June 16, 2026

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, WEINZAPFEL, and WILLIAMS along with the Clerk-Treasurer, Ann Huelsmann and Attorney, Nathan Maudlin.

Visitors in attendance: Alvin Blaylock, Andy Batt, Charles Bandy, Diane Saunders, Lora Phillippe, Shawn Worman, Tony Treadway, Jan Kahle, Jeanne Maudlin Audra Lambert.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Councilperson Williams made and Arneberg seconded a motion to approve the minutes of the May 19, 2026, Regular Meeting. It was noted that Diane Saunders' name was misspelled. All were in favor. Motion carried.

REPORT OF DEPARTMENTS FROM COUNCIL MEMBERES

Councilperson Williams noted the new camping sign across from the west entrance of Murphy Park. The electrical upgrade to accommodate the bathroom rehab is finished. The Parks and Trails Board is now putting out bids for the construction. They are also looking into installing the double wide barbeques that were purchased last year. They will be placed by each of the shelter houses. The Clerk-Treasurer Huelsmann got a call regarding poison ivy in Playtopia. Williams spent hours weeding there and only found Virgina Creeper and a lot of tree starts - no poison ivy.

Councilperson Weinzapfel reported that the town is dispensing mosquito dunks at the recycling center. Resident Andy Batt is leading the charge. We have flyers here in Town Hall. At the recycling center you can pick up buckets, dunks and directions on how to reduce mosquitoes in your yard. You can also get buckets at the New Harmony Soap Company and Bur Oak. There is a QR code on the flyer that shows you how to prepare the bucket. The next pest Weinzapfel talked about were skunks. She called some companies to help remove them. She decided upon one that agreed to a 30-day contract with us. The first thing they advised us to do was to help identify where the skunk paths are throughout the town. Residents should let Clerk-Treasurer Huelsmann know where you have seen them and we will start to put together a map of skunk paths. The company will then come in and trap them. Please tell everyone to let us know. Weinzapfel is talking to lightening experts regarding the lighting downtown and in Murphy Park. She is trying to get an estimate of how much this project would cost. The idea behind this project is that we want the light to not go out but go down. Dark sky lighting is preferable. Weinzapfel wants to thank Ashley Putnam at the Golden Rose and Tom Guggenheim at New Harmony Natives for re-potting the pots that are on Main Street.

President Smotherman announced that he and Marshal Gonzales are getting the police car re-stickered with very noticeable identifiers. Smotherman talked to Greg Wilson regarding the new flagpole located where you enter New Harmony. He wants to thank Tom Smith who did the electrical work to light the flag. Wilson is going to put marble stone around the flag that was donated to us from Mt. Vernon. Smotherman discussed the ongoing repair of the backhoe. He reported that the transmission is here in town sitting in front of the backhoe. Smotherman reported that he, Nathan Maudlin, Tom Williams, and Jeanne Maudlin met with the Scouts regarding the cabin in Murphy Park. They now have a memorandum of how the Town, and the Scouts are going to work together on the cabin.

Councilperson Arneberg has talked to the USI class that is studying the need for New Harmony to have a Town Manager. It is a master's level class that will be interviewing the town council members, town employees and residents on what a town manager could do if we had one and if we could afford one. Arneberg noted the new website is up. If you end up at the old website, you will get a redirect to the new one. The new Director for One New Harmony starts this week. He will introduce himself at the July meeting. Arneberg stated that they have invested in more marketing for New Harmony and now have radio ads on WNIN. Posey County is doing WIKI and another radio station. The new billboard is going, and the town has a new information booth that was premiered at the Antique Fair this past weekend It can be used for other events. She mentioned that we are in the festival season starting with the Antique Fair. We have the Threadworks festival next weekend, Firefly Festival, 4th of July, Kunstfest, Dulcimer Festival, new Halloween Event, Blues Festival, and Christmas in New Harmony. If anyone wants to volunteer, please let us know.

OPEN FORUM

Jeanne Maudlin, President of New Harmony Parks and Trails Board, wants to publicly thank the Women's fund of Posey County Community Foundation who awarded them a $600 grant for the year-round accessible restroom project. With those dollars they are going to buy a very high-end hand dryer. Maudlin also mentioned that Andy Batt is spearheading the seasonal footpath. The path is from the canoe launch to the river trail.

President Smotherman thanked the Parks and Trails Board for getting those grants.

OLD BUSINESS

President Smotherman introduced the second reading of the Unsafe Building Action Fund ordinance. Councilperson Weinzapfel made a motion to pass the second reading of the Unsafe Building Action Fund. Williams seconded. All were in favor. Motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS

President Smotherman read the permit for Arts in the Park. Smotherman noted that the Shelter House is reserved too. There will be 75 artists, food trucks and music. This will be in Murphy Park, October 17 - 18 (17th – 9:00-4:00, 18th 10:00-4:00). Set up will be October 16 and the early morning of the 17th before opening. Councilperson Weinzapfel made a motion to approve the permit. Williams seconded. All were in favor. Motion carried.

President Smotherman read the permit for 4th of July – Kiwanis. The event has been moved to Murphy Auditorium, and the golf carts should line up behind it. Picnic will continue at Maclure Park. Councilperson Williams made a motion to approve the permit. Weinzapfel seconded. All were in favor. Motion carried.

Councilperson Weinzapfel contacted Laura Phillippe from Lochmueller Group to discuss how the town is going to tackle the corners with open culverts and the bigger picture of streetscapes. Lochmueller is a civil engineering firm based out of Evansville. Phillippe had meetings with Weinzapfel to talk about drainage throughout the town. From that meeting came a list of 10 plus areas that need to get engineers involved for their direction. Phillippe presented the council with an overall general services agreement. There is not cost for this "on call" agreement. When projects are identified the money value to do it will be presented. A suggestion is not to exceed $25,000. Lochmueller does not do construction but can make recommendations. Phillippe mentioned meeting with Superintendent Johnathon Webber and learned about them starting to map all the infrastructure to Arc GIS. Weinzapfel said this type of work needed to be analyzed by professionals to determine which issue should be addressed first because it all can't be completed at once. She mentioned that during the summer Lochmueller has summer interns that can do some of the analysis at a lesser rate. Phillippe said that she would be able to assist us looking for grant opportunities and often to get those grants you must have an assessment in place. Councilperson Weinzapfel made a motion to hire the Lochmueller Group and sign the general services agreement. Arneberg seconded. All were in favor. Motion carried.

With Councilman Clark absent the two topics 1. Water/Sewage study and rate proposal and 2. Lead Pipe survey will be covered in the July meeting.

Councilperson Weinzapfel met with Trent Van Haaften of Van Haaften and Farrar from Mount Vernon, IN. She drove around with them and looked at Steammill, Third Street, and South Street. Van Haaften has a specialty in legal issues related to land, ownership and rights-of-way. Weinzapfel shared with Van Haaften what she had from Craig Keister on the survey of South Street and the legal descriptions of the transfers to property owners on Third Street. Van Hafften will do more extensive research on the history of the transfers of properties. Van Haaften estimated $1,500 to $2,000 for the project. Weinzapfel made a motion to hire Van Haaften and Farrar not to exceed $5,000. Williams seconded. All were in favor. Motion carried.

Councilperson Weinzapfel presented an estimate for re-rocking the fairgrounds road where our limbs disposal is and some alleys in town is $8,600 from Mulzer Crushed Stone. She made a motion to proceed with purchasing this stone. Williams seconded. Williams asked if the alley between the houses and sewer plant was included in this. Weinzapfel said that traffic usage helped determine which ones were getting gravel at this time. All were in favor. Motion carried.

Councilperson Williams reminded us that we have a program where residents can report issues with town trees that are between the sidewalk and the street. Williams, Weinzapfel and Tom

Guggenheim, town arborist, assess the trees that have been reported. Guggenheim then gives them his opinion on how imminent the situation is. Williams solicited two bids for the work: 1. BT $18,440 and 2. American Eagle $13,125 for about 10 trees to be trimmed or removed. Williams made a motion to hire American Eagle for this work. Weinzapfel seconded. All were in favor. Motion passed.

Jeff Smotherman presented a salary increase for the Clerk Treasurer Huelsmann. Smotherman investigated the practice of elected official's salaries being evaluated at the beginning of the year. Nowhere in our ordinances does it say it has to be in January. The practice had been that because that is when elected officers take office. The council needs to keep in mind that the Clerk-Treasurers salary can never go down. Huelsmann's salary is $51,584 as of 09/01/2024. Williams asked if we were looking at giving our consultant Laura Lyon an increase too. The response was no because she is a consultant. Weinzapfel wants to look at the position holistically, including the possibility of hiring a town manager. Weinzapfel made a motion to give Huelsmann a cost-of-living increase to $53,028 (2.8%) effective July 1, 2026, and reevaluate her pay in January 2027. Weinzapfel asked when the information pertaining to the town manager would be completed. Arneberg responded at the end of July. Clerk-Treasurer Huelsmann, as a Human Resources expert, suggested that the council might look at the completion of big projects or certifications, they might give lump sum payments instead of adding to base pay. Arneberg googled that the average clerk-treasurer's salary in the state of Indiana is $82,000 a year. Williams stated that we are on the low side of that because we only have a population of 600. Arneberg said yes, but we also have three utilities. Williams seconded the motion. All were in favor. Motion passed.

President Smotherman discussed the need for a new town hall roof. A roofer at the American Legion called Smotherman and informed him that a seam had rolled back on the town hall roof. Back in 2025 we had an estimate done to work on the roof and they patched a few places where tree limbs had damaged it. That estimate was $25,000 in 2025. The same company is coming back this week to give us an updated estimate on re-doing the entire roof. They thought it might be a little more than the initial bid.

President Smotherman gave an update on the bridge appropriation funds that the town council agreed upon last week in a Special Meeting. There is an appropriation bill in Congress to be voted on sometime between July and September this year. Our US Senator, Jim Banks, feels positive that a $20M appropriation bill is going to go through to repair the bridge. With that said there is a matching responsibility from the states, county and towns. The responsibility from Indiana and Illinois is $2.5M each. The Town of New Harmony voted to approve $250,000 if the federal funds come through. After a very good presentation from Councilman Clark to Posey County, Posey County decided to pledge $1M towards the project. This now goes back to the state. The state wanted to see what the local commitments were before they agreed upon a dollar amount. Smotherman stated that he felt the council did the right thing because that bridge could be a big asset to the town. Councilperson Weinzapfel mentioned that the bridge will accommodate vehicles and pedestrians (not golf carts).

Clerk-Treasurer Huelsmann announced the changing of the Town Hall hours starting July 1st to Monday – Friday 9:00 am – 4:00 pm, closed for lunch from 11:30-12:30. They will be in the office at 8:00 am but are designating time to do uninterrupted work.

President Smotherman reported that over $13,000 was received in online utility payments which he felt was a good start.

Councilperson Weinzapfel asked about the payment to Acme Sports for $1,069. Clerk-Treasurer responded that that was for a gun for one of our Deputy Marshals. Weinzapfel also asked about the payment made to Tom Smith for $1,678. President Smotherman responded that was for all the equipment he needed to light the flagpole. Connie also asked about a double payment to Slade. Huelsmann responded that it had to do with distribution. Councilperson Weinzapfel made the motion to approve the claims. Arneberg seconded. All were in favor. Motion carried.

There being no further business, Councilperson Arneberg made, and Weinzapfel 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