

MINUTES
MUNCIE COMMON COUNCIL
300 NORTH HIGH STREET
MUNCIE, INDIANA 47305



FEBRUARY 5, 2024

PUBLIC HEARING: 6:45 P.M., 1st Floor City Hall Auditorium.

ORD. 1-24 AN ORDINANCE FOR ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATIONS (FIRE DEPT – EMS).
No Public Comments.

REGULAR MEETING: 7:00 P.M., 1st Floor City Hall Auditorium.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Led by Councilperson Green.

INVOCATION: Given by Councilperson McIntosh.

ROLL CALL:	PRESENT	ABSENT
<i>At-Large 1, Dale Basham</i>	X	
<i>At-Large 2, Ro Selvey</i>	X	
<i>At-Large 3, William McIntosh</i>	X	
<i>District #1, Jeff Green</i>	X	
<i>District #2, Nora Powell</i>	X	
<i>District #3, Brandon Garrett</i>	X	
<i>District #4, Sara Gullion</i>	X	
<i>District #5, Jerry Dishman</i>	X	
<i>District #6, Harold Mason</i>	X	

CITIZEN RECOGNITION: Councilperson Garrett elaborates how warmer weather is coming so many people are planning to be outside. They will head out to enjoy the parks, go for a bike ride or just take a walk down the sidewalk. That is what he thought about when thinking of this month’s citizen recognition. He camps at the reservoir and claims that is his getaway. One group does all that, the local AFSCME Union, which consists of the Parks Department, Street Department, Building Commissioner, and Animal Shelter. If you see a dog running loose, you might call the Shelter and just forget about it. However, if you were to go to the Animal Shelter you would see all they go through in taking care of every dog and cat as if they are their own. It is easy to forget or be unaware of what all would go in to that. Our City has many gorgeous parks and that is all thanks to the Parks Department. Other than our City parks, they also help take care of the reservoir and pier maintenance. It is everything. They mow and weed eat the shoreline so when you get on your boat the vegetation is not overgrown and you can nicely walk safely on your pier. The Street Department employees are out all the time patching holes, plowing or salting. They never get enough recognition and that was Garrett’s first “real job.” He recalls being a young worker at the reservoir putting in the individual piers for a while. He was younger then and still had a hard time getting in the cold November water to take them out. The Parks Department is

always mowing and attending to the beautification for any events in the park and make sure the cabins are sufficient and all are equipped with what they need. They also tend to all the splash pads that are coming around now. The Building Commissioner's office is the ins and outs of tagging properties, handling vacant properties and citing tall grass or anything other type of violation. They work to ensure that any house rented in Muncie is up to code and livable. He doesn't think we will ever be able to thank them enough. His own father worked for this Union for 37 years so it's pretty near and dear to him. A lot of the people here to accept this award worked along him such as Becky, Nate, Travis, etc. They became family as much as friends. He presents the February 2024 Citizen of the Month Award to the AFSCME Union and thanks them for all the hard work they do day in and day out.

Street Department Employees accepting the award express they feel they get passed up quite a bit and aren't worthy of the public, so to speak. When all the dust settles, they will still be here cleaning up. They promise they are not going anywhere.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES: A motion was made by Powell and seconded by Selvey to approve the Minutes from the January 8, 2024 Regular Meeting as presented. A roll call vote showed 9 yeas. MINUTES APPROVED.

APPOINTMENTS TO BOARD AND COMMISSIONS:

EMERGENCY (911) BOARD

A motion was made by Powell and seconded by Selvey to nominate Harold Mason. No further nominations. A roll call vote showed 9 yeas and 0 nays. MOTION CARRIED. Harold Mason is declared appointed to the Emergency (911) Communications Board.

METROPOLITAN PLANNING COMMISSION

A motion was made by Selvey and seconded by Gullion to nominate Jerry Dishman. No further nominations. A roll call vote showed 9 yeas and 0 nays. MOTION CARRIED. Jerry Dishman is declared appointed to the Metropolitan Planning Commission.

MUNCIE INDUSTRIAL REVOLVING LOAN FUND

A motion was made by Powell and seconded by Gullion to nominate William McIntosh. No further nominations. A roll call vote showed 9 yeas and 0 nays. MOTION CARRIED. William McIntosh is declared appointed to the Muncie Industrial Revolving Loan Fund.

POLICE MERIT COMMISSION

A motion was made by Dishman and seconded by Basham to nominate Roger Overbey. A motion was made by Mason and seconded by McIntosh to nominate Wayne Scaife. A motion was made by Gullion and seconded by Garrett to nominate Steve Craig. A roll call vote showed 1 vote for Roger Overbey (Basham), 4 votes for Wayne Scaife (Green, Mason, McIntosh, Selvey) and 4 votes for Steve Craig (Gullion, Powell, Garrett, Dishman). MOTION WAVERING. Attorney Dan Gibson advised to vote again since there was a tie. A second roll call vote showed same results: 1 vote for Roger Overbey (Basham), 4 votes for Wayne Scaife (Selvey, McIntosh, Mason, Green) and 4 votes for Steve Craig (Powell, Garrett, Dishman, Gullion). MOTION WAVERING. A third roll call vote showed 4 votes for Wayne Scaife (Selvey, Mason, McIntosh, Green) and 5 votes for Steve Craig (Powell, Garrett, Gullion,

Basham, Dishman). Gullion’s MOTION CARRIED. Steve Craig is declared appointed to the Muncie Police Merit Commission.

REDEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

A motion was made by Powell and seconded by Gullion to nominate Andrew Dale. Councilperson Selvey confirms whether they are appointing one or two people tonight. Attorney Dan Gibson advises there are two appointments. A motion was made by Garrett and seconded by Powell to nominate Zane Bishop. Councilperson Basham requests a point of clarity in if they will elect them one at a time or if it will go to the top votes. Attorney Gibson informs in the past, traditionally, each person goes along and votes for two at a time and the top vote gets it if there is a majority. Selvey confirms they aren’t doing the appointments one by one then. Gibson explains no, it hasn’t been done that way in the past. President Dishman agrees. A motion is made by Selvey and seconded by Green to nominate Lorraine Tomlin. A motion is made by Basham and seconded by Green to nominate Isaac Miller. No further nominations. A roll call vote showed 6 votes for Andrew Dale (Mason, McIntosh, Gullion, Powell, Garrett, Dishman), 6 votes for Zane Bishop (Mason, McIntosh, Gullion, Powell, Garrett, Dishman), 3 votes for Lorraine Tomlin (Green, Basham, Selvey), and 3 votes for Isaac Miller (Green, Basham, Selvey). Powell and Garrett’s MOTION’S CARRIED. Andrew Dale and Zane Bishop are declared appointed to the Muncie Redevelopment Commission.

RIVERFRONT PROJECT REVIEW COMMITTEE

A motion was made by Dishman and seconded by Garrett to nominate Lewis Coulter. A motion was made by Gullion and seconded by Powell to nominate Hans Heintzelman. No further nominations. A roll call vote showed 4 votes for Lewis Coulter (Selvey, Green, Garrett, Dishman) and 5 votes for Hans Heintzelman (McIntosh, Powell, Gullion, Basham, Mason). Gullion’s MOTION CARRIED. Hans Heintzelman is declared appointed to the Riverfront Project Review Committee.

2024 COMMON COUNCIL STANDING COMMITTEES

<i>Committee</i>	<i>Chair</i>	<i>Members</i>	<i>Committee Description</i>
Government Administration	Garrett	Green McIntosh	Consideration of matters dealing with the function of city agencies, revision of city codes, and liaison with other units of government.
Finance	Powell	Entire Council	Consideration of all budgetary matters, including but not limited to preparation of the annual budget, transfer of funds and additional appropriations. Also, consideration of all bond issues.
Public Services	Dishman	Green Mason	Consideration of all matters concerning services provided by the city government directly to the public, including but not limited to police and fire protection, emergency ambulances, parks and recreations, cemeteries, public transportation, etc.
Public Works	Mason	Garrett Basham	Consideration of all matters connected with capital improvement, included by limited to block grant matters, construction of public facilities, etc.
Land & Traffic	McIntosh	Gullion Powell	Consideration of all zoning matters. Also, consideration of all matters concerning regulation of use of public ways.
Environmental Impact	Gullion	Garrett Selvey	Consideration of all matters regarding environmental health pertaining to the development or redevelopment of a parcel of property which could potentially affect the public health of the community.
Tax Abatement	Powell	Selvey McIntosh	Consideration of all tax abatement applications and monitoring property owner compliance. The committee may also make recommendations concerning ordinance, resolution, application, and monitoring revisions that can affect the tax abatement program.

ORDINANCES PREVIOUSLY INTRODUCED: No Ordinances Previously Introduced.

NEW ORDINANCES:

ORD. 1-24 AN ORDINANCE FOR ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATIONS (FIRE DEPT – EMS).

A motion was made by Selvey and seconded by Green to Introduce.

Craig Wright, City Controller, explained this is an ordinance asking for additional appropriations for the EMS Fire Department Fund# 104 for \$250,000. He is willing to answer any questions and has Chief Burford with him as well. Chief Burford explained there was a claim filed last year and they were working with attorneys on the matter. An agreement was reached through mediation and a settlement was set forth. This is asking for an appropriation of the funds to cover the settlement agreement. There is a confidentiality agreement attached and they, as councilmembers, could call for a Special Meeting where they could file proper non-disclosure agreements and further go into more details. However, they are limited, tonight, in a public meeting. President Dishman appreciates the explanation because he will not vote on something if he does not know anything about it.

Councilperson Powell requests the balance of Fund #104 after this amount is paid. Wright explains there will be additional funds available for the appropriations of \$898,412. Powell confirms that is what is unappropriated in that fund. Wright answers yes. He suggests introducing it tonight and reaching out with any additional questions in time for the vote next month. Dishman asks Wright to schedule a meeting to sign that disclosure because they have to know what they are giving this money to. Chief Burford will be happy to reach out to their respective counsel and maybe get a group email together and they can try to find some availability as soon as possible. Dishman states he would rather meet in person and insists he has to know what he is saying “yes” to. Burford understands and acknowledges the Council is privy to information that the general public is not in lieu of the position through confidentiality agreements. Dishman asks if it relates to HIPPA. Burford cannot speak as to what this pertains to publicly. Again, he would be more than happy to set up a meeting with counsel where they can follow proper procedures and be informed as to what they are voting on. Dishman asks if there is a time constraint. Wright indicates the sooner the better due to the simple fact that everything in that line item has to be overwritten until the additional funds are appropriated. Questions called. An all-in-favor vote showed 9 yeas and 0 nays. INTRODUCED.

RESOLUTIONS: No New Resolutions Filed.

TABLED:

RES. 18-23 COMMON COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF MUNCIE, INDIANA PRELIMINARY ECONOMIC REVITALIZATION AREA RESOLUTION REAL ESTATE TAX ABATEMENT (JRF MANAGEMENT LLC). (Tabled 11/13/2023)

A motion was made by Selvey and seconded by Green to Bring off the Table.

Councilperson Selvey explains this was originally Tabled because Joe Jackson was not here to speak on behalf of the resolution or answer any questions. She mentioned she was going to contact him and let him know that he needed to be present if they were going to take it off the table. She announces his name to see if he is present which he is not. A roll call vote showed 4 yeas (McIntosh, Selvey,

Basham, Green) and 5 nays (Garrett, Gullion, Mason, Powell, Dishman). MOTION DENIED. Res. 18-23 remains TABLED.

OTHER BUSINESS:

Russell Irving is here representing the East Central Neighborhood Association and the Emily Kimbrough National Register Historic District. He has only known about the situation he is calling about this evening for about for three days. Starting Friday, he noticed a surveyor on his front lawn who informed him he was measuring for water runoff and the effect that would have on the construction of a roundabout being constructed right off the back corner of his property. A little bewildered, the conversation continued and the surveyor mused that there wasn't just one roundabout being built, there were four. The surveyor mused that he did not see how these roundabouts could be constructed without the removal or adverse effect on structures in the neighborhood. Those structures would be owner occupied single-family historic structures, some even over the line in to the Historic District. Alarmed by that, Irving called John Hepner, the President of the Preservation Commission. Mr. Hepner claimed he was completely unaware of roundabouts being built in the District. That was Friday. On Saturday, alarmed, Irving went knocking door to door throughout the Historic District and his neighborhood asking if anyone knew anything about the roundabouts. One neighbor that told him that he had had a conversation with the Mayor who stated there were plans for that neighborhood but he wasn't privy to tell him at that time what the plans were. Another neighbor, upset, found Minutes to a Board of Public Works meeting held on April 12, 2023 where item #11 refers to a deal that was reached between the County, City, and Indiana Department of Transportation, in federal funds to build roundabouts in the neighborhood. That was over 11 months ago and this is the first he has heard about it. To say he is alarmed, upset or that the people of the neighborhood are upset is an understatement. At this point, the neighbors are so caught off guard by this that they don't know exactly what to ask for. However, they seeking help of the City Council representatives to understand what it feels like to know that there is evidence of this conversation about roundabouts in the neighborhood going back to 2022 and yet people have not been informed, included, or consulted with. This doesn't feel like the people have been ignored or disregarded. This feels as if they have been kept in the dark intentionally. He notes this conversation and him being here to speak on behalf of the District and intends for it to be included in the City Council Minutes. The neighborhood needs some help. They have been looking at every avenue and plan to address this at every angle they can come at it from. To address an issue that effects these people more than anybody, the ones that look out on this corridor and the ones that see the crime and traffic and all the problems with it.

Councilperson Powell asks if he has reached out to the Mayor's Office. Mr. Irving indicates he did make a call to Mr. Leach at the Street Department on Friday but did not get a call back. He has talked to several people but not anyone in the Mayor's Office at this point. Powell asks because she is curious as to what his follow-up was. Councilperson Garrett adds he hasn't received anything and asks if anybody else on the Council has regarding this matter of roundabouts. Various members say no. Councilperson Mason mentions he recently reached out to the Mayor's Office regarding another matter in the East Central Neighborhood and has scheduled a meeting for February 12 at 3:00 PM. He suggests they also address this matter then because he was not privy to any of this information either. He mentions being one of the people Mr. Irving called and how that was the first he heard of it. He met with the Mayor in December to bring him up to speed on what is planned for his District and this was never mentioned.

Craig Wright, City Controller, adds that Adam Leach, the City Engineer, has been out of the office both Friday and today but will be in tomorrow.

Dan Gibson provides an update on the Ethics Advisory Committee. Just as a reminder of what they do, there are 9 members appointed to the Committee and their job is simply to put together a proposed set of standards that will then come to the City Council for review at some point this year. As part of those standards, they will put together a framework of what a full-time permanent Ethics Commission would look like. The 9 individuals on that Advisory Committee are not going to be on that Ethics Commission going forward and are just here to set up the process. Ultimately, it will come to Council to do with that what they please. They are not investigating anybody or doing anything particular, they are just 9 volunteers trying to put together a set of standards. The next meeting is this Thursday, February 8 at 7:30 PM at Marian Hunt Library. The meetings are open to the public and they encourage anybody out there who is interested to please show up. In the next month or two, they hope to have an initial solid first draft of what they have put together in terms of a set of standards and will be getting that out to the public in the best way possible and providing many opportunities (as many as they can) for public input and feedback. There is also a Facebook page, Muncie Ethics Advisory Committee.

Rob Miller is here to speak about the Muncie Inn. It has been in the news, many people are here to show support and there has been many cruel things said on Facebook. There is a lot of misinformation about who lives there and he just wanted to give some of these people a voice. He was asked Friday to bring his pickup truck down to help some families move across town. A lot of them had to leave many belongings behind to be able to move into a better situation. Even lost pets were left behind. He is not upset that the City closed the Muncie Inn because it is a disaster but he wants people to understand that these people have jobs or are on disability. They aren't the drug addicted people that they've been made out to be. They just do not have a better option. The next step for them is sleeping in their car or sleeping in a tent. He met and helped move families. He met a person on Friday named Ryan who has a job and gets to work every day but just cannot come up with the money for a down payment on an apartment. Thankfully, some folks got him a down payment and he was able to secure an apartment but there are families there still now with nowhere to go. They are not being taken care of. A homeless shelter for people that are trying is cruel. We have to do better. When the Inn closes, this need isn't going to go away. We have working people with jobs that their only option is sleeping a tent with their wife or husband or be split up every night. The Inn was stopping that and we don't have something to replace that in town. He is asking Council to look into what can be done for transitional housing. What can be done to help people with down payment assistance? These folks are not monsters. Sure, there are bad apples there but not all of them are.

Kim Miller is also here to speak about the Muncie Inn. Last week she volunteered some of her time to help move some of the residents out of the Muncie Inn. During this time, she listened to their stories and most said they were never supposed to be there this long but life and things just happened. Volunteering her time has showed her just how much we need good transitional housing in Muncie. Many are celebrating the closing of this motel with no thought of what is next for these people. There will still be a need for housing for people who do not qualify for aid because the situation they are in just is not quite bad enough. This place was a buffer between homelessness and stable housing. We shouldn't have to break up families or make them choose between leaving their pets behind or even having to decide what possessions they get to keep and what gets left behind. This is the option if they go into a

shelter. No one wants to be faced with those choices just because the system we have doesn't work unless you have essentially lost everything. She challenges each councilmember to research transitional housing in other cities and see what organizations have done to create something that really works. When researching these things and talking to others, think about the person she helped this weekend that thanks her for just being kind. So many people are not kind and this brings back a little bit of faith. These are people who are trying to do the best they can in the unfortunate circumstances they have found themselves in. Without people who support us in a time of need, any one of us could be in this situation.

Councilperson Mason informs everyone that the meeting he has scheduled with the Mayor on February 12 was initially concerning the Muncie Inn. He has questions to the urgency, time frame and plan for this property. Again, what is the urgency? Giving people ten 10 days to vacate a property and to (really) not have anywhere for them to go just doesn't sound too humane. Dishman adds especially in the winter. Mason continues that he and Tom Collins who is the President of the Neighborhood Association and his Vice-President will meet with the Mayor at 3:00 on February 12 to hopefully get some answers.

Paige Brown states the Muncie Inn is a symptom of the problem addressing our local housing crisis as an opportunity that we cannot afford to be missing. While there have been efforts to develop new housing on the edges of our City, we have been neglecting the core of our community. The City's housing stock is its greatest asset. It represents our willingness to invest and maintain our current infrastructure and our investment in the future. The past several years we have played pick and choose with ordinance enforcement, leaving too many of Muncie's most vulnerable citizens prey to absent and negligent slumlords. This is a predominantly new Council and a new opportunity to ensure that Muncie's most vulnerable citizens have safe and equitable housing. She would like to challenge the Council to take what we know about chronically bad landlords and move forward in a proactive fashion.

Sue Weiland attended both candidate forums last fall for City Council. She thinks they all are Muncie natives or have been here since childhood and confirms if any of them have been somewhere else for at least a few years. A few of the councilmembers raise their hands. Weiland explains she landed here in 1993 to take a job at Bracken Library bring pretty much the same type of job she was already working but it was closer to her aging parents in southern Wisconsin. People would resign or retire and new people would be hired in. After a few months of getting to know her co-workers, she would ask them what they found weirdest about Muncie. Was it that the streets are discontinuous or offset making navigation difficult? Or all the extraneous no turn right on red signs? Or the manhole covers that are not flush with a pavement? They would laugh and say yeah they noticed those things because they do not occur other places. Most of the no turn right on red signs are mostly gone and the manhole covers are getting better. One of her work colleagues, who was born and bred here, graduated from Ball State with two degrees and ultimately got a job in Bracken Library. Once in conversation with her and several other people, Weiland was complaining about all of the unnecessary no right turn on red signs. Her colleague said that maybe it is just that Muncie has a lot of really busy intersections. That made her ask, busier than Indianapolis!? Busier than Chicago!? You can turn right on red in those places. But, her work friend didn't know that because all she knew was what was here. In contrast, Weiland has lived in 7 cities in 6 states spread across 3 time zones. Places as small as 4,800 and as large as 3 million. When a new person was hired at work, people in associated units would be involved in the interview. Candidates would, at some point, ask about Muncie. Her work colleague always said "I've lived my whole life here, I think it's pretty nice." That always caused Weiland to grip her teeth because all it does is prove that she has no idea how much better, worse, or just different life can be. She didn't plan to live in all of those different

places, it just kind of happened that way. However, she is very grateful for the perspective it gave her. It is a plus that all of the councilmembers are very familiar with Muncie's history, problems and situations but if everyone has the same or similar backgrounds and experiences it seems you can get in (kind of) an echo chamber and not be aware of possible solutions that might occur to someone with a broader background. Therefore, this is just to say that promoting Muncie roots in candidate forums was something of a turnoff for Weiland. She voted for Holly Juip simply because she had lived for several years in Michigan. She wonders if the same is true for some other voters and they just didn't vote because they all look the same. She would encourage the Council to solicit opinions in every situation from people with wider experiences, between the corporations, the University, the hospital, etc. It should be possible to find something.

Lorraine Tomlin just wanted to say thank you for having the opportunity to serve on the Muncie Redevelopment Development Commission for the last 2 ½ years. They have made great strides in housing and are still working through it. Now, it is up to the Council to make more of that happen. It has been an honor and a pleasure. She thanks Councilpersons Selvey and Green for their votes today and Councilpersons Garrett and Dishman for their votes in the past.

Seth Rawlings is also going to talk about the Muncie Inn as well as some stuff going on in the state legislature. Think about all of Muncie, generally 26,000 households. Our median household income is \$40,000. By large, that means half (so roughly \$13,000) in our City make either \$40,000 or less. Take in to account the average rent price being \$900, which amounts up to about \$11,000 a year. In doing the math, you're going to take about 20% away for taxes and end up with \$32,000 while \$11,000 of that will be spent of housing. The households (not people) have \$21,000 on average leftover for any basic necessity. That is not food, clothes, nor dare they want to go out and have some fun. The Muncie Inn problem is not just the Muncie Inn. It is everywhere you see all at once. For example, all of the abandoned houses. The Muncie Inn is a failure on all of us who do not take enough time to help these people out. As it has been mentioned, these people are not monsters. A lot of them have fallen on hard times, some of them have fallen on addiction and some of them just lost a job. Many people going through addiction got there by legal measures such as overstaying a prescription. That is all to say we have to be better at how we help those people as a City. Transitional housing is a big debt. We still have unused ARP funds that could be allocated to these people and there are other avenues that can be taken as a City. A big shout out goes to the Muncie Folk Collective because they do a lot of great work. Anyone can look up and donate to their cash app because it goes directly to the families. Rawlings makes a hard pivot on to the state legislature, noticing an attack on a certain city in the state of Indiana, Indianapolis. It has been going on for years but this year felt a little worse. Indianapolis can no longer tax downtown for its redevelopment purposes. Indianapolis cannot have a bus line because of the state legislator. The City of Muncie has to, needs to, come up with arms with other cities in the state. The state cannot allow cities to not control themselves. We need to be able to control ourselves in a more localized fashion. The state legislature is very hypocritical in saying they don't want big government, especially when it comes from "the feds" but they are acting as a big government in Indianapolis. We have to be better as a City about gaining up with our fellow cities. That's how we have to be able to govern ourselves.

Lynn Thornburg is on the Historic Preservation Commission and claims they have not heard anything about the roundabouts. The Mayor's wife is on the Commission so you would think they might have conversations at home that mentioned stuff like that and then she'd bring it to the Commission and

say, "did you realize they are going to have to impact some of the historic homes in the Kimbrough District of which we oversee every month?" There is her comment on that. When it comes to the Muncie Inn, she recalls being on the Committee when they did the Munciana Homes. Any bit of federal funds involved in a project (whether it's a year later they happen to use that property but say maybe they were talking about it a couple years ago) there are requirements for relocation and it's not just getting some nonprofit people together to send these people into shelters. There is rent subsidies, notification, meetings, information and none of that was done. It is not like 10 days ago they knew the Muncie Inn wasn't livable as parts of it were shut down during the last Administration. It has been horrible for years and nothing was done so to kick people out and give them 10 days notice didn't just happen. It is the same with the roundabout. This all doesn't just happen. We talk about transparency but didn't have that with either situation.

Wayne Scaife first thanks Councilpersons Mason, Selvey, McIntosh and Green for their votes. He just wanted to clear up something from the last meeting when he spoke about the BOT agreement. He did not want anybody to think that he was against it. He is not against it and claims he just doesn't understand it, like many others that spoke out against it. As far as he remembers there was only one person they said they was against it in the December Meeting and that was Mr. Overbey. Everybody else just said they didn't understand it and was trying to get clarification. In that meeting, former Councilperson Clark, who was on the Public Works Committee, made a motion to Bring it Off the Table for the Council to reconsider. Well, he was the one member that didn't appear at the Public Works Committee Meeting to answer questions. There were many unanswered questions and even the contractor that was there tried but couldn't answer them all. Many questions remained unanswered but the second meeting never occurred and the councilperson on that Committee didn't appear at the meeting to answer questions got upset because no one called him and asked questions. He should have been at the Meeting to answer those questions. Somebody spoke out and said they weren't comfortable having a private conversation with him over the phone and wanted to have it publicly on the record. Again, Scaife isn't against it. He just doesn't understand it. One thing he wanted to clear up was Councilperson Basham being misleading last month with his holiday reading month actually being the feasibility study yet made it seem like it explained the BOT process. Councilperson Basham responds no, he had the BOT agreement tucked in to that reading over the holidays. There were 340 pages plus the BOT agreement. Scaife asks if it explained the BOT agreement. Basham answers it did to his satisfaction. Scaife just wants to get it done and move past it. Lastly, it is a disservice to this City that the Mayor hasn't attended the last few City Council meetings to try to explain anything to the Council yet the first meeting with the new Council he comes in and gives an input.

Brian Shaw lives in the East Central Neighborhood which was brought up earlier and provides some recommendations. He has several edits to the City Code he wishes to present. One, an edit to require new methods for notifying residents that meetings are coming up. Advertising in the newspaper that nobody subscribes to or posting on a bulletin board at City Hall doesn't cut it so they need to get with the times. There are subscription services with text messaging, email, etc. that would also help reaching out to Neighborhood Associations concerning things in that neighborhood. Second, an edit to require any business or residence flagged as a public nuisance to require to pay for any services that it uses. Police, Fire, or Ambulance for example. The Muncie Inn has had a lot of that over the last couple of years. If they had been forced to actually pay for these excessive runs and whatnot then maybe they would have changed their business model a little bit and not had so many problems. Then, the people that actually

need transitional housing could have been fine and we would not have had that part of this situation. Deal with the crime and the addiction element. Of course there are other things that will have to be done for people with addictions to help solve that problem. Third, an edit to require any business that received notice of violation condemned or otherwise closed that affects residents then put them on probation and have it to where they need to be evaluated on a quarterly basis. The second floor of the Muncie Inn was closed down 6 years ago by the previous Administration. Why was it not inspected multiple times thereafter? Had it been required to be inspected every quarter for 5 years or so then maybe some of these little problems accumulated and now it has become some unsurmountable thing that they won't be able to reopen. Maybe they could have made changes. Fourth, an edit to include an appropriate set of guidelines, procedures, etc. that the City would follow in situations like this. Having a standard set of guidelines to follow if it is going to affect someone being kicked out of a property. It is possible to reach out to the public for an organized volunteer effort to help and such. He does not think there is anything standardized at all with regard to that process. He has no idea what the previous Administration did with the Red Carpet Inn but with this one, the public obviously knows what is happening. He has other ideas but his time is up so he will send all the councilmembers an email.

Nathaniel Snow recalls those who have spoken today about the Muncie Inn are the neighbors and the ones most imminently affected by the Muncie Inn. These citizens stand to benefit the most by the Muncie Inn closing in terms of increased property values yet they are standing up for those who have been displaced. He applauds and agrees with them. As his teacher Walter Williams once said, there is an optimal quantity of low-quality housing. Increasing the costliness of managing a facility would foreclose upon the opportunity to profitably operate low-quality housing. We need some low-quality housing and too much enforcement of code would actually make that more impossible. He then wanted to encourage students to attend an exercise voice at the upcoming meetings regarding the development by Ball State of the intersection at University and McKinley. He is confused about why they're building a brand new theater on tax free land near the University when they could be using facilities that are available downtown. In regards to the matter concerning roundabouts but more generally the following proposal: as the City engages in necessary eminent domain matters it can elect to adopt a process that citizens may deem fair. When the City seeks to practice eminent domain it can first offer the property owner what the City considers a fair market price for the property being appropriated. If the citizen agrees to this amount, the City agrees not to reassess the remaining property value for 7 years. Alternatively, the citizen can propose an alternative value to the property that will be taken and expresses the value of the property that remains as a proportion of the total property. That expressed value then becomes the value that the property is assessed at for the next 7 years taxes. If the property holders express value makes the project financially too great of a burden for the City then the project must be abandoned by the City. In closing, he asks the Council whether it is possible to appoint voters registered as Independent to citizen boards and if not, why not? Finally, he invites all to the Frederick Douglass Jazz Works free event scheduled for February 22 at Pruis Hall. Councilperson Powell confirms the date and location of the meeting which he invited the students. Snow explains the meeting regarding McKinley and University will be at Pruis Hall on Monday the 12 and at Cornerstone on Tuesday the 13.

Jeanetta Pressley has been helping people on the streets for a long time and she feels for the people of the Muncie Inn. That is why she is opening a shelter here in Muncie called Fiona's Place located at 413 S. Liberty (the old Aquarius House). She has acquired a building through Rhythm Ministries who turned it over to her and it comes with a nonprofit because she is a Lay Pastor. They agreed to help by

taking in a big family from the Muncie Inn to place upstairs for 10 days. The husband has a job but there are five small children so they are trying to help them so that they can get a place of their own. The problem is that Muncie doesn't have enough housing for folks that live on low-income, such as herself living on SSI benefits. If she didn't own her property over in Thomas Park Avondale, she would not be able to live in Muncie. Fiona's Place will be partnering with Christian Ministries and they are hoping that it will be operating as a Women and Children's Emergency Shelter at the end of the summer. Right now, they are using it as a night shelter collaborating with Christian Ministries and the Muncie Mission who supplied cots. It is currently ran on total donations and people are coming in now for housing. They open at 7:00 PM, provide dinner, a shower, laundry services, sleep and breakfast in the morning. However, Pressley is limited to how many people she can take. Right now they can only take 7 people in so the one family is all they can house right now. It has been her dream to do this. She is still on hospice so not quite well and experiencing a lot of medical issues but this was something she has always wanted for Muncie. The Council confirm how they can make donations to Fiona's Place. Pressley states yes, on location. She, her partner and service dog Bernard are living in the downstairs area to provide supervision and further assistance. It is church-owned and everything has been donated. Courtney Marsh has helped her so she wanted to show some recognition to her.

Audie Barber claims it is a shame that the Council turned away 3 different people tonight before their 3-minutes was up and that another few minutes wouldn't have hurt. They need to reevaluate that because the last Council gave people plenty of time to speak their peace. If they kept repeating, it was different but claims President Dishman told him people wouldn't be cut off. The Council needs to reconsider that rule because 3-minutes is not enough. He brought up the solar fields last month and wished to bring them up again because there is a problem with solar fields going in. The County has an ordinance on offsets but the offsets don't retain to the incorporated property of Muncie so the Council needs to evaluate these offsets and decide how they want to continue with the offsets of these solar fields. If not, they're going to be able to put them right up against the sidewalks or leave a little bit of space between a fence and the sidewalk and the solar field. That is going to be an issue so it is very important that they look into this. In addition, this is the second month he has talked about it up here. Barber moves on to AFSCME referring to Councilperson Garrett recognizing them with an award tonight. They are a great group of people. A group that is still working without a contract with the City of Muncie which is a problem and the Council needs to pull strings, pull budgets, shut budgets off, whatever it takes to get these people to contract that they deserve. The Council needs to put a fire under the Mayor's butt and make sure that happens. The councilmembers gave up their raise but these people didn't (pointing to the Street Department employees in the audience). They deserve it. They work out there every day, ran, snow, sleet and hail. Every day. Moving on to the State Highway, Indiana 32 is planning to put roundabouts at Main and Madison and Jackson and Madison. It has been in the paper, online, and part of the Indiana Department of Transportation lists so the roundabouts these folks are talking about have been discussed for well over a year now. That is why they're getting new sidewalks and stuff down there. He believes he has mentioned this before at a previous meeting but they're going to narrow it down to one lane in and one lane out with bike lanes and parking on both sides. Again, it is on the Indiana Department of Transportation website so everyone needs to check it out. For them to shut it down, they are going to have to do the same thing that was done out on Riggin Road. We are going to have to stand together and make it where those intersections do not become roundabouts. He believes that has all been in progress for a little over a year and a half and the Mayor took a \$3.5 million buyout so that once they are done with the paving and new sidewalks it will one day be managed by the Street Department. They will be the

ones that will have to clean the snow off it because the State won't come in anymore due to the Mayor receiving that \$3.5 million lump sum payment. Food for thought. Please reconsider the 3-minutes. They cut-off 4 or 5 people tonight who had a lot more to say and they don't come up here raising cane all the time like some other people.

Mary Stilts wants to reiterate what Mr. Barber said, that the State is who is doing those roundabouts. She has been working with them for the last 2 years or so because of all the wrecks that were occurring at Jackson and Main. They have been planning these roundabouts for the last 4 or 5 years and the City, unfortunately, has no control over it. We have to fight with the State. We, as voters, need to go to the State Highway Department and let them know we have an issue with this. The City doesn't control that right now and the State has it in plans. Regarding the Muncie Inn, there are ARP funds that are available and quite a bit of money has been set aside to A Better Way to help manage that and get some of these people in to housing. They are paying deposits, utility deposits, and first and last month's rent. They're working with them. She knows the housing sucks here in Muncie and claims she, herself, is on poverty, living on Social Security, unable to afford to move let alone into a 2 or 3-bedroom house or apartment. She lives in a rundown house but it is safe, clean and she takes care of it. Yes, we need something particularly for housing and rent but we cannot control what a private owner does with their rental property. We can cite them with ordinances for rule violations but that is about all we can do. Things need to change. Maybe more collaboration can take place with the Muncie Redevelopment Commission to come up with a couple more properties like what Ms. Pressley's Fiona's Place to provide some additional emergency housing. Stilts mentioned she told the last Council that she would be willing to volunteer and police it, sitting there all night. She doesn't care since she is retired so encourages the Council to think about it.

Councilperson Garrett announces he will be at the meeting with Councilperson Mason to figure out what they can do to help. They need to make sure that they are here for everybody in everything that they need. That is why the community put them up here. If someone asks for answers then they need to find them the answers. They need to make sure they are telling people both the answers that they do and don't like. It is 100% to be truthful and transparent. He applauds Mason for getting that meeting set up. It shows initiative and he really appreciate that. He mentions he was on vacation last month and had trouble with the Zoom software so apologizes for not being here. He was on the last Council and heard the beginnings of the BOT discussions. He claims he is not against it either. He requests Councilperson Basham send him what he had last month (the letter). Basham clarifies he didn't have a letter but went to the Mayor's Office and asked him if he had a copy of the BOT Agreement who then printed him one. He believes one was provided to Councilperson Powell and Gullion as well referring a lunch they all attended. Councilperson Gullion recalls but acknowledges there is no agreement yet, it was just the ordinance. Basham continues they asked questions about it and he got more information. Gullion and Powell both reference that the ordinance is different from the agreement. Powell states she did not have anything additional although did ask for additional. Basham asked for a printed copy and was able to get it. Garrett just wanted to be able to take it to his Neighborhood Association to be open and transparent with everybody. Again, he apologizes for missing last month and makes note he has never missed a meeting.

Councilperson Mason has a question about the Muncie Inn and asks if it is operated as a motel or low-income housing. Garrett thinks it is an almost borderline extended stay type of deal. He is unsure if it is operated week to week or month to month.

Pastor Joseph Romero, the Shepard's Heart and Hands, has only been in Muncie for a year but was at the Muncie Inn all week last week helping transfer people. To Mason's question, yes, some of the people there are paying rent week to week. A lot of them are making \$700 a month. He knows them personally because he has knocked on every door there to try to help. For those that don't know who he is, he is the local missionary to the homeless. He is in the woods every week trying to help people get out of that situation. He has over 40 years of doing this kind of work in many different states, first mentioning Orlando, Florida. He has gotten many people out of the woods by working with the city and its agencies. He is concerned like a lot of people but does bring solutions. He apologizes but will have to learn how all this works regarding the meetings but insists he wants to help. He has a nonprofit who is looking at different types of housing because a lot of the problems have to do with barrier to entry. Here is the good news of the Muncie Inn incident; the Mayor provided funding for certain kinds of provisions and a lot of people are thinking of the normal shelters and all that. He knows for a fact that many of them have been approved for the Muncie Housing Authority, having friends in that Department. He also knows that JV has special housing going on by a special property manager. They're not going to a list. The problem is the 10-day eviction as it wasn't enough time so people are going to be displaced unless some miracle happens and the eviction can be extended. He will be available for those displaced with tents and further help to assist with that kind of stuff because that's just what he does. Orlando, Florida does not have snow there so when he heard about the snow here he said someone has to be boots on the ground running because a lot of the displaced are not reaching out to agencies. This year alone 61% of new people in Indiana are experiencing homelessness amounting to the 2,000 range. Those stats are on public websites. He informs a camp he encountered where he helped put up a giant tent with a wood burning stove. He gives thanks to his dear friend who helped make it happen. Romero is out here evaluating what is going on and what all they can do. When he heard about the Muncie Inn, of course, he had to be boots on the ground. When he first showed up people were very ignorant and not aware of who to contact even though it was posted on the City Facebook page and in the newspaper. It wasn't working and we needed boots on the ground. He wants the Council to think about hiring someone to be the local boots on the ground type of person that can work with agencies. He volunteers for the position. He already told the HUB he was interested because it does make a difference in how long a person is going to be out there. One person going to the HUB he recalled didn't even know that there was a housing counselor available. The hotel would run their pricing month to month. There are people paying \$900 a month, people paying \$700 a month, and people paying \$800 a month. The other problem is many of these people will not qualify for many of the housing programs because they have been evicted. There needs to be housing set up with low barrier entry such as second chance housing, which is something he knows how to run. His 40 years' experience includes running residential programs such as Teen Challenge and assisting at the Mission. He has worked for many nonprofit residential programs and will be contacting Jeanetta who the Council graciously embraced. He hopes they will embrace him as well.

Councilperson Basham asks if Romero could provide an update since he has been over there, boots on the ground. What is the status of the people there that are still in need of housing? Romero informs that right now there are about 6 people that have been approved for the Muncie Housing Association but there's a transition period. He was told they had to be out by the 5th but has heard and cannot confirm it has been extended. He is unsure that but does know the people still there are saying they have nowhere to go.

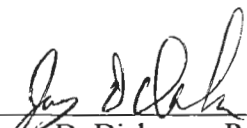
Councilperson Mason asks how many residents. Romero informs there are about 48 residents, some of which are double occupied but a lot of single people, couples, and one particular apartment with a dog, 3 cats, 2 birds and a fish tank. That family is going to be in their car because they don't have anywhere to go nor do they know anyone here. There is a need for this kind of housing. He knows JV is providing some but they don't know if the dots will be connected fast enough. He would be more than happy to provide information. The homeless and the people at the Muncie Inn have his contact info so that there tells how much he cares about everybody involved. He is very passionate for being one of Muncie's newest residents and hopes to make it his final home. He is trying to inspire unity for all of us from the residents, churches, and people of faith and of non-faith. Let's solve problems, not build walls.

Jeanetta Pressley adds to Romero's comments that the problem is not having affordable housing for people to get into. It is the fact these landlords and property management companies will not take people if they have an eviction. Anyone can go online to mycase.gov and review if someone has any evictions and if they do then it's a big no, no, no. There are about 11 families still stuck in the Muncie Inn with nowhere to go and she took in one of those families today. It is a shit show and the people there have nowhere to go.

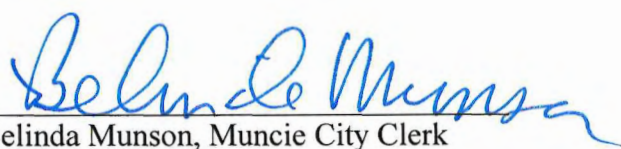
Councilperson Powell refers to the neighbors and residents of the East Central Neighborhood Association. She used to live over there so is aware that the Muncie Inn had always been an issue. She thinks it is wonderful that a lot of the movement to take care of the neighbors has come directly from the neighborhood residents. That is really admirable. Secondly, the ladies and gentlemen of AFSCME continue to do such an amazing job for our community even while still in negotiations and feeling unappreciated. They show up every day and do our City proud. She appreciates that as well and just wanted to make note.

ADJOURNED:

A motion was made by Garrett and seconded by Green to Adjourn. A vote by acclamation showed 9 yeas and 0 nays. ADJOURNED.



Jerry D. Dishman, President of the
Muncie Common Council



Belinda Munson, Muncie City Clerk
of the Muncie Common Council