

**TOWN OF ST. JOE ~ COUNTY OF DEKALB ~ STATE OF INDIANA
~ST. JOE TOWN BOARD MEETING~
September 15th, 2026**

The public meeting was called to order at 6:40pm by Misty Spicer
Pledge of Allegiance

TOWN ATTORNEY SEARCH – UPDATE:

The Clerk-Treasurer reported that a call with a prospective attorney has been scheduled for Wednesday; the attorney may send a colleague in his place if unavailable himself. Board members were asked to submit any questions in advance so they can be raised on the call. The Board discussed that legal guidance is needed regarding the Town's zoning authority, including the distinction in the Town's authority within its incorporated limits versus its extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ) area, in connection with an ongoing nuisance/environmental complaint at the Mulch/Wood Recycling Facility.

Residents and Board members discussed ongoing community concerns, raised on social media and directly with the Board, regarding smoke and odor from an active mulch/wood-waste pile fire at a local recycling operation. Fire department representative Mike Georgi reported that the Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM) has recommended allowing the pile to continue burning down, that no chemicals or hazardous materials are involved (the material consists of natural wood products and pallets), and that the operator is actively working to break the pile into smaller sections to help it burn down faster and more safely, including possible trenching to accelerate the process. It was noted the situation is being actively managed by the responsible party and is not classified as an ongoing emergency, and that the fire department previously used approximately 87,400 gallons of water (at an estimated cost of approximately \$8,000) in connection with the incident. Board members and residents raised concerns about air quality, especially for individuals with existing respiratory sensitivities, and about the smoke's visibility from town. No formal Board action was taken; the Board indicated it would continue to defer to IDEM and fire department guidance while monitoring the situation and directed staff to continue communicating updates to the public via the Town's Facebook page.

The Clerk-Treasurer presented the August water usage report: total billed usage of approximately 1,602,600 gallons, maximum daily usage of 94,000 gallons, minimum daily usage of 8,000 gallons, and average daily usage of 51,696 gallons.

ZONING BOARD UPDATE / SUBDIVISION CONTROL ORDINANCE:

Board Member Randy Drake, who attended the most recent Zoning Board meeting, confirmed the Zoning Board reviewed and is recommending the Town's draft subdivision control ordinance, based on DeKalb County's Unified Development Ordinance, Chapters 6 and 9, with modifications limited to provisions already established under the Town's existing ordinances.

The Board also clarified, for the record, the Currie Building's historic-designation status: the building is listed on the county and state historic registries (having been assigned a registry number through the DeKalb County historical record book, which was subsequently used in the

Town's application for state recognition), but is not listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Subdivision Control Ordinance – First Reading.

Misty Spicer made a motion to approve the first reading of the ordinance establishing subdivision control for the town of St. Joe, Indiana, governing subdivisions, replants, and plants, vacations. of the ordinance establishing subdivision control for the Town of St. Joe, Indiana, governing subdivisions, replats, and plat vacations. Randy Drake seconded. All ayes cast.

The ordinance will be posted publicly and made available in the Clerk-Treasurer's office, with a public hearing and final reading to occur at the Board's next regular meeting.

Randy Drake motioned to accept the Town Board meeting minutes of September 1, 2026. The motion was seconded by Zebulon Griggs. All ayes cast.

Following up on prior discussion, the Clerk-Treasurer confirmed the Town has eligible miscellaneous funds available to cover the previously discussed snowplow purchase (approximately \$11,242), drawing from a combination of: Motor Vehicle Highway miscellaneous (approximately \$5,150), Cemetery miscellaneous (\$5,031.47), Opioid Settlement unrestricted funds (\$1,103), and Special Distribution funds (\$6,713), to be allocated among these sources as the Board directs.

The Board discussed the choice between a standard fixed-blade plow and an adjustable multi-position ("trip-edge"/wing) blade, noting the adjustable blade offers greater maneuverability on the Town's wider streets and intersections (e.g., near the post office and 3rd Street) without requiring multiple passes, but carries a higher cost and added weight on the front of the Town's truck, raising a question about compatibility with the Town's existing vehicle. The Board also discussed liability considerations related to snow windrows left across private driveway aprons. Staff was asked to obtain a comparative price quote for the adjustable-blade option before a final purchase decision. No formal motion to purchase was made at this meeting; funding availability was confirmed for when the Board is ready to proceed.

The Clerk-Treasurer reported that representatives of the St Joe Church of Christ's new building project inquired about tapping into the Town's water main to supply a fire-protection sprinkler system for the new building. The Clerk-Treasurer advised them the tap-in would be at the church's cost and would require a Town employee to be present to oversee the work, and brought the request to the Board for awareness. The Town's current water-main contractor is separately planning a similar "hot tap" for the ongoing water project, which may provide the Town more information on the process in the coming weeks. No formal action was taken; informational update.

The Clerk-Treasurer reported that the Town's current cleaning contractor, who also operates her own cleaning business, has become too busy to continue providing adequate service to the Town, and that a new applicant has separately approached the Town about the position. The Board discussed whether to formally post the position for broader applicant options versus offering additional hours to an existing part-time Town employee (Sam Vela), who has previously expressed interest in additional hours; the Board also noted a previously identified pay disparity (approximately \$5.00/hour) between this position and other Town positions. The Board directed the Clerk-Treasurer to keep the new application on file for future reference and

Misty Spicer will follow up with Sam Vela regarding interest in additional hours and compensation. No formal motion was made.

The Clerk-Treasurer led the Board through a detailed first read-through of the proposed 2027 budget worksheets, by fund, ahead of the statutory budget adoption process (statutory adoption deadline noted as November). This was a workshop discussion only; no budget figures were adopted or approved at this meeting. Key points included:

- Storm Water: \$9,000 budgeted for repairs and maintenance (new line item, reflecting possible future storm-water repair work); no ARPA funds budgeted, as the Town's ARPA allocation has been fully utilized.
- Opioid Settlement Restricted: \$251 available; the Board discussed possible uses tied to the Fire Department's first-responder role (e.g., Narcan supplies, overdose-response training or educational materials), consistent with the program's restriction to community efforts addressing opioid/drug issues.
- Opioid Settlement Unrestricted: \$879 received this year, usable for any purpose.
- EDIT (Economic Development Income Tax) funds: \$40,000 for street and sidewalk repair; \$2,000 for building compliance.
- Currie Building fund (Home Rule): full available balance of \$8,748 budgeted as spendable.
- Leaky Hall fund (Home Rule): full available balance of \$9,176 budgeted as spendable.
- Sanitation: held flat at \$35,000 (increased last year in anticipation of higher sanitation costs that have not yet materialized; current level judged sufficient, including room for possible rate increases).
- Cumulative Capital Improvement (Cigarette Tax): increased \$621, to \$8,349 available if needed.
- Cemetery: administrative salary flat at \$3,090; hourly wages increased \$790 to \$8,000; purchasing/miscellaneous decreased \$1,150 to \$4,000; burial/grave-opening costs increased \$704 to \$4,000; grave locates increased \$30 to \$700; electrical service increased to \$440; total cemetery-related budget lines of approximately \$22,290.
- Motor Vehicle Highway (MVH) fund: hourly wages increased to \$13,640; gas and fuel increased \$850 to \$6,000; sand/salt/gravel (for road work, not winter traction) decreased \$2,150, reflecting lower use this year; weed-killer chemical increased \$85 to \$600; miscellaneous decreased \$1,150 to \$4,000; no funds budgeted for storm drain/street engineering (down from \$27,810 the prior year), as MVH funds are restricted to work within 50 feet of State Road 1.
- Local Roads and Streets (LRS) fund: decreased \$13,496, to \$10,000, reflecting that no grant-matched road-construction projects are currently planned for next year while the Town completes its ongoing water infrastructure project; the Clerk-Treasurer noted the fund can only be budgeted up to a statutory percentage of its balance without affecting the Town's tax levy.
- Local Income Tax (LIT) fund: Fire Department contribution increased \$2,000, consistent with prior Board discussion; office-related utility allocations included electric (\$2,000), internet/phone (\$1,400), natural gas (\$1,000), and sewer (\$1,380); Special Distribution

budgeted at \$7,000; Infrastructure Updates budgeted at \$90,000, usable for public-safety infrastructure such as fire hydrant replacement/installation. The Board noted the Public Safety LIT fund balance is approximately \$268,381, and discussed the possibility of using these funds toward new hydrant installation to address water-access gaps previously identified by the fire department.

- General Fund: Clerk-Treasurer salary flat at \$16,075; Town Board salary flat at \$15,000; general hourly wages increased to \$43,000; mosquito-control hourly increased \$3,000 (no mosquito chemical budgeted, as a large supply was already purchased); small tools and equipment at \$7,000; attorney fees flat at \$11,330; memberships at \$2,266; website contract increased \$730 to \$10,000; A/C and heating service agreement at \$1,200; travel expenses flat at \$3,000; telephone/internet increased to \$3,000 (held higher pending final Surf internet billing); printing and postage increased to \$1,500 (reflecting a postage rate increase); Clerk-Treasurer bond increased to \$300; liability insurance increased to \$13,000 (reflecting an increase this past year); electric service increased \$532 to \$8,000; natural gas service increased to \$2,500; sewer service at \$1,380; park electricity increased slightly to approximately \$1,100 (anticipated to decrease over time as new, more efficient LED lighting is installed); street lighting increased to \$11,000; Porta-John rental increased (one additional month added) to \$1,320; town events flat at \$6,000; training and certifications flat at \$4,000; miscellaneous increased \$820 to \$7,000; equipment and maintenance increased \$290 to \$7,500; capital outlay/improvements flat at \$9,343; and emergency allocation (contingency/rainy-day fund) held flat at \$22,876.

No formal action was taken; discussion only.

At the Board's request, a detailed history of the Town-owned Currie Building was presented for the record, summarized as follows: following the death of William Curry, the building changed ownership and use several times over the decades, including as a mercantile/clothing store, a fraternal lodge hall, a specialty shop with upstairs apartments (1970s), a flea market with upstairs apartments (1980s), and privately owned apartments (from approximately 2000), briefly hosting a children's ministry in the mid-2000s. The property was foreclosed upon in 2016; the Town requested the property from DeKalb County in 2018, the County granted it in 2019, and the transfer was completed in 2020, at which point volunteers and Town staff began interior cleanup.

Since acquiring the building, the Town has worked with an Indiana Landmarks representative (who toured the building in 2021 and wrote a supporting letter for a state historic-recognition grant application), obtained a roof repair estimate (reported at meeting as somewhere in the range of \$22,000–\$35,000; exact figure to be confirmed), addressed recurring water intrusion and sump-pump issues in the basement, and held several fundraising efforts (a themed basket raffle raising approximately \$700, and a dance-a-thon raising several thousand dollars) dedicated to the building's upkeep. The Town's applications for state historic designation and associated restoration grants have been unsuccessful to date; Town representatives reported being advised informally that the Town's competitiveness for such grants is limited by the absence of amenities such as a park or school, and separately that municipalities are ineligible for a number of historic-restoration grant programs generally available to non-profit or private applicants. The building remains occupied by a small local rental tenant at below-market rent, with proceeds directed toward the building's upkeep fund, and continues to have an unresolved bat colony requiring further professional remediation.

Mary Simcox reported receiving a request from the Lower St. Joseph River Watershed Management group, working with the county Soil and Water Conservation District, to help organize an educational “eco-tour”/nature walk along the River Greenway as part of a grant-funded regional water-education initiative; the group also plans to engage the Cal County Trails Committee. The Board expressed support for the Town's participation, and Mary Simcox will continue coordinating details (dates, times, and points of contact) with the organizing group and will loop in Sam Vela on further communications.

Staff and volunteers discussed planning for the Town's participation in the county's Day of Caring event on October 7, 2026, including ordering additional cemetery headstone-cleaning supplies (specialty cleaning solution and scrub pads) and organizing multiple volunteer groups for projects including cemetery headstone cleaning and decoration removal, Greenway cleanup, and a residential assistance project. Group leader and transportation logistics were discussed informally; no formal Board action was required.

A resident presented an estimated property-tax and utility-revenue analysis related to the Vulcraft expansion project, citing an estimated combined annual property tax yield of approximately \$29,000 across all applicable taxing units (including the county library, Eastern school corporation, Town of St. Joe, Concord Township, and fire protection), and estimated additional utility revenue to the Town of approximately \$1,350 per year for each of up to two potential new sewer subscribers and approximately \$756 per year in water revenue under the Town's updated water rates, describing these as estimates. The presenter also shared social media engagement statistics (reported as approximately 31,000 views, 250 likes, and 4,353 engagements) related to public interest in redevelopment concepts for the Currie Building, and resident comments expressing a desire for more local retail and grocery options and for the Town to pursue additional revenue-generating development.

Billy Roark followed up on a private redevelopment proposal presented at the September 1, 2026 meeting to purchase and redevelop the Town-owned Currie Building. He reiterated interest in purchasing the building (the amount offered for the Currie Building at the September 1, 2026 meeting was \$40,000), separately offered to lease, at no cost to the Town, a portion of his own privately owned property for use as a public park (with the Town's approval to be sought through the Zoning Board), framing the offer as a way to help the Town build the kind of community amenities that could improve its competitiveness for future grant funding, and requested that the Board provide a definitive response and timeline regarding the Currie Building proposal at the next meeting, citing ongoing bat-related and public-safety concerns at the building.

Board members responded that the Town has not stated that the Currie Building is for sale and does not oppose new businesses locating in Town, but that a sale of Town-owned property is public business requiring a formal legal process, and the Town currently lacks legal counsel to advise on that process. Board members also noted: prior Town investment in repairs and cleanup at the building; unsuccessful past outreach to prospective commercial and childcare-facility tenants; that some restoration-focused grant funding may be available for uses such as childcare or elder-care facilities, potentially through a non-profit partnership structure, which the Board has not yet pursued to a final decision; and concerns regarding adequate parking for the proposed use, given the building's downtown location. The Board reiterated general interest in seeing the building put to productive use and in continued dialogue about options, including

possible development of other vacant or commercially zoned Town-owned lots, and discussed forming a resident-driven economic development or advisory committee to help evaluate future development proposals and community priorities.

The Board further noted that there is a legal requirement that all items offered for sale by a municipality be publicly posted, and that bids be submitted and read aloud at a public meeting. If the Town Board wishes to sell the Currie Building or any other Town property, this process must be followed.

Multiple additional residents spoke during this discussion offering a range of views, including support for bringing new business investment to Town, concern about losing a historically significant building, and questions about the long-term viability and maintenance of any building or park improvements. No formal Board action was taken on the proposal itself at this meeting.

Zebulon Griggs made a motion to reinvestigate options for addressing the bat colony at the Currie Building, including contacting a wildlife exclusion/pest control company. Misty Spicer seconded the motion and carried. Board President Misty Spicer will obtain quotes for bat removal at the Currie Building.

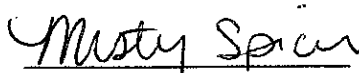
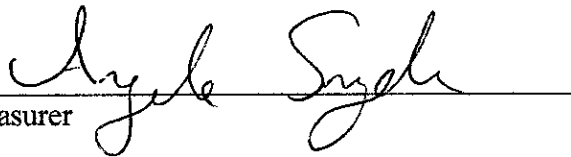
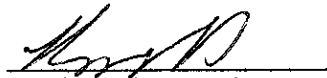
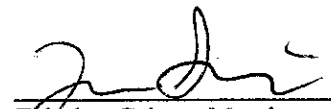
The Clerk-Treasurer/Mary Simcox presented the annual renewal for the Town's continued participation in the DeKalb County Economic Development Committee, at a cost of \$1,200, noting that participation provides the Town a voice in county-level discussions about prospective business and development opportunities (including advance awareness of interest in local sites), along with regular reporting back to the Board following each monthly committee meeting.

Zebulon Griggs made a motion to spend \$1,200 to continue the Town's participation in the DeKalb County Economic Development Committee. Misty Spicer second the motion. All ayes cast.

ADJOURN:

Randy Drake made a made to adjourn the meeting at 9:07pm. Zebulon Griggs seconded. All ayes cast.

Respectfully submitted:
Angela Snyder, Clerk Treasurer


Misty Spicer, President
Randy Drake, Member
Zebulon Griggs, Member