



Town Council of the Town of North Judson
Regular Meeting Minutes

May 20, 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, Councilmembers Felchuk, Banks, 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 May 6, 2024. Councilmember Felchuk moved to approve those Minutes. Councilmember Brown seconded the motion, and all Councilmembers present concurred.

Old Business:

Stellar Pathways Programs 2024 – LOI Update/ 2024 Town Comprehensive Plan Update

Town Manager Leszek stated that they are still waiting to hear if our region is selected as one of the finalists for the Stellar Pathways grant program. He noted that he would inform the Council as soon as any announcements are made. Clerk-Treasurer Rowe mentioned that he added the discussion of the Comprehensive Plan Update because if the region does get selected as one of the finalists, then we may be required to update the Town's plan which was implemented in late 2019.

New Business

Shannon Hoekman – Starke County Chamber of Commerce

Shannon Hoekman introduced herself as the new Director of the Starke County Chamber of Commerce. She stated that the Chamber wants to help promote any event the Town might be hosting and engage with new and existing businesses. The Chamber of Commerce is starting to develop a video series on the hidden treasures in Starke County. Hoekman stated that they are going to start with the Whistle Stop in Burr Oak. She believed that the candy store downtown would be a good business to add to the series. The Chamber is also available to help businesses write a business plan, seek funding, and provide mentors to help grow businesses around Starke County. Clerk-Treasurer Rowe mentioned that the Billing Clerk and Deputy Clerk

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were working out the details on some changes/updates to the Farmer's Market that would not limit the event to grown items; instead, vendors like crafters, artist, and food vendors would be sought and welcome as well. He also stated that, after some research, Thursdays are an open, more uneventful day regionally where the Market could attract attendees and vendors. Rowe also talked about bringing back Movies in the Park. He mentioned that it would be great to have the Chamber of Commerce help promote these events as they were involved in previous movies events at Norwayne Field. Hoekman asked that if someone wanted to sponsor a Movie in the Park, who would she need to get into contact with? Council President Rowe stated that Town Manager Leszek could help communicate between the Town and the Park Board. She also stated that she has a few people searching for empty buildings that are looking to start up new businesses. She mentioned that if they had any buildings in mind to contact.

Mitch Hansel – USI Consultants: Community Crossing Matching Grant: 2024-01/2024-02 Update

Mitch Hasel was present on behalf of USI Consultants. Hasel stated that quotes for the CCMG 2024-01 project were solicited and received. Pavement Solutions were the only bidder with a bid of \$49,913.25 and Hansel & Town Manager Leszek recommended that the Council accept the bid from Pavement Solutions. Town Manager Leszek reminded everyone that this was for their crack sealing and street maintenance project (2024-01).

Council Vice President Brown made a motion to approve the proposed Contractor Agreement with Pavement Solutions (bid of \$49,913.25) for the INDOT CCMG 2024-01 Crack Seal & Road Maintenance project per Hansel & Town Manager Leszek's recommendation. Councilmember Banks seconded the motion and, and all members present concurred.

Leszek wanted to confirm that, since the bid was under budget, the Town's portion would be less as well. Hasel confirmed that the Town's portion would be lessened. Council President Rowe wanted to know what the Town's Match was to which Hasel stated \$12,500 (25% of the proposed \$50,000.00 project). Hasel presented the most recent PASER Map to the Council. He and Leszek stated that their proposed plans include widening Weninger Street along the Town Park by ten feet on the north side so that parking would be paved in the same surface as the street. This will create some issues as the Grant will cover the first ten feet off of the edge of the road surface and that means that the Town would be responsible for covering the further ten feet of parking surface that would need to be paved to cover the entire parking area. Discussion was had on the matter and the project is estimated at \$257,000.00 – CCMG-\$192,750.00, Local Match-\$64,250. The cost of the further ten feet of parking on Weninger would cost the Town \$45,000.00 He also mentioned that portions of State, Garfield, Vine, and Arlington would be included in the HMA repaving plans in the application as well. The Town will be applying for the CCMG Grant 2024-02 in July.

Recognition of Guest

Donna Henry was present on behalf of the Mint Fest Committee. Henry stated that the Mint Festival hosted their annual Mint Pageant the previous Saturday, May 18th. They had a very successful afternoon at the Pageant. Henry reported that the 2024 Mint Festival Queen was Georgia Frasure, the King was Bryant Michael Fletcher, and their Mint Darling was Emmett Emery. They are currently busy sending out the vendor forms to all previous vendors. The Committee is requiring all the vendors to be ready and open at noon on Friday, June 14th. Henry also mentioned that their next meeting will be Monday, June 10th, at the North Judson Public Library. She stated that it would be the last meeting before the festival, and they will be making sure everything is prepared for the upcoming weekend. Town Marshal Fisher stated that she talked to Terry Young about scheduling times for security. Fisher said that the schedule for the Police

Department is pretty much set, they are just touching up things as of as right now, but they are ready to go. Utility Supervisor Kapp asked Henry if she had the map of where she would like the Utility Dept. to place the barricades. Henry confirmed she will get that to Kapp soon. Council President Rowe questioned if the Mint Festival will be having their own security. Henry stated that the festival usually has a couple security officers on Lane Street with the vendors and two officers to watch over the Norwayne Field area. Council President Rowe inquired about the events security. Fisher stated that she gives Donna Henry a list of names of the officers who were working and then they would cover their pay. Town Manager Leszek stated that he had a few people confused about the Poker Run hosted by the Fire Department. Henry confirmed that the Poker Run is still happening, and all of the information will be in the Green Paper. Henry stated that the Green Paper will be out on Thursday, May 23rd.

Larry Wickert was present on behalf of the Methodist Church. Wickert stated that he had spoken to Town Manager Leszek the day before and the morning of the Council Meeting. He mentioned that the Church's parking lot borders the Town's alleyway and Kirt Verhagen's parking lot. Wickert wanted to see if it was possible to get these properties seal coated all at the same time and have the payment split three ways. The Town's alleyway is 20' x 110' making which would total around \$660.00.

Council President Rowe put the question to the Council to which Councilmember Felchuk made a motion to approve the Town's covering the cost of seal coating of the Town's alleyway adjoining the Methodist Church parking lot. Council Vice President Brown seconded the motion, and all members present concurred.

Bill Ramp was present to discuss putting up speed signs on the corner of Keller Avenue and George Street. Council President Rowe questioned if Ramp had seen any signs or the speed trailer. Ramp confirmed that the trailer still had not been put out there. He stated that he had spoken to Deputy Marshal Russell about patrolling the area. Rowe stated that Deputy Russell was waiting for Town Marshal Fisher to come back from leave to set up the Speed Trailer and set it up out there. He believed that they would be working on getting the trailer ready to be placed out there sometime this week.

Department /Representative Reports

Clerk-Treasurer - Andrew Rowe

Clerk-Treasurer Rowe then presented:

P.O. 2572 to Troyer Group for Bidding and Construction Administration, Invoice 57891, in the amount of \$1,557.50.

P.O. 2573 to Brown and Brown General Construction, Inc. for Payment Application No.1 of the DNR LWCF Town Park Improvements Project in the amount of \$235,461.73.

Council Vice President Brown made a motion to approve:

P.O. 2572 to Troyer Group for Bidding and Construction Administration, Invoice 57891, in the amount of \$1,557.50.

P.O. 2573 to Brown and Brown General Construction, Inc. for Payment Application No.1 of the DNR LWCF Town Park Improvements Project in the amount of \$235,461.73.

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

Clerk-Treasurer Rowe and Leszek included a breakdown of the Town Park Project original estimate and the actual bid prices. Rowe also included a message that the Council President received earlier in the day

regarding the 2024 Opioid Settlement Distribution to the Council since it had links to the State Attorney General's website, SBOA and the IN.gov links that would be helpful for the Council if they were seeking any further information.

Rowe stated that the trees at the Dog Park and Norwayne are still not in yet from J.R.F. Nursery. He stated that he had called a couple times, and he is waiting for a call back. Rowe and Leszek were going to look closer at the bottle caps at the Hill Garage and try to get a plan in place. Hopefully by the end of the week they can get some weights and get the amenities outfitted for Dog Park. The Starke County Community Foundation has a Community Center Maintenance Fund from which the Town is eligible to disburse around \$1,800.00 that can be used for the benches and tables.

Clerk-Treasurer Rowe had a citizen reach out and inform him that communities in Hobart and Griffith have dropped their recycling due to the fact that they are unsure if the items are actually being recycled or are being placed with the trash in the landfills. Rowe mentioned that our contract with Waste Management runs through 6/2027, but it is worth researching and discussing whether the Town should keep the recycling program. Councilmember Felchuk stated that she would look into getting some information from contractors to see if she could find out how they take care of the recycling items. Rowe stated that any information would be appreciated.

School Board – Doug Wilde

Nothing presented/not present.

Building Inspector– Nick Radtke

Nothing presented/not present.

Code Enforcement – Town Marshal Kelly Fisher

Town Marshal Fisher stated that Deputy Marshal Russell was in earlier to see anyone had gotten their Chicken (Animal) Permits. She also said that she and Town Manager Leszek had started discussing a new system to track ordinance violations between the department and Town Hall.

Unsafe Hearing

Nothing Presented.

BZA/Planning Commission

Nothing Presented.

Redevelopment Commission

Clerk-Treasurer Rowe mentioned that, prior to the first or second meeting in June, he and Leszek thought it would be wise to schedule a Special Meeting wherein all (Council, Town administrators, and those in attendance) would meet and walk through the downtown area to discuss some small scale beautification efforts they're proposing, and to discuss suggestions for minor improvements.

Park Board – Nick Radtke

Nothing Presented.

Police Department – Town Marshal Kelly Fisher

Town Marshal Fisher stated that the radar sign is currently at the Police Department and that they were working on making sure that the battery was in good condition and the setup is done properly. She stated that as soon as they are done, they will put it up on Vine Street. Fisher mentioned that they had a representative come by and talk to them about getting a couple Tag Reader cameras for identifying license plates. These cameras can identify tagged vehicles to help alert the officers faster. She also talked about having the School Corporation assist with the expense of the cameras as well so they could install one near the schools. Fisher stated that they would have to get at least two cameras per order. The cameras would be \$3,000.00 each with a \$600.00 setup fee for a total of \$6,600.00 if we were to invest in them. Fisher stated that once they receive more information, she will present that to the Council. Fisher stated that all of the police vehicles are in good shape operating normally.

Fire Department – Fire Chief Todd Jackson

Fire Chief Jackson informed everyone that their Annual Fish Fry that is being held on June 8th was rapidly approaching. He stated that if anyone was interested in tickets to please see himself or Town Manager Leszek. Jackson stated that last Sunday, May 19th, the Fire Captains did an educational training at the town shooting range with some of their newer members. This gave them the ability to teach those new members and provide practice to other members who don't get to use them regularly.

Jackson then presented:

P.O. 2571 to Napa Auto Parts for three Commercial Batteries and three Cores, Invoice 897065, in the amount of 570.78.

Councilmember Felchuk made a motion to approve:

P.O. 2571 to Napa Auto Parts for three Commercial Batteries and three Cores, Invoice 897065, in the amount of 570.78.

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

Utility Department – Utility Supervisor Kimberly Kapp

Utility Supervisor Kapp stated that the crew has been out every week mowing. She mentioned that they had been working on sewer and storm drain repairs on Wenninger and Wilson Street since there was damage caused by Surf Net Wireless. She is currently waiting for a quote from Town & County Construction for the repairs and they will then be submitting that to Surf Net Wireless. They had a small leak on Garfield Street. She also wanted to inform everyone present that they would be opening the Splash Pad bathrooms the next day. Kapp asked if the Police Department would remember to lock them up at night and Fisher said she would remind the officers. Kapp stated that she fired up the Splash Pad two weeks ago and everything was working but when they went to turn it on for the season the board was not responding. They are currently waiting for the parts to be shipped.

Kapp then presented:

P.O. 2570 to Republic for Removal of Sludge Dumpster, Invoice 0717-001617643, in the amount of \$1,838.20.

Councilmember Felchuk made a motion to approve:

P.O. 2570 to Republic for Removal of Sludge Dumpster, Invoice 0717-001617643, in the amount of \$1,838.20.

Council Vice President Brown seconded the motion and, and all members present concurred.

Clerk-Treasurer Rowe wanted to thank Kapp and her crew for how well taken care of Norwayne Field has been so far this year; he voiced his appreciation for all their hard work in keeping our community looking nice, especially for things like NJSP School events.

Town Manager – Joe Leszek

Town Manager Leszek stated that he has been working with Surf Net Wireless for the past couple of weeks to discuss the damage they cause while installing their equipment. Leszek said that he has been on the phone with several representatives but as more complaints come in, they are starting to take accountability for the damage. He also restated that if anyone has had issues due to Surf Net Wireless to please let him know and he will add it to the list of residents. Leszek said that they recommended that Surf Net get in contact with all of the crews they had contracted to go back through Town and check their work. Leszek stated that he had been working on INDOT vouchers to start getting back some reimbursements. He had been working with HWC to add more information to the Town's website. Our HWC representative is still working on gaining full access from Google to set up Town personnel emails for all the newer employees. Leszek mentioned that we are currently looking to hire a new Utility Dept. employee after a recent resignation. He stated that the Town is also looking to hire on a new NJPD Deputy Marshal. He mentioned that if anyone knew of someone looking for a new career to send them to Town Hall. Leszek sent out our Fireworks Fundraiser to all of our engineering firms and Troyer Group has already responded and donated \$1,000 for the fireworks at the Mint Festival this year. He still has to follow up with our other contractors like Commonwealth and USI.

Leszek stated that we had some vandalism at the Town Park that he had spoken to Town Marshal Fisher about. The people tried to break into the storage garage by the bathrooms, but they were not successful. They did not steal anything, but they did cause some damage that Kapp and her crew had to fix. Leszek and Fisher will be setting up extra patrols around the park area. Leszek spoke about how Officer Patrick Quail had reached his ninety-day period and how they started him at the lowest rate for a police officer. Fisher stated that he has done very well for the Town and very good at communicating with all departments. Leszek also mentioned that Quail is filling out grants to get AEDs in all the squad cars and is very proactive in the department. He spoke with Fisher and Council President Rowe about giving him a new hourly rate of \$22.25 per hour.

Council Vice President Brown made a motion to increase Deputy Marshal Quail's hourly rate to \$22.25 per hour beginning on the next payroll date. Councilmember Felchuk seconded the motion, and all members present concurred.

Leszek then presented:

P.O. 2569 to Gary & Sons for Mowing and Weed Eating of Highland and Pioneer Cemetery, in the amount of \$2,000.00.

Councilmember Felchuk made a motion to approve:

P.O. 2569 to Gary & Sons for Mowing and Weed Eating of Highland and Pioneer Cemetery, in the amount of \$2,000.00.

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

Legal Updates – Town Attorney Justin Schramm

Town Attorney Schramm inquired whether or not James Young had resigned his Council seat. Clerk-Treasurer Rowe stated that he has not received anything yet. Schramm stated that someone residing in Ward Three would need to be selected by party to replace Young.

Additional Business Deemed Necessary by the Council:

Donna Henry spoke about that she will be hand delivering letters to each business on Lane Street to inform them on the times the vendors will be arriving to set up their trailers. She also asked if there was an ordinance about residents removing their trash cans off the curbs after service. It was not clearly known whether that matter was enumerated within any ordinance.

Payment of Claims:

Council Vice President Brown made a motion to pay Payment of Claims in the amount of \$120,703.48. Councilmember Banks seconded the motion, and all members present concurred.

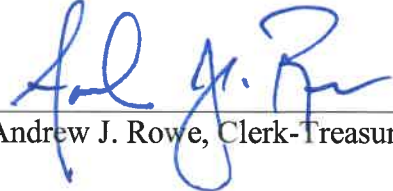
Councilmember Felchuk made a motion to adjourn, Council Vice President Brown seconded the motion, and all members present concurred.

Meeting adjourned at 7:20 P.M.



John Rowe, Council President

Attest:



Andrew J. Rowe, Clerk-Treasurer

Next regular scheduled meeting – Monday, June 3, 2024, at 6:30 P.M.