

JULY 2, 2025

TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

Those present:

Jim Smith	Adam Penrod	Cam Kissinger	Jeremy Hardy
Laura Rager	Carrie Mugford	Dave McVicker	Heather Cruz
Allen Miracle	Matt Mize	Shannon Carter	Cynthia Johnson
Gary Montel	Nate Birch	Ryan Shock	David Unhoch
Chalmer Tobias	Craig Walters		

Those absent: None. A quorum was attained.

The July meeting of the North Manchester Town Council was held at the Public Safety Building, 709 W. Main Street, North Manchester, Indiana, on July 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.

MINUTES

Minutes of the 06/04/25 and 06/18/25 meetings were presented for approval. Motion to approve the minutes as presented: Tobias/Rager. Motion passes unanimously.

VISITOR COMMENTS

Council President Jim Smith read a prepared statement responding to comments from last month from David Unhoch. The unimproved alley between 701 W Main Street and 106 S First Street has been monitored and the area has been kept open for both neighbors to access their respective properties. David Unhoch asked for clarification about the location of parked vehicles in the alley. At this time, no violations have been witnessed and no further action will be taken.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. One Time Alcohol Allowance (Hispanic Heritage Days) GO #4, Second Reading – Town Manager Adam Penrod noted that this is a repeat event from last year and it was very successful. The event will be held September 12 from 4:00 pm – 11:00 pm. MacKenzie Coulter Kern requests the closure of Market Street from 7th to 9th. Clerk-Treasurer Carrie Mugford read general ordinance #4 by title only. Motion to approve GO#4 on second reading: Rager/Tobias. Motion passes unanimously.

2. Wabash County Diversity Coalition Funding Request – Town Manager Penrod noted that this is a request for funding to support operations and initiatives of the Diversity Coalition. Motion to approve the \$10,000 request for funding: Tobias/Rager. Motion passes unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Manchester Alive Request for Funding – Town Manager Penrod introduced Manchester Alive Executive Director, Heather Cruz. This is an annual request for \$15,000 to help support operations of Manchester Alive, that in turn supports tourism and local economic development. Cruz gave an update on the many changes over the three years she has been the executive director. Manchester Alive is a combination of a local chamber and a Main Street organization, and also the umbrella under which numerous community minded groups are affiliated. The Coop, business incubator, is an exciting space within the Manchester Alive building where businesses

get started and grow. Additional staff has been hired to facilitate more open hours for business. Cruz emphasized that the Coop gives an opportunity for local and regional businesses to have a presence in North Manchester and offer good and services that wouldn't be available otherwise. Manchester Alive also presents 13 community events in various town facilities. The variety of events offers something for everyone. Each event requires insurance, permits, and hours of preparation. Cruz emphasized that business support for existing businesses is also a priority. Cruz thanked council for their continued support and the wonderful working relationship over the years.

2. Learn More Center Request for Funding – Town Manager Penrod introduced Cynthia Johnson of the Learn More Center. Penrod noted that Johnson gave a comprehensive overview of the Learn More Center's operations, current improvements, and future growth at last month's council meeting. Graduation for the current class of students will be July 19 and the open house for the new facility will be August 7. Johnson encouraged everyone to visit and see the new facility. The submitted request of \$10,000 is to help keep the North Manchester office open at least 20 hours a week for local residents. Johnson explained that federal and state funding has been cut and they are facing a budget cut in half. They are looking for new or additional revenue sources. This request would be used specifically for the North Manchester office for 2025 and another request will be made for 2026. Johnson thanked the council for their consideration and hopes to see everyone at the open house.

3. County/Town South Market Street Water Main Construction Contract – Town Manager Penrod stated that one of our ongoing projects is the reconstruction of the South Market Street bridge being done by the county. This is being funded with a federal grant secured by the county. Part of our agreement is that we will move the water and wastewater lines in conflict with construction. The County agreed to seek reimbursement for a majority of the relocation costs on behalf of the Town, through the Federal grant. During the design review process and after talking to contractors it was determined that the bore angle required for the water main installation to go under the river was not feasible. The best design is to bore from the north side of Main Street all the way under SR114 and the river to connect to the existing water main. The contract before the council tonight is a new reimbursement contract between the County and Town. The prior contract is void. The utility will pay up to \$100,000 for all engineering services and the County will cover all construction costs incurred by the Town via the new reimbursement agreement. Penrod feels this is a better design and financial arrangement for everyone. Once the county commissioners agree to the contract, the Town will advertise to bid the project and start construction this Fall. Penrod recommended approving the contract with the county to keep the process moving. Motion to approve the contract as presented: Tobias/Rager. Motion passes unanimously. Smith commented that this has been a long and winding road.

4. Water Softening Salt Bid Opening – Clerk-Treasurer Carrie Mugford stated that two bids for softening salt were received on time at town hall. Town Attorney Matt Mize opened the bids and found them complete. The bids were as follows:

Midwest Salt: \$115.00 per ton

Morton Salt: \$103.69 per ton

Penrod stated that the current contract is with Morton Salt at \$99.70 per ton. The bids will be taken under advisement and approved at a future council meeting.

DEPARTMENTAL & COMMISSION REPORTS

Police Dept. – Report included in packet. Police Chief Nate Birch reported that Officer Vice attended Stops Instructor training and can now teach best practices for traffic stops. Chief Birch completed patrol rifle instructor training and can now teach best practices with patrol rifles. Birch

remarked that having our own officers trained as instructors allows for training without sending officers out of town. Tim Terflinger was recently sworn in as an officer and is scheduled to attend ILEA in January.

Fire Dept. – Report included in packet. Fire Chief Cam Kissinger stated that 6 sets of SCBA gear were ordered on June 9 and received on June 13. Chief Kissinger received a grant from the Community Foundation for 2 thermal imaging cameras. Those 2 cameras were also ordered on June 9 and received on June 13. Kissinger has met with 2 additional sales reps to discuss wants and needs on the next fire truck purchase. At the regular volunteer fire meeting, the members accepted Alyssa Cole onto the department. Community fireworks will be held on Friday, July 4. Kissinger reported that Cody Meeks has successfully completed his probationary period and has proven to be a great addition to the department.

Building Commissioner –

Plan Commission – Building Commissioner Dave McVicker reported that Plan Commission met in June to discuss the proposed development by College Row, LLC. Phase 1 and 2 plat was discussed and approved.

Board of Zoning Appeals – Building Commissioner McVicker reported that the BZA met the same night as Plan Commission to discuss set back variances within the proposed development. The requests were approved.

Traffic Commission –

Parks & Recreation – Report in packet. Town Manager Penrod reported that dirt is being moved and trees are being removed at Warvel Park in preparation for the new pickle ball courts. The schedule is to have the courts playable by the first of September.

Town Life Center –

Tree Advisory – Minutes included in packet.

Grow Wabash County – Town Manager Penrod stated that the tax abatement rubric currently in use was developed in 2013. Tenille Zartman, Grow Wabash County CEO, and her team have developed an updated set of criteria for scoring tax abatement requests. New changes in legislation remove the tax liability on personal property under \$2,000,000. Therefore, no abatements will be given for personal property investments under \$2,000,000. Minimum wage requirement for consideration is \$19 per hour. Wages need to be at a livable wage rate and beneficial to Wabash County. The changes should produce fewer 10 year abatement recommendations and more 3-5 year abatements. This will allow for growth without pushing undue obligations on other tax payers in the community. Penrod noted that council always has the ability to accept, amend, or reject abatement recommendations. Wabash City and Wabash County have accepted the changes.

Redevelopment Commission –

MEDCOR – No meeting.

Solid Waste – Minutes included in packet.

Storm Water Board – Town Manager Penrod reported the Stormwater Board met and discussed revising the stormwater ordinance. The ordinance and fee were originally established in the 1990's. Commonwealth Engineers have suggested that the ordinance should be reviewed and revised to better reflect the uniform standards of today. The current ordinance isn't strong enough and leaves too much up to interpretation. Penrod will work with Commonwealth to create an ordinance that is similar to others around the state with more directions for future projects.

Public Works – Street Superintendent Craig Walters reported that mosquito spraying is being done 1-2 times per week. Walters and Chris Damron completed a class to be certified in PASER street rating.

Water Superintendent Ryan Shock reported that the department has been working on a leak at 3rd and Bond Streets. The repair has been difficult because the line goes through a sewer manhole. The permanent repair will require 300' of water main to be replaced.

Wastewater Superintendent Shannon Carter reported that a few catch basins have been replaced because of crumbling brick structures. The grinder station at the Lutheran Church is hooked up. The Beckley Street lift station will be bored on Monday and connected on Tuesday.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

Town Manager Adam Penrod reported that Gaunt and Son Asphalt is finishing Community Crossing Match Grant paving in the Sunset and Grandview area. Elm Street and West 4th Street will be paved after sidewalk work is complete. Homeowners have been requesting additional sidewalk work done which will help in the neighborhood.

The sewer along the South Market Street bridge has been abandoned now that the new lift pump is installed next to the Lutheran Church.

Utility relocation along the State Road 114 bridge is complete. Penrod feels the process was fairly smooth and the work done is an improvement for our utility. Outside of a little engineering, the work was all paid for by the state. Demolition of the bridge is scheduled to start in August.

The majority of the parts have been received for the water meter installation project. Vanguard will do a final inventory of the parts before beginning installation. There are currently nine meters installed and the utility office is working on software installation.

A recent meeting with Commonwealth was informative as design and schedule for new water main was discussed. There may be water main construction in November and December on town streets to comply with INDOT construction regulations.

Jeremy Hardy, Commonwealth, stated that the water projects scored well on the project priority list with SRF. Currently we are just outside of the traditional funding range at #13, but need to be in the top 10. Hardy noted that we may move up as projects fall off the list that aren't ready for funding. Traditional funding will mean lower rates.

Penrod reported that the wastewater bond anticipation note bid opening went very well. There were 4 banks that responded with bids. The best offer was from First Internet Bank at 4.125%. The wastewater BAN will pay for preconstruction costs.

CLERK-TREASURER'S REPORT

1. Financial Reports – Approved subject to audit.

2. Claims - The Town claim docket totaling \$831,470.13 and the Public Works docket totaling \$409,841.63 were submitted for payment. Motion to pay our obligations: Tobias/Rager. Motion passes unanimously.

3. Budget Meeting Schedule – The council will meet July 30 at 4:30 to discuss 2026 budgets with department heads.

VISITOR COMMENTS

None.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Town Attorney Matt Mize notified the council that the Wabash County Council is implementing a wheel tax at the minimum rate. This is an effort to ensure that Wabash County has access to Community Crossing Match Grant funds. Jim Smith expressed his appreciation for the cooperation between governmental entities in the county as we face financial uncertainty the next few years.

The next regularly scheduled town council meeting will be August 6.

Meeting adjourned at 7:57 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