



Town Council of the Town of North Judson
Regular Meeting Minutes

September 16th, 2024 – 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, Councilmember Banks, and Lewandowski, 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 September 3rd, 2024. Council Vice President Brown moved to approve those Minutes. Councilmember Banks seconded the motion, and all Councilmembers present concurred.

Council President Rowe asked for approval of the Minutes from the Special Council Meeting on September 9th, 2024. Council Vice President Brown moved to approve those Minutes. Councilmember Banks seconded the motion, and all Councilmembers present concurred.

Old Business:

Resolution No.2024-03: 2025 Budget Appropriations & Tax Rates – Second Reading & Adoption

Clerk-Treasurer Rowe read aloud the Second Reading of Resolution No.2024-03: 2025 Budget Appropriations & Tax Rates to everyone present. He stated that the Council would need to make an approval of the Second Reading and adopt the Resolution finalize the budget process.

Council Vice President Brown made a motion to approve the Second Reading and Adopt the Resolution No.2024-03: 2025 Budget Appropriations & Tax Rates. Councilmember Banks seconded the motion, and all members present concurred.

LWCF Park Improvements Project Update

Town Manager Leszek stated everything is on track to have the Town Park completed in October. They are still asking that everyone remains off the equipment until the Park is officially open to the public because there is still construction ongoing. Leszek mentioned that the walking trail is finished and open to the public.

New Business

Nicole Grzybowski – Baker Tilly Municipal Advisors: Budget Analysis & Financial Update

Nicole Grzybowski was present on behalf of Baker Tilly Municipal Advisors to discuss the Town's Budget Analysis and Financial Update with Clerk-Treasurer Rowe. Grzybowski presented a summary of cash flows that they prepared based on the first six months of 2024. She wanted to mention that the numbers show a scenario in which all budgeted funds are expended by year-end, but, ordinarily, all of the Town's budgeted appropriations will not be spent. Grzybowski stated that within the Town of North Judson, they have four funds that receive property taxes. She also explained that the CCD Fund is the only one that is an uncontrolled fund since it is based on the tax rate limited to the 5% established rate that is set for the CCD Fund. Grzybowski stated that the other three funds: General, MVH, and Park, are appropriated in a way that they could determine how they want to allocate the revenues within the established fund appropriations. Another way the Town receives funds is from the local income tax revenues receipted into the General and CEDIT Funds. She also wanted to bring attention to the MVH Funds which were a bit higher than the rest due to the Town's awarded reimbursement grants for the ongoing or recently completed INDOT street and sidewalk paving projects. She stated the Town's overall operating disbursements have been pretty level with what has been historically spent. She explained that if the Town's revenue stopped tomorrow, then the funds would still be able to operate at a varying amount of time depending on the fund without any additional revenues generated or received. She stated that in the overall picture, the Town's budgets are in really good shape. She wanted to give a shoutout to Andrew Rowe and Joe Leszek for really focusing on analyzing the Town's financial projections and actual appropriation/revenue figures, along with working through departmental requests for funding next year to, ultimately, ensure fund balances are in good order.

2024 Trick-Or-Treat Scheduling

Council Vice President Brown brought up the topic of changing Trick-Or-Treating times to 5:00 to 6:30 pm on Thursday, October 31st, 2024. Council Vice President made a motion to change the Trick-Or-Treat hours to 5PM-6:30PM on Thursday, October 31st, 2024; Councilmember Lewandowski seconded the motion, and all members present concurred.

Clerk-Treasurer Rowe mentioned that he and his staff would like to host a Halloween House Decorating Contest. Rowe stated that if the Council decided to move forward with the proposal, Utility Billing Clerk Lewandowski and Deputy Clerk Chaja would form a small committee similar to the Holiday Decorating Contest to work out all of the regulations, the sign-up process, and judging procedures. He also asked for Council input on how many winners we're going to award with a gift card prize. President Rowe and Councilmember Lewandowski stated that two winners would be good.

Vice President Brown made a motion to approve the Halloween Home Decorating Contest for Town Residents as outlined with two winners to receive \$125 Gift Cards. Councilmember Lewandowski seconded the motion, and all members present concurred.

Recognition of Guest

Donna Henry was present on behalf of the Mint Festival Committee. She stated that there would be Mint Festival Committee Meeting held on Thursday, September 19th, 2024, at 6:30 PM. Henry stated that the meeting would be held at the North Judson – Wayne Township Public Library.

Bill Ramp had nothing to present to the Council at this time.

Scott Krzyzanowski had nothing to present to the Council at this time.

Nicole Grzybowski had nothing to present to the Council at this time.

Department /Representative Reports

Clerk-Treasurer - Andrew Rowe

Clerk-Treasurer Rowe presented the following Customer Adjustment Requests:

- Account No. 5560006: Utility Customer moved to San Pierre and has not received any of their mail forwarded water bills since moving in June 2024. They're requesting a \$75 credit for the reconnect fee.
- Account No. 6310004: Utility Customer recently moved to 308 Main Street from 106 Central Avenue. The customer did not receive a Summer Sprinkler Credit on this past bill due to not having any history of this property. Based off the average consumption at their previous residence, they are asking for a credit of \$217.99 making their new amount \$245.36.

Vice President Brown made a motion to approve the following Utility Customer Adjustment Requests:

- Account No. 5560006: Utility Customer moved to San Pierre and has not received any of their mail forwarded water bills since moving in June 2024. They're requesting a \$75 credit for the reconnect fee.
- Account No. 6310004: Utility Customer recently moved to 308 Main Street from 106 Central Avenue. The customer did not receive a Summer Sprinkler Credit on this past bill due to not having any history of this property. Based off the average consumption at their previous residence, they are asking for a credit of \$217.99 making their new amount \$245.36.

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

Rowe presented the following Purchase Orders for Council Approval:

- P.O. 2659 to Brown and Brown General Contractors, Inc. for DNR LWCF Park Improvement Project – PPA No. 4, in the amount of \$60,322.08.
- P.O. 2660 to Brown and Brown General Contractors, Inc. for DNR LWCF Park Improvement Project – PPA No. 5, in the amount of \$112,450.98.
- P.O. 2661 to Baker Tilly Municipal Advisors, LLC for 2025 Budget & Prep. CF Form 1, Review and Revisions, Invoice BTMA27447, in the amount of \$3,991.25.

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

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- P.O. 2661 to Baker Tilly Municipal Advisors, LLC for 2025 Budget & Prep. CF Form 1, Review and Revisions, Invoice BTMA27447, in the amount of \$3,991.25.

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

Clerk-Treasurer Rowe stated that he had received a phone call regarding a small claims issue. He explained that there was a Holbrook small claims from 2014 and he believed they were trying to buy/sell a home, but the claim was still out there. Rowe stated that the Judgement never got released, but he was able to find receipts where the Town was paid for the ordinance/code violation which was for a mowing lean. The

receipt showed that the lien was paid and received by the Town. Rowe stated that Attorney Schramm is preparing a Release of Judgement to be submitted to resolve the matter.

School Board – Doug Wilde

Nothing Presented.

Building Inspector– Nick Radtke

Nothing Presented.

Code Enforcement – Interim-Town Marshal Frank Thomas

Thomas stated that they had been making progress in enforcing Town Codes on a few recurring properties. He stated that 705 Talmer Avenue had cleaned up a few things in the yard and that they have received some financial and physical help from family members. Council Vice President Brown inquired about ordinance violations for the cats. They were also able to arrange for the removal of some of the cats off the property. Thomas continued to explain that the resident needed outside resources, but they are slowly working on getting the property cleaned up. Thomas stated that they have a few more properties that show similarities to this resident and that the Council would be surprised by the conditions in some homes. He stated that these properties are a work in progress, but they are starting to see some results. Donna Henry asked if the ordinance regarding the trash cans needing moved within a 24-hour period falls under Code Enforcement. Clerk-Treasurer Rowe stated that it would fall under Code Enforcement, and he has also seen the trash cans she was concerned about. He also stated that the residents had larger items placed next to the cans and that they would need to contact Waste Management to schedule a pick-up. Bill Ramp had a question regarding a house that was being renovated on Jones Street. He stated that the property was covered in trash and had weeds as tall as his vehicle. Thomas stated that the owners have been working on redoing the whole house and that they were currently waiting for a dumpster to start removing the trash. He stated that the renovations would help the property, but he was not sure what the delay time would be for the dumpster. Council President Rowe confirmed that the owner works in Illinois and is currently fixing up multiple properties at the same time.

Unsafe Hearing

Nothing Presented.

BZA/Planning Commission

Clerk-Treasurer Rowe stated that he had been in contact with the Post Office regarding two properties on George Street with the same address. He informed the Post Office that the Planning Commission establishes the addresses explaining that we currently have two residents with 205 George Street, so he had informed the owner to use 205 *South* George Street. Rowe also informed the Post Office to be aware of the two addresses and to watch out for the 205 South George Street address. Rowe stated that they are thinking about drafting a letter explaining that the addresses will need to be known as North George Street and if more properties are to be added to South George Street they will need accessible mailboxes by the road.

Redevelopment Commission

Clerk-Treasurer Rowe stated that their next meeting will be on Monday, October 21st, 2024. Rowe would inform the Commission if they needed to meet again before the set date.

Park Board – Nick Radtke

Nothing Presented.

Police Department – Interim Town Marshal Frank Thomas

Interim Town Marshal Thomas stated that they have received multiple complaints about the badgers being in Town limits. He explained that there is a badger living in the woods behind the Medical Base. They believe that the badger came from the old army base located near the animal sightings. The army base was recently purchased and is being cleaned up. Thomas stated that they had reached out to the DNR and were informed that the badgers were a protected species and that animals were to be left alone. He also explained that the badgers do not like people so the animal would likely run off if it had seen them nearby. The DNR stated that their only real concern is if somebody was breaking the law by having their dog off the leash. Thomas stated that the dogs are naturally going to go after the animals which would probably end poorly for the dogs. He wanted to remind everyone to mind their business and let the badger eventually move on from Town. Town Manager Leszek wanted to add that there had been some social media misinformation saying that the Town was refusing to pay for the badgers to be removed. He stated that the information was false and that they were following the DNR's instructions to leave the animal alone. He also mentioned that if anyone has any questions then they should contact the Town Hall.

Thomas stated that the trial with the AXON body cameras has been going very well. There was going to be a meeting on Wednesday, September 18th to discuss pricing and agreements for the cameras. He stated that there was a feature that he was going to explore whether or not it would fit into their budget. He explained that the feature would allow the officers to see the transcription of events happening in the recordings. This will allow the officers to be able to write their reports more easily and with more accurate details.

Thomas also wanted to inform the Council that Deputy Russell would be attending a 'Firearms Instructor Qualifications Course' in Plainfield, IN the next day. This course would allow him to have the ability to train others so the Police Department wouldn't have to go through another agency.

He also stated that the hiring process for a new deputy has been slow. Thomas stated that he had a good interview the previous week with someone who was going to start working on paperwork and drug testing. He explained that this individual would start off as a part-time deputy in order to explore working up to the full-time Deputy Town Marshal position.

Fire Department – Fire Chief Todd Jackson

Nothing Presented.

Utility Department – Utility Supervisor Kimberly Kapp

Utility Supervisor Kapp stated that they had been working on their interviews as well. She stated that they should be having a potential candidate start on Monday, October 23rd. Kapp stated that the crew has been working on installing the new Radio-Read Meters and there was about 33 meters inside and 10 outside meters left to be installed. Kapp also mentioned that they have been cleaning and inspecting manholes as well.

Kapp presented the following:

P.O. 2651 to Smith Farm Store for Stihl Chainsaw (1), Stihl Weed Eater (1), Weed Eating Heads, Invoice 556, in the amount of \$613.94.

P.O. 2652 to Hoosier Equipment for Street Sweeper, Invoice 4793, in the amount of \$1,472.50.

P.O. 2653 to Living Waters Company for Annual Water/Sewer Maintenance and Recertifications, Invoice 9335, in the amount of \$1,246.30.

P.O. 2654 to Republic Services for Removal of 2 Sludge Dumpsters, Invoice 0717-001633673, in the amount of \$3,857.52.

Vice President Brown made a motion to approve the following:

P.O. 2651 to Smith Farm Store for Stihl Chainsaw (1), Stihl Weed Eater (1), Weed Eating Heads, Invoice 556, in the amount of \$613.94.

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

Town Manager – Joe Leszek

Town Manager Leszek stated that the Starke County Community Foundation reached out to the Town asking for a representative for the Lily Scholarship Board and he was able to work it into his schedule so the Town could participate. He mentioned that he has had several meetings with the Foundation to start reviewing some of the potential Lily Scholars. Leszek stated that the process seems to be going very well and that he was honored to have the Foundation reach out to the Town and invite us to have a representative on their scholarship board.

Leszek explained that they have been working on INDOT Rightway Acquisitions for the sidewalk project around the park. He stated that some of the rightway has changed a bit so they will be paying for that upfront and then they will be reimbursed for the project. He also wanted to mention that they have started working with WorkOne about a program that they'll pay for an employee to come and try to get some on the job training. Leszek stated that they will be having someone start on Monday, October 23rd and they will be helping out with the Utility Crew by painting some of the buildings at the park.

Leszek presented the following:

P.O. 2655 to Gary & Sons for Mowing of Highland and Pioneer Cemetery, in the amount of \$2,000.00.

P.O. 2656 to The King's Contractors for Removal of 1 Large Pine Tree from Highland Cemetery, in the amount of \$900.00.

P.O. 2657 to Sharon Lemke and Jana Manning for 401 Talmer Avenue Right away, in the amount of \$1,000.00.

P.O. 2658 to John R. Davis and Angela K. Davis for 405 Talmer Avenue Right away, DES #2003029, in the amount of \$1,000.00.

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

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

Clerk-Treasurer Rowe wanted to inform everyone that the AED's for the squad cars had arrived. He wanted to thank Officer Patrick Quail for applying for the grant to help fund the purchase of the AED Equipment for the Police Department squad cars.

Legal Updates – Town Attorney Justin Schramm

Nothing Presented.

Additional Business Deemed Necessary by the Council:

Nothing Presented.

Payment of Claims:

Council Vice President Brown made a motion to pay Payment of Claims in the amount of \$480,732.81. Councilmember Lewandowski seconded the motion, and all members present concurred.

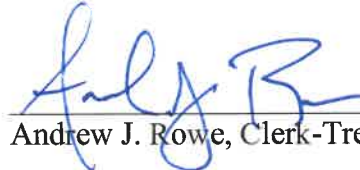
Council Vice President Brown made a motion to adjourn, Councilmember Banks seconded the motion, and all members present concurred.

Meeting adjourned at 7:08 P.M.



John Rowe, Council President

Attest:



Andrew J. Rowe, Clerk-Treasurer

Next regular scheduled meeting – Monday, October 7th, 2024, at 6:30 P.M.