

## AUGUST 18, 2026

The Trail Creek Town Council met in regular session on Tuesday, August 18, 2026, at 7:00 p.m., at the Trail Creek Town Hall, 211 Rainbow Trail, Trail Creek, Indiana. Mr. Schacht, Council President led the pledge of allegiance.

**Minutes:** A motion was made by Mrs. Saenz to approve the meeting minutes; the motion was seconded by Ms. Janes. Motion unanimously carried.

**Approval of Fund Report:** Clerk Treasurer, Crystal Frever provided copies of the Fund Report for July 2026. The Park Non-Reverting Fund had previously shown a negative balance due to expenses related to playground equipment. Donations have continued to be received, and the playground equipment is nearly paid off. The current negative balance was reported as approximately \$319.00.

A motion was made by Mr. Pizarek to approve the fund report; the motion was seconded by Mr. Vedo. Motion was unanimously carried.

**Approval of Claims:** Clerk Treasurer, Crystal Frever provided copies of the bills to the council for July 15, 2026 – August 14, 2026, in the amount of \$140,725.76 (ONE HUNDRED FORTY THOUSAND SEVEN HUNDRED TWENTY-FIVE DOLLARS AND SEVENTY-SIX CENTS). A question was raised regarding the police overtime entries appearing as separate line items without identifying which officer received the overtime. Clerk-Treasurer Crystal Frever explained that the accounting software automatically generates the report but offered to provide a monthly report identifying the employees who received overtime.

A motion was made by Ms. Janes to approve the bills as presented; the motion was seconded by Mr. Vedo. Motion unanimously carried.

### Correspondence:

- **104 Penny Lane**

The Council discussed correspondence received from the resident at 104 Penny Lane regarding a tree that had fallen from Nelson Park into the resident's backyard.

Discussion was held regarding having the trees at Nelson Park inspected by a certified arborist. It was noted that the Town had previously had trees inspected and that it may be appropriate to establish a priority list for potentially hazardous trees.

The Council agreed to begin with Nelson Park and obtain a quote for a tree inspection.

- **509 Green Tree**

The Council discussed a complaint regarding stick and branch pickup at 509 Green Tree. The Street Department had responded to the residents, and the issue was considered resolved.

An additional concern received was also reported to the Street Department and resolved.

**MS4:** No Report

**Attorney:** Attorney Christopher Willoughby in attendance; The Town Attorney provided updates on several matters:

- **Harding Property**

The Town Attorney provided an update regarding the Harding property and its complicated ownership and tax sale history.

The property is currently involved in a tax sale situation, with the redemption period expected to end in October. A charitable organization reportedly has an interest in the property but had not recorded its deed. The attorney reported that there are indications the organization may attempt to redeem the property and work toward resolving the ownership issues.

The attorney advised that the Town is running out of patience and that if progress is not made, the Town may need to consider further action, including condemnation proceedings.

The Council agreed to continue waiting for additional developments.

- **Property at 1929 E Coolspring**

The attorney reported that the property remains out of compliance and that citations have continued to accumulate daily.

A 10-day letter had previously been sent to the trustee responsible for the property. The attorney stated that if the property does not come into compliance, the Town may need to pursue enforcement through the courts, including collection of fines and reimbursement of enforcement costs.

The attorney will continue communication with the trustee and provide an update.

- **Johnson Road Traffic Ordinance**

The attorney reported that a draft ordinance has been prepared regarding limiting traffic on Johnson Road. Additional work is needed to determine appropriate limitations, particularly because of the gas station and necessary local deliveries.

A Council representative will work with the Police Department and Town Attorney to finalize the proposed ordinance for future consideration.

- **Board of Zoning Appeals and Plan Commission**

The Council discussed the need to fill vacancies on the Board of Zoning Appeals and/or Plan Commission.

Jennifer Heath had been appointed but was determined to be unable to serve in the position. The Council agreed to seek interested residents.

A request for letters of interest will be posted on Facebook and the Town website. Interested individuals will be asked to provide their political affiliation, as required for board membership considerations.

- **Woodruff Development**

The attorney provided an update regarding the proposed Woodruff development.

Changes being discussed by the Michigan City sanitary district may impact future sewer service agreements. The sanitary district is reportedly moving away from private sewer agreements and instead considering agreements directly with municipalities, while requiring municipalities to maintain ownership and responsibility for infrastructure.

Potential rate increases, surcharges, and significant developer fees were also discussed.

The attorney advised that the Woodruff development could be in jeopardy because of these changes. However, because the project was already underway, there may be a possibility that it will not be subject to all future requirements.

- **Mary Fox Property**

The Council received an update regarding the Mary Fox property. An inspection has not yet taken place because of scheduling and work demands. Arrangements are still being made to coordinate an inspection, potentially involving the Police Department. An update is expected at a future meeting.

- **State Housing and Development Requirements**

The attorney informed the Council of new state requirements effective July 1 that will require municipalities to review and discuss their development and housing efforts. The Town will be required to hold a public meeting or hearing and complete certain reports regarding housing and development by the end of the year or early next year. Additional information will be provided to the Council and Planning Commission.

**Engineer:** No engineering representative was present. (See Street Department for update)

**Park Board:** Park Board President Katrina Vedo not in attendance. Mrs. Saenz reported:

- The Park Board meeting scheduled for the previous Thursday was canceled due to the recent storm and rescheduled for the upcoming Thursday, August 20, 2026.
- The Park Board will consider approval of new park signs addressing appropriate conduct and prohibiting profanity. The signs are expected to cost less than \$100 and will not require prior Council approval.  
The Council discussed possible locations for the signs, including relocating an existing surveillance sign and placing the new signage nearby.

**Building Inspector:** Steve Thomas not in attendance. No Report

**Planning/Zoning:** Planning and zoning matters were addressed during the attorney's report.

**Police:** Marshal Dick in attendance.

- The Police Department thanked the Street Department for installing signs at the Police Department building and north entrance.
- The Swanson Center 5-K Run will take place on Saturday, September 12, 2026.
- The Town is approximately 60 days away from Halloween. Donations are being requested for the annual Halloween event.  
The Police Department anticipates needing approximately:  
40 gallons of hot chocolate;  
3,500 pieces of individually wrapped candy; and  
Approximately 900 eight-ounce cups.  
Residents may donate individually wrapped candy or make monetary donations at Town Hall. Individuals wishing to donate hot chocolate supplies may contact the Police Department for additional information.

**Street Department:** Street Commissioner, Dave Baker in attendance.

- **CCMG**

The Street Department reported on Community Crossings Matching Grant preparations. Street Department personnel attended training at Purdue University in West Lafayette regarding PACER road ratings and state requirements. The training will assist the Town in properly rating roads and preparing future Community Crossings Matching Grant applications.

The deadline for submitting the Community Crossings Matching Grant application is September 30, 2026. The Street Department will continue working with the Town Engineer and Council to determine which projects should be submitted.

- **Storm Cleanup**

The Street Department provided an update regarding ongoing storm cleanup.

The department reported that approximately 21 dump truck loads of storm debris had been removed as of the previous morning. Disposal and turnaround times have been impacted by the large number of debris being handled throughout the county.

LaPorte County has established separate disposal areas for municipalities and residents, which has helped improve turnaround times. The Street Department reminded residents that only a small number of part-time employees are currently available. The department is working extended hours to continue cleanup efforts. Large storm debris piles will remain the priority. Residents were reminded that smaller sticks, branches, and yard debris should be placed in their trash or yard waste totes for regular Friday pickup. The Council discussed improving communication with residents regarding Town services, ordinances, and changes. Possible options discussed included mailers, email notifications, automated phone calls, and text messaging services.

- **Equipment Breakdown**

The Street Department reported that the Bobcat used for storm cleanup had experienced a mechanical failure. The Bobcat's grapple attachment was described as an important piece of equipment for handling large debris piles. Repairs were underway, and the department hoped to have the equipment operational soon. The Council discussed developing a contingency plan for equipment failures, including alternative equipment and attachments.

The Street Department also discussed the possibility of purchasing a grapple attachment for another Town-owned machine as a backup option. Temporary use of Town property for debris storage was also discussed, although recent flooding limited access to some areas.

The Council thanked the Street Department for its efforts during the storm cleanup.

**NIRPC:** No Report

**Old Business:**

- **Speed Bumps/Speed Humps**

The Council continued discussion regarding the possible installation of temporary speed bumps or speed humps. The proposed devices would be mechanically attached to the roadway and removed during the winter months, then reinstalled in the spring. The Council discussed using the devices as a pilot program near Nelson Park due to concerns about speeding and the safety of children and pedestrians. The Town Attorney advised that proper installation and signage would be important to reduce potential liability.

Council also discussed the need to prevent drivers from going around the devices through yards or other areas. Council agreed that additional input should be obtained from the Town Engineer regarding the most appropriate type and placement.

A motion was made by Mr. Pizarek authorizing the purchase and installation of speed control devices, signage, and related items, in an amount not to exceed \$1,500, subject to further consultation with the Town Engineer. Motion was seconded by Mrs. Saenz. Motion carried.

- **Town Hall Retaining Wall**

The Council noted that the Town Hall retaining wall had been installed and paid for.

**New Business:**

- **Wallen Invoice**

The Council discussed a Wallen invoice. Because funds in the garage budget line were depleted, the Council discussed paying the invoice from the equipment budget line.

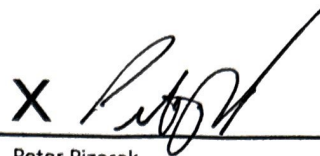
A motion was made by Ms. Saenz to approve payment of the invoice from the appropriate Equipment or Repair Maintenance Funds. Motion was seconded by Mr. Vedo. The motion carried.

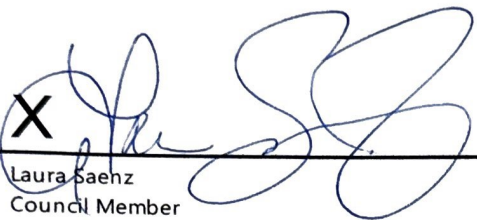
- **Emergency Action Plan and Community Notification System**

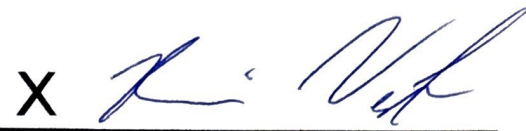
The Council discussed the need for improved emergency communication with residents, particularly following the recent storm. Council members discussed developing an emergency action plan and surveying residents regarding how they would prefer to receive notifications. Potential notification options include: Landline phone calls, Mobile phone calls, Text messages, Email, Town website notifications, Facebook, Instagram, and other communication platforms. Possible emergency notifications could include: Severe storms, High winds and heavy rain, Road closures, Snow plowing information. Town Hall closures and Canceled meetings. Non-emergency notifications could include scheduled Town Hall closings, meetings, events, and other Town announcements. The Council also discussed communication platforms that may provide automated emergency notifications and allow residents to report issues such as downed branches, potholes, and other concerns. Costs, budgeting, liability, maintenance responsibilities, and possible grant opportunities were discussed. The Council agreed that a survey should be conducted and shared with residents to determine how they would prefer to receive notifications. The attorney advised that if a formal committee is created involving a quorum of Council members, open meeting requirements could apply. The Council agreed to begin with the resident survey.

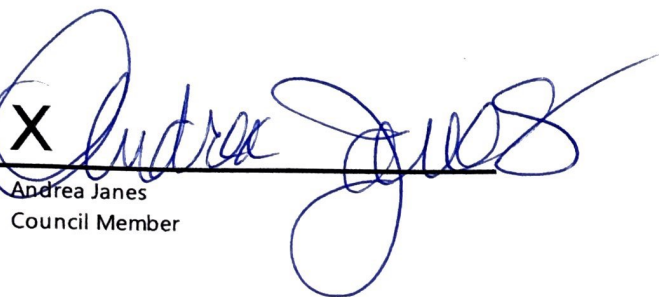
MINUTE APPROVED SEPTEMBER 15, 2026 - AUGUST 2026 MINUTES

X   
Warren Schacht  
Council President

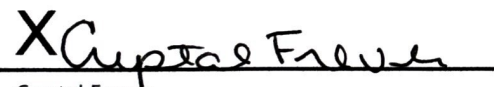
X   
Peter Pizarek  
Council Vice President

X   
Laura Saenz  
Council Member

X   
Brian Vedo  
Council Member

X   
Andrea Janes  
Council Member

ATTEST:

X   
Crystal Frever  
Clerk-Treasurer