



Town Council of the Town of North Judson
Regular Meeting Minutes

March 18, 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, Town Attorney Schramm, Clerk-Treasurer Rowe, and Councilmembers Young, Felchuk and Banks were present as well.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

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

Council President Rowe asked for approval of the Minutes from the Regular Council Meeting on March 4, 2024. Councilmember Brown moved to approve those Minutes. Councilmember Banks seconded the motion, and all Councilmembers present concurred.

Old Business:

NJPD Vehicle Take-Home Policy

Councilmember Felchuk made a motion to remove the NJPD Vehicle Take-Policy Policy from the meeting agenda until a later date. Councilmember Banks seconded the motion, and all members present concurred.

Town Ordinance No.2024-04: Annexing Real Property for the Inc. Town of North Judson

Clerk-Treasurer Rowe read aloud Town Ordinance No.2024-04: Annexing Real Property for the Inc. Town of North Judson. Rowe then recapped the timeline leading up to this Second Reading of the Ordinance and then put it to the Council to adopt Town Ordinance No.2024-04: Annexing Real Property for the Town of North Judson if they saw fit.

Councilmember Felchuk made a motion to accept the Second Reading and adopt Town Ordinance No.2024-04: Annexing Real Property for the Incorporated Town of North Judson. Councilmember Brown seconded the motion, and all members present concurred.

Stellar Pathways Program 2024-Office of Community & Rural Affairs

Town Manager Leszek stated that Bob Aloï discussed the Stellar Pathways initiative with the Starke County Council and Commissioners earlier in the day and that he and Clerk-Treasurer Rowe will convene with Aloï on Tuesday, March 19, 2024 to discuss the trail extension and, at that time, they will inquire about the discussion and whether or not County officials are interested in pursuing the Stellar program with the Town as a municipal representative. Leszek also stated that there is a meeting of the Stellar group scheduled for Thursday, March 21, 2024.

2024 Highland & Pioneer Cemetery Maintenance – Timeline for Bid Advertisement & Opening

Clerk-Treasurer Rowe presented an updated version of the Cemetery Maintenance Contract with new dates outlined for the year ahead for the care and maintenance of Highland & Pioneer Cemeteries. Rowe explained that the request for bids has been published 2/14 & 2/21 edition of The Leader. The bids will be accepted until 4:00 P.M. on Monday April 1, 2024. Bids can be mailed to The Town of North Judson or be dropped off at the Town Hall before the deadline. The bids will be opened and presented for Council consideration with (potentially) a winning bidder selected at the Regular Council meeting on Monday April 1, 2024.

Council President then suggested that the Bid Proposal be posted to Facebook as well. Clerk-Treasurer agreed with the suggestion. Clerk-Treasurer Rowe mentioned that the previous year's bidder reached out and was interested in submitting a bid again in 2024.

New Business

Thomas Decola – Request for Rezoning: Parcel No. 75-09-16-302-032.000-014

The Town Planning Commission held a Public Hearing at 5:00 P.M. on Monday, March 18, 2024. The hearing concerned Thomas Decola's Request for Rezoning of his property on Simmons Street (Parcel No. 75-09-16-302-032.000-014) from Industrial to 'Residential.' A representative from the Hoosier Valley Railroad Museum, an adjoining property owner to the parcel in question, attended the Public Hearing and stated that their maps of the lots that bordered the property in question to the west were not as large or the same as those which Decola presented.

The Planning Commission unanimously voted to not recommend the Request for Rezoning until a survey was presented showing the precise location of the property lines in relation to the surrounding parcels. Hoosier Valley Railroad Museum Treasurer, Bob Barcus, noted that the State surveyed their lot within the past several years and that he would try to get ahold of the paperwork. The Council took the Planning Commission's recommendation under advisement and took no further action on the matter.

Recognition of Guests

Donna Henry stated that the Mint Festive will be holding a meeting at 6:30 P.M. on Thursday, March 21, 2024 at the North Judson-Wayne Township Public Library. Henry noted that they're continuing their planning and, currently, they're working on the "Green Paper" for this year's festival. Henry asked who the new Fire Chief of the North Judson-Wayne Township Volunteer Fire Department is and that she would like to include them in the Green Papers. She was informed that Todd Jackson is now the NJ-WT VFD Chief.

Clerk-Treasurer Rowe suggested that the Town secure a larger portion of one of the pages in order to not only have a picture of the Town Council but all of the departments, including the Police Department and

Utilities Department who do so much to keep everyone safe and take on the major clean-up efforts after the festival has concluded. Henry stated that the deadline for submission is Wednesday, May 1, 2024 and that she would prefer to have the photos by Monday April 15, 2024. Rowe and Henry discussed holding a meeting later on to finalize the ad. Capturing a new photo of the Council and other administrators was planned for the April 15th meeting.

Department/Representative Reports

Clerk-Treasurer - Andrew Rowe

Clerk-Treasurer Rowe presented a few Special Event Permit Applications:

Purple Tent of Hope Ministries at Norwayne Field to be held on Saturday, April 6, 2024; Fundraiser for Mission Trip to Uganda (Gurski/Bacon) to be held on Saturday, April 13, 2024, at Norwayne Field.

Councilmember Brown made a motion to approve the Special Events Apps and to waive fees for:

Purple Tent of Hope Ministries at Norwayne Field to be held on Saturday, April 6, 2024; Fundraiser for Mission Trip to Uganda (Gurski/Bacon) to be held on Saturday, April 13, 2024, at Norwayne Field.

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

Clerk-Treasurer Rowe asked Town Attorney Schramm if he had known any information about the Indiana Political Subdivision Risk Management Commission and if any other communities with which he works were enrolled in the Commission. Neither Henry (former Clerk-Treasurer) nor Schramm had any information about the topic.

Clerk-Treasurer Rowe stated that they have been looking for potential upgrades in the Billing Clerk's Office now having two full-time employees working in the office. Rowe discussed moving the desks to have more maneuverability when customers were in the office and upgrading the reception area altogether. Options were presented to the council, but Rowe mentioned that there would be more formal details presented at the next meeting.

Clerk-Treasurer Rowe and Town Manager Leszek recently discussed cemetery road removal with Doug O'Donnell from O'Donnell Funeral Home. Rowe discussed contacting Bob Alois from Territorial Engineering, Inc. about getting a quote for engineering/platting services concerning the potential road removal to facilitate the addition of grave spaces.

School Board – Kelly Shepherd

School Superintendent Kelly Shepherd thanked the first responders and emergency personnel for quick response to a medical emergency at one of the schools. Town Manager Leszek had a follow-up with the schools to discuss what was done well and what needed to be improved.

Town Manager Leszek discussed that during the safety roundtable he noticed that the school needed new AEDs. Shepherd stated that there are four AEDs around campus, but he would like to have around six-to-eight throughout the campus' of both buildings and sport fields Leszek recommended utilizing Unrestricted Opioid Funds in order to assist in the purchase of two AED units for the NJSP Schools. Discussion was had on the price of each unit, around \$2100, and the funds availability w/in in the Opioid Unrestricted Fund.

Councilmember Young made a motion to approve of the purchase of two new AED Units for the NJSP School Corporation utilizing the Town's Opioid Unrestricted Fund tentatively in the amount of \$4200.00

(until an actual amount can be presented for Council approval via Purchase Order). Councilmember Brown seconded the motion, and all other members present concurred.

Building Inspector– Nick Radtke

Nothing presented.

Code Enforcement – Deputy Marshall Derek Russell

Russell mentioned issues with furniture being left out and not scheduled for pickup with Waste Management along with some animal complaints. He's left warnings giving these residents one week to comply. Discussion was had concerning how to enforce noise ordinances when it comes to barking dogs if it's not happening when the deputies arrive at the site of the complaint. Audio/video of the instances helps to enforce Town Code when a complaint arises, without that it becomes hard to enforce. Discussion was then had on the number of dogs/cats allowed on each property (four) and making sure they're checking for pet/animal tags a bit more diligently.

Unsafe Hearing

Nothing presented.

BZA/Planning Commission

There is a meeting of the Planning Commission tentatively planned for the morning of April 15, 2024.

Redevelopment Commission

Clerk-Treasurer Rowe mentioned the need for a meeting of the Redevelopment Commission prior to the Council meeting on April 1, 2024 – somewhere between 6:00p.m.-6:15p.m.

Park Board – Nick Radtke

Town Manager Leszek noted that Brown & Brown General Contractors will be getting to work in the Town Park to remove any trees in the Town Park Improvements Project plans prior to late-April, when the state no longer allows for removal of trees due to bat nesting regulations. As that gets underway, Leszek mentioned that we would start seeing the ½-mile trail take shape. Rowe also mentioned that there are a few trees which will be implemented in the Town Dog Park &/or the hill at Norwayne Field.

Police Department – Deputy Town Marshal Derek Russell

Russell stated the Police Department has had 334 calls since the last meeting to which they have been dispatched. They've had a rise in the number of DUI's recently and have received a lot of calls concerning a gentleman living on 500 W. who is a registered sex offender. Russell noted that they've been working closely with the Starke County Sheriff's Department and other local & state entities to try and remedy the situation as quickly as possible. The individual has moved in from another state and he has yet to be classified in the State of Indiana; once that's individual's classification is issued, and it's decided whether or not he is living too close to NJSP Schools, local agencies and authorities will be able to take any and all necessary action. There's been a rise in juvenile issues which the department is working to address as well.

Council President Rowe asked Russell if they'll be ready for the Easter Egg event; Russell mentioned that they've be stuffing eggs and will be well prepared for the March 30th event.

Fire Department – Fire Chief Todd Jackson

Fire Chief Jackson mentioned that Truck 2 will be operational; Truck 3 is down with leaks sprung recently. Those components are being rebuilt and should be in service by the weekend. Tim Gaskey will be finishing up his training as a new member, and he'll be getting more involved in calls and at scenes. Jackson and the department has decided to host a Golf Cart/UTV Ride/Poker Run during the Mint Festival instead of their usual water ball tournament, as long as the Council approves. The goal is to start with a 9am registration with multiple stops at the car show, the train museum, the Point, the Mint Festival booth, and end at the Fire Department when finished. Each location would have a card pull and signature. Prizes would be given out to the winning hand and next winning hands. Jackson answered questions posed by the Council, including a safety reminder around staying off the highway and that this is a one-time-thing for UTV's on Town streets. Jackson noted that there would be liability and rule waivers noting town restrictions with speed enforcements. This would be the one-time exception for utilizing UTV's in Town. Clerk-Treasurer Rowe mentioned the Town's request for licenses and proof of liability insurance on golf cart permits, and that it may be a good idea to confirm each entrant is insured.

Councilmember Brown motioned to allow for the NJ-WT Volunteer Fire Department's hosting of a Golf-Cart/UTV Poker Run through Town during the 2024 Mint Festival between 9am & 1pm on Saturday, June 15, 2024. Councilmember Banks seconded the motion, and all members present concurred.

Utility Department – Utilities Supervisor Kimberly Kapp

Kapp noted that the north clarifier is up and running. They recently had 31 locates for fiber installations. The CV Drive Axel was replaced on the 1-ton in-house. For the department's locator, training was done with more to be scheduled in the form of a full-day training in the near future. The crew has been trimming up the Town Park trails to tidy up for the season ahead.

Kapp then presented the following Purchase Orders for Council approval:

P.O. 2538 to EJP for a VLOC 5 watt Locator Kit and a Magnet Break-N-Take Lid, Invoice No. 6292185, in the amount of \$5,913.00.

P.O. 2539 to North Judson Ace Hardware for Stainless Fastners for North Clarifier, Invoice No. 3108/2, in the amount of \$1,240.10.

P.O. 2540 to IDEXX for 5-100ml Irrad Colilert and a Quanti-tray of 2000 disposable 100/BX, Invoice No. 3147017916 in the amount of \$1,486.81.

Councilmember Felchuk made a motion to pay:

P.O. 2538 to EJP for a VLOC 5 watt Locator Kit and a Magnet Break-N-Take Lid, Invoice No. 6292185, in the amount of \$5,913.00.

P.O. 2539 to North Judson Ace Hardware for Stainless Fastners for North Clarifier, Invoice No. 3108/2, in the amount of \$1,240.10.

P.O. 2540 to IDEXX for 5-100ml Irrad Colilert and a Quanti-tray of 2000 disposable 100/BX, Invoice No. 3147017916 in the amount of \$1,486.81.

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

Council President Rowe questioned Kapp about the Lane Street street-lights to which she noted that there were one or two that needed replacing, and that she's looking for a source for those replacements.

Town Manager-Joe Leszek

Town Manager mentioned researching body cams and payroll system upgrades for the Police Department, Town Hall video & audio components for public meetings to meet state requirements next year, and that HWC's technology and email upgrades/updates are implemented and working. They're now acquiring the Town's email and web domains from the previous vendor, Datacrates. Everything was put into a personal account which has created issues with some of the email address transfers. Leszek mentioned some iPad issues that accompanied the iCloud account updates on Council/Town official tablets. Updates to the Town's website was discussed through HWC as well.

Leszek noted that Kirt Verhagen reached out with intentions of placing two additional duplexes on his Town Park adjacent property. The Planning Commission will be discussing the matter with Verhagen, who is still interested in donating some funds towards the rehabilitation of the Hill Garage. Verhagen is also interested in starting an Arts Council locally to which funds could go in order to enlist local or regional artists to erect sculptures or murals around Town at parks or tourist properties. Hometown Power Washing has completed their work at Norwayne Field; this led to discussions around work needing to be done in the near future at Norwayne in order to extend the longevity of the wall and bleacher areas.

Leszek then presented:

P.O. 2541 to Hometown Powerwash for Nowayne Field Concrete Cleaning, Invoice No. 184, in the amount of \$4,722.98.

Councilmember Brown made a motion to approve:

P.O. 2541 to Hometown Powerwash for Nowayne Field Concrete Cleaning, Invoice No. 184, in the amount of \$4,722.98.

Councilmember Young seconded the motion and all members present concurred.

Clerk-Treasurer Rowe presented for payment (missed during his department report) the following Purchase Order: P.O. 2542 to Troyer Group for Invoice No.56539 for Bidding & Construction Administration on the Town Park Improvement Project in the amount of \$2712.50.

Councilmember Felchuk made a motion to pay P.O. 2542 to Troyer Group for Invoice No.56539 for Bidding & Construction Administration on the Town Park Improvement Project in the amount of \$2712.50; Councilmember Banks seconded the motion, and all member present concurred.

Rowe also requested an adjustment to the March 4, 2024 Account Payable Voucher Register approved by the Council; he noted that he had mistakenly forgotten to include the meetings "Recurring Bills" which are the bills incurred by the Town each month, including Aflac, Verizon, AT&T, etc. in the amount of \$1843.88 which he would see approval for including those into the APV Register retroactively.

Councilmember Felchuk motioned to grant the adjustment to the March 4, 2024 Council Meeting Accounts Payable Voucher Register in the amount of \$1843.88 to incorporated those (First Monthly Meeting) Recurring Bills. Council Vice President Brown seconded the motion, and all members present concurred.

Finally, Rowe noted the hiring of a new full-time Deputy Clerk, Erin Chaja, who will be joining the Town from the NJ-WT Public Library.

Legal Updates – Town Attorney Justin Schramm

Schramm presented an amended Quit Claim Deed for the Town Park property which includes the language necessary to carry out the DNR's LWCF Grant; part of the requirement was to present a deed to the property with a recital proclaiming that it will remain a public park in perpetuity. Also mentioned was an issue with an alley along Sheridan Ave. A survey was discussed as the best remedy to the situation.

Additional Business Deemed Necessary by the Council:

Councilmember Felchuk mentioned wanting to get wayfinding signage in place prior to Mint Festival. Discussion was had and Clerk-Treasurer Rowe noted the plans provided by Ball State University in their downtown revitalization plan several years ago.

Councilmember Banks inquired about the status of Town Marshal Fisher to which Deputy Russell replied that she's hoping to be back middle-to-early April. Also, Banks mentioned a sign and visibility at Jones St. and Hwy. 10; she asked when the large-item pickup will take place with Waste Management – April 25th – and if there's a way to alert landlords/owners that they'll be able to clean their properties then. Couches and furniture removal of Town properties was discussed.

Councilmember Brown mentioned parking in front of the bakery, and doing away with an area with a "No Parking" zone near Luken Street. Town Manager Leszek provided his input from the Fire Depts. Perspective. Town Attorney Schramm asked whether or not there was an Ordinance passed to place that signage in that area. Removal of such a zone would need to take place via Ordinance. Donna Henry provided her input that she was of the understanding that the gentleman living adjacent to the space approached the Council about putting the signage in place there; ultimately, she recollects him putting the signs up himself. Discussion was had, Leszek will search for an Ordinance.

Payment of Claims:

Councilmember Brown made a motion to pay Payment of Claims in the amount of \$102,683.59.

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

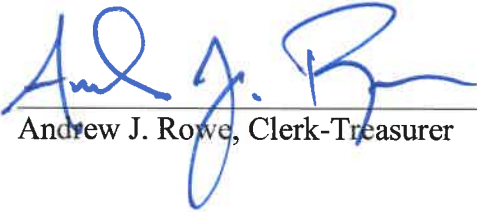
Councilmember Felchuk made a motion to adjourn, Council member Brown seconded the motion, and all members present concurred.

Meeting adjourned at 7:59 P.M.



John Rowe, Council President

Attest:



Andrew J. Rowe, Clerk-Treasurer

Next regular scheduled meeting – April 1, 2024, at 6:30 P.M.