



Town Council of the Town of North Judson
Regular Meeting Minutes

September 3rd, 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, Felchuk and Lewandowski; Town Attorney Schramm, 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 Felchuk seconded the motion, and all Councilmembers present concurred.

Council President Rowe asked for approval of the Minutes from the Regular Council Meeting on August 19th, 2024. Council Vice President Brown moved to approve those Minutes. Councilmember Banks seconded the motion, and all Councilmembers present concurred.

Old Business:

2025 Budget Resolution No. 2024-03: Public Hearing and First Reading

Council Vice President Brown made a motion to Open the 2025 Budget Public Hearing. Councilmember Felchuk seconded the motion, and all members present concurred.

Clerk-Treasurer (CT) Rowe stated that they have discussed their Form One's over the last six-to-eight weeks with Council, Department Heads, and Town Manager Leszek in order to set their budget and levy for 2025. He asked if anyone had anything to add. The Council and those in attendance had no comments at this time.

Councilmember Felchuk made a motion to close the Public Hearing for the 2025 Budget Resolution No. 2024-03. Vice President Brown seconded the motion and all members present concurred.

Rowe then presented the First Reading of Resolution No. 2024-03. Councilmember Felchuk made a motion to accept the First Reading of Resolution No. 2024-03. Vice President Brown seconded the motion and all members present concurred.

LWCF Park Improvements Project Update

Town Manager Leszek stated that completion is still on track. They are currently working on finishing the walking trail early next week so that the NJ-SP Cross-Country team would be able to utilize it Thursday for their meet. After speaking with the contractors, Leszek was able to report that everything is looking good. The playground contractors would be arriving soon to reform the hill since they needed to make a change in order to get the bridge to fit properly. The contractors are working on finishing some loose ends but so far everything is on track for completion by October 2024. CT Rowe stated that they would be looking at dates during the next Council meeting to host a ceremony either the last week of September or the first of October to officially open the Park.

New Business

Town Ordinance No. 2024-05: 2024 Salary Ordinance Amendment

Town Manager Leszek stated that Frank Thomas has been filling in the void as the Interim Town Marshal. He continues to say that since the PD is currently down an officer, Thomas has been trying to do a job meant for two people. Leszek stated that they were working to get Thomas' pay situated so that he could be compensated for the work he was putting in on an hourly basis. He stated that the hourly rate for the Town Marshal would be \$27.32/hour with the allowance of overtime.

CT Rowe presented the First Reading of Town Ordinance No. 2024-05: 2024 Salary Ordinance Amendment. Councilmember Felchuk made a motion to approve the First Reading of Town Ordinance No. 2024-05: 2024 Salary Ordinance Amendment. Council Vice President Brown seconded the motion and Councilmember Banks voted aye; Councilmembers Rowe & Lewandowski abstained from voting on the motion. CT Rowe stated that they would have a Second Reading and Adoption at the next Council meeting.

Recognition of Guest

Blair Todd, Roger Mann and Deborah Clemons were present to discuss the 419 Main Street property. Blair Todd introduced himself as an attorney from Winamac, Indiana. He explained that his clients, Roger Mann and Deborah Clemons, own a piece of property at 415 Main Street and their neighbor, Kevin Williams, has long abandoned his property on 419 Main Street. Todd stated that the property is in a deplorable state. Mann and Clemons have been taking care of the yard and have paid some of the taxes for the property. He explained that there were some remaining taxes due and that the house was set for tax sale next week. Todd stated that he had been in contact with Attorney Schramm and Clerk-Treasurer Rowe who were unsure about the forgiveness of the sewer liens since the property was not in their name. He mentioned that they were invited to attend tonight's meeting in the hopes that they might be able to come to an imaginative solution in order for his clients to have the ability to take over the property. Council President mentioned that they have had issues in the past regarding the forgiveness of liens. CT Rowe confirmed that the liens become uncollectable debt, and it would be up to the Council if they wanted to forgive the liens. Todd mentioned figures for the outstanding liens and taxes. Mann stated that he paid the taxes every year up until this year. Clemons mentioned that they had paid \$3,600 to get the taxes all caught up years previous. Councilmembers expressed their concerns about lifting the liens permanently and then the property remaining in deplorable condition or staying with the current owner. Todd asked if there was a way for the Council to temporarily lift the liens for three to six months in order for his clients to gain possession of the property. He continued to say the Mann's would have time to file the Quiet Title and pay the back taxes that are owed by Mr. Williams, then the Town would be able to reevaluate fees. Attorney Schramm stated that he had met with the Mann's some years ago regarding 419 Main Street and they have been trying to search for an answer. The petitioners have been paying taxes on a property that was not theirs for several years. CT Rowe usually once the money is transmitted then the liens are released. Todd stated that they are

prepared to pay the sewer liens, if necessary, but his clients were requesting those liens be forgiven. Schramm was unsure how the process would go since it has never been done before. He stated that if the Council would like to try to get the liens temporarily lifted then he could look into the process. Schramm and CT Rowe stated that they would get in contact with the County and see if this process would be possible.

Donna Henry was present on behalf of the Mint Festival Committee. Henry stated that they were able to mail out the certificates to all of the previous year's vendors. She informed the Council that their next committee meeting would be held on Thursday, September 19th at the North Judson–Wayne Township Public Library at 6:00 PM. She mentioned that the committee had been working on a website for the festival instead of just a Facebook page. CT Rowe asked if the committee thought about trying to see if they were able to get the carnival back at the festival since this would be the time to see what would be available for next year. Henry mentioned that they have been trying to research different companies, but they are currently booked for two-to-three years ahead. Council President Rowe told Henry that it might be a good idea to go ahead and book the companies that way the festival would not miss out on the chance of having a carnival again three or four years from now. Henry confirmed that she went ahead and put the festival on one of the lists.

Bill Ramp explained that he spoke with Marshal Fisher about getting more reserve officers to help with security for events. President Rowe stated that Town Marshal Thomas would now be overseeing these types of things.

Anita Goodin had nothing to present.

Department /Representative Reports

Clerk-Treasurer - Andrew Rowe

Rowe presented the following:

P.O. 2650 to Troyer Group for LWCF (DNR) Park Improvement Project – Construction Administration, Invoice 59233, in the amount of \$609.00.

Councilmember Felchuk. made a motion to approve the following:

P.O. 2650 to Troyer Group for LWCF (DNR) Park Improvement Project – Construction Administration, Invoice 59233, in the amount of \$609.00.

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

Rowe stated that he did not have much to report. He did mention that he did have the Opioid Reporting going in tomorrow. Rowe also explained that only one tree was still alive at the Dog Park and that they should look into getting more in before the trees go dormant for the winter. Rowe and Leszek will both be going to the Hill Garage to look at the bottle caps that members of the community got together for benches/tables in order to create space to utilize within the garage.

School Board – Doug Wilde

Nothing Presented.

Building Inspector– Nick Radtke

Nick Radtke was not present. Town Manager Leszek reported that Radtke had done electrical inspections and a few shed permits recently.

Code Enforcement – Interim Town Marshal Frank Thomas

Frank Thomas was not present. Town Manager Leszek read off a report sent in by Thomas. Thomas stated that 705 West Talmer was able to clean up the majority of debris on the property but there is still more to go. The home currently does not have electricity or water and is on the list of tax sale properties. He spoke to the owner about resources to help but they did not seem interested. Thomas contacted the owner of 404 High Street regarding the debris on the property, but the owner did not see anything wrong with it. Leszek stated that they have been dealing with the owner for several years now and that the owner sees value in all the junk and debris on the property. Thomas tried to offer some ideas to help but the owner did not want anything done. Thomas inquired if Attorney Schramm could offer any insight on how to fix this situation. Schramm asked if the building was livable or if the property was just disorganized. Leszek confirmed that the home was unlivable, and that the owner was currently living in the garage on the property. Schramm stated that the Town would need to utilize the Unsafe Building process and send the resident a letter stating as such. He explained that the Code Enforcement Officer would need to make a list of the things that need to be done, and the courts would be able to take it from there. Leszek stated that Thomas also mentioned that 603 Keller had several junk vehicles, but they have now been removed from the property. Thomas explained that the radar unit was acting up, so he was able to bring it back to the Police Department. He believes the solar panels are not charging the station correctly, so he was going to try and charge the station himself to see if the issues continue.

Unsafe Hearing

Clerk-Treasurer Rowe stated that the building on the corner of Main and Lane Street would need to be included on the list of unsafe properties. He explained that the building's awning has been falling apart for years now and the awning is down to bare wood. Schramm agreed that the Town should make a list of all the current unsafe properties in order to file them all at once. Leszek also stated that they should add the Blue Palm to the list as well. Vice President Brown asked if they had already listed that property, but Leszek confirmed that Fisher had spoken to the owner several times before he passed away. The owner had been working on cleaning up the property, but he unfortunately passed away before the work could be finished. Council President Rowe stated that he had received a message about 203 Arlington having several vehicles on the property that were just sitting there. Leszek stated the owner of the former Trusty's Northside was renting the property out to someone who was trying to run a mechanics shop, but they stated that they would get in touch with the renter about moving the vehicles inside and cleaning the property up.

BZA/Planning Commission

Nothing Presented.

Redevelopment Commission

Clerk-Treasurer Rowe asked the Commissioners to plan to have a meeting on Monday, September 16th, around 6:00 or 6:15 PM. He stated that it would be a good idea to start securing services for some of the projects that they have been discussing previously during the meeting.

Park Board – Nick Radtke

Nothing Presented.

Police Department – Interim Town Marshal Frank Thomas

Town Manager Leszek presented the report on Interim Town Marshal Frank Thomas's behalf. Leszek stated that they had started demo-ing the AXON cameras and everything had been going well. The officers have been favoring these cameras so far. He continued to say that he will have the final quote for the cameras by the next meeting. He also stated that they are currently looking to hire a fourth full-time police officer and that the position had been posted on multiple platforms.

Fire Department – Fire Chief Todd Jackson

Fire Chief Jackson stated that the department had twenty-five calls, four of them being various fire calls, 12 medical, two vehicle accidents, one missing person, and two powerlines. Jackson stated that Leszek was able to order new gear including boots and gloves for the department.

Jackson presented the following: P.O. 2645 to Macqueen Emergency for Gloves/Hoods/Boots, Invoice P34676, in the amount of \$1,804.70.

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

P.O. 2645 to Macqueen for Gloves/Hoods/Boots, Invoice P34676, in the amount of \$1,804.70.

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

Utility Department – Utility Supervisor Kimberly Kapp

Utility Supervisor Kapp stated that her crew had been installing the new radio-read meters. They currently have installed ninety-five out of the 215. She stated that they have also been trimming down alleys with the side mower. Kapp also mentioned that they brought their leaf machine to the shop to do an inspection before leaf season begins. They discovered that they would need to replace the liner, so they are hoping to have it back together before the season begins. Kapp stated that they are still looking for a fourth full-time Utility Dept. employee. She mentioned that they have had a few interviews and were hoping to have someone start on Monday, September 23rd.

Kapp presented the following:

P.O. 2642 to Town & County Construction for Prepare & patch Wilson Street & Wenninger Street, Invoice E3690074.1, in the amount of \$3,920.00.

P.O. 2643 to Utility Supply Company for ¾ Mueller Exp. Conn. for meters (20), Invoice 1493990, in the amount of \$780.00.

P.O. 2644 to Hoosier Equipment for Impeller Fan CCW, Step Down Key, Liner Set, Shipping & Handling, Invoice 4789, in the amount of \$2,546.65.

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

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

Brown asked if the crews had finished with the alleys. Kapp reported that she had just begun working on the alleyways and that she would be continuing to work on them throughout Town.

Town Manager – Joe Leszek

Town Manager Leszek stated that they have been busy preparing for the park inspection and filling out INDOT vouchers in order to start getting reimbursement funds back from the project. He also stated that he had been working on Police matters which included getting equipment turned back over and shutting down old cellphones. Leszek mentioned that he had been working with a company called Vercada in order to potentially get upgraded security cameras installed at the Town Park. They are currently looking at four options which would have cameras by the bathrooms, pavilion, and all the of courts and fields. He stated that the cameras would be around \$1,000 to \$1,500 per installed camera with a 10-year warranty.

Leszek presented the following:

P.O. 2646 to USI Consultants for work on Project DES-2101695, Invoice 21600 in the amount of \$5,462.00.
P.O. 2647 to Brenda S. Wright for right-of-way on Project DES-2003029, in the amount of \$1000,00.
P.O. 2648 to Service Sanitation for Town Park & Norwayne Field Port-a-Potty for the month of August, Invoice 8925428, in the amount of \$540.80.
P.O. 2649 to Thad R. Beauchamp for Installation of back wall & countertop at Pavilion No.2 at the Town Park, in the amount of \$2,386.25.
P.O. 2639 to DC Garage Door & Entry for 10'2 x 9 Model Garage doors & trailers & installation, Invoice 4309, in the amount of \$5,275.00.
P.O. 2640 to Ken & Tammy's Collision Auto for Tesla Windshield, Invoice 4168, in the amount of \$999.00.
P.O. 2641 to American AED for Philips Heart Start AED units & case (4), Quote #20240828-084900831, in the amount of \$7,276.00.

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

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

Legal Updates – Town Attorney Justin Schramm

Nothing Presented.

Additional Business Deemed Necessary by the Council:

Councilmember Felchuk stated that she would not be present at the September 16th meeting. CT Rowe stated that her absence could cause an issue since they will need the whole council to be present in order to pass the amendment to the salary ordinance. He stated that they would discuss scheduling a date for a special meeting at a later time.

Councilmember Banks stated that she had a few people complain to her about Town's website being outdated. Then she wanted to discuss if it would be possible to get parking lot lines painted at the grocery store since the customers are never sure how they should be parking. Town Manager Leszek stated that they have looked into that before and they were not able to due to the size of the street. Banks also brought up that a schoolteacher reached out to the Fire Department to see if they would be willing to come to the school to speak with their class, but he never received a response. CT Rowe stated that they need to reach out to Joe Leszek and that he could direct them to the proper contact. Banks also asked what the plan for sidewalks was next to the Retro Building since they were only getting worse. Leszek stated that they were able to add that portion of sidewalk and street paving to their 2025 CCMG Project Application earlier in the summer.

Payment of Claims:

Council Vice President Brown made a motion to pay Payment of Claims in the amount of \$246,544.59. Councilmember Lewandowski seconded the motion, and all members present concurred.

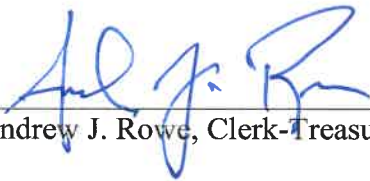
Councilmember Felchuk made a motion to adjourn, Councilmember Banks seconded the motion, and all members present concurred.

Meeting adjourned at 7:34 P.M.



John Rowe, Council President

Attest:



Andrew J. Rowe, Clerk-Treasurer

Next regular scheduled meeting – Monday, September 16th, 2024, at 6:30 P.M.