

DECEMBER 18, 2024

TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

Those present:

Jim Smith	Adam Penrod	Cam Kissinger	Eric Christiansen
Laura Rager	Matt Mize	Dave McVicker	Chris Harrison
Allen Miracle	Carrie Mugford	Brandon Whitcraft	Mel Sautter
Gary Montel	Jennifer Hotchkiss	Shannon Carter	Tim McLaughlin
Chalmer Tobias	Craig Walters	Alex Downard	Kody Cook

Those absent: None. A quorum was attained.

The second December meeting of the North Manchester Town Council was held at the Public Safety Building, 709 W. Main Street, North Manchester, Indiana, on December 18, 2024, at 5:30 p.m., pursuant to notice duly given in accordance with the rules of the Council. The meeting was called to order by Council President Jim Smith, who presided.

MINUTES

None.

VISITOR COMMENTS

Chris Harrison, Commonwealth Engineering, wished a Merry Christmas to staff and community.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. 2025 Salary Ordinance, GO#12 – Clerk-Treasurer Carrie Mugford read general ordinance #12, the 2025 salary ordinance, by title only. Motion to approve GO #12 on third reading: Tobias/Miracle. Motion passes unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Pickleball Court Request for Funds – Town Manager Adam Penrod stated that a request was received from pickleball enthusiast, Tim McLaughlin, for a contribution to the construction of pickleball courts within Warvel Park. McLaughlin addressed the council to present construction estimates and fundraising efforts from the last 6 months. McLaughlin spoke on the importance of amenities to the community and the popularity of pickleball, noting that around 100 local people regularly participate in pickleball activities. McLaughlin anticipates hosting tournaments and spoke about the economic impact for the community. Councilmember Chalmer Tobias asked about the space requirements for the proposed 6 pickleball courts. McLaughlin answered that each court is 30'x60' with a buffer around each court. Penrod asked who would be responsible for programming at the courts. McLaughlin stated that there are websites that facilitate tournament schedules and there is no intention to put additional burden on the parks department. Council President Jim Smith asked how long the pickleball season lasts. McLaughlin commented that people can utilize the courts as long as there's no snow or ice. The hope is to install lights so that people can play longer in the evening when the weather is nice. Council Vice President Laura Rager asked if there would be any concerns with the courts interfering with the regular hours of park operation. Park Director Jennifer Hotchkiss responded that the parks close at 11:00 and doesn't anticipate it being a problem. Smith asked if courts at the South Mill Street

pavilion were considered. McLaughlin stated that the surface of the pavilion floor is slick and not conducive to playing and there are no fences to contain the balls. McLaughlin feels a permanent facility with permanent fixtures is more attractive. Hotchkiss acknowledged that the location of the courts was chosen to mitigate noise and light pollution that the courts will create. Mel Sautter remarked that the tournaments could be opportunities for service organizations to sell concessions. Smith thanked McLaughlin for his presentation and noted that the council will consider the request at the next regular meeting.

2. Authorization of Prepayments, GO#13 – Clerk-Treasurer Mugford explained that a law was passed last year allowing prepayments to vendors for the purchase of materials relating to a larger project. There are guidelines within the ordinance that must be followed to allow for the prepayment for materials. Considering the number of projects happening in North Manchester in the next few years, this is a good time to have this ordinance passed. Mugford read general ordinance #13 verbatim. Motion to approve GO#13: Tobias/Rager. Motion passes unanimously. Tobias stated that this ordinance allows the town to do real world work legally.

3. 2025 Encumbrances – Clerk-Treasurer Mugford explained that encumbrances are an annual part of the budget process and allows for expenses incurred in the current year to be paid the in the new year. Encumbrances are not related to cash, but is extending the permission to spend appropriations. Mugford explained the encumbrances which are all for the General Fund. Motion to approve the 2024 encumbrances as presented: Rager/Tobias. Motion passes unanimously.

4. Boards & Commissions Appointments – President Jim Smith read the list of new appointments and reappointments for the new year.

Parks Board: Jack Vineyard

Plan Commission: Laura Rager, Lois Karnof

BZA: Tom Brown, Dale Carpenter, Eric Lambert

Tree Commission: Dave Good, Ben Vineyard

Stormwater: Adam Penrod

MEDCOR: Joel Nesler, Joe Egner

Motion to approve the boards and commissions appointments as presented: Tobias/Miracle. Motion passes unanimously.

5. 2024 Utility Write-Offs – Clerk-Treasurer Mugford presented the annual list of utility accounts to be considered for write-off. These accounts are uncollectable by all means available to the utility office. The list is 2 accounts and totals \$565.33. Mugford commended Utility Clerk Angie Casper for her meticulousness in keeping past due utility accounts paid up. Smith echoed the praise of the utility office staff. Motion to approve the 2024 write-off list: Rager/Miracle. Motion passes unanimously.

DEPARTMENTAL & COMMISSION REPORTS

Police Dept. – Report included in packet.

Fire Dept. – Report included in packet.

Building Commissioner – Report in packet. Building Commissioner Dave McVicker wished everyone a Merry Christmas.

Plan Commission – Did not meet.

Board of Zoning Appeals – Did not meet.

Traffic Commission – Did not meet.

Parks & Recreation – Report in packet. Park Director Jennifer Hotchkiss reported that Christmas Break daycamp will start next week. The dog park gate locks will be installed after the first of the year and the parks department will begin selling annual passes.

Town Life Center – Hotchkiss reported that the gym at TLC will be opened for walking during the cold weather. Maintenance staff will open the doors by 7:30 and close them at 3:00.

Tree Advisory – Report in packet.

Grow Wabash County – Town Manager Penrod announced that Wabash County was designated one of two Stellar Pathways communities in Indiana! Dearborn County was the other recipient. Local projects include funding a new Daniel's place facility, Manchester Mile safety enhancements, and sidewalk installation from Casey's to McDonald's on the west side of town. The grants will be paid out over 5 years. Additional guidelines will be forthcoming. Each community in the county will see enhancements because of this award.

Redevelopment Commission – Town Manager Penrod reported that the RDC approved a declaratory resolution for the College Row housing development TIF district at their December meeting. The next step is to have the plan considered by the Plan Commission. After that it will go before the town council and back to the RDC for final approval. This is a mechanism to fund the building of town homes along College Avenue in conjunction with the Lilly grant.

MEDCOR – Did not meet.

Solid Waste – Minutes included in packet.

Storm Water Board – Did not meet. Will meet next Monday.

Public Works – Wastewater Superintendent Shannon Carter reported that the land application permit is being renewed. Carter is adding 40 acres to the permit area. This would allow for appropriate amount of land application area in the event the industrial park is fully developed. Street Superintendent Craig Walters expressed his thankfulness for leaf pickup being done. Smith expressed gratitude from the entire community and the work that it takes.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

Town Manager Adam Penrod thanked the council, Clerk-Treasurer, and departments for their diligence and hard work this year. It was a busy year and there are a lot of projects happening in the next few years. Penrod commented that the town will look different in 5 years. Penrod thanked everyone for their support.

CLERK-TREASURER'S REPORT

1. Financial Reports – Approved subject to audit.

2. Claims - The Town claim docket totaling \$502,351.49 and the Public Works docket totaling \$64,313.08 were submitted for payment. Motion to pay our obligations: Tobias/Rager. Motion passes unanimously.

3. 2025 Meeting Calendar – Clerk-Treasurer Mugford presented the 2025 calendar for consideration. The first Wednesday in January is New Year's Day. That meeting will be moved to January 8. The first Wednesday in February is February 5 which is AIM Legislative Day in Indianapolis. Mugford and others will be in attendance at those meetings. The February meeting is moved to February 12. No other conflicts were noted. All other meetings will be the first Wednesday of the month unless need arises to move the meeting at which time it will be properly noticed.

4. Year End Trial Balance – Clerk-Treasurer Mugford presented an unreconciled year end trial balance. Mugford explained that funds generally ended the year with a healthy balance and no concerns are present.

VISITOR COMMENTS

None.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Chalmer Tobias thanked the council, Town Attorney Mize, Penrod, Mugford, department heads and employees for their exceptional work throughout the year. Smith added that it takes a team and North Manchester employees are a remarkable team.

Carrie Mugford announced that the budget order was received earlier in the day and the 2025 budget was fully funded.

The next council meeting is scheduled for January 8 at 7:00 pm.

Meeting adjourned at 6:13 pm.

TOWN COUNCIL, TOWN OF N. MANCHESTER

Jim Smith, President

Laura Rager, Vice-President

Allen Miracle

Gary Montel

Chalmer Tobias

ATTEST

Carrie Mugford, Clerk-Treasurer