TOWN OF DUNE ACRES
COUNCIL MINUTES - DRAFT
October 20, 2026

The Town of Dune Acres Town Council met for its regular monthly meeting on Tuesday, October 20, 2026 at the Clubhouse. Council President Richard Hawksworth called the meeting to order at 7:01 pm., with Council members Alex Stemer and Paul Woidke; Clerk-Treasurer Bonnie Hawksworth; and Town Attorney Adam Mindel in attendance. Commissioners present were: Dick Taylor, Maintenance (in person) and Shawn Fitzpatrick, Parks (via Zoom).

The meeting was broadcast live and recorded via Zoom. The recording will be archived online for 90 days at:

https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/07sveXAlpKHbG1khU6tmAvI1FAu3hxycohzn5_4tWJABB0F0uKuksaV9C__DZbOh.3Nw7xM38vphwYffW
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APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

There was a motion and second to approve the minutes from the September 15th meeting. The vote was unanimous in favor; motion passed.

APPROVAL OF FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Clerk-Treasurer Hawksworth presented the September month-end financial report. The combined bank account balance as of September 30 is $813,430.79. At this point in the year, approximately 80% of our budget has been expended. Year-to-date revenue is $638,055.17.

It was moved and seconded to approve the financial report. The vote was unanimous in favor; motion passed.

PAYMENT OF CLAIMS:

Clerk-Treasurer Hawksworth asked the Town Council to approve Accounts Payable Vouchers for October in the amount of $67,684.13 (http://duneacres.org/apv/apv_2026-10.pdf). This includes some Clubhouse rental deposit refunds, roof repairs at the Clubhouse, buoy removal, and the annual accounting software fee. It was moved and seconded to approve the APVs. The vote was unanimous in favor; motion passed.

EXECUTIVE REPORT:

OAK DRIVE BEACH ACCESS IMPROVEMENTS

A new walkway and improved stairs and deck have been constructed on town property to the west of the Martino residence on Oak Drive. These improvements were funded by DACIF.

COMMUNITY CROSSINGS GRANT APPLICATION

The Town submitted a Community Crossings grant request to the Indiana Department of Transportation at the end of September. The state has moved the Community Crossings program to a single grant cycle with more limited funding than in past years. The Town's proposal covered paving work on Ridge Drive, Circle Drive, East Road, and Summit Court. If it is approved, there will be some stormwater management

improvements, beginning with survey work later this fall. The roads commissioner, David Kudrna, and clerk-treasurer have both dedicated time on this proposal.

MUST DELIBERATIONS

Clerk-Treasurers from all Porter County municipalities have met three times this month to discuss changes to the state's local income tax, which will take effect in 2028. Dune Acres has a relatively modest voice in the discussion because we are by far the smallest municipality in the county. But these are important meetings which will determine to what degree we maintain the roughly $30k per year allocation from local income taxes paid by residents.

SALARY ORDINANCE

President Hawksworth presented his proposal for this year's salary ordinance to include a generous compensation package for each employee.

His proposal recommends a 6% across-the-board base pay raise for all hourly and salaried positions, which aligns with the state's Max Levy Growth Quotient for 2027. Hawksworth noted the 6% was a historical anomaly with 3% being a more typical MLGQ.

President Hawksworth also recommended changes to the Town's fringe benefit structure.

First, to eliminate administrative tracking errors and manual mid-year adjustments, all time-of-service milestones will be calculated strictly by calendar year. An additional year of service will be accrued on January 1st of each year, rather than on the date of hire.

Second, Hawksworth proposes that the vacation time accrual schedule be accelerated to provide more time off (or payable vacation stipend) earlier in an employee's tenure. Under this proposal, an employee would be paid three full weeks of vacation stipend after four years of service. Under the current framework, three weeks vacation stipend is not earned until the eleventh year of service. Vacation or vacation stipend is calculated as a prorated amount based on an employee's average daily hours worked over the prior twelve months as has been done previously.

Third, the end-of-year holiday bonus will be rebranded as a Service Time Bonus, paid annually with December payroll. The old 1% holiday bonus will be replaced by a flat-rate milestone payment, ranging from $200 for newer employees to $750 at year one, and maxing out at $3,500 for those with twenty or more years of service.

The fourth and final facet of the proposal is a new Official Holiday Pay, paid monthly. Hawksworth noted that Dune Acres has never offered paid holidays, PTO, or sick days. To remedy this, and to act as a permanent PTO safety net without creating an undue administrative burden, Hawksworth proposes the town provide a flat eight hours of straight-time pay for each of eleven federal holidays, regardless of an employee's standard daily schedule. Employees who work on a holiday would be paid straight time, in addition to holiday pay. Combined, this injects 88 hours of extra pay across the calendar year to provide the flexibility every employee deserves.

President Hawksworth closed his introduction by stating that he believes it is the right time to maximize the town's current state allowance to support staff, noting that tariffs and the cost-implications of the war with Iran continue to erode the standard of living for American households. He cautioned that the Town must

remain disciplined and cognizant of the effects of Senate Enrolled Act 1 which are predicted to suppress local government revenues as more and more properties bump into the circuit breaker.

Councilmember Stemer asked if the town could provide health insurance for its employees. Hawksworth stated that the administrative burden of administering a plan would be significant and said that the generous increases were designed to put more money into the pockets of employees to spend based on what makes sense for each person.

Councilmember Woidke noted he had only received the proposal earlier in the day. He thanked President Hawksworth for preparing the proposal and promised to analyze the numbers before the next meeting.

Hawksworth tabled the Salary Ordinance first reading until the November meeting and said, if the council were in agreement on the final language, two readings could be done at that time.

CORRESPONDENCE: None

COMMISSIONER REPORTS:

BEACH: Clerk-Treasurer Hawksworth reported that buoys have been removed for the season and this year, no buoys were lost needing replacement.

BUILDING: None.

ENVIRONMENT: The spring clean-up will be scheduled on Saturday, April 17, 2027. Mark Taylor has been working with Tree Bee on tree-cutting and branch clean-up. During this process, they identified an invasive Spotted Lanternfly. The Town will build some awareness of this issue and what can be done to mitigate it.

FIRE: None

MAINTENANCE: Mark Taylor reported that brush cleanup continues later this week.

PARKS: Commissioner Fitzpatrick reported on tennis court quotes received. He is exploring grant opportunities to help pay for resurfacing work in the spring. Attorney Mindel has sent a letter to Everline to negotiate a lower rate for this year's resurfacing due to the Town's dissatisfaction with their quality of work. There are downed trees in the playground area needing to be addressed.

ROADS: None

SECURITY: Roger Goode reported that train delays totaled 189 minutes in the past month. The back gate was opened three times as a result.

OLD BUSINESS:

Power Back-up at Security: Rick Demkovich presented the results of his research on back-up power options for the security building. Based on his findings, he recommends the purchase of a Generac generator,

installed by Circle R Electric. The cost as presented would be approximately $18,000. The Town has a commitment from DACIF to cover $15,000 of this expense. President Hawksworth said he received a separate proposal for a backup generator at the clubhouse which included an alternative proposal for security. He said he would forward the proposal to Mr. Demkovich for his review and comment.

NEW BUSINESS:

First Reading, Ordinance 2026-03, 2027 Salary Schedule: Consideration of the 2027 Salary Ordinance was tabled until the November meeting.

David's Lawncare Proposal for Snow Removal: The Town Council reviewed the 2026/2027 proposal from David's Lawncare for snow removal. It was moved and seconded to accept the proposal. The vote was unanimous in favor; motion passed.

Title VI Implementation Plan: The Town Council reviewed an updated version of the Title VI Implementation and Transition Plan. There was a motion and second to approve the Title VI Implementation and Transition Plan as presented. The vote was unanimous in favor; motion passed.

Clubhouse Rentals on 11-28-2026 and 12-05-2026: The council considered requests for Clubhouse use on Saturday, November 28, and Saturday, December 5. It was moved and seconded to approve the usages. The vote was unanimous in favor; motion passed.

Trick-or-Treat: The Town Trick-or-Treat will take place on Saturday, October 31 from 5:30-8:00 pm.

OTHER BUSINESS:

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:25 pm. The next regular meeting of the Town Council is on Tuesday, November 17, 2026 at the Clubhouse.

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RICHARD HAWKSWORTH, Town Council President

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PAUL WOIDKE, Town Council Member

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ALEXANDER STEMER, Town Council Member

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BONNIE HAWKSWORTH, Clerk-Treasurer