



Town Council of the Town of North Judson
Regular Meeting Minutes

March 3, 2025 – 6:30 PM

The North Judson Town Council met in Regular Session at the North Judson Town Hall, 310 Lane Street, North Judson, IN on the above date and time with the following present: Council President Rowe, Council Vice President Brown, and Councilmember Lewandowski, Banks, and Windbigler, Town Manager Leszek and Clerk-Treasurer Rowe present as well.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Council President Rowe asked for approval of the agenda. Council Vice President Brown moved to approve the agenda. Councilmember Banks seconded the motion, and all Councilmembers present concurred.

Council President Rowe asked for approval of the Minutes from the Regular Council Meeting on February 17, 2025. Council Vice President Brown moved to approve those Minutes. Councilmember Banks seconded the motion, and all Councilmembers present concurred.

Old Business:

2025 Highland & Pioneer Cemetery Caretaker – Request for Proposals & Agreement for Services

Clerk-Treasurer Rowe explained that he had given the Council the Request for Cemetery Mowing Bids. He explained that he was going to send the advertisement out on Wednesday and then have it run in the papers for the next four editions. He stated that the bids would be accepted until end of day Monday, April 7th and opened at the meeting that evening.

Council Vice President Brown made a motion to approve the 2025 Highland & Pioneer Cemetery Request for Cemetery Mowing Bid Proposals advertisement. Councilmember Banks seconded the motion, and all members present concurred.

Donna Henry – 2025 Mint Festival SEPA

Donna Henry stated that her committee was presented with six action items at the last Council meeting that they were needing to address. She informed the Council that those items were addressed at the end of their application. She explained that she is currently waiting to hear back from USI regarding their donation. Henry informed that Council that they held the NIPSCO walkthrough with members of her committee and Joe Leszek on behalf of the Town. During the walkthrough, they were able to review all of the electrical connections and what would be necessary to move the vendors over to Main Street. They also looked to see if any connections would need to be upgraded at Norwayne Field. Henry stated that NIPSCO would have to install small poles for the Main Street electricity. Council President Rowe asked if she knew the cost of

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the additional electric for Main Street. Henry stated that the cost would be \$250.00 per pole but they were also needed to address their A-frames. She explained that their cords were currently being stored with their former electrician and that they were planning on retrieving the cords to see what upgrades would be needed or if they need to start from scratch. They did receive a quote of \$3,000.00 if the frames needed to be replaced. Henry stated that they were able to receive a \$1,000 grant from NIPSCO and that the festival would be participating in Ace Hardware and Good-to-Go's roundup fundraisers. The Mint Festival committee also agreed to increase the vendor costs. She explained that craft vendors would be \$75, food vendors would be \$150. Council President Rowe asked if the prices would be per day. Henry answered that the cost would cover the whole weekend. She also stated that vendors that need electric will have an additional charge. Henry mentioned that they increased the price of their green paper advertisements to \$75 for small business cards, \$115 for four-by-four-inch space, \$140 for six-by-four-inch, \$400 for half a page, and \$800 for a full page. Henry explained that they had a carnival ride company reach out, but Christina Alexander was able to do some research on the company to find unencouraging results. Councilmember Eric Lewandowski explained that the festival would be having some new events for the children including a Touch-a-Truck event and possibly a helicopter for kids to get an up-close look. Lewandowski stated that the Committee would need to finalize the electrical issues. Alexander explained that the plan is to purchase and upgrade a few components each year, ensuring long-term sustainability and eventual full ownership of the electrical infrastructure. Leszek stated that adding additional power sources near the water tower could solve multiple issues for multiple events such as the Point's car show and the farmers markets in the summer.

Councilmember Lewandowski suggested that the Committee start to meet twice a month leading up to the festival in order to keep up the communication and events. Council President Rowe asked about the plans for the Mint Festival Pageant. Clerk-Treasurer Rowe explained that the committee sent a Special Event Permit Application for Norwayne Field. Robin Prater, head of the Pageant, explained that they would like to use Norwayne Field for the pageant, but they also received permission to use the Heartland Christian Center as a rainout location. Rowe explained that they would combine the Mint Pageant application with the Mint Festival SEPA permit. The Council had agreed to hold the date of Saturday, May 17th available for the pageant. Chrissie Scutchfield asked if Henry would still be allowed to send out the requests for the Green Paper even though the Council has not yet approved the permit to which the Council informed the Committee that they could go ahead with sending out the requests, but they would like to ensure that the electrical issues and location of the vendors is established before final approval.

Council President Rowe stated that Mad Bomber Fireworks will be presenting the annual fireworks display on the Saturday of Father's Day weekend. Council Vice President Brown made a motion to approve the Mad Bomber Fireworks Agreement in the amount of \$10,500.00. Councilmember Banks seconded the motion, and all members present approved.

Town Park Board Member Appointment

The Park Board informed Leszek that they currently don't have anyone in mind to fill that position. Council Vice President Brown suggested that they also advertise for the position as well. Rowe and Leszek responded well to the idea and agreed to get it out the following day.

New Business:

2025 Rates & Fees Ordinance Update

Clerk-Treasurer Rowe explained that Building Inspector, Todd Jackson, had been working on various updates to the Town's building and zoning code ordinances as well as updating the Town's fee schedule

ordinance. He stated that the Planning Commission will considering Ordinances to recommend to the Council for approval covering Dwellings, Accessory Structures, Solar Installation (commercial & residential), and Boring/Horizontal Drilling. After the Planning Commission's upcoming meeting on March 13, 2025, the Ordinances will be presented to the Town Council. Jackson highlighted his recommendations. Clerk-Treasurer Rowe stated that the current fee schedule will be sent out for the Council to compare.

Recognition of Guest

Bill Ramp was present but had nothing to discuss.

Donna Henry was present but had nothing to discuss.

Terry Young stated that the contract had been signed with Henry Lee Summers for the Mint Festival concert. He informed the Council that \$3,000.00, half of the contracted amount, has been paid. Young mentioned that he is very excited about this year's festival since they have gotten more people involved.

Deb Young was present but had nothing to discuss.

Summer Galbreath was present but had nothing to discuss.

Bob Barnett stated that he was glad to hear that they will be looking into fixing the electricity since they have had several problems in the past.

Chrissie Scutchfield was present but had nothing to discuss.

Robin Prater was present but had nothing to discuss.

Jennifer Flores was present but had nothing to discuss.

Christina Alexander was present but had nothing to discuss.

Chad Scutchfield was present but had nothing to discuss.

Courtney Dusek was present but had nothing to discuss.

Department /Representative Reports

Clerk-Treasurer - Andrew Rowe

Clerk-Treasurer Rowe presented the following Special Event Permit Applications for Council Approval: Girl Scout Cookie booth at Norwayne Field on Saturday or Sunday, March 8th or 9th.

Council Vice President Brown made a motion to approve the following Special Event Permit Application for the Girl Scout Cookie booth at Norwayne Field on Saturday or Sunday, March 8th or 9th. Councilmember Lewandowski seconded the motion, and all members present concurred.

Rowe informed the Council that their last DNR LWCF Park Improvements Project reimbursement had been approved for \$54,947.67. He explained that it will take about three to four weeks for the reimbursement to arrive. Rowe stated that their semi-annual Water and Sewer bond & interest payments would be drafted at the beginning of the month. He mentioned that he and Town Manager Leszek have been working on the Water

& Sewer Utility Annual Financial Management Reports. He stated that he would be presenting the reports once they are completed.

Rowe then mentioned that he was able to meet with James Young earlier in the day to discuss the Main Street Commission. They discovered that the Commission was still active and current as Bob Howard had kept up with taxes and requirements to maintain 501C3 status. Rowe stated that the Main Street organization – as a separate entity unaffiliated with the Town – would be eligible for grant opportunities for downtown beautification efforts for which the Town is ineligible. He also brought up the yearly conflict of interest forms that would need to be filled out and submitted for the year. Rowe stated he had given the forms filled out by himself, Council President John Rowe, Councilmember Eric Lewandowski, Utility Billing Clerk Kara Lewandowski, and Utility Supervisor Kimberly Kapp.

School Board – Doug Wilde

Nothing presented.

Building Inspector – Todd Jackson

Building Inspector Jackson stated he had a few inspections during the last week and then he had a few projects and questions coming up within the next couple of weeks.

Code Enforcement – Town Marshal Frank Thomas

Leszek stated that Thomas had been looking into more issues around the Town as the weather began to break.

Unsafe Hearing

Clerk-Treasurer Rowe explained that they were planning on getting the ball rolling on addressing unsafe properties as Jackson gets more familiar with his new tasks. Jackson mentioned that he spoke with Attorney Schramm about applying for the Unsafe Structure Inspection Warrant for a residence on High Street.

BZA/Planning Commission

Clerk-Treasurer Rowe stated that the next Planning Commission meeting would be Thursday, March 13th. He stated that they will have several Ordinances that they will be entertaining/approving for recommending to the Council for consideration. Jackson informed the Council that he had given them a copy of his new UTV Ordinance. He explained that the Town of Bremen passed their own last year. Jackson wanted to address the concerns of the Council stating that the UTV's are safer than the golf carts since they have roll cages, seatbelts, and other safety features that make them more secure than most golf carts. He explained that he would require all UTV to have a town permit sticker, which would need to be placed visibly on the vehicle. State registration would also be required, and an officer would need to inspect the UTV in order to make sure all regulations are met. Jackson would also enforce fees for any violations of the ordinance.

Concerns were raised about adding more responsibilities to local police, who already deal with issues monitoring golf carts. Jackson proposed to have a designated inspection day to streamline police involvement. He also explained that permits would only be issued to licensed drivers to prevent underage operation and higher permit fees compared to golf carts. He stated that many county residents support the idea of the convenience of driving into town for fuel and food. He suggested a one-year trial period to evaluate the impact. The Council asked for more feedback before making a decisions on the matter.

Redevelopment Commission

Clerk-Treasurer Rowe stated that he would like to schedule a meeting prior to the next regularly scheduled meeting. He stated they can schedule a meeting tentatively for 6:00PM on Monday, March 17th.

Park Board – Nick Radtke

Town Manager Leszek explained that they met with Troyer Group to discuss a bit about their proposal for the Phase II of the Town Park Improvements Project. Leszek and Clerk-Treasurer Rowe felt that they already taken care of certain aspects of the proposal, including public engagement which was carried out extensively during the master planning process, and that they should not have to pay for this again. Troyer Group informed them that the LWCF application process would be \$8,500.00 and the Schematic Design services would amount to \$5,300.00 bringing the total 2025 DNR LWCF Application Proposal amount to \$13,800.00 (50% of which is eligible for reimbursement). The schematic design would transform the Town's ideas and get harder dimensions in order to get a more accurate estimate. Leszek stated that it was stressed to Troyer Group that the estimates had to be more accurate considering the amount of costs over budget during the last phase. Rowe stated that since they were over the \$10,000 mark they would have to receive quotes from three other consultant/engineering firms for similar services. Leszek stated that even if they did decide to apply for the grant, construction would not begin until at least 2027.

Police Department – Town Marshal Frank Thomas

Town Manager Leszek stated that he had nothing major to report on. Thomas was able to get all of the shifts covered in his absence and the deputies had nothing to report.

Fire Department – Fire Chief Todd Jackson

Jackson stated that they had a total of 21 calls in the month of February. The calls consisted of structures, medical, and car accidents. He mentioned that the department is currently planning their annual fish fry and the Touch-a-Truck event for the Mint Festival. Jackson explained that he had spoken with the Indiana State Police as well as Starke County first responders/departments to ask them to bring their vehicles. He stated that his department is also in the process of planning their golf cart/UTV poker run for this year's Festival.

Fire Chief Todd Jackson presented the following Purchase Orders for Council Approval:

P.O. 2759 to Bartronics for 7.2V/4400 Mah/ Li Ion Smart Battery (4), Shipping (1), Invoice 41867, in the amount of \$694.00.

Council Vice President Brown made a motion to approve the following Purchase Orders:

P.O. 2759 to Bartronics for 7.2V/4400 Mah/Li Ion Smart Battery (4), Shipping (1), Invoice 41867, in the amount of \$694.00.

Councilmember Banks seconded the motion, and all members present concurred.

Utility Department – Utility Supervisor Kimberly Kapp

Kapp stated that her crew had been working taking down the snowflake decorations from downtown. She mentioned that they went ahead and put up the previous banners and that they would replace them once the new banners were ordered. She explained that they are still working on training the new crew members to get them up to speed on day-to-day tasks. Kapp stated that they had to pull pump two at the Oakwood lift station as well as pump two at their headworks. She explained that she received an email update from the Town's WWTP operations advisor/contractor stating that the pump would need to be replaced.

Kapp presented the following Purchase Orders for Council Approval:

P.O. 2760 to ERA for WWTP Sample Testing, Invoice 078145, in the amount of \$759.23.
P.O. 2761 to USA Bluebook for WWTP Lab and Supplies, Invoice INV00624377, in the amount of \$712.64.
P.O. 2762 to Republic for Removal of Sludge Dumpster (1), Invoice 0717-001655833, in the amount of \$1,788.18.
P.O. 2763 to Bellman Oil Company for 55gal Drum 15W 40 (1), 55gal Drum Hd 46 (1), Invoice 191749, in the amount of \$1,032.35.

Council Vice President Brown made a motion to approve the following Purchase Orders:
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Council President Rowe asked if they started to advertise for the part-time position yet. Kapp stated that she reached out to WorkOne to see if they had any candidates, and they informed her that they currently have two. Leszek stated it might be like before when they paid the individual for six weeks while we offer on the job training. Leszek stated that the candidate would start in early May.

Town Manager – Joe Leszek

Town Manager Joe Leszek has been working on INDOT vouchers over the past several weeks in order to get reimbursements back for our federal DES projects. He mentioned that he had been working with the Police Department on some radio licensing issues. He explained that all of the departments had VHF licenses, but they are now seeing whether they are still needed since they do not use those radios anymore. He explained that he had been discussing banners, benches, and trash cans for the downtown area. He has been in contact with the Starke County Community Foundation about putting in a grant application to help cover the cost of some of those project items. He mentioned that they would be working on setting a date for a spring cleanup with Heartland Pastor, James Young, and others in their local church coalition.

Legal Updates – Town Attorney Justin Schramm

Schramm mentioned that he had spoken with Jackson about a few properties around Town. Jackson was able to provide him with the proper information for each place. He also stated that he would be getting the paperwork together for the inspection warrant.

Additional Business Deemed Necessary by the Council:

Nothing Presented.

Payment of Claims:

Council Vice President Brown made a motion to pay Payment of Claims for February 18, 2025 – March 3, 2025 in the amount of \$453,097.65. Councilmember Banks seconded the motion, and all members present concurred.

Councilmember Lewandowski made a motion to adjourn, Council Vice President seconded the motion, and all members present concurred.

Meeting adjourned at 7:53 P.M.

Attest:



John Rowe, Council President

Andrew J. Rowe, Clerk-Treasurer

Next regular scheduled meeting – Monday, March 17, 2025, at 6:30 P.M.