

JANUARY 3, 2024

TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

Those present:

Jim Smith	Adam Penrod	Cam Kissinger	Maddie Schultz
Laura Rager	Carrie Mugford	Dave McVicker	Eric Christiansen
Allen Miracle	Jim Kirk	Ryan Shock	Alex Downard
Gary Montel	Craig Walters	Shannon Carter	Keith Gillenwater
Chalmer Tobias	Jennifer Hotchkiss	Kody Cook	Cynthia Johnson

Those absent: None. A quorum was attained.

The January meeting of the North Manchester Town Council was held at the Public Safety Building, 709 W. Main Street, North Manchester, Indiana, on January 3, 2024, 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 Councilmember Jim Smith.

Town Manager Adam Penrod requested an addition to the agenda. Penrod asked for council consideration of bids for a water valve project. This will be added as action item #4. Motion to add an action item to the agenda: Rager/Tobias. Motion passes unanimously.

Councilmember Allen Miracle asked that the Learn More Center request for funding under unfinished business be tabled for a later date. Miracle is concerned that with the holidays the council has not had time to meet and discuss this request. Miracle asked for a council work session to discuss all known requests for funding and the impact on the budget.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Clerk-Treasurer Carrie Mugford opened the floor for officer nominations. Motion to approve Jim Smith as council president for 2024: Tobias/Rager. Motion passes with 5 votes in favor and 0 votes against. Motion to approve Laura Rager as the council vice-president for 2024: Tobias/Miracle. Motion passes with 5 votes in favor and 0 votes against. Mugford announced that officers will be retained from the previous year.

MINUTES

None.

VISITOR COMMENTS

None.

UPDATES

1. Grow Wabash County – Keith Gillenwater, former President and CEO of Grow Wabash County, presented highlights of investments, trips, and projects in 2023 and thoughts about 2024. Gillenwater confirmed that he will be leaving GWC and thanked the council for their support and the work that was accomplished in his tenure. Council President Jim Smith shared a memory of attending the first annual meeting held by Gillenwater for Grow Wabash County. Smith was amazed by the insight and knowledge Gillenwater already possessed about Wabash County. Smith expressed his appreciation for the work done for North Manchester and all that Gillenwater has accomplished in Wabash County. Penrod commented that Gillenwater has always been very

professional and he has been able to learn a lot from Gillenwater over the years. Penrod remarked that Gillenwater never wants to pass an opportunity without giving it a try. Council wished Gillenwater well in his new adventures.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. Learn More Center Request for Funding – Councilmember Miracle stated that requests for funding are numerous this time of year. Multiple opportunities are presented that are known and unknown to the council. Miracle would like to have a plan for what council does with funding requests and evaluate how much council has to offer for donations. Miracle suggested having an intentional annual budget for requests for funding. Motion to table the Learn More Center request for funding: Miracle. Motion dies for lack of a second.

Town Manager Adam Penrod gave a synopsis of the LMC request from the December 6 town council meeting. Cynthia Johnson, Director of Education, confirmed that the LMC is now serving 91 students. Requests for funds are being submitted to Wabash County, Wabash City and other agencies to support the growth and expansion of services that the students require. Motion to approve the Learn More Center request for \$15,000: Rager/Tobias. Motion passes 3-0. Montel and Miracle abstain.

NEW BUSINESS

1. 2024 Enabling Resolution, Resolution #1, 2024 – Clerk-Treasurer Carrie Mugford explained that an enabling resolution is done at the beginning of a new term to set home rules, such as meeting dates, and allows for certain financial practices, such as investing excess funds. Mugford read resolution #1, 2024, verbatim. Motion to approve resolution #1, 2024: Rager/Miracle. Motion passes unanimously.

2. Authorization to Reimburse Pre-Project Expenses, Resolution #2, 2024 – Town Manager Penrod explained that this resolution will allow the wastewater utility to reimburse itself for pre-project expenses related to upcoming long term control plan improvements from bond proceeds. Pre-project expenses might include engineering, design, or bidding paid from wastewater improvement fund cash. The anticipated long-term debt is not to exceed \$28,000,000 but will be mitigated by the USDA Rural Development grant. Mugford read resolution #2, 2024, verbatim. Motion to approve resolution #2: Rager/Miracle. Motion passes unanimously.

3. MVH Request to Purchase Cab and Chassis – Town Manager Penrod explained that two years ago Street Superintendent Craig Walters ordered a new Ford F650 cab and chassis. The order went unfilled and was presumed canceled. Walters instead purchased a truck last year from Ohio to replace the old dump truck. Walters received an email in late December saying the original order is still in the system and is scheduled to be produced in February. Now the town has the option to purchase the 2025 F650 as ordered or let it go and re-order another truck in a year or two. However, this order was price locked and the town would get a 2025 truck at a 2022 price (\$73,620). Mugford confirmed that money was budgeted in the 2024 budget for a capital expense; so, this truck could be paid for this year and other capital purchases would be pushed back. Walters noted that this truck would replace the 2002 dump truck. Penrod recommends moving forward with the purchase. Motion to approve purchasing the 2025 F650 cab and chassis: Tobias/Rager. Motion passes unanimously. Councilmember Chalmer Tobias stated that the current conditions delaying vehicles is not expected to change in the next few years and it is prudent to make this purchase when it is available.

4. Bid Consideration for Water Valve Replacement – Town Manager Penrod explained that the water department solicited bids for valve replacements on Wabash Road and South Street that

are broken. These valves are on either side of the railroad to shut off the main if there were a main break. Also included is the removal of remaining 20 feet of 4" main on Wabash Road that is abandoned but connected to the valve. The bid request was for labor only because the water department purchased all the necessary materials. One bid was received on time at town hall from Samm Trucking out of Evansville. That bid was opened on December 28. The estimate for the bid was \$40,000 - \$50,000. The bid received was \$141,000. Penrod suggests rejecting all bids and rebidding. Motion to approve rejecting the bids for this project: Rager/Miracle. Motion passes unanimously.

DEPARTMENTAL & COMMISSION REPORTS

Police Dept. – Report included in packet. Police Chief Jim Kirk reported that Officer Brett Walden reported to police academy yesterday and will be done April 14. Sgt Birch has received a golden retriever puppy named Rip that will be the new K9. Rip will start training in August for drug detention and trailing. A K9 trainer from Allen County examined the litter and chose Rip for police work. Rip is also a good community liaison because kids just love him.

Fire Dept. – Report included in packet. Fire Chief Cam Kissinger reported that Fire Fighter Dan Renz was presented with a stork award after delivering a baby on scene. Travis Fry has been accepted as a probationary member of the volunteer fire department. The department is preparing for an ISO audit which will affect residential insurance rates. The last ISO audit was done in 2014. The last rating was a 5 but Kissinger feels that can be dropped to a 4 with improvements over the last 10 years.

Building Commissioner – Report in packet. Building Commissioner Dave McVicker reported that he attended class in Columbia City and Zionsville in December.

Plan Commission – Meeting planned for January 22.

Board of Zoning Appeals – No meeting.

Traffic Commission – No meeting.

Parks & Recreation – Report in packet. Parks Director Jennifer Hotchkiss reported that the facility is busy with day camp, swim meets, and walk-in visitors.

Town Life Center –

Tree Advisory – Report in packet

Grow Wabash County –

Redevelopment Commission – Will meet in January to elect officers and discuss 2024 projects.

MEDCOR –

Solid Waste – Councilmember Gary Montel reported that Solid Waste has new leadership and will meet again next Tuesday.

Storm Water Board – Penrod reported that Stormwater Board did not meet in December but will meet in January to discuss flow modeling and cost sharing.

Public Works – Street Superintendent Craig Walters reported that Christmas wreaths and banners were removed while the weather was warm. Christmas trees are being collected and shredded. Over 200 trees collected so far.

Wastewater Superintendent Shannon Carter reported that employees are getting back into the swing after the holidays.

Councilmember Miracle asked Water Superintendent Ryan Shock what his thoughts are on the valve project bids. Shock commented that it's hard to get contractors for small jobs so the department does as many repairs as they can on their own. This particular job is too small for most contractors but too big for the three water employees to do. Shock was surprised local contractors didn't respond.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

Town Manager Penrod invited the council to attend a meeting of the Manchester University/Lilly Grant committee on Friday from 2:00-3:00 at town hall. Zach Benedict, design architect, will be in town for a few hours to get ideas and thoughts on the projects being considered.

Penrod received a letter from the DNR notifying the town that there will be treatment in the northeast corner of town for Gypsy moths. Treatments include a dust being deployed from low flying planes. The DNR will hold public meetings on Zoom and in person on January 29 & 30 to explain the problem and why they are treating it. The proposed treatments will be applied in May. Penrod confirmed that the Solid Waste District has removed the recycling center from The Hardware parking lot. Penrod is working with Solid Waste to determine an appropriate alternate location for limited recycling. The intent is to reduce contamination. Recycling has become prohibitively expensive because the tolerance for contamination continues to decrease. Penrod will notify the community once a decision has been made about an alternate site.

Penrod reported that the trash contract is done July 1, 2024. Bids for trash and recycling will be taken in the spring.

CLERK-TREASURER'S REPORT

1. Financial Reports – Approved subject to audit.
2. Claims - The Town claim docket totaling \$181,149.25 and the Public Works docket totaling \$170,400.28 were submitted for payment. Motion to pay our obligations: Rager/Miracle. Motion passes unanimously.
3. 2023 Financial Recap – Clerk-Treasurer Mugford noted the December trial balance included in the council packet. All funds ended the year with a positive balance. Any questions about fund balances can be sent to the Clerk-Treasurer.

VISITOR COMMENTS

None.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Chalmer Tobias took a moment to speak his appreciation of Tom Dale for serving on the council for many years.

Meeting adjourned at 7:57 pm.

TOWN COUNCIL, TOWN OF N. MANCHESTER

Jim Smith, President

Laura Rager, Vice-President

Tom Dale

Allen Miracle

Gary Montel

ATTEST

Carrie Mugford, Clerk-Treasurer