**TOWN OF MERIDIAN HILLS**

**TOWN COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**   
**Monday, September 8, 2025, 7:00 pm, Park Tudor**

<http://www.youtube.com/@TownofMeridianHillsIndiana>

• Council President Freihofer called the meeting to order at 7:01PM ET after confirming Quorum. The following were in attendance:

• Walter Freihofer, Town Council Member—President

• Zach Gordon, Town Council Member

• Greg Jacoby, Town Council Member

• Cole Marr, Town Council Member

• Craig Huse, Town Council Member

• John Dillon, Clerk-Treasurer

• Rick Batza, on behalf of Town Marshal Mike Russo who was not in attendance

• David Borden, Town Engineer (CrossRoad Engineers, PC)

• Jim Higgins, Town Accountant (LWG CPAs & Advisors)

• Sloan Schafer, Town Attorney (Dentons)

1. Pledge Of Allegiance—Led by Council President Freihofer
2. Any Resident Issues

* Rachel Patzer (160 E. 71st St.) asked the Council about an issue with an existing path near here residence that she and her family uses. She stated that another resident constructed a fence to block the path. She spoke with other neighbors around the area who have utilized the path. Council President Freihofer stated that he spoke with several neighbors around the area, and he believe it is not an issue that the Town needs to address. Council President Freihofer recommended that Ms. Patzer speak with neighbor who constructed the fence to attempt to remedy the issue. Ms. Patzer explained that because the path is closed, her children have to walk along 71st St., which she believes is dangerous because there is no crossing path. Council President Freihofer stated that 71st St. is under the City of Indianapolis’ jurisdiction and not the Town’s jurisdiction. Council President Freihofer asked Rick Batza—Chief Deputy of the Town Police—to discuss the issue off the record with Ms. Patzer.

1. Approval of Minutes of July 14, 2025—Council Member Huse moved to approve the Council Minutes for the July 14, 2025, Council meeting, and Council Member Gordon seconded. No discussion. The motion passed with a 5-0 vote.
2. Clerk Treasurer Report
   * Clerk-Treasurer Dillon stated that he notified the resident located at 7101 N. Pennsylvania St. regarding overgrown foliage at the northeast intersection of 71st St. and Pennsylvania St. and that the resident removed the overgrown foliage.
   * Clerk-Treasurer Dillon notified all individuals attending the meeting that the meeting is being livestream via the Town’s YouTube account (<http://www.youtube.com/@TownofMeridianHillsIndiana>) for purposes of compliance with Ind. Code § 5-14-1.5-2.9.
   * Approval of Claims – Total Claim Payout—Clerk-Treasurer Dillon introduced the Town’s claims and recommended approval by the Council. Clerk-Treasurer Dillon noted that the claims total $223,997.95. Council Member Jacoby moved to approve the total claim payout, and Council Member Gordon seconded. No discussion. The motion passed with a 5-0 vote.
   * Acceptance of July 2025 Financial Packet—Clerk-Treasurer Dillon recommended approval by the Council of the July 2025 Financial Packet. Council Member Jacoby moved to approve the July 2025 Financial Packet, and Council Member Marr seconded. No discussion. The motion passed with a 5-0 vote.
   * Approval of July 2025 Bank Reconciliation—Clerk-Treasurer Dillon recommended approval by the Council of the July 2025 Bank Reconciliation. Council Member Jacoby moved to approve the July 2025 Bank Reconciliation, and Council Member Gordon seconded. No discussion. The motion passed with a 5-0 vote.
   * Review of the 2026 Budget
     + Introduction and Public Hearing—Clerk-Treasurer Dillon introduced Town Accountant Jim Higgins. Town Accountant Higgins introduced the Town’s 2026 budget and explained that the Council would not take action on the 2026 budget at today’s meeting. The purpose of introducing the 2026 budget at this meeting is for the Council’s review and for public comments. Town Accountant Higgins explained the 2026 budget at a high level and asked if any of the Council Members had questions. No Council Members had any existing questions. Council President Freihofer asked for a motion to open discussion of the 2026 budget for public comment. Council Member Gordon moved to open discussion of the 2026 budget for public comment. Council Member Huse seconded. No discussion. The motion passed with a 5-0 vote.
     + There were no public comments for the 2026 budget. Council Member Marr moved to close public comment on the 2026 budget. Council Member Gordon seconded. No discussion. The motion passed with a 5-0 vote.
     + Adoption – October 13, 2025 (Special Meeting)—Clerk-Treasurer Dillon stated that the Council vote on the 2026 budget will occur at the Council’s October 13 Special Meeting.
   * Discussion of Impacts of Senate Enrolled Act 1 (property tax bill) - UPDATE—Town Accountant Higgins Clerk-Treasurer Dillon asked Town Accountant Higgins for any further comments on Senate Enrolled Act 1. Town Accountant Higgins stated he had no further comments different than what he has previously stated to the Council.
   * Insurance Renewal Discussion – Joe Sandifer—(see Attachment A) The Town’s insurance broker, Joe Sandifer with Huntington Insurance, introduced himself and explained the Town’s current insurance policies, effective July 1, 2025. Mr. Sandifer explained that the Town obtained additional insurance for the Town’s monument signs. He stated that the Town’s insurance coverage includes: (i) general liability coverage ($1,000,000.00 per occurrence and $3,000,000.00 aggregate; (ii) coverage for the Town’s police officers; (iii) errors and omissions coverage; (iv) $1,000,000.00 auto liability coverage, which includes any damage to the Town’s 2019 Chevy; and (v) umbrella coverage ($5,000,000.00 occurrence and $8,000,000.00 aggregate). Mr. Sandifer explained that the insurance premium increased from last year (July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025). Great American Insurance Group is not the provider for the umbrella coverage anymore. Old Republic Insurance Company now provides the umbrella coverage. Clerk-Treasurer Dillon asked Mr. Sandifer the ratings for Great American Insurance Group and Old Republic Insurance Company. Mr. Sandifer stated that the ratings are both A+.
   * Clerk-Treasurer Dillon explained to the Council the implications of certain legislative modifications related to Ind. Code § 8-1-34-24 concerning cable franchise fees, and, under the legislative modifications, the Town’s cable franchise fee will decrease by one percent on January 1, 2026. Clerk-Treasurer Dillon that he and Council President Freihofer will research the Town’s current cable franchise fee ordinance and report their findings to the Council.
3. Town Marshal Report—Rick Batza, on behalf of Town Marshal Mike Russo who was not in attendance, introduced himself as the Chief Deputy of the Town Police. He stated that he has no updates. Chief Deputy Batza stated that he plans to speak with Ms. Patzer regarding her path and crosswalk concerns. Clerk-Treasurer Dillon asked Chief Deputy Batza about asked about the status of 75th St. from Illinois St. to Meridian St. to Pennsylvania St. to College Ave. Chief Deputy Batza explained that the Town Police is getting radar guns prepared to do radar activity in that area and that they have performed dozens of traffic stops.
4. New Business – Town Engineer

* Updated Monthly Report Project Updates:
  + - 2024-01 CCMG Pavement Project – CO No.1 (FINAL) - Council approved the change order 5-0. Final walkthrough and punch list completed. Certificate of substantial completion issued as maintenance bond received.
    - Invoice No.1 – submitted after CO No. 1 approval.—Town Engineer Borden explained that 2024-01 CCMG Pavement Project is complete. Town Engineer Borden requested the Council approve a change order for the project (see Attachment B) and to accept the project as filed. Town Engineer Borden explained that there was a cost overrun between this Project and the 2024-02 CCMG Pavement Project of roughly $4,500 dollars. Council Member Huse moved to approve the change order, and Council Member Jacoby seconded. Council President Freihofer stated that the additional width involved in the change order is beneficial to the Town. The motion passed with a 5-0 vote. Invoice will be submitted to Clerk-Treasurer for processing.
  1. 2024-02 CCMG Pavement Project – CO No. 1 (FINAL) – Council approved the change order 5-0.
     + Punchlist to be completed on Saturday 9/6/2025. —Town Engineer Borden explained that 2024-01 CCMG Pavement Project is complete. Town Engineer Borden requested the Council approve a change order for the project (see again Attachment B) and to accept the project as filed. Final walkthrough will be scheduled. Town Engineer Borden explained that there was a cost overrun between this Project and the 2024-01 CCMG Pavement Project of roughly $4,500 dollars. Council Member Huse moved to approve the change order, and Council Member Jacoby seconded. Council President Freihofer stated that the additional width involved in the change order is beneficial to the Town. The motion passed with a 5-0 vote.
* Funding Applications:
  1. 2024 Indy NIP Application (awarded) – City accepted revision to agreement to include 50% coverage of street sign replacement. Agreement for both 2024 & 2025 has been reviewed and returned to Indianapolis with comments.— Town Engineer Borden explained that the City of Indianapolis combined this agreement and the 2025 Indy NIP Application agreement together. He explained that the City of Indianapolis provided the draft Project Agreement to Town Attorney Sloan Schafer and that Town Attorney Schafer provided proposed revisions to the City of Indianapolis. Town Attorney Schafer stated that the City of Indianapolis responded with two additional changes and that the Project Agreement should be finalized shortly and executed by the Town.
  2. 2025-1 CCMG Application – call for projects opens 10/1/2025 – 10/31/2025
* Recommending the street segments on attachment “CCMG 2026-1” (see Attachment C) be included in application —Engineer recommended street list provided to council. Final decision on street selections will be made at the 10/13/25 council meeting.
  + - Town Engineer Borden explained that the State of Indiana put a delay on this Application until about a month ago. He stated that it will open on October 1 and close on October 31. Town Engineer Borden proposed to continue down the path that the Town previously decided to go down, which includes resurfacing all streets every 10 years. He believes it is good to leverage CCMG and to leverage INIP, which results in roughly 12.5% of local dollars to do these projects. He proposed that the Town continue with the cadence of a resurfacing cycle of 10 years. Town Engineer Borden explained that this funding is not guaranteed to continue but that it is good to go ahead with receiving it. He presented a map to the Council for proposed resurfacing. He explained that the proposed target areas get better pricing. Town Engineer talked about doing the Illinois St. repaving north of St. Luke Catholic Church. He also stated that a certain portion along 72nd St. off of Washington Blvd shows as a private road and that the Town is currently collecting gas tax on that portion. Council President Freihofer asked about Illinois St. north of St. Luke Catholic Church and that it is a private drive. Council President Freihofer said the Town stopped resurfacing that portion of the road in the past and asked Town Engineer Borden to look at area very closely. Council President Freihofer also asked about mileage discrepancy with the State of Indiana. He asked if additional miles were added to the Town. Town Engineer Borden stated that the number he received regarding the Town’s mileage is from the Local Technical Assistance Program. Council President Freihofer said talk to the State of Indiana about the correct number of miles in the Town to confirm the Town would not have to give any money back. Council President Freihofer said there is a special meeting on October 13 to review any application documents. Council Member Jacoby asked if 71st St. was given back. Council President Freihofer said there was a disagreement with the City of Indianapolis for snow plowing. Town Engineer Borden said that the matter can be continued until the October meeting.
* Infrastructure
  1. 75th St speed limit signage – installed—Town Marshall’s report stated that speed enforcement along 75th St. is now being able to be imposed. Town Engineer Borden explained that the 75th St. speed limit signage was installed.
  2. 75th St. Sidewalks: Penn to Washington Blvd. – It was discussed that this infrastructure would potentially be applied for on the 2026 INIP. Survey completed. Town Engineer Borden explained that the topographical survey was completed for the 75th St. sidewalks.
  3. Radar Speed Sign & Flashing Stop Sign – Radar speed limit sign approved to move forward. Location of stop sign to be tabled until 10/13/25*.* Council approved up to $9,000 last council meeting.—Town Engineer Borden explained that the Council previously approved up to $9,000 for radar speed signs and flashing stop signs. He asked the Council where those items should be place again for the council to consider where to place these. Council Member Jacoby stated that the Council should as the Town Police where the items should go. Council Member Jacoby asked Town Engineer Borden for the topographical survey for the 75th St. sidewalks.
* Utilities & Work in R/W
  1. *See engineer’s inventory report* (see Attachment D)*.*—Town Engineer Borden explained the existence of the inventory report regarding utilities so that the Town has records of them.
* Reviews
  1. Fence placement at 7481 E. Holliday Dr.—Town Engineer Borden explained that all comments regarding the fence placement at 7481 E. Holliday Dr. were addressed and permits were issued.

1. Land Use Committee
   1. 6445 Spring Mill Road—(Patrick M. and Laura D. Steele) (see Attachment E) Council President Freihofer introduced the variance request for 6445 Spring Mill Rd by Patrick M. and Laura D. Steele and that it is for a side yard setback for the east property line. He explained that the Land Use Committee (a/k/a the Development Standards Committee) voted for approval of this variance, subject to the existing private easement. Counsel for the Steels, Misha Rabinowitch, explained that the Steeles live at the residence and that they wanted to replace a swimming pool with a kitchen. He explained that the contractor and architect received permits for the modification but that they overlooked a setback issue. Mr. Rabinowitch stated that the improvements were located roughly 3 feet off property line, where the zoning requirement is 12 feet. There’s also a 6 inch encroachment into a private utility easement. He stated that Mr. and Mrs. Steel spoke with their neighbors and that they all indicated support. Council Member Gorden moved to approve the variance, subject to the Town not being liable for any easement encroachment located in the area, and Council Member Marr seconded. No discussion. The motion passed with a 5-0 vote.
   2. 170 E. 71st Street—(Jay Vernon and Karen Ann Wirts) (see Attachment F) Council President Freihofer introduced the variance request for 170 E. 71st St. by Jay Vernon and Karen Ann Wirts and that it is for a side yard setback for the west property line. The representative for the Wirtses, Joe Gradison from Gradison Design Build, explained that the Wirtses want to enclose an existing car port into a garage. Mr. Gradison explained that the proposed garage is identical in width and height to the existing carport. He stated that the depth will be extended slightly by about 6 feet to account for two car garage. Mr. Gradison stated that the Wirtses received letters of support from all neighbors. Council Member Jacoby moved to approve the variance, and Council Member Gordon seconded. The discussion. The motion passed with a 5-0 vote.
   3. 501 E. 75th Street—(BTC Acquisitions LLC, an Indiana limited liability company) (see Attachment G) Council President Freihofer introduced the variance request for 501 E. 75th St. by BTC Acquisitions LLC, an Indiana limited liability company, and that it is for a front yard setback for the north property line. The representative for BTC Acquisitions LLC, Matthew Peyton, explained that the north front yard setback under the applicable zoning ordinance makes the north front yard setback impractical for development. He explained that the issue with the setback is that there is only one other property taken into account for the north front yard setback and that it is a larger parcel. Mr. Peyton explained that BTC Acquisitions LLC will comply with the west front yard setback off Central Ave. He explained that the driveway will be off 75th St. Council President Freihofer explained that the Land Use Committee did not take a vote for recommendation. Council Member Jacoby request, for consistency purposes, that BTC Acquisitions LLC must place a row of trees between the garage and 75th St. Mr. Peyton stated that such requirement is acceptable. Council Member Jacoby moved to approve the variance, subject to the placement of trees and a landscaping barrier between the garage and 75th St, and Council Member Marr seconded. No discussion. The motion passed with a 5-0 vote.
   4. 55 Williams Creek Blvd—(Mary Elizabeth Segar Revocable Trust) (see Attachment H) Council President Freihofer introduced the variance request for 55 Williams Creek Blvd by Mary Elizabeth Segar Revocable Trust and that it is for a side yard setback for the north property line. Council for the Trust, Brian Tuohy, explained that the Trust owns the residence and explained that the issue with the setback is that there is only one other property taken into account for the north front yard setback. He explained that the Trust desires to construct a primary bedroom on the north side of the residence. Mr. Tuohy stated that approval letters were received from all neighbors. Council President Freihofer stated that the Land Use Committee recommended approval of the variance. Council Member Jacoby moved to approve the variance, and Council Member Huse seconded. No discussion. The motion passed with a 5-0 vote.
2. New Business—None.
3. Adjournment—With no other business to come before the Council, Council Member Marr moved to adjourn the meeting, and Council Member Huse seconded. The meeting was adjourned with a 5-0 vote at 7:54PM ET.