

APRIL 2, 2025

## TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

Those present:

Jim Smith	Carrie Mugford	Ryan Shock	Maddie Schultz
Laura Rager	Matt Mize	Shannon Carter	Chris Harrison
Allen Miracle	Nate Birch	Brandon Whitcraft	Jim Chinworth
Gary Montel	Cam Kissinger	Dave Good	Karen Eberly
Chalmer Tobias	Dave McVicker	Alycee Kissinger	

Those absent: Adam Penrod. A quorum was attained.

The April meeting of the North Manchester Town Council was held at the Public Safety Building, 709 W. Main Street, North Manchester, Indiana, on April 2, 2025, at 7:00 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.

President Jim Smith asked for an amendment to the agenda by removing item #2 which is not ready for consideration at this time. Motion to remove new business item #2: Tobias/Rager. Motion passes unanimously.

### **MINUTES**

None.

### **VISITOR COMMENTS**

None.

### **UPDATES**

Commonwealth Engineering – Chris Harrison gave an update on the SRF applications that have been submitted for water and wastewater projects. Wastewater was essentially a resubmittal of the application from last year. The water application included identification of block groups of disadvantaged in the community which could potentially bring additional funding for projects in those areas. An environmental review has been completed and USDA has been notified that no comments were received during the review. The water meter contracts for purchase and installation have been completed with Vanguard and are ready for council signature. There is a discrepancy in the contracted number of meters to be installed. The increase will be included on a change order and billed at the same unit price as the original contract.

### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

1. Behavior in Public Building, Barnes & Thornburg, GO #1, 2025, Third Reading – Clerk-Treasurer Mugford read general ordinance #1 by title only. Motion to approve GO#1 on third reading: Tobias/Rager. Motion passes unanimously.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

1. MELC Funding Request – Jim Chinworth and Karen Eberly spoke to council as representatives of the Manchester Early Learning Center Board of Directors. Eberly read a prepared statement highlighting three items. The center currently has 69 children enrolled with 3

babies joining soon. The families of these children continue to see rate increases slightly higher than inflation and the board is cognizant of that impact. Secondly, MELC has achieved level 2 status in Indiana Paths to Quality and is working on level 3. Receiving level 3 will make the center eligible for additional state and federal funding as well as higher reimbursement rates from childcare development grants. Lastly, MELC will once again offer a summer program for school aged children. This was a successful program last year and they are hoping to expand it this year. Eberly expressed her appreciation to the council and the community for believing that MELC is an investment in our children. Jim Chinworth gave an update on MELC finances. Last month 87% of expenses were covered by fees. This number is very fluid but a good indicator of sustainability. MELC currently receives subsidies for meals and the Community Foundation is backfilling fees for some families. The future of those contributions is never certain but they are certainly helping right now. Chinworth confirmed that MELC is requesting less contribution from the town this year, but still needs some assistance. The ask for 2025 is \$25,000. Councilmember Chalmer Tobias asked if staffing is still difficult. Chinworth commented that the revolving door is moving slower than years past. The staffing is holding solid at 28 dedicated individuals. Smith asked about maximum enrollment. Chinworth replied that the maximum allowed is around 100 children but the facility can practically handle 75-80 children. Smith confirmed that the request will be considered and decided on at the May regular council meeting.

2. S&T Investment Tax Abatement Confirmation - Tabled

3. Wessler Engineering Water Well Head Protection Contract – Council President Smith stated that this is a 5 year contract renewal with Wessler Engineering to ensure the water department is in compliance with IDEM well head protection rules. The contract includes publication of testing results and regulations for affected households as required by law. The cost of the contract is \$16,000 over 5 years, equating to \$3,200 per year. Water Superintendent Ryan Shock confirmed that Wessler Engineering has been providing this service to the town for many years. Education and notification include individuals utilizing septic systems and fertilizers and any other chemical that may affect the town's water supply. Shock emphasized the importance of protecting the wells where water is drawn and the role Wessler plays in that process. Motion to approve a 5 year contract with Wessler Engineering for well head protection services: Rager/Tobias. Motion passes unanimously.

4. Resolution Opposing Unbalanced Property Tax Legislation, Res #4, 2025 – Clerk-Treasurer Carrie Mugford stated that municipal government revenue streams are under attack this state legislative session. Mugford is asking council to consider approving a resolution stating that North Manchester does not want revenues to be cut without a replacement mechanism to pay for necessary amenities. Under the current version of SB1, North Manchester could lose up to \$400,000 needed to pay for essential services. Smith reiterated that the council is not opposed to legislation amending current property tax laws, but only with thorough investigation of replacement streams of revenue. Mugford explained that the other harmful piece of the bill is the stagnation of the maximum levy growth quotient. Statutorily freezing the budget will have long range consequences caused by the loss of a year of growth. Mugford read resolution #4, 2025, verbatim. Motion to approve resolution #4: Tobias/Rager. Motion passes unanimously.

5. Apex Engineering Construction Administration for Community Crossing Match Grant – President Smith stated this contract is executed annually for construction inspections, quantity calculations, and pay applications for the Community Crossing Match Grant road work. North Manchester has partnered with Apex Engineering for the past several years and Apex does good work. The contract is not to exceed \$16,310. Motion to approve the 2025 Apex Engineering construction administration contract: Montel/Tobias. Motion passes unanimously.

6. Arbor Day Proclamation – Council President Smith read the annual Arbor Day proclamation. North Manchester has been a Tree City USA recipient for over 20 years. Arbor Day is proclaimed in North Manchester on April 25, 2025.

7. Proclamation Celebrating MJSHS Boys Basketball Team – Clerk-Treasurer Mugford introduced an exciting proclamation for the council to consider. Mugford read the proclamation acknowledging the extraordinary accomplishments of the 2024/2025 MJSHS boys' basketball team and their victorious run to the 2A state championship. Acknowledgement was also given for the contributions to the spirit of the Town of North Manchester. Smith reported that Mr. Webb and Caleb Kline also received individual honors during the state tournament. Council discussed the comradery amongst the entire county and the celebrations in a rural county for such an achievement. GO SQUIRES!

### **DEPARTMENTAL & COMMISSION REPORTS**

Police Dept. – Report included in packet. Police Chief Nate Birch reported that March was a quiet month except for escorting the boys basketball team as they traveled around the state.

Fire Dept. – Report included in packet. Fire Chief Cam Kissinger stated that on March 6 a report was received of a female with chest pains. When the department arrived, she had passed out and was in full arrest. Kissinger recognized Brandon Whitcraft, Cody Meeks, Cole Niccum and Ryan Niccum for their efforts in resuscitating her and saving her life.

Building Commissioner – Building Commissioner Dave McVicker reported there are no Plan Commission or BZA meetings planned for April.

Plan Commission – Plan Commission met in March and approved the item before them relating to the College Avenue development.

Board of Zoning Appeals – BZA met in March and approved the item before them relating to the College Avenue development.

Traffic Commission – Dave Good reported that the Tree Commission is getting more active this spring as requests for removals and trims are coming in. The Walrod Tree planting program only had 7 applicants this year. The Tree City USA designation was received again last year making 29 consecutive years. Arbor Day will be observed at Manchester Elementary School this year. The program begins at 2:00 for anyone who would like to attend. POET and Kiwanis are providing trees to be planted on MES property.

Parks & Recreation – Report in packet.

Town Life Center –

Tree Advisory – Minutes included in packet.

Grow Wabash County –

Redevelopment Commission – Clerk-Treasurer Mugford presented the RDC annual report summarizing receipts, disbursements, RDC members, and parcels involved.

MEDCOR – No meeting.

Solid Waste – Minutes and annual report included in packet.

Storm Water Board –

Public Works – Wastewater Superintendent Shannon Carter reported that recent storms are bringing a lot of water to the wastewater plant. The work being done to the lift station on Beckley is going well except that the contractor is having trouble locating the existing force main to tap into. The department will assist with further excavation.

Water Superintendent Ryan Shock reported that he has been meeting with Fox Contractors who are working for the state to move the water main attached under the State Road 114 bridge. Shock has been working through the difficult decisions of how to switch water mains while maintaining water to residents and ensuring safety. There will be some time in May when there will be road closures in front of the water plant and on River Road while the water main crosses the road. The plan continues to be that bridge deconstruction, on half the bridge, will start in August.

### **TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT**

Town Manager Adam Penrod is enjoying a much deserved vacation with his family this week.

### **CLERK-TREASURER'S REPORT**

1. Financial Reports – Approved subject to audit.
2. Claims - The Town claim docket totaling \$688,128.07 and the Public Works docket totaling \$717,293.44 were submitted for payment. Motion to pay our obligations: Tobias/Rager. Motion passes unanimously.

### **VISITOR COMMENTS**

None.

### **COUNCIL COMMENTS**

None.

The next regularly scheduled town council meeting will be May 7.

Meeting adjourned at 7:40 pm.

TOWN COUNCIL, TOWN OF N. MANCHESTER

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Jim Smith, President

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Laura Rager, Vice-President

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Allen Miracle

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Gary Montel

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Chalmer Tobias

ATTEST

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Carrie Mugford, Clerk-Treasurer