



Town Council of the Town of North Judson
Regular Meeting Minutes

October 17th, 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, Councilmember Banks and Lewandowski; 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. Councilmember Lewandowski 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 16th, 2024. Councilmember Lewandowski moved to approve those Minutes. Councilmember Banks seconded the motion, and all Councilmembers present concurred.

Old Business:

LWCF Park Improvements Project Update & Opening

Town Manager Leszek informed everyone that the pour-in-place had been completed and that the contractors would be moving on to put the matting on top of the hill. He also stated that the playground contractors would be back within the next week to finish installing the bridge as well as a few more miscellaneous items. Leszek stated that the Park is on track to finish up by the end of October. Council President Rowe stated that he had seen some of the contractors working over the weekend. Leszek confirmed that the contractors were taking advantage of the warm, dry weather in order for the pour-in-place to set correctly. He also wanted to thank Deputy Russell for looking over the park after they were finished to make sure people stayed off the pour-in-place. Leszek also informed the Council that the Utility Staff had been working on painting some of the buildings. He stated that the goal was to have most of the painting finished in time for the ribboning cutting ceremony at the end of the month. Clerk-Treasurer Rowe stated that they would be setting up a date for the ceremony at the next Town Council Meeting on October 21st. He also informed the Council that he had received one of the reimbursement checks for the park project in the amount of \$445,052.33.

New Business

Nothing Presented.

Recognition of Guest

James Young was present on behalf of the Heartland Christian Center and a group of other local pastors. Young explained that over the past few months he and Pastor Dan (Lutheran Church) had started a coalition between the two churches. He stated that they wanted to bring together a group of people to help with projects within the community. Young stated that there have been discussions about having a volunteer weekend where they would mobilize a couple hundred people to help with painting or some kind of clean-up around the community. He stated that they are currently representing 10-15 ministries, so they have decided to call themselves the Hope Network. Council President Rowe stated that he thought this was a wonderful idea and that he thought that the groups could also help with the downtown beautification. Rowe stated that the Town would be able to purchase the supplies, but the groups could put the flowers into the planters around the downtown area. Everyone agreed that spring would offer a variety of options for the coalition to help with. Clerk-Treasurer Rowe mentioned that they could also help with leaf pick-up/fall clean-up around the parks this fall. Young stated that he would bring up the topic during the next meeting at the beginning of November. Fire Chief Todd Jackson stated that his full-time position deals with greenhouses, planters and soil. Jackson explained that he would be more than happy to help get the supplies the Town needs for the planters. He stated that he would get a catalog for them to go through. Young expressed his gratitude and thanked the Council for their time.

Donna Henry was present on behalf of the Mint Festival Committee. She stated that their Mint Holiday Fair had been scheduled for Saturday, November 9th at St. Peter Lutheran School. Henry explained that they are currently looking for any crafters, bakers or vendors that would like to participate. She stated that they have posted the registration form online, but vendors are allowed to have it emailed to them as well. Council President Rowe mentioned that Kara Lewandowski and Erin Chaja were able to have a variety of vendors at the Town's Maker's Market and that Henry should get in contact with them to share some of their vendors.

Bill Ramp wanted to see if the Town would be able to post a speed limit sign on Vine Street or a "Blind Hill" sign at the top of Jones Hill. Council President Rowe stated that they could have the Police go out and look at the area to see if they felt that signage would be necessary.

Department /Representative Reports

Clerk-Treasurer - Andrew Rowe

Clerk-Treasurer Rowe presented the following Customer Adjustment Requests:

- Account No. 2990001: Utility Customer was notified that their consumption was 60,000 over the average. The customer found a large leak under the house and promptly fixed it. They're requesting a credit of \$439.96 on the sewer charges making their new amount due \$443.57.
- Account No. 4100009: Utility Customer had not been staying at this property due to illness. When they returned a leak was found and repaired. They're requesting a \$81.90 credit making their new amount \$160.41.
- Account No. 52002: Utility Customer found her outside spigot was turned on during the night at least three times in the last month. The customer has taken steps to fix this issue so the spigot cannot be turned on anymore. They're requesting a \$75.88 credit making their new amount \$156.38.

Councilmember Lewandowski made a motion to approve the following Customer Adjustment Requests: -

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The customer found a large leak under the house and promptly fixed it. They're requesting a credit of \$439.96 on the sewer charges making their new amount due \$443.57.

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

Rowe presented a Special Event Permit Application for the Meet and Greet – Political Candidates on Saturday, October 19th, 2024. Councilmember Lewandowski made a motion to approve the Special Event Permit Application and to waive the fees. Councilmember Banks seconded the motion, and all members present concurred.

Rowe stated that Community Services of Starke County sent a letter seeking donations and/or pledges assistance in providing their services. Town Hall had also received a plan from the State of Indiana regarding voluntary retirement savings. Rowe explained that the plan would help boost the public employee retirement system. He explained that he was going to reach out to state to get more information but wanted to put the topic on the Council's radar.

Rowe presented the following Purchase Orders for the Council Approval:

P.O. 2670 to Bowen Printing Inc. for 11x17 Yard Sale Signs (500), #10 Window Security Envelopes (2,000), and #10 Regular Envelopes (1,000), Invoice 62071, in the amount of \$805.00.

Councilmember Banks made a motion to approve the following Purchase Orders:

P.O. 2670 to Bowen Printing Inc. for 11x17 Yard Sale Signs (500), #10 Window Security Envelopes (2,000), and #10 Regular Envelopes (1,000), Invoice 62071, in the amount of \$805.00.

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

Clerk-Treasurer Rowe gave an update on the appropriation and fund reports. He stated that overall, everything was in good shape for the last quarter of the year. The only fund that was on the lower side was the MVH fund due to all of the projects going on around the Town, and the reimbursements not being reflected in the appropriation reports.

School Board – Doug Wilde

Wilde spoke with Council President Rowe regarding the Special Event Permit Application for Meet the Candidates. Wilde stated that the organization reached out to the school since they did not hear from the Town. Billing Clerk Lewandowski informed the organization that, as with every SEPA presented for Town approval, the Council would have to approve the permit at a public meeting, and it would take longer for the permit to be approved since there was an additional week in between the Town Council meeting.

Building Inspector – Nick Radtke

Town Manager Leszek stated that he is currently waiting for information regarding building codes for shipping containers and semi-trailers. He mentioned that he has received more complaints from Town residents regarding these containers. Leszek stated that once Radtke is able to collect all the information then they will be scheduling a Planning Commission meeting.

Code Enforcement – Interim Town Marshal Frank Thomas

Interim Town Marshal Thomas stated that he did speak with Harry Tolson about the shipping container on his property. He informed Tolson that the Council did not approve the shipping container on his property. He stated that 705 Talmer Avenue has been working to clean up their property. They currently have been able to get their car removed from the property to someone willing to work on fixing the vehicle. He explained that he had tagged the remaining vehicle onto the property and gave the owner one week to have it removed or else he was going to have the truck towed. Thomas stated that someone has now acquired 304 Main Street and that they are currently working to clean up the property. The previous owner's cars are currently still on the property, but they have all been tagged and will be removed within the coming days. He stated that he had been working with the Health Department regarding the owners of 807 Talmer. He explained that there were about 20 to 30 cats living inside of the house making the home unsanitary. Thomas explained that the Humane Society would not be able to house the animals due to virus that has killed some of the cats inside the property. He was able to help another property on Talmer Avenue remove a van that had been sitting. He stated that some progress was made around the Town but there was still work to be done.

Unsafe Hearing

Nothing Presented.

BZA/Planning Commission

Nothing Presented.

Redevelopment Commission

Clerk-Treasurer Rowe scheduled a meeting for Monday, October 21st at 6:00pm.

Park Board – Nick Radtke

Town Manager Leszek mentioned that the curbing contractors would be at the Town Park tomorrow, October 7th, to put in new curbing around the smaller playground set that was by Pavilion Two. Leszek also stated that the railroad ties had been removed and the utility crew had leveled out the ground underneath. He stated that two new implementations will be installed next spring as well. After that the utility crew would go out and power wash the equipment so the smaller equipment would be ready for use next spring.

Police Department – Interim Town Marshal Frank Thomas

Interim Town Marshal Thomas stated that they were having a hard time receiving applications for the fourth officer. He had spoken with other agencies in the area, and they were reporting the same issues. Thomas explained that they were able to hire a part-time deputy, Adam Stoll, who was in attendance. Thomas explained that Stoll had experience of being a guard at the Department of Corrections and working as a reserve officer for Walkerton and Starke County. He explained that he is currently training with Deputies Russell and Quail.

Interim Town Marshal Thomas presented the following Purchase Order for Council Approval:

P.O. 2662 to Axon Enterprise for Axon yearly subscription for 5 body cameras and equipment, in the amount of \$4,895.74.

Councilmember Lewandowski made a motion to approve the following Purchase Orders:

P.O. 2662 to Axon Enterprise for Axon yearly subscription for 5 body cameras and equipment, in the amount of \$4,895.74.

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

Council President Rowe asked what all is included in the Axon package. Thomas explained that the package includes the yearly subscription, the warranty, and updates to the technology. He explained that once Axon releases the newer version of the body cameras then the department will automatically receive the updates. Leszek and Thomas also explained that they were able to drop the pricing sufficiently from \$30,000 to \$40,000. Council President Rowe asked if there were other departments in the area using the Axon cameras. Thomas confirmed that Axon is the most popular body cameras company used nationwide and that the cameras have been very helpful to the department. He also mentioned that their trial will be up in November, and they will not receive their new body cameras till mid-December. Leszek stated that once the cameras are implemented then he will be working on setting up accounts for the Councilmembers to have access to some of the footage. Thomas confirmed that once these accounts are set up then he will be able send information to the Council, working within the set regulations, of course.

Fire Department – Fire Chief Todd Jackson

Fire Chief Todd Jackson informed the Council that his department had twenty-seven calls in the month of September. The department had fourteen medical, six brush fire and one serious car accident. Jackson stated that he initiated the burn ban earlier in the month and that the ban would most likely continue due to having little to no rain.

Jackson presented the following Purchase Order for Council Approval:

P.O. 2663 to Macqueen for Lion Versa Pro brush jacket w/ shipping on Invoice 019837, in the amount of \$669.95.

Councilmember Banks made a motion to approve the following Purchase Order:

P.O. 2663 to Macqueen for Lion Versa Pro brush jacket w/ shipping on Invoice 019837, in the amount of \$669.95.

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

Utility Department – Utility Supervisor Kimberly Kapp

Utility Supervisor Kapp stated that her department had been busy painting structures at the Town Park as well as updating some of their testing procedures at the wastewater treatment plant. She also mentioned that the Leaf Machine is back up and running just in time for leaf season.

Kapp presented the following quote for Council Approval:

Quote #QUOT1102868-3 to USA Bluebook for PlantPRO Incubator 19.3 cu ft./300 bottles, in the amount of \$6,400.00.

Kapp explained that their current incubator is letting their BODs come out at lower temperatures than is allowed. She also stated that their current incubator will only hold thirty-four bottles while they are currently making a minimum of thirty-six bottles a week. She stated that she was able to receive a quote from North Central Laboratories for \$6,649.00 and the final quote from USA Bluebook was for a total amount of \$6,400.00. Kapp explained that the new incubator would be able to store three hundred bottles which would store all of the BOD equipment while not overpowering the refrigerator. She continued to explain that there would also be space to hold their distilled water in order to keep it at 23°C for their BOD Testing. Town

Manager Leszek stated that their current incubator is five years old, and it was purchased in order to get by with what they needed to meet state requirements. Clerk-Treasurer Rowe asked if the bigger one would last longer and if there was a warranty available. Kapp stated that there would be a three-year warranty available for the new incubator while their current one only had a warranty of eighteen months. Leszek stated that the incubator that they had to replace previous lasted for fifteen years, but appliances were not built like they were in the past.

Councilmember Banks made a motion to approve the following quote:

Quote #QUOT1102868-3 to USA Bluebook for PlantPRO Incubator 19.3 cu ft, 300 bottles, in the amount of \$6,400.00.

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

Kapp then presented the following Purchase Orders for Council Approval:

P.O. 2664 to H&T Electrical for WWTP motor control swap and furnish spare MCC load center, Invoice 2397, in the amount of \$1,017.00.

P.O. 2665 to USA Bluebook for Lab supplies, Hach Multi Input lab meter, Invoice 497603 and 487577, in the amount of \$5,583.69

Councilmember Banks made a motion to approve the following Purchase Orders:

P.O. 2664 to H&T Electrical for WWTP motor control swap and furnish spare MCC load center, Invoice 2397, in the amount of \$1,017.00.

P.O. 2665 to USA Bluebook for Lab supplies, Hach Multi Input lab meter, Invoice 497603 and 487577, in the amount of \$5,583.69.

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

Town Manager – Joe Leszek

Town Manager Leszek stated that Lily Scholarship Committee would be meeting this Friday, October 4th, to interview the scholarship finalists. He informed the Council that they should know the winner of the scholarship by the end of the weekend. Leszek mentioned that he met with KV-REMC at Norwayne Field to discuss the electric. He explained that the park is currently using the old-style power enclosers that allow moisture to come in and trip the GFIs. REMC is going to update all of the enclosers and separate multiple 20-amp circuits, all free of charge. Leszek stated that they will be taking care of all of the labor and materials at no cost, and he thanked REMC for their help in updating the park's electricity. He also stated that he had been in contact with NIPSCO regarding the main power going to the building at the park. The building currently has 200 amps, but the building needs 400 amps. NIPSCO agreed to put in a 400 amps service in, free of charge. NIPSCO did request that a trench be dug between their poles and the building at the park. H&T Electric agreed to donate their time in order to get the trench ready for NIPSCO. H&T Electric also agreed to help hook up the 400-amp panels once NIPSCO has finished installing the equipment. Leszek stated that once the work is done then this should alleviate all of the electrical issues at the park. Leszek wanted to mention that the school had a very successful "Walk to School Day." He wanted to thank all of those Town Departments that came together in order to make sure all of the students got to the schools safely. He also asked if Town Attorney Schramm received his list of unsafe properties and if there were any updates. Schramm stated that he would have to go through his emails to find the new list of properties.

Leszek presented the following Purchase Orders for Council Approval:

P.O. 2666 to Pulaski Memorial Hospital for new employee drug screen for Town Departments, in the amount of \$923.10.

P.O. 2667 to Korellis for Town Hall Roof repair, Invoice 45146, in the amount of \$687.80.

P.O. 2668 to USI for DES #2101695, Hubeny Sidewalk Project, Invoice 21190, in the amount of \$5,998.00.

P.O. 2996 to Creative Concrete for new curbing for playground equipment near pavilion #2, in the amount of \$2,700.00.

Councilmember Lewandowski made a motion to approve the following Purchase Orders:

P.O. 2667 to Korellis for Town Hall Roof repair, Invoice 45146, in the amount of \$687.80.

P.O. 2668 to USI for DES #2101695, Hubeny Sidewalk Project, Invoice 21190, in the amount of \$5,998.00.

P.O. 2996 to Creative Concrete for new curbing for playground equipment near pavilion #2, in the amount of \$2,700.00.

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

Leszek presented a mileage claim for Kimberly Kapp for the Bacterial Sample Drop-off (South Bend) for 126 miles, in the amount of \$61.74. Councilmember Banks made the motion to approve the mileage claim for Utility Supervisor Kimberly Kapp presented by Leszek. Councilmember Lewandowski seconded the motion, and all members present concurred.

Clerk-Treasurer Rowe wanted to mention that they did receive a visit from the people who are working on the new trail. Their visit was regarding the trail's new crosswalks and entranceways. There will be new entrances at Mulberry and Arlington. Rowe informed the Council that the entry gates would be similar to the ones placed on the Main Street trail entrance. Leszek stated that they had their DNR walkthrough last week and he was informed that there were things that would need to be more ADA accessible but could be fixed as they finished up during the completion of the park.

Legal Updates – Town Attorney Justin Schramm

Schramm asked if 614 Simmons Street and 615 Simmons Street would part of the same property. Kapp confirmed that the address was just 614 Simmons Street and that she did not recall there being a 615 Simmons. Leszek stated that the structure is partially collapsed. He also mentioned that people had been interested in some land behind the property, but the land has no access for a drive to be put in place. He informed them that they might want to get in contact with the owner of 614 Simmons to see if they would be interested in selling the property to help solve the landlocked issues they are facing.

Additional Business Deemed Necessary by the Council:

Councilmember Banks had some questions regarding the highlighted portion of the water bills. She stated that several people have mentioned to her that they would prefer to have Town updates put on the bills instead. Billing Clerk Lewandowski informed her that information would have to be known and approved almost a month in advance in order for it to be put on the bills since it is based on the billing cycles. Leszek informed Banks that the Town does offer a text system called "Text MyGov" that would send out Town information to anyone that signs up for the service. Clerk-Treasurer Rowe mentioned that we could potentially use the board outside of the Police Department to post the Halloween hours. Leszek also wanted to inform the Council that Bob Barcus had to start from scratch on a new website, but the Town's website should be completely revamped within the next couple of weeks.

Payment of Claims:

Councilmember Lewandowski made a motion to pay Payment of Claims in the amount of \$466,498.84. Councilmember Banks seconded the motion, and all members present concurred.

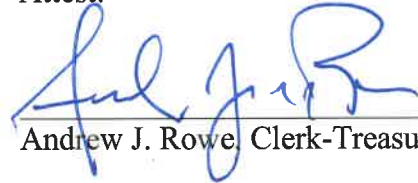
Councilmember Lewandowski made a motion to adjourn, Councilmember Banks seconded the motion, and all members present concurred.

Meeting adjourned at 7:35 P.M.



John Rowe, Council President

Attest:



Andrew J. Rowe, Clerk-Treasurer

Next regular scheduled meeting – Monday, October 21st, 2024, at 6:30 P.M.