up in the office and make sure that it worked correctly. They failed to make sure everyone had their Logins correct, we are working with them. Birch: They came and sold us, and I mean it was a pony show. I would like them to come back and explain why they did not live up to what they guaranteed us. Mayor: I am holding a \$10,000. Invoice. Birch: I would like to have them come back and explain. I would like a list of what they promised and what they have done. Brian will look at the contract if we get to that point.

- G. Non-Employee Access to City Hall:** Brain Hogue presented: The reason I asked for this, there has been some concerns brought to my attention from City Hall of People being there during business hours but not conducting business and it is disruptive to them being able to get their jobs done during the workday. That is one issue, and the other is non city employees accessing City Hall when City Hall is closed, which is some additional concerns of who has access and when. I wanted to bring this to you all. So that you all as a body can discuss what should be allowed; what should not, and hopefully put something in place that will address that. Who is it that is coming in? Like friends or coworkers. No, it is council members. I called the municipal league, City Council is welcome to come into public areas, but they are not allowed to really come into private office space. Unless they are invited into a private office space, they are not supposed to be in that area. If you are not a city employee with a reason to be in that employee space, then that is not a space that a council person So and I know this is the issue. If a council person wants to come down and look through anything they want, absolutely make an appointment, come down, I will meet you there, one of the city staff will meet you down there. But just showing up and expecting that the city employees are going to stop their work and sit down and have a conversation, it is that is not reasonable.

**Public Input:**

Mary Smith, we have two openings now into the park that you can drive a vehicle, there is a thing now about stealing black walnut trees particularly if you're a meth addict. And we have some Primo black walnuts trees. Taking the tree and selling the tree, black walnuts are worth thousands of dollars. I have asked for some gates and game cameras would be good.

**Adjournment:**

Birch Wright motioned to adjourn at 9:16 PM. Seconded by Colton Martin. All in favor. Yay (6)

The motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 9:16 PM.

  
**Marjorie Vaillancourt**  
Recorder/Treasurer

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**Russell Stroud**  
Mayor