



Town Council of the Town of North Judson
Regular Meeting Minutes

January 6, 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 and Banks, Lewandowski 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 December 16th, 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 December 30th, 2024. Council Vice President Brown moved to approve those Minutes. Councilmember Banks seconded the motion, and all Councilmembers present concurred.

Old Business:

2025 Property & Liability Insurance Renewal – 1st Choice Insurance

Megan Greer was present on behalf of 1st Choice Insurance to present the Town with the yearly renewal of the Town's Property and Liability Insurance Policy for the new year. Greer thanked the Council for allowing her to work on the Town's insurance renewal for what will now be five years. She explained that she has enjoyed working with everyone and thanked everyone from the Town who have made any issues seamless and easy to solve, mainly due to frequent communication. Greer then discussed the Town's insurance policies. She explained that their premium had a small increase but that was a current trend for insurance at the moment. Greer also mentioned that they do have the option to increase their deductibles by bringing autos up to \$2,500.00 and buildings up to \$5,000.00. She also reported that their Cyber-Liability Policy had increased to \$3,000,000.00 of liability coverage but everything within the policy would remain the same as the year before. Greer mentioned that there were also new options for their risk management training. They would now have the ability to bring in personnel to train the individuals or they would be able to access a

new website with all of the training videos. Greer was able to provide the Town's premium breakdowns from 2022 to the current year with what the policy would look like if the Council agreed to the deductible changes. She informed the Council that the Town would be saving \$2,000.00 per each if they decided to make the change.

Council Vice President Brown made a motion to approve Property and Liability Insurance Policy presented by 1st Choice Insurance with the deductible increase changes in the amount of \$69,134.00. Councilmember Banks seconded the motion, and all members present concurred.

2025 Year End Meetings, Financials & Reporting Update

Clerk-Treasurer Rowe explained that he was currently working on the year-end process and Annual Financial Report (AFR). He explained that he was able to last transfers of the water and sewer bonds of the year. Rowe also mentioned that he did receive a TTC number from the IRS in order for him to submit 1099's electronically through Keystone. He stated that all W-2, W-3 and 1099 forms will now have to be submitted electronically and that they will be working on getting everyone's forms mailed out. Rowe stated that he is going to continue to work on the year-end financials with Baker Tilly and once everything is submitted, he will be emailing the Council with the final reports and presenting the AFR for Council approval prior to submission.

2025 Council Representatives

Council President Rowe stated that, after discussion, they have decided that it would be a good idea to appoint Council Departmental Liaisons in 2025 for the Police and Utility Departments.

After some discussion, Council Vice President Brown made a motion to appoint Eric Lewandowski as the Police Department Liaison, Linda Banks as the Utility Department Liaison, and Town Manager Joe Leszek as the Kankakee-Iroquois Regional Planning Commission (KIRPC) Board Representative. Councilmember Banks seconded the motion, and all members present concurred.

Council President Rowe stated that Nick Radtke had resigned from his position as the Building Inspector but he will assist with all permits until a successor is appointed. CT Rowe explained that they will be posting the position on the Town's website, Facebook and in The Market. The matter will be discussed and letter of interest addressed at the January 20th Council Meeting with interviews to follow in late January, if necessary.

Council Vice President Brown made a motion to appoint John Rowe as Town Council President in 2025. Councilmember Lewandowski seconded the motion, and all members present concurred.

Councilmember Lewandowski made a motion to appoint Josh Brown as the Town Council Vice President in 2025. Councilmember Banks seconded the motion, and all members concurred.

New Business:

Nothing presented

Recognition of Guest

Joseph Thomas stated that he had taken his children out to skateboard at the Town Park. He was informed that there had been a Town Ordinance that forbids skateboarding. It was recommended that Thomas attend the Council meeting in order to voice his opinion on the matter and potentially address the ordinance. He heard that there had been plans to add a skating area during the second phase of the Park Improvements Project and he wanted to provide some helpful feedback. Thomas explained that most skaters do not need a large skate park and that they would be satisfied with a small skate plaza which would be more versatile to the community. He explained the plazas are concrete pads with benchers, stairs and planters. He continued to state that these plazas are skate-friendly but also a nice sitting area in the park for those who do not wish to skate. CT Rowe agreed that the plaza would be ideal for the second phase of the Park Project. He informed Thomas that they are looking into doing more concrete work this year and that they could look over their five-year park plan to see what would be more feasible for those who are interested in a place to skate.

Kyle Nissen stated that he had recently purchased 101 East Talmer Avenue and that he would like to get the property cleaned up in order to turn the property into a used car dealer. CT Rowe stated that it would be nice to get the area cleaned up to brighten up the area and match surrounding businesses and Norwayne Field. Councilmember Lewandowski asked if he was planning to have mechanic work done at the property as well as selling used vehicles. Nissen stated that he was planning on having basic mechanics done in order to keep the vehicles moving in and out. Town Manager Leszek asked about how many cars Nissen was planning to have on the lot at a time. Nissen stated the state requires him to have a minimum of ten cars on the lot. He explained that he wanted to keep a few cars on the west side of the lot in order for people to have a better view, but the majority of the cars will be kept to the east side.

Council Vice President made a motion to approve the Zoning Affidavit for Kyle Nissen, Bowers Logistics Inc. Councilmember Lewandowski seconded the motion, and all members present concurred.

Donna Henry mentioned that while her husband was in the Town Park, he had noticed there had been a decent-sized hole by the new sidewalk that she wanted to make the Council aware of. Kapp stated that her crew would be able to take a look at the hole and see what they could do. Henry then informed the Council that their next Mint Festival meeting would be on January 23, 2025 at 6:30 pm at the library. She explained that they would be deciding this year's theme. She asked when she would be able to obtain their special event permit for 2025. CT Rowe stated that his office was looking to update the forms in order to receive more information from the applicants. He stated that forms would be ready by the next Council meeting, providing Council approval. Leszek asked if the Committee had made any big changes to this year's festival planning. Henry mentioned that they looked into utilizing the block of Keller Avenue in front of the library if they needed to. She also stated that she was able to attend the State Festival convention where she was able to speak to five different carnival companies. She informed the Council that there will most likely not be carnival since most of the companies are booked for the next three to five years. Rowe mentioned that there were discussions about moving the vendors to Main Street and Keller Avenue in order to make the festival less separated from itself. Leszek stated that he was able to take a walk with NIPSCO last summer and they informed him that Keller Avenue and Main Street had enough power to host the vendors from Lane Street. Henry stated that they had a few people ask about moving the vendors, but the Catholic Church wanted to maintain their side of the parking lot for the weekend's services. She informed the Council that they will be discussing the best location for the vendors to be located.

Anita Goodman was present but had nothing to discuss.

Bill Ramp was present but had nothing to discuss.

Department /Representative Reports

Clerk-Treasurer - Andrew Rowe

Clerk-Treasurer Rowe stated that he would like to update the Special Event Permit application. He explained that the new application has more details regarding whether the event requires electricity, amp services, and exact times.

Council Vice President Brown made a motion to approve the 2025 updates to the Special Event Permit application. Councilmember Banks seconded the motion, and all members present concurred.

Rowe explained that he provided each Councilmember with a copy of the Fall 2024 Settlement Form 22, year-end balances, and financial reports. He stated that he also received an update on their December Opioid Settlement distribution in their Restricted Fund that he would be sending to everyone. Rowe mentioned they are currently waiting to receive letters of interest for the Building Inspector position before working with Councilmembers to schedule interviews. He also mentioned that Eric Walsh from Baker Tilly Municipal Advisors will be present at the next meeting to discuss the proposed agreement with the Town going into the next year and the benefits the Town would receive if they decided to change the billing and services dynamics. Rowe asked Leszek if he would be willing to set up a meeting with OCRA and KIRPC to discuss updating the Town's Comprehensive Plan. Leszek stated that he had already contacted them to discuss a time, and they will be getting back in touch with him later this week.

School Board – Doug Wilde

Nothing Presented.

Building Inspector – Nick Radtke

Nothing Presented.

Code Enforcement – Interim Town Marshal Frank Thomas

Interim Town Marshal Thomas explained that the owner of the High Street property has made some progress, but it is lateral progress. He explained that Bill Ramp has been working with his son in order to clean up his property as well.

Unsafe Hearing

Nothing Presented.

BZA/Planning Commission

Clerk-Treasurer Rowe stated that there would be some membership dynamics that the Planning Commission would be discussing during their meeting on Friday, January 10, 2025. They will be meeting in the morning to elect their officers for the year and having discussions about filling vacancies within their local party representatives.

Redevelopment Commission

Clerk-Treasurer Rowe stated that they could plan a short meeting prior to their meeting on January 20th in order to elect officers, discuss the year ahead, and start making progress on some of the projects for 2025.

Park Board – Nick Radtke

Nothing Presented.

Police Department – Interim Town Marshal Frank Thomas

Interim Town Marshal Thomas stated they had gotten some equipment installed in the Explorer, including the radio. The Explorer has more equipment that will need to be installed at the next appointment. Thomas explained that they got the Durango back from the dealer for a blower vent warranty issue. He stated that all of the police vehicles are back at the station. He mentioned that 110 Jones had hired contractors to come in and level the whole area in order to get it cleaned up. Thomas stated that the corner should be cleaned up nicely. Town Manager Leszek asked the Council to move Frank Thomas from Interim Town Marshal to Full-Time Town Marshal.

Council Vice President Brown made a motion to appoint Francis Thomas as the Town Marshal of the North Judson Police Department. Councilmember Banks seconded the motion, and all members present concurred.

Fire Department – Fire Chief Todd Jackson

Town Manager Leszek stated that Fire Chief Todd Jackson was currently attending the Starke County Planning Commission meeting. He explained that Jackson was finishing up getting funding for new radios for the Fire Department.

Town Manager Leszek presented the following Purchase Order for Council Approval:

P.O. 2719 to Macqueen for Test and Recertification for Fire Department SCBA Packs, Invoice P04608, in the amount of \$1,903.00.

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

P.O. 2719 to Macqueen for Test and Recertification for Fire Department SCBA Packs, Invoice P04608, in the amount of \$1,903.00.

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

Utility Department – Utility Supervisor Kimberly Kapp

Utility Supervisor Kapp reminded everyone to keep their water trickling in order to keep their pipes from freezing during the below zero temperatures. She informed the Council that they are currently working to get all of the new employees trained in everyday tasks. Kapp mentioned that they have gotten the tanks cleaned up with the power washer and the crews removed the Christmas decorations from Main Street to Talmer Avenue. She also stated that the crew will be taking down the snowflakes in late February or early March. Clerk-Treasurer Rowe stated that they will be discussing whether or not they will be getting new banner to put on the downtown light poles. Kapp informed everyone that the JetVac has been fixed and is up and running.

Utility Supervisor Kapp presented the following Purchase Orders for Council Approval:

P.O. 2717 to Alexander Chemical Corp. for 10-150 Chlorine Cylinder, 6-150 pd Sulfur, and Cylinder Rental, Invoice 87329, 89068, and 88081, in the amount of \$3,890.55.

P.O. 2718 to Republic Services for Removal of two Sludge Dumpsters, Invoice 0717-001649775, in the amount of \$3,920.22.

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

Town Manager – Joe Leszek

Town Manager Joe Leszek stated he had reached out to Jacque Ryan regarding putting in an application for grant funding to help with beautification efforts in the downtown area. He explained that the goal is to get some funding to help cover the potential cost of banners, benches, and trash receptacles throughout downtown. He mentioned that he has been working with Town Marshal Thomas regarding ordinance issues. Leszek informed the Council that the alley behind the Smoke Shop needs to be resurveyed. He explained the alley is curving into the shop when it needs to be going straight. Leszek stated that the homeowner believes it is their property, so they have let bushes and trees grow in the way where the alley should be, presumably. He stated that it is in their best interest to get the alley resurveyed. He had spoken with Bob Aloï of Territorial Engineering who was able to give him a quote of \$2,570.00. Councilmember Lewandowski asked if the alley had been surveyed previously and if they would be able to find any stakes. Lewandowski stated that he would be able to go out and see if there had been stakes placed if the alley had been surveyed in the past. All facets will be considered when Aloï is able to meet with Town officials regarding the matter.

Town Manager Leszek presented the following Purchase Orders for Council Approval:

P.O. 2720 to USI for DES #2101695 Hubeny Sidewalk, Invoice 22601, in the amount of \$5,208.00.

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

P.O. 2720 to USI for DES #2101695 Hubeny Sidewalk, Invoice 22601, in the amount of \$5,208.00.

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

Legal Updates – Town Attorney Justin Schramm

Leszek stated that if the High Street property is not willing to make significant progress soon then they will need to start the process of getting the inspection warrant. CT Rowe mentioned that they would like to get the ordinance regarding no skateboarding in Town addressed, but they would be able to discuss the process at a later date.

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 \$477,130.29. Councilmember Lewandowski seconded the motion, and all members present concurred.

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

Meeting adjourned at 7:29 P.M.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'John Rowe', written over a horizontal line.

John Rowe, Council President

Attest:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Andrew J. Rowe', written over a horizontal line.

Andrew J. Rowe, Clerk-Treasurer

Next regular scheduled meeting – Monday, January 20th, 2024, at 6:30 P.M.