



## August 13, 2025 Town Council Meeting Minutes

Attendees: MacKenzie Taylor, Larry Randolph, Dean Smith, Avery Ferguson, Gale Gerber, Corey Oberlin, Ray Rodriguez, Vernon Miller, Tina Smith, Alesha Miller and Taya Jacobs (From Fairfield Youth League)

Dean called the meeting to order.

Dean made a motion to approve the meeting minutes from July 9, 2025. Larry seconded the motion. Upon voice vote the meeting minutes were unanimously approved.

**Water:** Avery informed the council of the fall conference that is coming up September 21-September 23 in Ft. Wayne.

Batco was on site yesterday and did a demo of the larger locating unit. Corey also watched the demo. They were able to locate electrical lines using the 3-watt. Corey agreed it worked well. Avery believes he can manage with the 3-watt. The 10-watt would be nicer of course because it would allow more distance. Larry told Avery he is leaning more towards the 10-watt even though it's more expensive. Dean also agreed to go with the better one. The 10-watt cost \$4,864. Larry and Dean asked MacKenzie if this was feasible. MacKenzie asked, who all would be using it? MacKenzie asked Corey if he would use it? Corey said probably not much. Vernon would use it a little for marking electrical lines at the park when needed. Avery would be the primary user. MacKenzie suggested a 3 way or 4-way split. Avery told the council he has another large quote to present. Therefore, this locator has been tabled. Avery informed the council he did place an order for the \$855 locator to locate curbstops.

Avery handed the council a quote from Peerless. Avery explained, every year the wells have to be inspected. The last time Well 1 was worked on was in 2016. It's slowing down ever so slightly. Avery stated, we need to budget money in 2026 to get that fixed. This is a must. Avery went on to explain, it's not half way or minimum, we are still in good shape. Dean asked about Well 2. Avery said it's much better, that one was done more recently. Larry asked if it was performing at a 17% rate design? Avery said he wasn't sure what that means. Avery said he mentioned this sometime last year and we agreed to wait on it. It needs to be scheduled to get fixed in 2026. Dean made a motion to accept the \$22,680 Peerless quote to have Well 1 fixed. Larry seconded the motion. Upon voice vote the Peerless quote was unanimously approved.



Avery handed the council a quote from Bills Heating. The quote is for AC to be fixed at the water plant, mainly in his office area. Avery said, it needs to be done at some point. The quote is for \$1760.58. Dean made a motion to accept the quote from Bills Heating. Larry seconded the motion. Upon voice vote the quote for Bills Heating was unanimously approved.

A couple of weeks ago when we received a storm, Avery received an alarm system for the electric pump. He spent 5 hours with a tech on Sunday because they had to replace the back board, which is like the mother board. They also had to work on two transponders and some other items. Avery believes lightning caused the failure. Dean asked Avery about having Middlebury Electric complete a surge protection? Avery said it's lightning; it does what it wants. Larry asked, would it help to install lightning rods? Avery replied, it was just a freak thing that happened. Avery warned the council this was work that had to be done and he apologizes for the large bill we will be seeing from Middlebury Electric.

Avery had a water inspection and stated we passed for the most part. One thing he needs to look into is about a Backflow Ordinance in various businesses. Avery said he needs to do some research on that because there is no enforcement in our current ordinance. Avery said he needs to see what other local towns are doing and get with MacKenzie to make something up that follow suit to others.

Avery said he will be flushing hydrants sometime in September. With Dean and Tina, your personal family expansion coming, Avery said he tried to push it off a bit.

**Wastewater:** Dean asked if there have been anymore turtles? Avery replied no.

Avery said he is waiting on a quote for a pipe.

Dean asked Avery about the UV Plant at wastewater. Dean said he's aware some kind of structure needs to be put in. Avery said, right now the final tank we currently have, they will take one side and build within it. Dean asked about the blowers needing to be in a building? Avery said it might not need to be in the building and he's talked with Phil about it a few times and Phil doesn't think it's necessary. Avery went on to explain where the UV Plant would go in that one side, it would be down in that tank with a cover over the top. Avery isn't sure if in 2027 you want to consider. It was discussed to move chlorine out near final. Have a structure built out there for the chlorine room and now it's across the structure and Avery needs to have it closer because currently that's a lot of pipe. SO2 numbers and E.coli were previously up and Avery wasn't sure why. He said he is leaving chlorine as a back up to the UV plant and sometime that will need to be discussed. Dean said he is aware at how expensive chlorine has been in the

past. If we can save 20%-30% that's a win. Dean also mentioned he isn't sure what they are currently losing now. Avery said we aren't losing it; it goes in a vacuum with water. So, it basically just sits in the pipe until it's used. Avery said he is still learning about grants and he would have to look into it.

**Community Development:** MacKenzie told the council herself, Corey, Vernon, Abonmarche, and the Pumpkin Vine Coalition all met Monday and had a great meeting. A trail has been decided on by all of us. We can now start having meetings with the land owners and explain our plans.

MacKenzie told the council she has a meeting at County tomorrow to discuss Senate Enrolled Act 1.

Lastly, for those of you that haven't heard, congratulations because the Purchase Agreement has been signed by both parties for the two acres of land. Larry asked, when did you find this out. MacKenzie replied, right before our meeting about the Hawpatch Trail.

**Maintenance:** Corey examined a tree on Washington St and determined it's on the Town's easement. Corey said he gather some quotes and present them at the next council meeting.

Corey expressed the dump truck has not been working since he had it at BoDicks. Floyd had the dump truck for 3-4 days and he said he couldn't figure out the lights on it. The turn signals don't work consistently. Larry told Corey to start with the multi-switch. Dean advised Corey to check and see if power comes out of it. Larry told Corey again to start with the multi-switch and he can come help him if he needs it.

Corey told the council we didn't think we were awarded the salt contract, but apparently, we were awarded. They should be bringing salt before too long.

Someone asked if we included S. Jackson Street (Lumber Yard Road) in the proposed sign ordinance change. MacKenzie said off of the top of her head she cannot remember, she told the council it'd be in the email I sent as a forward to you guys after our last council meeting. Dean told MacKenzie to get that one added too if we haven't already.

There are signs for Wabash Street that need to be inserted. Larry said there is a yield there now. Maybe we need to include it in the draft Jackson Beck gave us. It was decided to table Ordinance 2025-07 until we receive clarification on adding no truck signs.

Corey explained to the council he received a phone call from Jeff; he works for Interra. Jeff expressed concerns about the sidewalk in front of the bank. Corey got a quote from Ultimate Edge, but it was for \$25,000. This isn't feasible even if Interra pays for half of it. Corey thought about taking asphalt and making a little ramp or something. Dean asked if we could raise or lower the cracked portions in the concrete? Corey replied he's never done that before. Dean requested another quote or two and we can go from there.

Corey told the council he got the stage trailer for Farmers Day, it's in place.

The street sweeper came this morning and the task was completed.

The road project on Maple Street was brought into discussion. MacKenzie asked Corey to explain because he understands this better. Corey said, Niblock wants to take out 5-6 inches and refill with the millings that were left at the maintenance department. The plans have been changing constantly. We originally want to do the cement stabilization but then they discovered gas lines and were unable to do so. NIPSCO won't come out and move them, that'd be costly for them and it could take a year before they'd move them. Larry asked if filling in with millings would solve the problem and can we get this in writing? It's written on the change order that's been provided by Commonwealth. Corey added, they want to put down geogrid to help hold the subbase/future road together. The problem is there's not a good base to pave the road. Larry said, that road has been there since 1975. It looks like they just poured cement on it. Larry said, Gale my question to you is why weren't we notified. Niblock took out all of the concrete and packed up and left town. It's all a lack of communication. Gale said, he and Commonwealth didn't know anything about it. Niblock just took it upon themselves to do what they did. Gale said, when they first found unsuitable soils, they should have brought it to our attention and your attention. They handled this entire contract incorrectly. Gale said, this is how some contractors play the game unfortunately. Larry reiterated, we all should have been notified. (MacKenzie and Corey notified the council via text messages on a group chain on everything that has taken place throughout this 2024-02 Community Cross Roads Matching Grant). Corey had the exact dates down of when Niblock started, to when they stopped. On that Saturday, Niblock came back here and that's when they did the east end work without anyone knowing. After the fact, they tried to charge us \$11,000 and MacKenzie, Corey, and Commonwealth called them on this. They didn't charge the entire price after negotiations. They only charged the town \$4,000 after this interaction. Corey went on to say, they did it because they had a loaded truck on there and it sank. MacKenzie told the council, this is all documented too. Corey told the council, ultimately, this would have happened regardless. It's not right, but no one could foresee what would transpire. Corey also mentioned, you truly don't know how bad it is until you walk it. There are some hard spots and some soft spots. If they tested random areas, they truly didn't

know what they'd be getting into. Dean asked if there was any drainage down there? Corey said there is one by Dana's house and one at Cripe St. Dean asked, why are there so many soft spots? Corey replied because it's clay. Gale seemed confident in the geogrid, he has done this on past projects. It's like a chain link fence; it holds the road together. Dean asked him how long ago was it that you did this and what's the structure of the road like now? Gale replied they did this 10 years ago and it's still in good shape. Larry asked Gale if this is our only solution? Gale told the council he is not an engineer just a PR person. Gale said he is still so mad at the contractor, Larry agreed too. Corey said Niblock believes we have at least 200 tons of millings at the shop, let's use them and get this road finished. The change order is for \$28,422. MacKenzie said, we have money in EDIT for this change order and to get this done. Dean made a motion to accept the change order to get Maple Street finished. Larry asked, what if he doesn't sign this? MacKenzie told Larry he can start accepting the calls from Maple Street and explain to them why the street isn't getting finished because she's over this. Larry told MacKenzie no, he won't be taking any of the calls. Larry reiterated, he doesn't understand why they left the road in that condition and left the site. MacKenzie told Larry they have other jobs to do and our plan fell through so we were trying to come up with another suitable plan. Larry asked how soon will they start? MacKenzie replied, she doesn't know, they have to pull people off of crews to bring them back here to finish the project. Larry seconded the motion by signing the change order. Upon signage of the change order, it was unanimously approved. Corey told the council; we are about to run into the same problem with Timber Valley. Dean asked MacKenzie how much we have paid Niblock so far. MacKenzie replied, nothing. Dean told MacKenzie do not pay them until the work is satisfactory and alert the residents on updates.

**Marshal:** Ray told the council the cameras have been installed and he is waiting to get those activated. This should be happening sometime next week.

Dean said according to the agenda you guys have been writing a lot of tickets. Dean said he hasn't heard any complaints about speeding recently.

**Park:** Dean thanked Vernon for his hard work on the two-acre land purchase. This wouldn't have happened without you.

Vernon said things are going good so far. He said he finally sees a light at the end of the tunnel. Tomorrow night he thinks everything will be well set in place for Farmers Day. Vernon told the council he made hitching posts that are running north and south. Typically, the horses stand on a concrete pad when they're tied up and we all know concrete is so expensive. Vernon said he spoke with Larry from the feed store and he has used rubber mats that Vernon can buy at a discount to keep the horses from digging. Vernon said the mats will be sold at \$47.00 a piece

and he believes he will need 80 of them. So, it would cost us \$3,760. Vernon said, to him it's a no brainer because if nothing is placed there, it will tear the mower to pieces. Dean asked MacKenzie if we have the money. MacKenzie told them we can afford this purchase but then need to watch our spending for the park for the remainder of the year. Larry asked MacKenzie if the RDC can purchase this? MacKenzie responded, I don't know, you will have to ask them at your meeting Monday. Larry mentioned, it's an improvement to the park. MacKenzie said, yeah sort of. Larry told Vernon to go ahead and get the mats. He will discuss it with the other RDC members Monday.

Vernon told the council Tad Groff has been a HUGE help this past week and prior week in getting prepared for Farmers Day.

Corey told the council Vernon does need a larger mower (72 inch); it would cut his mowing time in half.

**Clerk Treasurer:** MacKenzie told the council she will be working with Janet Alexander in person next Wednesday to build the budget. The public hearing will be on September 10 and the adoption date will be on September 24.

**New Business:** Taya introduced herself as the President for the Fairfield Youth League. She began by saying first she wants to thank us for allowing the Jr. High boys to play on our fields. She stated there were 36 boys that played in this year's league. We (Alesha and Taya) wanted to meet with the council so they can start putting a budget plan together for next season. Taya wanted to see what the fee will be to use the fields for 2026. MacKenzie told Taya, Dana Rutter donated some money for the boys to play last season. MacKenzie couldn't remember the exact donation amount but she believed there should be some left over to go into the next season. MacKenzie received Taya's phone number and will call her tomorrow to let her know what she figures out.

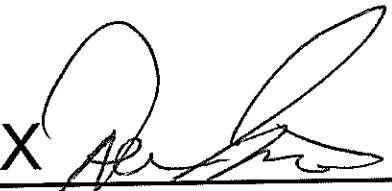
Avery told the council he wanted to let them know he's heard talk about drainage issues recently in Timber Valley. Avery said on a personal issue with the alleys between myself and Patty, Avery said he has a stream that runs through his garage and would like for it to get fixed correctly. Larry asked if milling would benefit him or Patty, mill 8-10 inches and blacktop near the garage? Corey said it dead ends at Washington Street. Avery said it was milled and asphalted to the corner and goes right down into his garage. Dean suggested building a new garage. Corey said there's a lot of issues with Timber Valley and needing to look into the drainage issues of that area. Larry said, Larry Yoder claims he did everything County told him to do and it was

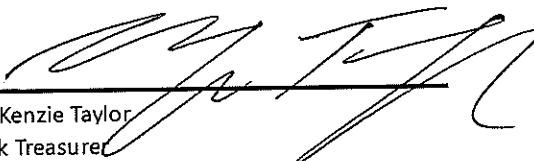
approved. Avery said, look at what County did for Brian Yoder. It could have been whoever was signing off on paperwork at County that day. Larry said, Gary had to jump through hoops to get his place at Sandbrook.

Dean made a motion to pay bills. Larry seconded the motion. Upon voice vote bills were unanimously approved.

Dean made a motion to adjourn. Larry seconded the motion. Upon voice vote the meeting was adjourned.

Next council meeting is on August 27, 2025.

X   
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Dean Smith  
Council President

X   
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MacKenzie Taylor  
Clerk Treasurer