310 LANE STREET
NORTH JUDSON, IN 46366

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**Town Council of the Town of North Judson**
**Regular Meeting Minutes**

July 1st, 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 were in attendance; Town Manager Leszek and Clerk-Treasurer Rowe were 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 June 17th, 2024. Council Vice President Brown moved to approve those Minutes. Councilmember Lewandowski seconded the motion, and all Councilmembers present concurred.

## Old Business:

### Drive Clean Indiana – Electric Vehicle Charging Station Grant

Clerk-Treasurer Rowe stated that he was able to get the Cost/Share Commitment Letter submitted. He stated that the program will be getting in touch with the next few weeks about the proposals they have received. The program did mention that the estimated cost of $4,000 to $6,000 was potentially on the high side but this would include five years of maintenance on the station. Rowe then noted that having the infrastructure funded will be the most important factor because the technology may change over the next 5-10 years, and there will likely be upgrades or technical improvements that require a new unit. We would be prepared to adapt as demand dictates.

### Mark Rippy – Town Park Table Donation

Clerk-Treasurer Rowe, after speaking with Rippy, put a packet together for the Council that contained the tables Rowe and Leszek thought would be best. Rowe stated that they would need to have five tables total with one of them being ADA compliant. Rowe mentioned that he and Leszek discussed ordering the blue tables to match the blue and gray color scheme for the pickleball and basketball courts right nearby. Rippy discussed that they have bought movable tables for the Knox Schools in the past but there were also options for permanent ones as well. Council President Rowe and other voiced concerns about having movable tables at the shelters. Clerk-Treasurer Rowe explained that they had kids move the tables in the past and that they would like to avoid those kinds of issues moving forward. Council President agreed that it would be one less thing to worry about if the tables could just be bolted down. Rippy stated that since speaking with Clerk-Treasurer Rowe, they would need four six-foot tables and one six-foot ADA compliant one. Rippy stated if the Council agreed then he would present the decision at thier meeting on July 13th. The Council decided to go with the permanent tables matching the ones near the splash pad at Norwayne Field.

## New Business

### 2025 Budget – Planning Workshop & Public Hearing/Adoption Timeline Discussion

Clerk-Treasurer Rowe stated that he and Leszek had been working with Nicole Gryzbowski from Baker Tilly Municipal Advisors to set up a short meeting to kick off the 2025 budgeting season. Rowe stated that they would be meeting on Wednesday, July 10th, to discuss meeting dates for the Public Hearing/Adoption and the timeline for the upcoming budget meetings. He stated that, at most, only a member or two of the Council, Leszek, and himself would need to schedule meetings with department heads to discuss next year's budget while looking at last year's actual figures, the first six-month figures this year and the overall 2024 budget. Rowe will present the proposed timeline and a budget meeting date will be established at the next Council meeting.

## Recognition of Guest

**Steve Ransom** was present to discuss a storm drain near his property. He believed that the drain needs more paving because it is holding water instead of draining properly. He stated that his neighbors had puddles where they park their vehicles because of the standing water. Ransom also wanted to bring up the crab gass that was planted after the completion which has become an overgrown mess. Ransom wanted to discuss the issue of semitrucks parking on neighborhood lots in Town. Fisher stated that she did receive the message, and, in one instance, they contacted the owner who was informed that he could not be parking his truck there. Ransom also wanted to mention that he had been keeping an eye on the park project; he noted his appreciation and that the Town's going to have a really nice park once the project is finished.

**Scott Krzyzanowski** stated that the house next door to his property on Franklin St. needed to have someone address their overgrown vegetation and their trash bags in the back alley. He also stated that the property has three junk cars with expired plates. Town Marshal Fisher could confirm that the property has been sent a mowing letter to address the issue. Krzyzanowski also stated that he was having a semitrailer problem on Franklin Street as well.

**Harry Tolson** was present to discuss having a portable shipping container on his residential property. He stated that he called the Town Hall the previous week and he was told that portable shipping containers were not allowed within town limits. Council President Rowe confirmed with Town Manager Leszek that shipping containers are only allowed on commercial properties. Tolson asked what the difference is between a portable shipping container verse a pod since they are both portable. Tolson has a property on Bradley Street and would like to put a shipping container on it. Tolson wanted to propose the Council make an amendment to the ordinance to allow shipping containers on residential properties. Rowe asked how big the shipping container was. Tolson confirmed that it was 8 feet by 36 feet. Tolson also stated that the Council could create regulations requiring the shipping containers like they have to be painted a neutral color. Council President stated that there would have to be regulations so that the container is not on top of their neighbor's property or they become an eye sore for everyone else. Ransom also suggested making sure that there is a limit to the number of containers one can have on their property since people have the ability to stack multiple containers on top of each other. Krzyzanowski jumped in to say that shipping containers are starting to become more common and stated that people are using them to build houses. Rowe stated that the Council would not be able to give him an answer right now, but it would be something the Council would be willing to review. Tolson asked if the Council had a timeframe in mind since he needed to get the container moved soon. Rowe asked if Town Marshal Fisher had any concerns about the shipping container. Fisher asked if the shipping containers were going to replace the semitrailers that are currently being used for storage purposes. Tolson spoke up saying that had been discussion a few years ago but as long as the semitrailers were plated and movable, they were fine to be on the property. Council President Rowe stated that the next meeting and opportunity to discuss the matter would be Monday, July 15th.

**Wendy Hoppe** asked if anyone knew when Highway 10 and George Street would be fixed. Utility Supervisor Kapp replied stating that they are hoping to start working on it Friday, July 12th.

**Department /Representative Reports**
**Clerk-Treasurer - Andrew Rowe**
Clerk-Treasurer Rowe then presented the following:
P.O. 2595 to Boyce Systems for Invoice 109248 – Software Maintenance on Keystone Device, Fund, Payroll, and Billing from 9/1/2024-8/31/2025, in the amount of $11,595.00.
P.O. 2596 to Troyer Group for Invoice 58290 – Bidding and Construction Administration of the LWCF Town Park Improvements Project in the amount of $2,030.00.
P.O. 2603 to Service Sanitation for Invoice 8874351 – Park Basic Port Restroom (3), Environmental Fees (3), Fuel Adjustment (3) in the amount of $728.85.

Council Vice President Brown made a motion to approve the following:
P.O. 2595 to Boyce Systems for Invoice 109248 – Software Maintenance on Keystone Device, Fund, Payroll, and Billing from 9/1/2024-8/31/2025, in the amount of $11,595.00.
P.O. 2596 to Troyer Group for Invoice 58290 – Bidding and Construction Administration of the LWCF Town Park Improvements Project in the amount of $2,030.00.
P.O. 2603 to Service Sanitation for Invoice 8874351 – Park Basic Port Restroom (3), Environmental Fees (3), Fuel Adjustment (3) in the amount of $728.85.
Councilmember Banks seconded the motion, and all members present concurred.

Clerk-Treasurer Rowe stated that he had received a letter from the DNR stating that the Chesapeake Ohio 2-8-4 Steam Engine 2789 has been put forward to the Indiana Division of Historical Preservation and Archaeology. Rowe reached out to the DNR to see where they could see the whole submission and he is waiting to hear back. Rowe stated that he would share the link with the Council once he has received it. He also mentioned that he had received the Uniform Conflict of Interest form that gets updated every year for School Board Representative, Doug Wilde, for the year starting on July 1st, 2024. Wilde presented the Uniform Conflict of Interest disclosure statement and Rowe noted that upon approval it would be sent back to the School Board.

Council Vice President Brown made a motion to approve the Uniform Conflict of Interest statement requested by the NJSP School Board for Town Representative Doug Wilde. Councilmember Banks seconded the motion, and all members present concurred.

Rowe mentioned that the spring/summer policy renewals for the IPEP Worker's Compensation and the NJ-WT Volunteer Fire Department's Fire/Accident/Sickness policies have been renewed for the year. He also mentioned that WRF Nursery would be delivering two trees to the dog park this week.

Rowe noted that payment has gone out to Brown & Brown General Contractors for the first two DNR-LWCF Park Project Payment Applications. He stated that once that's processed, he and Joe would put together all the necessary paperwork for submitting those and all reimbursable Troyer Group expenses to the DNR for reimbursement. Rowe spoke with the Town's DNR Grants Agent to inform them that we are working hard on the project, and that we'll soon be ready to submit the proper forms for reimbursement. After the first submission, the Town will then submit the request for reimbursement on a quarterly basis; with our first submission in July and our next in October. With the project scheduled for completion around the same time, there's a likely chance that we'll only need to submit two reimbursement requests.

**School Board – Doug Wilde**
Nothing present.

**Building Inspector– Nick Radtke**
Nothing presented.

**Code Enforcement – Town Marshall Kelly Fisher**
Town Marshal Fisher stated the corner of Keller Avenue and New York Street has been mowed. She also stated that they have addressed the semi-truck parking on Dahlke Street and Fisher stated that she will address the semi-truck parking on Franklin Street as well. Council President Rowe mentioned that he had a complaint about a residence on Talmer Avenue. The house has a van on the property that has not been moved in at least a year. Fisher stated that the house did receive an ordinance letter, but she will go and address the matter. Council President was not sure if the van was plated or not, but Fisher believed that it was broke down and not plated. Vice President Brown noticed that the property's grass was also getting out of hand as well. Leszek stated that we would send the owners a mowing lien letter if and when necessary.

**Unsafe Hearing**
Nothing Presented.

**BZA/Planning Commission**
Nothing Presented.

**Redevelopment Commission**
Clerk-Treasurer Rowe wanted to schedule a meeting prior to the July 15th meeting. He stated that there will most likely be some billing and pay applicants that will need to be addressed before July 15th. Leszek and Rowe wanted to bring the downtown beautification back up as well. Rowe mentioned that there were discussions about planting trees on the hill or shade sails over the seating areas at Norwayne Field. The sun beats down on the park during the summer season. He mentioned that they could start looking at pricing for these additions as part of an unofficial phase two of park improvements. Vice President Brown asked what time the meeting would start at. Clerk-Treasurer Rowe replied that the meeting would probably begin at 6 P.M. on Monday, July 15th. Rowe stated he would have all the park financials ready prior to the meeting.

**Park Board – Nick Radtke**
Nick Radtke was not present. Leszek confirmed that the construction was still happening at the Town Park. The basketball court had the old crack seal removed and low spots filled. The courts should be ready for painting this week as long as the weather remains good. Leszek stated that the sand volleyball courts were filled earlier in the day. The contractors have a few more side projects that must be done first and then they will be moving onto the construction of the trail. Leszek stated that once they are finished then the contactors for the playground equipment and surfacing will begin work.

**Police Department – Town Marshal Kelly Fisher**
Town Marshal Fisher stated that she was very proud of Deputy Town Marshal Patrick Quail for obtaining a grant from the Starke County Community Foundation for the AED equipment for all four squad cars in the amount of $7,776.00. She also stated that Town Manager Leszek has been busy getting all the paperwork together for the hiring of Frank Thomas as Chief Deputy Town Marshal. She also mentioned that the parts of the radar trailer have been sent off to be fixed and she told the company that they would need them back as soon as possible so they could put the speed trailer back out into use.

**Fire Department – Fire Chief Todd Jackson**
Fire Chief Jackson was not present. Leszek stated that Jackson was unable to attend tonight's meeting but did send a run list which was presented to the Council.

**Utility Department – Utility Supervisor Kimberly Kapp**
Utility Supervisor Kapp stated she emailed the weekly report to all of the Councilmembers. She mentioned that Tanner Butler had reached his six-month period and was requesting a small pay increase. Council President Rowe asked if she had an amount that she would recommend specifically. Kapp stated that she discussed giving him a $0.25/hour raise with Leszek.

Council Vice President Brown made a motion to approve the additional $0.25 raise in pay to Tanner Butler to take effect on his next payroll check. Councilmember Lewandowski seconded the motion, and all members present concurred.

Kapp stated that she has reached out to the state multiple times regarding the corner of Talmer Avenue and George Street being paved. She stated they have "bump" sign out there to indicate the bump ahead and people need to slow down their approach before they hit it. She did obtain a quote from Town & Country Construction, Inc. to have that area repaved with some other minor remove/replace or patch work. The estimate was for pavement of the patch where the main break was at George and Talmer, and removal/replace a portion of sidewalk at Wilson and Weninger and a patch on Sheriden Avenue for the grant total of $14,168.00. Kapp requested expediated approval from the Council so the crews could get started paving on July 12th.

Council Vice President Brown made a motion to approve the proposal from Town & County Construction, Inc. for street/sidewalk infrastructure removal, patching, or repaving in three areas of Town. Councilmember Banks seconded the motion, and all members present concurred.

Leszek mentioned that there were some complaints about how long it was going to take to fix highway 10 but he did explain to them that the Town cannot pave it on their own and that they would need to obtain quotes before moving forward. He also stated that he was very grateful that Town & Country were able to quote those sections of town since usually those companies are busy with far bigger and more lucrative projects during the summer months. Ransom asked if the Town could add more gravel to the bump site to help when people drive over it. Leszek stated that the Utility Crew has been putting gravel in, but the gravel gets pushed out when people drive over the hole. Kapp presented another estimate for a patch of sidewalk repair on the corner of Talmer and George from NWI Concrete & Excavation LLC in the amount of $1,682.00.

Vice President Brown made a motion to approve Estimate No.294 from NWI Concrete & Excavation LLC in the amount of $1,682.00. Councilmember Banks seconded the motion, and all members present concurred. Kapp stated she would get ahold of them so that they could get the sidewalks on their calendar to be fixed.

Kapp presented the following:
P.O. 2600 to USA Bluebook for Mercoid Tube Pressure Switch (2) and Freight, Invoice 00390461, in the amount of $1,975.44.
P.O. 2601 to Wiers for Repairs to 1 Tan Dump Truck, Invoice 70567, in the amount of $2,668.84.
P.O 2602 to BL Anderson for Repair Control Panel A/C, Quote 051524-JWG, in the amount of $1,790.66.

Council Vice President Brown made a motion to approve the following:
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P.O. 2601 to Wiers for Repairs to 1 Tan Dump Truck, Invoice 70567, in the amount of $2,668.84.
P.O 2602 to BL Anderson for Repair Control Panel A/C, Quote 051524-JWG, in the amount of $1,790.66.
Councilmember Banks seconded the motion, and all members present concurred.

Vice President Brown mentioned that the welcome sign on the east side of Town need weed eating. President Rowe asked if the west side needed it as well and Vice President Brown stated that there were flowers planted below the west side. Kapp stated that they would take a look at both signs and see what would need to be cleaned up.

**Town Manager – Joe Leszek**
Town Manager Leszek stated they our Starke County regional submission not chosen as one of the Stellar Pathways Finalists. He stated that we are out of the running for the program this year, but we can try again next year if they continue the program. Leszek did announce some quotes for the Highland Cemetery fencing that would include construction of a new black chain-link fence along the entire east side with no gates attached at the entrance.

The Estimates presented were:
Mullet's Fencing from Plymouth in the amount of $13,890.21;
Custom Fencing from Warsaw in the amount of $14,700.00.
White's Fencing from Winamac in the amount of $13,600

Vice President Brown made a motion approve the estimate/proposal from White's Fencing for black, 4' chain-link fencing along the east side of Highland Cemetery in the amount of $13600.00. Councilmember Banks seconded the motion, and all members present concurred.

The Highland Cemetery Fencing Committee that was formed to look at the fencing preservation/replacement options wants to start removing a section at a time to start the wrought iron repair.

Leszek then mentioned working with the Police Department about getting body cameras for all of the officers. They currently have a demo camera that they will be testing out within the next few weeks. He also mentioned that they would be working to establish a new payroll system through the company Atto. Leszek stated that the system appears to be very user friendly, easy to navigate, and just what the department needs.

Deputy Patrick Quail then stated that he had applied for a grant through the Northern Indiana Community Foundation for four brand new AED machines with equipment boxes for each of the squad cars. The Department was recently awarded a grant which totals $7,776.00 for the purchase of AED units for the North Judson Police Department. Quail stated that he had a meeting with Town Manager Leszek to pick out the best AEDs for the amount of money awarded. They will be moving forward with the purchase and once it is completed then there will be AEDs in all four squad vehicles. Quail believed this was a necessity for the Department because when he previously worked for La Porte's Police Department, they had to use their in-car AEDs twice during his service. He thought that if the deputies had a chance to save a life, then it would be a good idea to have the AED equipment in each vehicle.

Leszek wanted to get everyone to start thinking ahead to the 2025 CCMG. He stated that they had five roads picked out for repaving and that their match would be $62,000.00. He also stated that they got a quote on fixing the sidewalk on Main Street in front of Retro to the alley on the north and south side all the way to the Point with ADA accessibility. The new paving additions would end up adding to the Town's match by nearly $25,000.00, bringing the total match to around $90,000.00. Leszek stated that he would be getting a new quote from USI that would take out two of the roads to try and help lower the matching price. He stated that they would need an answer by the next meeting so that they can inform USI what the Town would like to have paved. He mentioned to that, as previously discussed, the Town would also be responsible for a portion of the paving for parking at the Town Park on Weninger because of INDOT restrictions. The Town would need to pave a strip to meet the edge of the road; this would total nearly $15,000.00 additionally bringing the overall total to around $105,000-$110,000 in local funds.

Leszek mentioned that he has been working with Bob Barcus from HWC. He stated that they have gotten the ordinance ticket system up and running. Our Deputies are now better able to see what citations have been given out to whom and/or at what residences. Council President Rowe asked how often the ordinance violations get sent to the Billing Clerk's office. Quail stated that as soon as he submits the forms Kara Lewandowski receives the email immediately.

Leszek presented the following:
P.O. 2597 to Gary & Sons for Mowing Highland and Pioneer Cemetery, in the amount of $2,000.00.
P.O. 2598 to USI for 2024-1 and 2024-2 CCMG, Invoice 21144, in the amount of $2,9683.00.
P.O. 2599 to Jackson Seed Sales & Service LLC for Poly Rubber Crack Repairs and Seal Coating alley, Invoice/Quote 005-2024, in the amount of $660.00.

Council Vice President Brown made a motion to approve the following:
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P.O. 2598 to USI for 2024-1 and 2024-2 CCMB, Invoice 21144, in the amount of $2,9683.00.
P.O. 2599 to Jackson Seed Sales & Service LLC for Poly Rubber Crack Repairs and Seal Coating alley, Invoice/Quote 005-2024, in the amount of $660.00.
Councilmember Banks seconded the motion, and all members present concurred.

Leszek asked the Council for the approval of extending the offer of full-time employment for the position of Chief Deputy Town Marshal to Francis Thomas. He also explained that the position would include the benefits of the Chief Deputy Marshal and recognized past years of service. Leszek stated that his official start date would be Monday, July 1st, 2024, with an hourly rate of $24.50.

Council Vice President Brown made the motion to approve the offer of employment to Francis Thomas for the position of Chief Deputy Town Marshal with the Town of North Judson Police Department including the rate, benefits, and years of service discussed. Councilmember Lewandowski seconded the motion, and all members present concurred.

**Legal Updates – Town Attorney Justin Schramm**
Nothing presented.

**Additional Business Deemed Necessary by the Council:**
Councilmember Banks stated she had received a sex offender notification in the mail for 603 Keller Avenue. Fisher stated that the Sheriff's Department sends out notifications if a registered sex offender moves into the area. Banks was concerned since she saw two young girls walking near the old elevator. She was not sure what to do or if she needed to warn the girls or not. Officer Quail stated that she could call dispatch and they would send an officer out to monitor the area.

Council President Rowe wanted to welcome their new Councilmember, Eric Lewandowski. Lewandowski stated that he was happy to be there and was looking forward to working with everyone.

**Payment of Claims:**
Council Vice President Brown made a motion to pay Payment of Claims in the amount of $776,118.02. Councilmember Lewandowski seconded the motion, and all members present concurred.

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

Meeting adjourned at 7:35 P.M.

John Rowe, Council President

Attest:

Andrew J. Rowe, Clerk-Treasurer

Next regular scheduled meeting – Monday, July 15th, 2024, at 6:30 P.M.