

NOVEMBER 16, 2025

The Town Council met in a regular session at the Town Hall at 5:30 p.m.

President Smotherman led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Present in person were: SMOTHERMAN, ARNEBERG, CLARK, WEINZAPFEL, and WILLIAMS, along with Attorney, Nathan Maudlin and Clerk-Treasurer, Ann Huelsmann.

Visitors in attendance: Ted Thompson (Better Benefits), Alvin Blaylock, Andy Batt, Shelly Batt, Kim Nightingale, Dan Nightingale, Jeanne Maudlin, David Vonderscher, Charles Bandy, Ben Angel, and Alex Gale.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Councilperson Weinzapfel made and Arneberg seconded a motion to approve the minutes of the September 16, 2025, Regular Meeting. A correction was requested to change a consulting firm's name to Bose McKinney from Baker Tilly. All were in favor. Motion carried.

Councilperson Clark made and Weinzapfel seconded a motion to approve the minutes of the November 4, 2025, Special Meeting. All were in favor. Motion carried.

REPORT OF DEPARTMENTS

Councilperson Williams stated that November 1, 2025, Arbor Celebration in Murphy Park was a success. Three trees (a white oak and two dogwoods) were planted by Bur Oak, that were donated by Theresa and Pat Smith, in honor of Paula Kuvelas (Pat's sister). Bur Oak has completed planning the 10 under story trees in Murphy Park.

Councilperson Arneberg announced that the State Museum and USI received \$2.5M from the Lilly endowment on top of the \$2.5M Historic New Harmony received, which is huge for the town. The \$7.5M of new assets will help us with many projects including bathrooms in downtown New Harmony on the corner of Church and Main. Thank you for all your hard work on obtaining those grants. They also still have one more grant pending. We received a couple of grants from the Posey County Community Foundation. The State Museum received a grant separately from the Posey County Community Foundation to add some Adirondack chairs for an outside education area behind Dorm 2. Arneberg is continuing discussions with IUC and USI. IU Center for Rural Engagement tried to connect the university with rural communities. Arneberg and Councilperson Clark talked to a professor there who's potentially going to help us do an evaluation of whether a town manager makes sense for our community. They may also do a free strategic plan for One New Harmony for our Main Street organization with one of their classes. We have also connected with a class at USI that's going to do a social media audit for One New Harmony in the Spring of 2026 to try and give us a perspective on how we're marketing our community. Regarding the new Town website with the Indiana Office of Technology – they should begin work on that next month. The tourism commission for the county did meet last week. Arneberg is the new President of that commission. It was a good meeting talking about how the county is getting marketed and how One New Harmony can work with them as efficiently as possible. We are looking at applying for the Lilly Arts and Culture Grant in January 2026

Councilperson Weinzapfel stated that the town crew has started picking up leaves. The crew will pick up until the last tree has dropped its last leaf.

President Smotherman introduced our new Town Marshal, Leo Gonzales. The Fire Department will have their bean dinner in February. They continue to need new volunteers.

Councilperson Clark reviewed the town work and special projects schedule. The Church St. Project is still moving forward smoothly. Lawns that were town up will be re-seeded. Clark has one emergency issue which is the generator at the sewer plant is not working right. Because the generator is older, it takes time to find the parts to fix it. It must be fixed because if the electricity goes off, we'll have a problem. The cost to repair is \$1,360. Clark announced it's time to do a rate study on all the utilities. He has been working with Clerk-Treasurer Huelsmann to find companies that will complete the study. It will be \$7 to 9 thousand to do a rate study on each utility. The last rate study was done 15 years ago. Councilperson Weinzapfel asked how this fit in with the infrastructure plan? Clark responded that they are related but we should move ahead with the rate study. Huelsmann mentioned that she had talked to some other towns and asked how often they did a rate study and was told around every three (3) years. She stated that if we receive additional information from the infrastructure study, we can incorporate that into a future rate study. Bose McKinney is ready to do the redevelopment work for us. Clark stated that there is an informal meeting with the old school property developers this week to get an update. Civitas will be sitting in on that meeting. Civitas submitted a proposal to be the Town's project manager on that project.

OPEN FORUM

Diana Sanders spoke representing Owen/Maclure 200 Years festivities. She thanked the town for getting the banners up. On November 17, 2025, which is the anniversary of Robert Owen's death they will be launching the Owen/Maclure 200 website which you can find at owenmaclure200.com. The public can subscribe to learn about events.

Audra Lambert announced the celebration of 50 years of the New Harmony Gallery of Contemporary Art with the University of Southern Indiana. The Gallery is grateful for New Harmony's support and helping them to share achievements in the past and future. Some of the events include: 1. Block Party, November 1, 3:00-5:00 pm in front of the Gallery. 2. Free Speakers Series, November 8, 1:30-3:00 pm at the Atheneum and 3. Trees of Forty Fruit demonstration, November 9, 10:30 am.

Ben Angel had comments and questions regarding the unsafe housing ordinance. He agrees that something like this is needed. He has observed a vacant house that had a limb drop on the roof and thinks it needs to be addressed. Angel is concerned about how public nuisance is defined and how the ordinance is managed when someone might not have the means to make needed improvements. He urges the town to consider, as a part of this ordinance, some kind of grant that businesses or residences could receive to stabilize and beautify their space.

Lois Gray wanted an update on the meeting that was held with the LLC that purchased the school property. Councilperson Weinzapfel said there had been no further communication.

OLD BUSINESS

President Smotherman discussed the passing of Budget Adoption – Ordinance 2025-4. In our September meeting we conducted a public hearing for the 2026 budget. At that time we asked for any discussion and feedback and received none. Councilperson Clark made a motion to pass the budget ordinance. Arneberg seconded. All were in favor. Motion carried.

Councilperson Clark is doing a second reading of proposed ordinance changes. This is the same reading done in September and any changes that were made from that reading are highlighted in the document shown on the screen. Clark will be covering only those ordinances that have changes from the initial reading.

- Title I – Chapter 11. The legal boundaries of the town of New Harmony are recorded in the official Plat book of the Town of New Harmony at the Posey County Auditor's Office and shall be deemed official and definitive.
- 33.03 United Fidelity Bank and Trust Indiana are the depositories for the town and shall remain so until such selection is revoked, changed, or additional depositories are added.
- 34.23 (A) The Zoning Administrator shall be authorized to revoke or suspend any building permit, and the Town Marshal shall have the authority to revoke or suspend any other permit for the following reasons:
 - 34.24 Does not change
 - 70.99 (B) Whoever violates any provision of 70.15 shall be subject to the general penalties provided in 10.00 of this code.
 - 91.04 clarified some of the designated codes. Corrected by adding 91.02 in the last sentence.
 - 92.17 (A) (4) to remove "and June Barrett Parks"
 - 92.17 (A) (5) to read "Residential firepits on residential lots that are small and appropriately contained." and renumber below.
- Change (a) to say, "Any person violating any provision of the chapter shall be subject to section 10.99 of this code of ordinances." (eliminate section number) and Repeal (B), (C), and (D)
- Replace the entirety of (A) to say "The Parks and Trails Board shall establish rules regarding the use and safety of the town's recreational trails and shall post such rules in conspicuous places to include prohibitions on automobiles and trucks, motorcycles, go-carts, off-road vehicles as defined in 7.031 (A) and any other rules promulgated by the Parks and Trails Board. Golf carts as defined in 70.30 (A) and motorized wheelchairs shall be specifically allowed."
- 93.15 The owners of property abutting any sidewalk within the incorporated limits of the town are required to construct or repair their own sidewalks at their own expense. However, upon proper application to the Town Council by the owner of such property, the town may demolish and remove existing sidewalks at the town's expense and, pursuant to 93.16 (A), may order the owner to construct new sidewalks at the owner's expense.
- Amend 93.45 (E)(2) to "...at the determination of the streets and Streetscapes Department of Town Council."

Councilperson Clark made a motion to pass these ordinances after the 2nd reading addressing the change in 33.03. Weinzapfel seconded. All were in favor. Motion carried.

Councilperson Clark mentioned the things we need to come back to such as credit card usage. 32.095 is regarding the police department which President Smotherman and Councilperson Weinzapfel need to address. There is an ordinance that was brought up pertaining to a cumulative capital development fee and one regarding paying certain bills prior to council's approval. Others included natural yard designation which Councilperson Williams will address. Clark mentioned that he is addressing noxious weeds in the same way as we are unsafe buildings. President Smotherman says that he is working on the street vendor ordinance. The next big batch of ordinances will be the Utilities, which Clark, Clerk-Treasurer Huelsmann, Utility Clerk Naas and Superintendent Webber will address.

Councilperson Clark did a second reading on the unsafe building ordinances. There are three (3) of them. The first one addresses that we are going to adopt the Indiana State Code as our governing body of work on how we are going to deal with these things. The second one addresses the need to designate the Town Council as the governing body, enforcing the unsafe building ordinances. The third ordinance lays out the definition of a nuisance. Councilperson Clark proposed that we have a third reading and give residents other chances to voice their opinions. He proposed that we post it on our website and Facebook and post hardcopies at the post office and town hall. Clark asked his colleagues to look these three ordinances over closely. Councilperson Clark made a motion that the three unsafe building ordinances be moved to a third read. Weinzapfel seconded. All were in favor. Motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS

President Smotherman and council, upon the exit of the previous Town Marshal have done extensive research in the compensation of comparable positions in Posey County - for example Mt. Vernon is hiring and offering \$60,081 plus a \$10,000 hiring bonus and a take-home car. These are the obstacles we are facing while hiring. Our current Marshal salary ordinance shows a range of \$45,000 to \$65,000 per year. Smotherman is proposing that we increase our Marshal salary range to \$55,000 to \$75,000. Councilperson Weinzapfel made the motion to increase the Marshal salary range to \$55,000 to \$75,000. She stated that if we want qualified people that will stay, we have to pay more. Clark seconded. Clark stated that he was in a discussion about a town that had to increase their rates due to the State Police making a substantial increase in their pay, which then in turn everyone must increase to keep people. All were in favor. Motion carried.

President Smotherman said that we had three qualified, certified applicants whom we interviewed. Councilperson Weinzapfel made the motion that we hire Leo Gonzales as the Marshal for the Town of New Harmony at \$69,000. Clark seconded. Smotherman reviewed his resume. He's a military veteran, has national guard experience, worked in security at Sabic, was a policeman in Mt. Vernon for 11 years and is currently on the Deaconess Hospital Police Force. He was highly recommended and has a passion for community policing. All were in favor. Motion carried.

Councilperson Weinzapfel reviewed the alley paving project and the bid received from E&B Paving. We only received one bid. Weinzapfel showed a map that designated the paving locations. The bid from E&B Paving was \$71,938. The Town currently has \$138,897 in street funds. The work will commence in the Spring. Weinzapfel made the motion to accept this bid for \$71,938 from E&B Paving. Williams seconded. Weinzapfel mentioned there will be other areas that are graveled that the Town crew will even out and put down new gravel. All were in favor. Motion carried.

Councilperson Weinzapfel received a proposal from Craig Kuester for street surveying. We are moving our Marshal to 3rd Street, and we are not 100% sure of the through streets on 1st, 2nd and 3rd between South and Steammill. We also have Low Street that is parallel to North Street, north of Roofless Church. The two surveys are \$6,000 and \$3,500 respectively. Weinzapfel made a motion to accept the Kuester bid, not to exceed \$9,500 for those street surveys. All were in favor. Motion carried.

Councilperson Weinzapfel said that she and Councilperson Clark have been interviewing firms to protect the Town's interest on the proposed subdivision at the former school property. We need to understand the true cost to the town and the legal possibilities to protect the town's investment, if one is made. We also need to understand the technical aspects of it, such as the streets, infrastructure, drainage, landscape architecture, and traffic patterns. Weinzapfel and Clark are getting close to identifying a firm.

Jeanne Maudlin, President of the Parks and Trails Board, made a request to President Smotherman and Town Council to make a proclamation that Saturday, November 1, 2025, will be New Harmony's Arbor Day Celebration. The event will take place at Murphy Park at 10:00 am. The Parks and Trails Board is working with the Kiwanis Story Hour to have children's artwork displayed at Town Hall. Smotherman read the proclamation. Councilperson Weinzapfel made the motion to proclaim November 1, 2025, as Arbor Day in New Harmony. Clark seconded. All were in favor. Motion carried.

Jeanne Maudlin read the notice from the Posey County Community Foundation awarding the Parks and Trails Board \$12,000 to fund the 200-amp service upgrade for Murphy Park Restroom Project.

Audra Lambert presented an events permit for the NHGCA 50th Block Party. Councilperson Weinzapfel congratulated the Gallery for 50 years. Weinzapfel talked to her fellow council members and voiced that they are concerned about the event being in the street on a Friday afternoon. She asked if they could move the event up on the sidewalk which Lamber agreed to. President Smotherman read the event permit. The event is weather permitting. They will be doing sidewalk art and would like to request that the two parking spots in front of the Gallery be blocked off. The Town will supply the barricades. Councilperson Clark made the motion to approve the permit application and block off the two parking spaces. Weinzapfel seconded. All were in favor. Motion carried.

Councilperson Clark announced the Fair Grounds had a large water leak that went on for over a month and a half. The town notified them as soon as it was known. The Fair has a water bill of \$10,000 and that is too large for them to afford. Clark met with the President of the Fair Board, who had been in the position for only days. Our practice has been to give all utility customers a one-time forgiveness on extreme bills due to water leaks. Because of the size of this one Clark felt it was important to bring to Council to approve the one-time forgiveness. Clark asked the Fair President, because of the amount, what could the Town possibly get for the forgiveness. The Fair President agreed verbally that we could be named as a sponsor of the Fair for the next three (3) years. Clark made the motion to forgive the Fair Board's \$10,000 bill. Williams seconded. All were in favor. Motion carried.

President Smotherman noted that we were not going to discuss the trash rate increase because that was covered in the previous month's meeting.

Councilperson Clark asked that agenda item regarding the Resolution for establishing procedures for the introduction and adoption of ordinances by the town council be withdrawn.

Councilperson Clark said that the council had talked to Baker Tilley about establishing a redevelopment district. The sale of the school property has ramped up that need. Clark and Arneberg talked to the Town's Association of Indiana Municipalities (AIM) representative. The AIM representative recommended a law firm out of Indianapolis. Attorney Maudlin verified their reputation. So, to establish the redevelopment district the law firm's rate is \$595 per hour and the project should not exceed \$5,000. Clark made a motion for the law firm to do the legal work to establish a redevelopment district, to not exceed \$5,000. Weinzapfel seconded. All were in favor. Motion Carried. The Council approved Clark signing the document. Clark mentioned that the next step will looking at TIF funding for the development. That is going to require a firm like Bose McKinney to evaluate the proposed subdivision and how that will impact our net assessed value.

President Smotherman identified a mini excavator with a four-foot bucket for the \$24,000 and \$2,250.00 for the trailer. The excavator is a 2017 and has an additional two-foot bucket and a ditching bucket. It has a low number of hours. Comparables online were close in price range but included no accessories and higher hours. Councilperson Clark made a motion to purchase the mini excavator not to exceed \$27,000. Williams seconded. All were in favor. Motion carried.

Councilperson Clark made a motion that an agenda item of hiring a town laborer be added. Weinzapfel seconded. All were in favor. Motion carried.

President Smotherman announced that we had two applicants for our open Laborer position. He communicated his background. Councilperson Williams made a motion to hire Gavin Meyers at \$16.00 an hour. Weinzapfel seconded. All were in favor. Motion carried.

Councilperson Clark made a motion to approve the claims. Weinzapfel seconded it. All were in favor. Motion carried.

There being no further business, Councilperson Weinzapfel made, and Arneberg seconded a motion to adjourn the meeting. All were in favor. Motion carried and the meeting was adjourned.

Jeff Smotherman, President

Attest:
Ann Huelsmann, Clerk Treasurer