

DECEMBER 6, 2023

TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

Those present:

Jim Smith	Carrie Mugford	Cam Kissinger	Maddie Schultz
Laura Rager	Matt Mize	Shannon Carter	Chalmer Tobias
Tom Dale	Jim Kirk	Ryan Shock	Brandon Whitcraft
Gary Montel	Craig Walters	David McManus	Cynthia Johnson
Allen Miracle	Jennifer Hotchkiss	Kody Cook	Bob Sklar
Adam Penrod	Dave McVicker	Ray Houser	

Those absent: None. A quorum was attained.

The December meeting of the North Manchester Town Council was held at the Public Safety Building, 709 W. Main Street, North Manchester, Indiana, on December 6, 2023, 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 11/01/23 Board of Public Safety and 11/01/23 council meetings were presented for approval. Motion to approve the minutes as presented: Rager/Montel. Motion passes unanimously.

VISITOR COMMENTS

Bob Sklar, 116 W Main Street, questioned the contract and monthly stipend to Parkview Health for EMS services stationed in town. Sklar then questioned a 1970 policy requiring police officers to live within 5 miles of town.

PUBLIC HEARING

Council President Jim Smith opened the public hearing for additional appropriations. No comments were heard. The public hearing is closed.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. 2024 Salary Ordinance, GO#9, Second Reading – Clerk-Treasurer Carrie Mugford read GO#9, 2023, by title only on second reading. Motion to approve the 2024 salary ordinance on second reading: Rager/Dale. Motion passes unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Learn More Center Program Update and Request – Town Manager Adam Penrod welcomed Cynthia Johnson, Director of Education for the Learn More Center. Johnson thanked council for the contribution in 2019 of \$6,150 which was used for High School Equivalency tests and other outreach measures. LMC has not needed to ask for assistance until this year when they have seen a surge of younger students coming for services. Johnson stated that almost half of the most recent class was under 25, and younger students need soft skills such as writing proficiency, financial literacy and sending proper emails. LMC is expanding programming to accommodate the needs of clients, many of which require English as a second language training. Johnson noted that MPS Eggs provides many students because of a companywide emphasis on

education. Johnson stated that the LMC is a small program with a goal to reach 105 people per year. This year they already have 80 students and expect to reach 150. Johnson is looking to the town for help funding the growth of their programs because state funding doesn't increase fast enough to keep up with development. The plan is to investigate partnering with other programs providing adult education, as well as, potentially investing in a larger facility to allow for labs and other instructional aids. Councilmember Allen Miracle noted that he has volunteered at LMC and appreciates the impact that is made in people's lives. Miracle asked how many people are employed at LMC. Johnson stated that there is 1 full-time employee and approximately 7 part-time staff and 13 volunteers. Miracle asked if Wabash City and Wabash County were also being asked to contribute. Johnson stated that Wabash City is giving a portion of AARPA funds and Wabash County has given a pledge, there are also state and federal funding sources. Miracle asked if there will continue to be a presence in Manchester if they undergo a building project. Johnson acknowledged the need to have a facility in Manchester because 75-80% of students are from Manchester and a large number of those students walk or need rides. Smith echoed Miracle's comments and appreciates the work in the community. Smith asked about the apparent decline in revenue showing on the financials. Johnson explained that end of year reimbursements and grants will compensate for the loss by the end of the year. Smith thanked Johnson. Council will make a decision about awarding the request at the January meeting.

2. 2023 Additional Appropriation, Resolution #10, 2023 – Clerk-Treasurer Carrie Mugford read resolution #10 verbatim. Mugford explained that additional appropriations are an increase in appropriations or a request to spend cash on hand not a request for additional money. The requests are as follows:

Park & Recreation: Other Services & Charges	\$75,000
Town Life Center: Other Services & Charges	\$3,000
Law Enforcement Continuing Education: Other Services & Charges	\$16,000
Opioid Restricted: Other Services & Charges	\$4,100
Local Road & Bridge: Other Services & Charges	\$31,000
Warvel Park Donation: Other Services & Charges	\$5,200

Motion to approve resolution #10, additional appropriations as presented: Rager/Dale. Motion passes unanimously.

3. Apex Engineering Design and Bid Administration Contract – Town Manager Penrod stated that the town has been working with Apex Engineering for the past several Community Crossing Match Grant applications. This current proposed contract is to design, survey and bid the most recent scope of work. The contract is not to exceed \$32,749. The schedule is to have solicitation for bids go out in January, receive bids in February and be under contract by March 6. Penrod recommended approval of the Apex Engineering contract. Motion to approve the contract as presented: Rager/Dale. Motion passes unanimously.

4. Duke LED Street Light Conversion – Town Manager Penrod remarked that many municipalities are going green and saving money by switching street lights to LED. Duke Energy has a program to switch traditional amber street lights to a brighter white LED bulb. Duke estimates a \$600 monthly savings and a one-time rebate of \$9,400. The conversion will take 2-3 months to complete. Council Vice President Laura Rager asked about the expected longevity of the new bulbs. Penrod spoke to the Duke representative and was told the bulbs should last 20-25 years but could make it to 30 years. Motion to approve the contract with Duke Energy to convert street lights to LED: Rager/Montel. Motion passes unanimously.

5. Request to Purchase and Train an Additional K9 – Town Manager Penrod acknowledged the loss of K9 Strider over the summer. Since that time the department has only had one K9 (Sarge) to call on. Having two dogs allows one dog and handler to rest while the other dog and handler

are on duty. Penrod noted that the drug problem in town is much better than it used to be and the dogs are a valuable tool for drug detection. Police Chief Jim Kirk would prefer to have a single purpose dog this time that would be used only for drug detection. The department does not utilize a bite dog enough to warrant a dual purpose dog. The department already owns a vehicle equipped for a K9, as well as, cages and other necessary equipment. Sargeant Birch has indicated he would like to continue as a K9 handler. The department is looking for a younger dog to raise and train. It will take about a year to get the dog completely trained and ready for work. Kirk found local breeders that work with law enforcement to produce puppies suitable for police work. Penrod requested council approve a not to exceed amount of \$8,000 for the purchase of the dog without further approval. Penrod commented that any expenditures for purchase and training will be out of the 2024 budget. Motion to approve the purchase and training of a K9 not to exceed \$8,000 without further council approval: Rager/Montel. Motion passes unanimously.

DEPARTMENTAL & COMMISSION REPORTS

Police Dept. – Report included in packet. Police Chief Jim Kirk reported that probation officer Brett Walden has been hired as the newest patrol officer. Walden has completed pre-basic and will report to police academy from January 2 till April. Kirk has ordered a new Ford Interceptor that should be built and delivered next year.

Fire Dept. – Report included in packet. Fire Chief Cam Kissinger reported that the volunteer fire department voted to retain the same officers for next year.

Building Commissioner – Report in packet. Building Commissioner Dave McVicker reported that the property owner of 1004 Hillsamer Drive contacted McVicker today. No work has been done at the property because of ongoing family medical concerns. The property owner has hired someone to assist with the work that needs done and intends to have significant work completed by January. Smith mentioned there is a planned Board of Safety meeting in January. Rager asked if photographs have been provided yet. McVicker confirmed that no photos of the inside have been provided.

Plan Commission – No meeting.

Board of Zoning Appeals – No meeting.

Traffic Commission – No meeting.

Parks & Recreation – Report in packet. Parks Director Jennifer Hotchkiss reported that a meeting is scheduled with Duke Energy to discuss options for electricity at the dog park. The electronic locks have been ordered for the gates. The pickleball net for TLC has been purchased. There is a group already renting the gym for weekly pickleball and there are plans for open pickleball times in the mornings. Hotchkiss and Penrod met with JPR landscape architect for a preliminary location search for outdoor pickleball courts. The aquatic facility will be busy with swim meets for a few months.

Town Life Center –

Tree Advisory – Report in packet

Grow Wabash County –

Redevelopment Commission –

MEDCOR –

Solid Waste –

Storm Water Board –

Public Works – Street Superintendent Craig Walters reported that leaf pick up is complete. Walters thanked Carter for loaning out employees to get the job done.

Wastewater Superintendent Shannon Carter reported that Duke's Root Control has started a lift station monitoring program. Carter will be getting a quote to install the system on all lift stations.

Water Superintendent Ryan Shock reported that the department worked on a water main break at Ninth and Market all day. A service line break on Wayne will be the project for tomorrow. Shock confirmed that the Town of Roann has agreed to purchase the old hydrovac machine.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

Town Manager Penrod reported that the roofers were finally working at the South Mill Street pavilion today. Once they fix the vent and drip edge the roof should be done.

Penrod attended the county commissioners meeting in November. Penrod answered questions about EMS service in town. The county commissioners support the contract with Parkview and approved a contract for the next 5 years.

Penrod stated that Plan Commission and BZA attended virtual training at town hall. It was very beneficial.

Penrod noted that Grow Wabash County will be holding a legislative wrap up on December 19. Congressman Yakym, Senator Zay, and Representative Sweet are scheduled to be in attendance.

CLERK-TREASURER'S REPORT

1. Financial Reports – Approved subject to audit.

2. Claims - The Town claim docket totaling \$969,108.28 and the Public Works docket totaling \$227,430.67 were submitted for payment. Motion to pay our obligations: Rager/Dale. Motion passes unanimously.

3. Annual Elected Officials Forms – Clerk-Treasurer Mugford asked council to sign the annual forms declaring they are in compliance with hiring and contracting laws regarding nepotism. These forms will be kept with the annual report for auditing purposes.

VISITOR COMMENTS

None.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Tom Dale acknowledged that this might be his last council meeting. Dale stated it has been a privilege and honor to serve on the council since 2008. Dale appreciates the employees and leadership. Dale expressed his immense appreciation for the town manager and clerk-treasurer. Dale remarked that he has served for 25 years between council and local school board and its enough. Smith thanked Dale for his time and devotion to the town.

Meeting adjourned at 7:44 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