AUGUST 5, 2026 TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

Those present:

Chalmer Tobias	Matt Mize	Craig Walters	Maddie Shultz
Laura Rager	Cam Kissinger	Miriah Tobias	Kim Pohler
Allen Miracle	Jennifer Hotchkiss	Chris Harrison	Heather Cruz
Jim Smith	Blake Hearn	Jeff Rowe	Alex Vice
Adam Penrod	Shannon Carter	Dr. Stacy Young	Brett Walden
Carrie Mugford	Ryan Shock		

Those absent: Gary Montel. A quorum was attained.

The August meeting of the North Manchester Town Council was held at the Public Safety Building, 709 W. Main Street, North Manchester, Indiana, on August 5, 2026, 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, Chalmer Tobias, who presided.

MINUTES

Minutes of the 06/03/26, 06/24/26 and 07/08/26 meetings were presented for approval. Motion to approve the minutes as presented: Smith/Rager. Motion passes unanimously.

VISITOR COMMENTS

Council President Chalmer Tobias responded to comments from the July meeting concerning the safety of pedestrians on the State Road 114 bridge. Town Manager Adam Penrod requested that INDOT install safety railing on the outside of the sidewalk to protect pedestrians from vehicular traffic. INDOT responded that there are no viable options for the town to consider and the request is denied.

PUBLIC HEARING

Town Manager Penrod presented an administrative justification for wastewater rate changes. Penrod explained that the Town has been discussing necessary rate structure changes and related capital improvement projects for several months. At the July council meeting, Jeff Rowe from Baker Tilly presented a comprehensive Cost of Service Analysis. The primary driver for the rate adjustment is supporting the debt service payments for major wastewater system upgrades, which are currently budgeted between $30 million and $35 million. The rate structure relies on a volume-based cost-of-service analysis to distribute costs equitably among ratepayers. Detailed information showcasing the projected impact on standard utility customers, was made available at the meeting and will be available at Town Hall during normal business hours. The rate schedule outlines Current Rates, Phase I, and Phase II. A proposed Phase III to be determined once final project and loan/bond terms are finalized. Customers with larger meters can request customized estimates from the utility office. Rowe was present to address any questions as they came up.
Council President Tobias opened the floor for public comments. Hearing no comments the public hearing was closed.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. Affordable Housing Fund Creation, GO #9, Third Reading – Clerk-Treasurer Mugford read GO#9 by title only. Motion to approve GO #9 on third reading: Rager/Miracle. Motion passes unanimously.

2. Wastewater Rate Ordinance, GO #10, Second Reading – Clerk-Treasurer Mugford read GO#10 by title only. Motion to approve GO#10 on second reading: Rager/Smith. Motion passes unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Consideration of Fire SCBA Quotes – Fire Chief Cam Kissinger presented quotes for the purchase of 4 Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) equipment. Kissinger explained that the department has been systematically replacing its old SCBA units, originally obtained through federal grants, which have reached their certified end-of-life. The replacement schedule began in 2023 with the purchase of 10 units, followed by 6 units in each of the past two years. This request represents the final phase of 4 SCBA units. Funding for this purchase is drawn from the Local Option Income Tax-Public Safety Fund. Kissinger recommended accepting the low bid of $51,173.80 from Hoosier Fire Equipment, Inc. Motion to approve the purchase of 4 SCBA units in the amount of $51,173.80: Rager/Miracle. Motion passes unanimously.

2. Rezone Request for 1002 St Rd 114 E, GO #11, First Reading - Town Manager Penrod introduced a petition submitted by Ms. Kim Pohler, of Pohler Financial, to rezone two parcels located at 1002 State Road 114 East from Residential Single-Family to Multi-Family. The subject property is a former church building. The Plan Commission held a public hearing last Monday, July 27, and considered the request. The Plan Commission recommends council approval. Pohler addressed Council, outlining her vision to relocate her business, Pohler Financial, from downtown and completely renovate the interior of the building. Pohler's plans include constructing up to five residential apartments specifically designed for older couples and individuals looking to downsize. Pohler emphasized that the units will be approximately 800 square feet and feature ADA complainant amenities to address a critical housing gap in the community. Pohler confirmed that she closed on the property last Friday and holds a clear title. Council member Laura Rager commended the proactive out-of-the-box approach to repurposing the empty commercial structure, noting it mirrors successful past projects in the Town. Tobias asked about the timeline for renovations. Pohler has engaged an architect and is hoping to have apartments available before Christmas. Mugford read general ordinance #11, an ordinance amending the district map of the zoning ordinance for the Town of North Manchester. Motion to approve General Ordinance No. 11 on first reading: Rager/Miracle. Motion passes unanimously.

3. Hispanic Heritage Fest Street Closure Request – Manchester Alive Director Heather Cruz presented a request for temporary street closures to support the 3rd Annual Hispanic Heritage Festival at Warvel Park on Friday, September 18, 2026. The request entails closing Market Street between 7th and 9th Streets from 3:00 PM to 11:00 PM. Food trucks will align along the sidewalk to ensure safe pedestrian flow and permit bus traffic to navigate through after school. The intersection near the MELC building will remain open until after closing at 5:30. The road closure requires only four barricades, and is identical to the successful layout from last year.
Motion to approve the road closure request as presented: Smith/Miracle. Motion passes unanimously.

DEPARTMENTAL & COMMISSION REPORTS

Police Dept. – Report in Packet.

Fire Dept. – Report in Packet. Fire Chief Cam Kissinger reported that firefighter physicals were successfully conducted on July 12 and 13. On July 13, the department responded to a mutual aid request for a commercial structure fire in Henry Township. During the incident, a rear tire failed on 601. Driver Dan Renz successfully controlled the vehicle, resulting in only minor cosmetic damage to the wheel well. All eight tires were replaced the next day. Additionally, the truck cap and bed slide were installed on the department's new pickup truck yesterday.

Building Commissioner – Report in Packet. Building Commissioner Blake Hearn reported 13 building permits issued in July generating $570 in revenue. Additionally, 15 code enforcement letters were sent.

Plan Commission – Plan Commission met to consider and approve 2 rezoning requests.

Board of Zoning Appeals – BZA met and approved 4 variance requests.

Traffic Commission –

Parks & Recreation – Report in packet. Park Director Jennifer Hotchkiss reported that the first annual Pickleball Tournament held last weekend was a tremendous success. Despite rain, all games were completed. The event had 124 registered players, of which 100 were out-of-town or out-of-state visitors, contributing significant local economic impact. Tim McLaughlin plans to present a comprehensive overview at the next council meeting. The final day of Summer Day Camp is Friday, with the school year starting next Wednesday. The pools are scheduled to close August 17th–19th to undergo filter media replacement in the lap and therapy pools. The original 15-year-old sand filter media will be replaced with glass media, which provides a significantly longer operational lifespan. Additionally, Scout Hall parking lot mill and repaving is expected to be completed within the month.

Town Life Center –

Tree Advisory – Minutes in packet.

Grow Wabash County – Penrod announced that the GWC annual meeting will be held October 8. Gaunt & Son Asphalt will be celebrated as the county's business of the year.

Redevelopment Commission – Will meet later in August.

MEDCOR –

Solid Waste – Report included in packet.

Storm Water Board – Did not meet

Public Works – Street Superintendent Craig Walters reported that crews applied 12 tons of hot mix for pothole patching and alley maintenance, focusing on highly deteriorated areas.
Wastewater Superintendent Shannon Carter reported that an Indiana Department of Environmental Management inspection was conducted on July 28 and went exceptionally well, with all facilities in full compliance. Micah Magnus passed his Class I Certification exam last week, marking his fifth year of service as of August 2.
Water Superintendent Ryan Shock reported that Dixon Engineering conducted annual water tower inspections. The tank mixer at the Wabash Road tower was removed due to failure and is

being replaced under warranty at no cost. Peerless Midwest pulled well No. 5 for a routine inspection and found that the well pump had been struck by lightning, resulting in severe motor and wiring damage. The pump is currently being rebuilt in Mishawaka. Milestone 1 of the Water Main Project is near substantial completion, with only the surface asphalt layer remaining. This wraps up roughly one-third of the total project. The department hired a new employee, Aaron Gearhart, on Monday. He brings several years of municipal utility experience and has commenced field operations.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

Town Manager Adam Penrod provided the following status reports:
Community Crossings Grant Project: Contractor Gaunt & Son Asphalt began concrete work in late July. Paving has been rescheduled from August to September for projects on Strauss Provimi Road, East Fourth, and College Avenue.
South Market Street Bridge: Reopening is delayed due to concrete finishing deficiencies identified in a bi-weekly meeting with INDOT. A specialized sealant must be applied to the bridge deck. The sealant contractor is scheduled for the week of August 17, pushing the bridge opening to the week of August 24.
Water Project: Milestone 1 surface layer paving is scheduled for August 11 and 12, weather permitting.
Wastewater Project Grant: The Town has not yet received a response from the State Revolving Fund regarding the $5 million forgivable loan request. If denied, some portions of the project may be pushed out further, though Penrod remains hopeful after securing a $3 million grant for the water project.
Eel River Commons Park Project: The Northeast Indiana Regional Development Authority has augmented the State's Readi 2.0 grant to the town from $1,000,000 to $1,321,000. The architect has been instructed to value-engineer the project to within a reasonable budget considering secured funds.

CLERK-TREASURER'S REPORT

1. Financial Reports – Approved subject to audit.
2. Claims - The Town claim docket totaling $705,166.53 and the Public Works docket totaling $1,586,434.19 were submitted for payment. Motion to pay our obligations: Smith/Miracle. Motion passes unanimously.
3. 2027 Budget Schedule - Clerk-Treasurer Mugford reported that the budget public hearing is scheduled for September. Mugford reported a productive initial meeting with the DLGF budget representative. There were no concerns with the budget as it was presented. Mugford will continue to make adjustments as revenue estimates are provided from the state.
4. Annual Conflict of Interest Forms – Clerk-Treasurer Mugford presented 2 conflict of interest statements for council. The first is for Mugford and her ownership of Round Barn Metal Works, and the second is for Dan Renz and his ownership of Renz Repair. These forms will be signed by the council president and filed with the State of Indiana and Wabash County.

VISITOR COMMENTS

None

COUNCIL COMMENTS

None

The next regularly scheduled town council meeting will be September 2, 2026.

Meeting adjourned at 7:37 pm.

TOWN COUNCIL, TOWN OF N. MANCHESTER

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Chalmer Tobias, President

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Laura Rager, Vice-President

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Allen Miracle

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Gary Montel

ATTEST

_____
Jim Smith

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Carrie Mugford, Clerk-Treasurer