

**THE COMMON COUNCIL OF THE CIVIL CITY OF NEW ALBANY,  
INDIANA, HELD A REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING IN THE COUNCIL  
CHAMBER AT NEW ALBANY CITY HALL ON MONDAY, OCTOBER 6, 2025  
AT 7:00 P.M.**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Council Members: Mrs. Collier, Mr. Phipps, Mr. FitzGerald, Mrs. Gohmann, Mr. Blair, Mrs. Griffith, Mrs. Murphy, Mr. Unruh and President Dickey.

**ALSO PRESENT:** Mrs. Manning, Mr. Gibson, Ms. Johnson, Mrs. Moeller, Police Chief Bailey, Assistant Police Chief Fudge, Police Major Popp, Fire Chief Juliet, Deputy Fire Chief Baylor, Police Admin Heather Knopf and Mrs. Glotzbach

**President Dickey** called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

**MOMENT OF REFLECTION:**

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:**

**ROLL CALL:**

**APPROVAL OR CORRECTION OF THE FOLLOWING MINUTES:**

**Mrs. Murphy moved to approve the Budget Work Session Meeting Minutes for September 4, 2025, Mrs. Griffith second, all voted in favor with the exception of Mrs. Collier and Mr. Unruh who abstained.**

**Mr. FitzGerald moved to approve the Public Hearing Meeting Minutes for September 18, 2025, Mrs. Gohmann second, all voted in favor.**

**Mr. FitzGerald moved to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes for September 18, 2025, Mrs. Gohmann second, all voted in favor.**

**COMMUNICATIONS – COUNCIL:**

**Mr. Phipps** stated this morning there was an accident out in front of his house, and a car came into his yard and hit the fence but no one was injured as far as he knows. He said then right before he came down here to the work session, the doorbell rang and the neighbors across the street wanted to know if they could have access to his ring camera. He stated their car was hit sometime between last night and this afternoon, but he doesn't think that was part of the one that happened this morning or it's happened after that or some other time. He didn't have access to it because it only records when someone rings the doorbell. He said the point being is Spring Street needs traffic calming, especially if we're going to get 1.5M people coming through there to Origin Park. He stated we need to be proactive on this and not wait until there's a problem. He added the one that came in the yard this morning came up over the sidewalks so a pedestrian could have easily been killed in a situation like that. He is constantly talking about pedestrian safety and we need to make the city more walkable and pedestrian friendly. He then stated it's a new month, so October is National Youth Substance Abuse Prevention Month, Emotional Wellness Month, and it's LGBTQ History Month.

**Mr. FitzGerald** said he'd like to give a shout out and thanks to both chiefs and their teams for the amazing work over the weekend with the parade. He added a preemptive thank you for all the work that they are about to do this week with the booth days. He said it's the 58th Harvest Homecoming, and hopefully everyone's going to be able to make it out and enjoy what is an institution for our community, and make sure that the heart of harvest shines strong, especially after the incidents from last year. He then stated he was going to submit a request to have Southern Indiana Works present but did not do that by accident, so he'll make sure that is in for next meeting. He said this week is banned books week, so be sure to pick up your book that you think is banned, and hopefully it's a good one. He also said he is excited to welcome Ms. Kelly Troutman and

Liberty Place here. He said he'll do anything for his constituents, and Liberty Place is in his district, so he is very excited to have them here again.

**Mrs. Gohmann** stated last month, the council voted unanimously to request the mayor to give us the total amount of money spent on Glenmill Dam. She said we are the fiduciary body of New Albany and we collectively represent the citizens of the city. She stated the citizens have asked, this council has asked, the media has asked and the administration refuses to divulge the amount of taxpayer money spent on this fruitless pursuit. She said they have lost case after case in court, but they seem determined to throw good money after bad, even to the point of taking it to the Supreme Court, which she hopes does not happen. She asked where will this end and how much more money will be squandered? She also asked will this council stand behind the previous decision and finally compel the administration to give us some answers? She said enough is enough.

**Mr. Blair** told Mrs. Gohmann that was well said and he agrees totally with her comments concerning the Glenmill Park Dam. He then stated on the subject of the traffic comment, ironically, he got an email from a constituent that lives on Mt. Tabor Road, and they're having trouble with semi-trucks driving down Mt. Tabor Road. He said it's that section between Klarner and Charleston Road that's been diverted as far as improvements, but he knows it's in critical need of pavement. He added he has seen some videos of cars racing through there and he was told cars are passing each other on that section of the road. He also added that with the semi-trucks, the houses that are adjacent to the road are actually shaking as they drive by. He has notified the administration, city engineer and street department several times over this, but he thinks we really need to put some attention to that. He hasn't responded back to the constituent, but he just wanted to sort of add on to what Mr. Phipps was saying as far as the need for traffic calming and attention to some of those streets, which have become pretty dangerous.

**Mrs. Griffith** stated along that note, she did have somebody reach out about Charlestown Road where Prosser is as well as all the new development. She said apparently, Seven Brews is having their employees park across the street and walk through that traffic light and it's kind of a sketchy part anyway, so along the whole traffic calming, yes, she thinks that it's time that we really look all the different major streets throughout New Albany. She then told Mrs. Gohmann that her comments were well said on the dam. She then said she has been trying to keep the council up on ribbon cuttings and tomorrow Coast to Coast is celebrating their 25th or 30th anniversary. She also said Prosser is doing their release of their new manufacturing lab on Friday, October 15th at 3:00 p.m. and then they have their options days on the 17th. She just really appreciates everything Prosser does for our area and wanted to share that. She then wished everyone a safe Harvest Homecoming and said that she felt very safe with all of the public safety officers in the crowd and thanked them for all they do.

**Mrs. Murphy** said she just wanted to echo the sentiments of her colleague and wanted to thank the Fire Department and Police Force for all of the work they did for the Harvest Homecoming Parade and on the upcoming booth days. She then stated that October 15th is SUDEP Action Day. SUDEP is Sudden Unexpected Death in Epilepsy so if you or anyone you know has epilepsy, please make sure they talk to a medical professional about SUDEP. She said that SUDEP has no one cause and Epilepsy has no one cause or cure. She added unfortunately, congressionally directed medical research funding has been cut by 57% and this action will halt progress in preventing, diagnosing, treating, and curing epilepsy. She also added combined with Medicaid cuts and the elimination of the DOE, individuals with epilepsy will face more economic hardships, and there will be challenges ensuring the rights of students with disabilities. She urged everyone to contact their elected officials, and once again, wear purple on October 15th for SUDEP Action Day.

**Mr. Unruh** stated he wanted to echo Mr. Fitzgerald's and Ms. Griffith's comments thanking our police and fire for the work they did with the Harvest Homecoming Parade, and the work that they will be doing soon for the great Harvest Homecoming that starts on Thursday downtown.

**Mr. Dickey** stated that he also wanted to echo the Harvest comments and his fire friends and police friends will all know how much he thinks of them because he told them all the way down the parade route. He also wanted to thank our street department because they make sure that the barriers, and so many of the other assistance items, are put in place. He said he wanted to also thank the folks at dispatch, making sure that people are able to get to where emergencies occur during the festival and the folks in the different departments that make this possible. He also thanked the Harvest Homecoming team who makes Harvest a tremendous success. He also wants people to be mindful that Thursday through Sunday, we will have a lot of people in the downtown region so please be mindful of pedestrians. He added it is going to impact your travel time between locations and you may need to take extra time to traverse through town, so please make sure that you do that. He said additionally, he wanted to give some kudos to IU Southeast, who this past week released information that they were recognized by U.S. News and World Report as a best college ranked 48th among top public schools. He stated that is a tremendous achievement in record and it speaks to the quality of our staff, faculty and students. He said it was also ranked 82<sup>nd</sup> top performer on social mobility, so in other words that means that people who go are able to climb and improve their station in life. He also wanted to pay a little bit of tribute to Professor Phipps. He said as someone who had him as a professor, he does a great job, and he wants to make sure that he and all his fine faculty members and colleagues there know that we really do appreciate the hard work they do every day.

**Mr. Phipps** thanked Mr. Dickey.

**Mr. Dickey** then stated that he has had some conversations in relation to our burgeoning youth council with IU Southeast, and can report that they have sent him a correspondence offering to each of our students in the program a \$500 per year up to four years for an admitted student at IU Southeast. He said it is a scholarship to any member of our New Albany City Youth Council who serves a one-year term in good standing and is attending high school. He stated it is an extra piece that we can offer these students and he wanted to thank Ms. Donna Reed, the Director of Workforce and Community Partnerships at IU Southeast for helping on that. He stated this also gives him the opportunity to say we are still accepting applications, so if you are a student or know of a high school student in the city of New Albany who would like to be part of our first inaugural Youth Council, we are accepting applications right now. He stated the application is available on the clerk's website and he thinks we did have a deadline date in there, but we've extended that.

#### **COMMUNICATIONS – MAYOR:**

**Mrs. Glotzbach** stated that she was asked by Mr. Michael Hall to read the following letter from the mayor into the minutes:

Members of the New Albany City Council,

I appreciate your continued interest in the city's efforts to defend our New Albany Shoreline, Public Infrastructure and public green spaces from being seized by private corporations and outside entities. Just as before, this legal matter remains ongoing, and it would not be appropriate to release specific expenditures at this time.

However, I can assure you that the city continues to operate with the highest standards of financial prudence and responsibility. We recently received one of the best financial audits in city history from the Indiana State Board of Accounts. The City of New Albany also maintains an A+ financial rating, and during my tenure as mayor, we have never overspent a single budget. The state audit should give full confidence that our city continues to spend appropriately and within its means.

There is also some wonderful news to share. At last, the Indiana Department of Natural Resources has requested mediation for all ongoing legal matters, and we have agreed upon a date in early November. This is encouraging progress, because mediation is exactly what we have been seeking from the very beginning.

We are hopeful that, through this mediation, we can learn more about how we can best prepare for a reported 1.5M visitors traveling through New Albany to neighboring Clark County annually, and any associated strain on our infrastructure or other impacts this may cause.

We are also hopeful that through this process, we can achieve a resolution that benefits all parties involved. Now, there is clearly an end in sight, and we are optimistic that this will lead to something positive for the people of New Albany.

As for the city's overall financial health and operations, our departments continue to deliver exceptional service to residents. Our street, stormwater, and flood control teams are maintaining and improving infrastructure citywide. The New Albany Parks Department is adding new leagues and programs to keep us healthy, and new amenities to parks to increase our options for fun and fitness. Our redevelopment and economic development departments are cutting ribbons and celebrating business milestones at a record pace. Our planning and zoning department is hard at work developing a new comprehensive plan that will set a vision for the next 20 years of New Albany's success. And our public safety departments are better equipped, better trained, and better supported than ever before thanks to new, strong union contracts and investments in personnel and equipment.

I sincerely hope the Council recognizes the dedication and professionalism of our city employees who work tirelessly every day to make New Albany a great place to live, work, and visit. I would encourage your support for this year's budget, one that sustains our excellent services, supports our hardworking city employees and public safety teams, and continues the remarkable progress our River City is making every single day.

Thank you for your partnership and helping to make New Albany the best city in Indiana.

Mayor Jeff Gahan

#### **COMMUNICATIONS – OTHER CITY DEPARTMENTS OR CITY OFFICIALS:**

##### **ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS:**

- Consideration for council funds for AIM IDEAS Conference Training – Dickey**

**Mrs. Collier motioned to approve from the council budget the appropriate approval to authorize that travel, registration and related expenses, Mr. Phipps second, all voted in favor.**

**Mr. Dickey** stated that he put forward in the packet today consideration for council funds for AIM Ideas conference training that is scheduled for the week of the 20th. He said part of this is to ensure that if there is anyone who wants to attend for part or all, we can facilitate the registrations either through reimbursement or through a direct action. He wanted to ask council members first and foremost if there were interested parties who would like to attend the training? He added he has already signed up for the training himself, but would encourage others to attend as well.

**Mr. Fitzgerald** stated he would be interested.

**Mr. Blair** asked what the dates are again?

**Mr. Dickey** said it's the 21st through the 23<sup>rd</sup> of October, and it is in French Lick.

**Mr. Blair** said he would be interested if he can. Okay.

**Mrs. Griffith** asked if you have to attend all days or can you just go certain days?

**Mr. Dickey** said he thinks there's an option to attend Wednesday, do a one-day session so we can facilitate that. He stated it sounds like we've got at least four people who are interested.

**Mr. Blair** stated we don't spend the night; we could just come back.

**Mr. Dickey** stated he goes each year, and he typically does not always spend the night.

**Mr. Blair** stated he was just trying to make it cost effective.

**Mr. Dickey** stated obviously we would specifically try and cover the registration and the cost of the travel. He asked Mrs. Moeller if there is anything else that we've traditionally covered there?

**Mrs. Moeller** stated the council would just need to approve for them to pay for the training expenses, any lodging that they may incur, mileage and meals. She added if you do meals, then we just need an itemized slip to go with that of all the expenses, and then we can reimburse you.

**Mr. Dickey** stated with that being said, he'd propose to proceed. He said he would entertain a motion to approve from our budget the appropriate approval to authorize that travel, registration and related expenses.

**REPORTS – COMMITTEES, BOARDS OR OTHER OFFICIALS AS REQUESTED BY A MAJORITY VOTE OF THE COUNCIL:**

**Mr. Blair motioned to add to the agenda and approve the Development & Annexation Committee meeting report, Mr. Phipps second, all voted in favor.**

**- Development & Annexation Committee – Dickey**

**Mr. Dickey** presented the following report:

To: New Albany City Council  
From: Development & Annexation Committee  
Date: 10/6/2025  
Re: Development & Annexation Committee Report – Ordinance Z-25-03

The following report is respectfully submitted following the Development & Annexation Committee's consideration of Ordinance Z-25-03, an Ordinance for vacation of a public way pursuant to a petition filed by EM Cummings Veneer, Inc. and reservation of permanent utility easement, heard on Thursday, September 4, 2025, with Committee members Dickey, Phipps & Fitzgerald present. Councilmember Elaine Murphy and Council Attorney Corrie Manning were also present.

The petition proposed to consolidate property owned by EM Cummings Veneers, Inc and vacate an unimproved alley dividing their property. After brief discussion, Mr. Phipps moved to approve the legislation for consideration by the Council on second reading. Mr. Fitzgerald seconded the motion and all voted in favor 3-0.

With no further business, Mr. Fitzgerald moved to adjourn. Mr. Phipps seconded the motion and all voted in favor 3-0.

**- Presentation by Liberty Place – Dickey**

**Ms. Kelley Troutman, President & CEO, Liberty Place**, provided a handout on Liberty Place to the council members. Said handout is on file in the city clerk's office. She then stated that she wouldn't go through the whole handout, but she just wanted to say a few words about our veterans at Liberty Place, and why they are there and why we need to keep them there for as long as they need to be. She said our veterans come to Liberty Place from being unhoused, from being incarcerated, and from rehabilitation. She

stated they are all participants in the Veterans Court of Southern Indiana and so our mission is important and needed for those veterans to gain a safe, sober, and stable environment. She said in the past year, we've served 23 veterans and with our living space, we have room for 16. She added we do refer to it as a flexible transitional space so you have individuals graduating, and that's why the number is at 23. She also added 90% of those gained employment, 88% of those exited into stable housing, 91% maintained sobriety during their stay, and 73% remained sober six months later. She stated our residents gave back more than 250 hours of community service while residing at Liberty Place, and Liberty Place reduces homelessness, it reconnects families, it strengthens the workforce, and lessens reliance on public systems. She said our community partnership with Veterans Court of Southern Indiana helps us to achieve these goals, of course, and we only house those individuals that are in that program. She stated back in February, we received some funding from the council to pay rent, if you will, for our veterans that were in place in February of this year, and she wanted to thank the council again for that. She added it made a real difference in their progress because financial accountability is important during their stay there because they're wanting to leave a whole person, and financial obligations in the real world are real, and so they do have a financial obligation while they stay there, so that did help with that for that month. She said she would request that the council consider Liberty Place if any additional funding becomes available because additional funding will allow us to ensure that residents remain supported in safe, sober, and stable housing while fulfilling their requirements of the court programming. She added even with all of these successes, the need for safe, sober, and stable housing still remains, and we are not finished and probably won't be ever finished, to be real about it. She stated it's vital that all of us continue to work together to ensure that every veteran in New Albany has safe, sober, and stable housing. She then asked if there were any questions that she could answer?

**Mrs. Murphy** stated she does not have a question, but a comment. She thanked Ms. Troutman for all that she does. She has had the opportunity to attend many of the graduations, and she applauds what they do, and she applauds the courage of the people that attend Liberty Place. She said it takes a lot of courage to admit that you've messed up and admit that you have issues and to challenge yourself to work on those, so she applauds their courage.

**Mr. FitzGerald** stated that if there are 16 beds right now or 16 rooms, is there capacity for more in the future or are any plans for increasing that?

**Ms. Troutman** stated that would be zoning because back in 2019, we were approved for 16 only because that keeps it as residential rather than a facility level. She said of course, we would love to expand at some point and that can be in conversations later on, maybe.

**Mr. FitzGerald** stated that Mrs. Griffith and he had the opportunity to help support and vote in favor of the Caesars money for Liberty Place. He just wanted to check to see how that's coming along as well.

**Ms. Troutman** replied wonderfully. She stated that's great and we are almost ready to put that technology into place. She added we work with Kilt Consulting on that, and oh, it's going to change everything.

**Mr. FitzGerald** asked what the situation was before?

**Ms. Troutman** stated everything was paper, piles of paper, resident notes, just everything on paper. She said we needed to go into this century with paperless, and that technology will help us do that, and it's almost completed. She added we're ready for probably next month to put it in place and Kilt Consulting has been working really hard on that. She stated we appreciate that grant so much and a lot of time, money, effort has gone into it, and it's going to make everything so much easier as well as provide more quality time spent with a resident rather than documenting via pen and paper. She added it will save some trees, and just make everything smoother, so we certainly appreciate that. She thanked Mr. FitzGerald and Mrs. Griffith.

**Mr. Dickey** said he is a big supporter and appreciates everything that Ms. Troutman and Liberty Place are doing. He is glad to see that the opioid money has been a big help and certainly thinks that this is a worthwhile program that many of our citizens want to see continue to grow in our community. He thanked Ms. Troutman for coming tonight and giving them a little bit of an update.

**APPROVAL OF CF-1 FORMS:**

**INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES FOR FIRST READING:**

**A-25-06      An Ordinance to Fix the Flood Control Budget for the Year 2026      Collier 1**

**Action Taken: Referred to the Budget & Finance Committee.**

**Z-25-03      An Ordinance for the vacation of a Public Way Pursuant to a Petition Filed by EM Cummings Veneer, Inc. and Reservation of Permanent Utility Easement      Collier 1**

**Action Taken: Referred to the Development & Annexation Committee.**

**INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES FOR SECOND READING:**

**COMMUNICATIONS PUBLIC: A-25-06 Flood Control Budget for 2026**

**COMMUNICATIONS PETITIONER: A-25-06 Flood Control Budget for 2026**

**A-25-06      An Ordinance to Fix the Flood Control Budget for the Year 2026      Collier 2**

**Mrs. Collier introduced Bill A-25-06 and moved to approve the second reading, Mrs. Gohmann second, all voted in favor.**

**Mrs. Collier** stated that as Mrs. Moeller stated earlier, this is just a requirement due to an advertising issue, and she believes Mrs. Moeller is still here if anybody has any other questions that weren't answered earlier.

**COMMUNICATIONS PUBLIC: Z-25-03 Vacation filed by EM Cummings**

**COMMUNICATIONS PETITIONER: Z-25-03 Vacation filed by EM Cummings**

**Z-25-03      An Ordinance for the vacation of a Public Way Pursuant to a Petition Filed by EM Cummings Veneer, Inc. and Reservation of Permanent Utility Easement      Collier 2**

**Mrs. Collier introduced Bill Z-25-03 and moved to approve the second reading, Mrs. Murphy second, all voted in favor.**

**Mrs. Collier** stated she believes that we have Mr. Kopp here if anybody has any questions.

**Mr. Mike Kopp** stated that he has been a commercial real estate agent for about 23 years now and has done a lot of work in downtown New Albany exclusively. He said the reason he is here tonight is that he is trying to help the gentleman who owns E.M. Cummings Veneer Incorporated. He said he is in the process of kind of shutting down the business and that's pretty much been done. He added he'd been selling all the inventory equipment, etc., and one of the other things that's part of it is that he's got him involved in trying to make sure that we can have, at some point, a clear and free title to transfer. He stated upon looking into some of the information, we found that there was a 10-foot alley

that is sitting below a building that was built in 1970, so we went through the process of finding out what we needed to do in this case. He stated he sought the assistance of the city attorney and the city clerk and they went through the process of helping us kind of see if we could find any record of such vacating, and unfortunately, it didn't produce anything. He added that the owners didn't have anything, but Jackie Koetter built the building back in 70, and he built the other one previously in 64; there used to be about three houses sitting there that had addresses of 16, 18, 20, and 24. He stated in order to be able to make a transfer, should we sell it, there needed to be a clean title, and that's what left us in the situation where we went ahead and made a formal request to vacate the alley through the application process, so that's what's in front of you. He stated again that he just helping the gentleman who does own the company and they've owned it since 1939, same family. He added they've been there in that same building and done quite a lot of business over the years, and it's kind of sad to see that shut down. He said there a lot of emotions there, even with the last five employees or so that were there. He learned just about three weeks ago, his uncle worked there in 1942, so that was kind of neat. He then said he just came really just to ask if you all had any questions about any of it.

**Mr. Dickey** asked if there were any questions for Mr. Kopp?

**Mr. Fitzgerald** stated he is just wondering if we're going to vacate public space and that even though there's a building already on top of it, what's precluding for future development on this space that still maintains possibly a unique feature as well? He said he just trying to figure out what are the opportunities ahead if we don't vacate. He stated if they're selling the property and there's the alley that's there right now, what is possible? He asked if there are there any thoughts from the applicant about if he is just wanting to sell the property outright or redevelop it?

**Mr. Kopp** stated we we've had about six interested in using them as warehouses just as they are today. He said there is two 6,000 square foot warehouses there right now and they would continue the use of that.

**Mr. Dickey** stated so it's more of a clear title issue, right?

**Mr. Gibson** said as far as we can tell it's 55 years since it was built. He stated he can't believe it wasn't probably done in some fashion, and maybe the paperwork just didn't get done, but we simply just couldn't find anything on it. He said you don't run into it very often when buildings are built on top of our alleys and stuff, unless we vacate in that situation. He said if you look across on your map, there are a couple houses that are kind of in there, so that's what led us to believe that it probably was in some fashion vacated back at some point. He stated it just doesn't appear to have probably got recorded right or done.

**Mr. Fitzgerald** said it's great cleaning up issues from decades and decades ago.

**Mrs. Griffith** stated they've had the property since 1939, and it has probably just been an oversight this whole time.

**Mr. Gibson** stated these do pop them occasionally.

**Mrs. Griffith** stated this this doesn't need to go in front of planning and zoning or anything, right?

**Mr. Gibson** replied no and stated that anytime we get a vacation, we check with every department. He said we verify first that there are no utilities running in, no sewer, no stormwater, none of that. He stated we also verify that there's not a different use or something else that maybe we wouldn't know in planning and zoning and always get their sign off. He added if they want to subdivide and different things later on, to answer Mr. Fitzgerald's question a little bit more directly, they would have to come back and do a subdivision or re-separate some of those parcels because they're all joined together, and this will even join them all more together. He said it'll come back to planning zoning if

they ever need to parcel them out because right now, once they have one of them all together, they do kind of become joint.

**Mr. Kopp** stated that the surveyor that we had over there, he went ahead and worked so that we could show it as one parcel for all of it.

**Mr. FitzGerald** stated he also just wanted to make sure it wasn't a mistake on the GIS maps as well, so this is all surveyed correctly too?

**Mr. Gibson** stated we normally have them surveyed and we have them give us a legal description. He added GISs are just not exact. He said it gives a good visual, but they're not exact. He also said anytime we do a vacation, we actually have them get a survey.

**Mr. Kopp** said that was at the cost of the actual petitioner, so there wasn't any cost incurred by the city.

**Mr. Phipps** asked Mr. Kopp if one of the people interested by any chance is the one that is going to do the development next to it, the housing? He said Mr. Kopp mentioned warehouses for the storage and he was thinking with the multi-use, the housing, and the market they're going to put there, it would be perfect.

**Mr. Kopp** stated he is actively engaged with about three people currently on the existing building now. He also stated as you know, they've already closed on half of the Padgett District Development and they'll close on the other half.

**Mr. Phipps** stated he is not opposed to warehouses, but if we could use it for other types of things with the direction that that neighborhood's going in, that would be great.

**Mr. Kopp** stated for right now, they probably will serve for a warehousing aspect of it for a while, but he would say that the other portion of the building will be something very unique and add some discussions. He said he is pretty involved in all that, so he thinks everybody will like what they see. He added to include the Padgett District, that'll take a little while, but it's had some adjustments and plans, but that too will be a pretty sizable project and will be good for New Albany.

**Mr. FitzGerald** said that Mr. Phipps said his concern much better than he did.

#### **INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES FOR THIRD READING:**

**COMMUNICATIONS PUBLIC: A-25-02 General Fund Budget for 2026**

**COMMUNICATIONS PETITIONER: A-25-02 General Fund Budget for 2026**

**A-25-02      An Ordinance to Fix the General Fund and      Collier 3**  
**Other Budgets for the Year 2026**

**Mrs. Collier introduced Bill A-25-02 and moved to approve the third reading, Mrs. Murphy second, all voted in favor with the exception of Mr. Phipps, Mrs. Gohmann, Mr. Blair and Mrs. Griffith who voted no. Bill A-25-02 becomes Ordinance A-25-12.**

**Mr. Blair motioned to amend the ordinance by reducing line item 4311 in Department 105 from \$250,000.00 to \$0.00, Mrs. Griffith second, Mr. Phipps, Mrs. Gohmann, Mr. Blair and Mrs. Griffith voted yes, Mrs. Collier, Mr. FitzGerald, Mrs. Murphy, Mr. Unruh and Mr. Dickey voted no. Amendment did not pass.**

**Mrs. Collier** stated she would just like to ask this body to approve this so we can get it moved forward and onto the state so it can go through that process, and we can fund our budget for next year.

**Mr. Blair** stated he has been outspoken about the council's role, our fiscal responsibility, our responsibility of taxpayers and citizens and requesting information, so we know in

what manner our funds are being used and making sure we spend money wisely in a prudent way. He said he is referring to the part of the Glenmill Park Dam as far as in our budget because there have been numerous requests for information on this. He has done a public access counselor request, people in the media have done a lot of requests, the News and Tribune has especially done a lot of requests and want information from the administration. He stated we're in a position now with our fiscal authority that we can require information through the budget process, and get that information so that we know how we're spending the taxpayers' funds. He said at the August 21st meeting the seven members that were here unanimously voted to receive information concerning the defense or concerning maintaining the Glenmill Park Dam, and we have not received any information at all from the administration concerning that. He stated we even carved out, because he knows there's a lot of confidentiality, an executive session, and they did not take us up on that. He said at the last council meeting, he requested information concerning what accounts are being used to fund the efforts to maintain the Glenmill Park Dam and he has received nothing, no information. He added he sent an email last week and still hasn't received information. He stated that we have an opportunity here to sort of carve out at least one piece of the budget that's being used for the Glenmill Park Dam, and that's the legal expenses that are being incurred in our city attorney's budget. He said there's about \$250,000, and he believes some portion of that is being used to fund the legal parts of the dam. He added that's not everything because there a lot of moving pieces here, and he is sure there's a lot of line items that are being used, but at least we know that one. He stated he is asking to zero that \$250,000.00 out and that will not affect the rest of the budget; we could go on with everything else that's in the budget, public safety, in particular is very important and we need to continue with that. He said the other thing that could happen is if, at a future date, they needed money for the dam, they can always come back to the council and ask for an appropriation, so we're not taking anything away. He stated we're just asking them to come back to us and explain to us how the money is being used, which is again our fiscal authority. He then said he would like to make a motion for that amendment to take that \$250,000.00 line item to zero.

**Mr. Phipps** said he'd like to concur with what Mr. Blair said. He said he wanted to preface this by saying he doesn't think there's anything underhanded going on and doesn't think there's a bit of illegality with this when we've got the A+ credit rating, but it's basically our right as the elected body to have that information. He said we are the fiscal body, and the only way that we can maintain a republic and a democracy is to make sure that we have the branches of government in check with one another, so he would concur with that 100%. He also said this is not against Mr. Gibson, personally, if part of his salary comes out of that; it's just we need to know. He stated at the last meeting, he even said what's been spent is spent and we can't control that. He said but if he could just get reassurance from the administration that it's going to stop here and it's not going to go to the Indiana Supreme Court and waste more money, then he'd be willing to say, okay, let bygones be bygones. He stated he has not gotten that reassurance, so he is going to support Mr. Blair's motion to amend.

**Mrs. Griffith** stated she just kind of wanted to agree, too. She added it's nothing against Mr. Gibson, as you all said, you all do stay within budget and nothing underhandedly is happening. She said we're just having a hard time getting that information, and this is the only thing that we could come up with as a great compromise so that funds can still be released. She stated we're not taking funds away because they can still come to the council, and then at least it's going to be transparent and the public's going to be able to see what's going on going forward. She thinks it's a great amendment and thanked Mr. Blair for bringing it up.

**Mr. Fitzgerald** said he knows zeroing out that line item affects the plaintiff types of lawsuits but how will that also affect lawsuits that we are defendants on? He asked if it is saying that the administration will have to come back for that money as well from that line item?

**Mr. Blair** replied yes, they would have to come back to use any expenditures for anything from that line item and just do an appropriation and ask us to fund that.

**Mr. Fitzgerald** said but not just for the dam, for any torts also?

**Mr. Blair** said anything that's coming out of that line item, yes. He stated again that he could not get cooperation as far as what item line is being used, so he is just trying to get the one he knows is being the most used and getting that information. He said yes, it'll affect other things, but they always have the ability to come back to us and get the appropriation, which he thinks we'll gladly do. He added he doesn't think we're trying to block anything that's just typically a normal expense.

**Mr. Fitzgerald** said he is going to preface like, yes, he'd like to see the numbers, 100% transparency and all that, but he doesn't want to have a department with one arm tied behind their back when dealing with issues that might be tort-related or anything that we are defensive about. He also doesn't want them to have to month after month of come back and ask if they can have a little bit more, so that's his concern with the amendment.

**Mr. Blair** said yes and he wishes we could have done it separately. He stated he conferred with our legal counsel, and we can't just specifically say we're not going to fund this project; we can only take money away or reduce the budget. He added this was the best he could do without cooperation from the administration as far as upholding our responsibility.

**Mr. Phipps** stated if we had that information, we could better adjust that number.

**Mrs. Gohmann** stated she is absolutely in favor of Mr. Blair's amendment, and again, this is nothing against Mr. Gibson or against anybody. She said we voted unanimously; every person on this council voted that we wanted that information, and we have to be willing to stand up and say if this is what it's going to take to get the information, then so be it.

**Mr. Unruh** stated he disagrees with the amendment. He thinks we have a very good and solid budget for 2026, one that positively affects all of New Albany, all city departments including our 300-plus employees, including our excellent police and fire departments. He thinks the passing of all four budget ordinances this evening, in his opinion, should be solely based on their merit and shouldn't be connected to a political issue.

**Mr. Griffith** said aren't these each separate, though? We have the general, the salaries, and the non-reverting.

**Mr. Dickey** stated the budget bills are separate budget legislation and he thinks Mr. Unruh was just referring in generality.

**Mrs. Griffith** stated she agrees with Mr. Unruh. She stated it's a great budget put forward, and we're not changing that, we're just asking for the information beforehand going forward next year. She said it's not affecting anything else in the budget except that one line item that Mr. Blair has suggested. She stated that's why she thought it was a very good compromise.

**Mr. Phipps** said he would wholeheartedly agree with Mr. Unruh except one word he used in there which was political issue. He doesn't see it as a political issue because we've got bipartisan support here. He sees it as an economic, fiscal, and transparency issue as well as an accountability issue.

**Mrs. Collier** stated she just would like to say that she too agrees that we need to see those numbers, but she can also see how it would have some very negative implications if we were just to zero that out, and have to go through this process if something were to come up. She thinks that's rather drastic, especially in light of the wonderful financial rating that we have had for several years and continue to have. She knows it's not ideal, but she trusts that once we get through this process, we will get that information and the public will get that information, and she does not think that the answer is to zero out the entire budget for our city attorney's office.

**Mrs. Murphy** stated she agrees with her colleague and she is a very patient person so she can wait until mediation in November. She also stated we will find out the numbers; it may not be the exact moment that we want them, but if we are patient those numbers will come. She stated she does not want to hand-tie our legal department by having them come to every meeting asking for the money that they need. She said she is not aware of everything that Mr. Gibson does and our legal department does, but she is sure it's much more involved than we all know and she can't support taking away their income.

**Mr. Dickey** stated his concern is for the unintended consequences. He appreciates the frustration that his colleagues have and understand their motivations, he really does and has encouraged the exchange of information. He said as a councilman, he also has an obligation to his constituents to ensure that city government functions. He added that when there is an issue where we need to take legal action to safeguard the public, he doesn't want to have to be calling emergency meetings or having to deal with advertisements or spending a month or two months delay to achieve the result of funding our legal department, so they can actually do the work that they do every day. His concern is that we think that this would go one way, but he's not sure that we can have the confidence to say that it would.

**Mrs. Murphy** stated she just wanted to reiterate that we do not know everything that our legal department does and she thinks it's grossly unfair to them to take away their funding. She said we want them to be able to do the job that they need to do. She also said she is thinking back to last year's Harvest Homecoming and the incidents that happened there. She is sure there were many legal issues that needed to be expedited and she doesn't want to tie their hands.

#### **COMMUNICATIONS PUBLIC: A-25-03 Non-Reverting Budgets for 2026**

#### **COMMUNICATIONS PETITIONER: A-25-03 Non-Reverting Budgets for 2026**

**A-25-03      An Ordinance to Fix the Non-Reverting Budgets for the Year 2026      Collier 3**

**Mrs. Collier introduced Bill A-25-03 and moved to approve the third reading, Mr. Phipps second, all voted in favor. Bill A-25-03 becomes Ordinance A-25-13.**

**Mrs. Collier** stated again she just would like to ask for the council to approve this tonight for the final reading so that we can get the process moving and to the state.

#### **COMMUNICATIONS PUBLIC: A-25-04 Employee Salaries 2026**

#### **COMMUNICATIONS PETITIONER: A-25-04 Employee Salaries 2026**

**A-25-04      An Ordinance Setting Salaries for the Year 2026 for Employees      Unruh 3**

**Mr. Unruh introduced Bill A-25-04 and moved to approve the third reading, Mr. Phipps second, all voted in favor with the exception of Mr. Blair and Mrs. Griffith who voted no. Bill A-25-04 becomes Ordinance A-25-14.**

**Mr. Blair motioned to amend the ordinance to approve a 4% increase with a 6% stipend, Mrs. Griffith second, all voted no with the exception of Mr. Blair and Mrs. Griffith who voted yes. Amendment did not pass.**

**Mr. Unruh** stated this ordinance was approved by the Budget and Finance Committee. He said it would include a 10% raise for non-bargaining employees. He added this includes full-time hourly, part-time hourly, full-time bi-weekly or monthly salaries, and wages for each and every appointed officer, deputy's assistant department, and institutional heads for the city of New Albany. He feels like that this would keep our city employees who do such a great job in line with comparable municipalities.

**Mr. Blair** stated Mr. Unruh said this would keep the salaries in line with other municipalities. He asked him if he has seen that information?

**Mr. Unruh** stated no, he has not.

**Mr. Blair** asked him then how he knows that?

**Mr. Unruh** said he knows what the salaries are now.

**Mr. Blair** stated he wants that information to compare to it. He wants to be fair to our employees, and our employees do a wonderful job, but he also wants to be fair to taxpayers. He said we need to know what the market value of jobs are. He stated Mr. Gibson mentioned that he looked at some information, and he asked for that information from Jeffersonville and never received it. He added there are companies or consultants out there that will prepare market studies, let us know what the job types are, what's comparable, and where we stand compensation-wise. He also added we may be underpaying our employees, he doesn't know. He stated without that information, it's hard for him to do an extraordinary raise like 10% because that's sort of unheard of in the public or anybody else. He said just to assume that we're underpaying employees he doesn't think is fair to the taxpayers. He stated we're in an environment where we know things are changing in the next couple years with how we tax and how we bring revenue into the city, and we're going to handcuff ourselves and put ourselves in a burden that we may not be able to sustain. He added if we can't continue to pay these increases in the future, the only thing we can really reasonably do is lay people off. He also added that salaries make up a large, or the majority of our budget. He said again without a market study, he thinks it's really hard to say a 10% raise is justifiable. He stated he does value our employees and what we could do is a 4% increase on salary, and then provide the other 6% as a stipend and maybe pay that over a quarterly basis. He said that way you get your full 10%, but then next year you're only compounding on top of the 4% increase and not the 6% additional. He stated we were fortunate this year because we got \$8M plus in the safety LIT tax that was unexpected and was something the county provided to us. He said we probably lost \$1M in our property tax levy, so we gained about \$7M. He doesn't mind doing one-time expenditures. He added we increased our street paving budget this year and we can also do a one-time expenditure for employees and that's 6%, but to do 10%, that's going to maybe burden us or cause issues down the road without market data, he doesn't think we should be doing that. He then motioned that they do a 4% salary increase for non-bargaining employees and then they pay 6% in a stipend paid quarterly.

**Mr. Dickey** asked how are we functionally showing that as an amendment in this budget? He asked what's the trigger here?

**Mr. Blair** said that's a good question. He doesn't know how you show it. He stated you've got salaries, and it shows an increase, so the increase is the same; we're not reducing anything. He said it's just how we're distributing the dollars so he is going to need help from the legal team as far as how to show that. He also said he will have to confer with our controller as far as payment because we don't want to get in a cash flow situation. He stated we also have the opportunity to revisit this at the next meeting because we already have to revisit the flood control at the next meeting. He thinks that's a fair for the employees and also being fair to the taxpayers given we're going into an unknown, uncertain revenue generating situation here in the next couple of years.

**Ms. Manning** stated that Mr. Blair had asked her for her legal opinion regarding this proposal, and she just feels it's important that she let the rest of the council know what she advised on this. She said the statute that pertains to council authority for the budget that's been presented states that the authority of the council is that you can reduce the line items in the budget but you cannot increase them, and that's the language. She added there's no additional language in the statute that directly addresses the authority as it pertains to separating the powers between the legislative branch and the executive branch. She added there's also not a lot of case law interpreting that code section. She just wants to clarify for the benefit of the council that what her advice was is that she believes it's squarely within the authority of the council to reduce a line item; that's explicitly

stated in the statute, but something beyond that that would then bleed into the act of the executive. She said she does have concerns about the legality of the paying out on this and she can't tell them what way a court would rule on that. She stated in her experience, the actual paying out of the money, and how it is paid out, is something that falls within the executive branch's authority and not the authority of the council. She just wanted everyone to have the benefit of what she shared with Mr. Blair in that regard.

**Mr. Phipps** said while what Mr. Blair says sounds reasonable, he thinks when you're talking about a stipend it could affect things like PERF because he thinks that's based on probably baseline salary, so even though they would be getting that extra money, it wouldn't be building in their retirement. He also said as he has said many times just in general, for the most part workers are underpaid in the United States, and anytime he thinks that we're in a position that we can help the working people, and our city employees are working very hard, so he thinks we should do that. He stated he would be opposed to this particular amendment.

**Mrs. Collier** stated she was just going to say that she knows personally for her family of two, just groceries alone have gone up at least 30%, and she doesn't have young kids or a whole family that we are responsible for. She also stated that she thinks that it is in the best interest of our taxpayers to pay our employees a wage where they can get consistent on their paycheck, and not have to wait for a stipend so they can go to the grocery store and feed their families and take care of necessities. She said it doesn't do the citizens of this city any good if the employees start leaving and going to look elsewhere for work, because then who's going to take care of our city?

**Mrs. Griffith** stated just to reiterate, too, we value the employees. She said we did not have an employee study to find out how we do compare to other cities. She thinks that a quick study for the employees should have been done, and thinks that information is something that the administration should have to provide to us. She said Mr. Blair came up with a great compromise again; he's not taking money away that was budgeted for this year. She stated we're just saying how we spend it so we're not setting ourselves up for failure in the years to come. She added next year is when we're going to find out how SB1 is going to affect us and what the changes will be. She also added this gives us another whole year to figure out if we will be able to keep those salary increases in 2027. She said if we can't, then we don't have to decrease salary and won't have to lay people off. She also said that is her biggest concern. She stated as Mr. Blair said again, we had \$8M extra this year and we were very lucky that we could add three positions. She said that's just to the regular budget and she thinks flood control added three, and she thinks the fire and the police added some. She stated we were very happy that the contracts did get passed, and she's glad that that's not affecting anything in this budget. She added it doesn't affect the unions; this is only on the non-unions in the city. She also added she just doesn't want to set themselves up for failure.

**Mr. Unruh** stated he thinks while we're in a financial position to be able to do so, that we pay the non-bargaining employees the same as the bargained employees. He said if we do a 4% off the baseline and a 6% stipend, then by next year, when you add the percentage onto the base, then they're going to still be 6% behind on their base salary moving forward the next year and the following and the following. He said he stands with the 10%.

**Mrs. Murphy** asked if she didn't just hear that we cannot do that?

**Ms. Manning** stated it's an ambiguity in the law, but her legal opinion is that that would intrude into the authority of the executive, so she does believe that it creates a risk that a court could find that the council's action was improper.

**Mrs. Murphy** said so legally we cannot do that. She also just wanted to remind folks that we're talking about the salaries of school crossing guards, parking enforcement, animal control people, maintenance people and people who are not on the top tier of income. She stated if we have an opportunity to adjust that, we need to take that opportunity. She said

Mr. Gibson at our last meeting told us what this raise would cost per year for the total. She asked if it was like \$250,000 or \$240,000 overall for everybody to get that raise?

**Mr. Gibson** said yes, you're right, it's \$240,000 and that includes 60 people.

**Mrs. Murphy** said so we're not talking millions of dollars here; we're talking \$240,000 for everyone. She also said it is about 60 people and asked if we want to send the message that our bargaining folks are more valuable than our non-bargaining folks? She doesn't think so. She thinks we need to value all of our employees and do what we can to make sure they have a living wage.

**Mr. Dickey** stated he thinks Mrs. Murphy makes a very good point, and as a general rule, he personally prefers that if we're going to provide increases, which we have provided increases and tried to pull the fire and the police up, we should provide increases to all employees. He thinks it would be awful hard to go to the animal shelter and to say to an animal control officer or a deputy director or an animal care person that they don't have value in the same. He realizes they're not going into a burning house or they may not be taking small arms fire, but you think they don't deal with dangerous animals? He guarantees they do. He looks at it the same way with building code enforcement because they go into dangerous buildings, and they go into dangerous situations and have to deal with difficult individuals. He knows of at least one code enforcement who has had someone threaten them. He would like personally to value all employees equally because he thinks that that sends the right message to each and every one of them that they are a valuable part of our city team, and they do an excellent job for the citizens of the city. He said we know public service work does not pay well. He was just looking through Gateway for some of the salaries of similar positions in neighboring cities and some of them are compensating more than we are. He is sure some are compensating less than we are, but that's kind of his philosophy when we consider things like this.

**Mr. Fitzgerald** stated we just came from a season earlier in the year before SB1 where all of us got the full court press from our wonderful firefighters and the unions about making sure that they are fully funded, that they get increases. He said so knowing that, he thinks that we just can't leave our non-union, non-bargaining employees behind. He thinks it needs to match because we're the ones who are able to make sure that they aren't left behind. He stated as Mrs. Collier was saying about food, gas, rent, while we got a tax break for our property taxes, he's not sure our assessed value will reflect that much either. His went up \$35,000 so everything keeps on increasing. He said we just have to make sure that we are providing for our employees as well that don't have the background, that don't have the bargaining power that the majority of our employees do. He is so thankful that the union agreements worked out, that they are beneficial to our working employees, and he wants to make sure that those who are not in a bargaining agreement also reflect that because it's not just our firefighters and police officers who are in those offices. He said it's also the admin staff, it's the people who are helping support in addition to that. He thinks that if we're able to, why not be the leader. He understands the market research could be valuable but if we're able to do it and we have the situation right now, why not do it? He added nationally economically, prices keep on increasing and we just can't leave our employees behind as well, not just in regards to their pay, but their living standard as well. He knows that if someone only gets a COLA, that's still making less money the next year. He said then their money just doesn't go as far as it did the previous year.

**Mrs. Murphy** asked if we have a motion to amend or are we going to?

**Mr. Dickey** stated we are on a motion to amend, as outlined, a 4% increase with a 6% stipend.

**Mrs. Murphy** said now we know that that's legally not really feasible.

**Mr. Blair** stated that's not what he heard. His understanding is we need to look into the legality and how the payment would be made and we have time to do that. He said we're going to bring another item back next meeting as far as the budget, so we have time to

research that and make sure that it's applicable and we can do that. He asked Ms. Manning if she would agree?

**Mrs. Manning** stated she is not going to change her opinion that she thinks that that goes too far into the executive authority. She has had time to research that and she does acknowledge that what she is saying is it's a legal ambiguity. She is not saying that presently there's a statute that says you can't do that, but what she is saying is based on the language of the statute. She is concluding that it is likely that if you were to do that, a court would find that that goes beyond your legislative authority.

**Mr. Blair** said okay but if it was illegal to do this, he wouldn't propose it, and that's not what he heard earlier from Ms. Manning. He added we can still look at the process. He then stated that the other group that we're not looking at is our taxpayer. He said they have to go to the grocery store; they have to pay those higher increases and so forth. He asked if we are putting an extra burden on them because we are funding more into salaries? He said that's why he is trying to say we can carve out some of it and make it a one-time expense, and not keep incurring that for our future years where he thinks we're setting ourselves up for issues in the near future.

**Mr. Phipps** stated that he had something he wanted to add just so it doesn't appear that he's being a hypocrite. He understands what Mr. Blair is saying, but when we have an attorney here saying that that's clearly not our role as the legislative body to intrude on the executive body, he will have to say that we have to preserve those branches of government, just as he said before. His whole issue before wasn't so much the fiscal, but our issue of we have the power to ask for that money, and we have the power to take that money away. He meant, we have the power to ask for the information before we allocate, so he is just trying to preserve their branch of government, and he is also doing the same now for the administration based on what the legal advice has been. He said he is consistent with both of his arguments in his support for the other one and his objection to this one.

**Mrs. Murphy** stated she cannot support this amendment because it is something that's legally questionable.

**Mr. Blair** stated he can't support this salary ordinance because we don't have due diligence and information to back it up, so no.

**Mrs. Griffith** said she'd like to explain her vote, too. She said because she doesn't feel it will be fully supported down the road, she is a no right now on the salary ordinance.

#### **COMMUNICATIONS PUBLIC: A-25-05 Elected Officials Salaries 2026**

#### **COMMUNICATIONS PETITIONER: A-25-05 Elected Official Salaries 2026**

**A-25-05      An Ordinance Setting Salaries for the  
Year 2026 for Elected Officials      Unruh 3**

**Mr. Unruh introduced Bill A-25-05 and moved to approve the third reading, Mrs. Murphy second, all voted in favor with the exception of Mr. Blair and Mrs. Griffith who voted no. Bill A-25-05 becomes Ordinance A-25-15.**

**Mr. Phipps moved to reduce the council salary line items to \$0.00, Mrs. Griffith second,**

**Mr. Phipps rescinded his motion, Mrs. Griffith rescinded her second,**  
**Mrs. Griffith moved to approve a 4% increase for council members, Mr. Phipps second, Mrs. Collier, Mr. FitzGerald, Mrs. Murphy, Mr. Unruh and Mr. Dickey voted no and Mr. Phipps, Mrs. Gohmann, Mr. Blair and Mrs. Griffith voted yes. Amendment does not pass.**

**Mr. Unruh** stated A-25-05 sets the same 10% increase as all other city employees, both in and out of the bargaining unit.

**Mrs. Griffith** stated she has the same feelings on this one. She thinks 10% is too high across the board. She is all for cost of living and she did do her due diligence on this one. She stated that she researched the data in Gateway and looked up each individual salary because we're all public knowledge, so all of our salaries are on there. She said she took similar cities, second-class cities with a population between \$34,000 and \$600,000, the land size that was the closest to New Albany, and just took it through and averaged it out. She passed a chart with all of the salaries included to the council members so they could see her results. Said chart is on file in the city clerk's office. She then stated that we are right there where the average is for our salary this past year, so she doesn't feel that we need the 10% increase. She said as she stated before, excluding our clerk, because this is her full-time job, she feels as elected officials, this is something that we kind of do as a side job. She added that our mayor is right in with all the second-class cities and our mayor also gets paid for sitting on the sewer board, so he has two compensations. She also added that she took our average for our general population just to kind of know how much the population is in New Albany and that is right at 36,737.00. She stated she is with Mr. Blair in that she does want all of our city employees to be making it and be able to go to the grocery, but she feels for our taxpayers who clearly have a lower annual salary than a lot of us. She thinks we need to be conscious of everyone that lives in New Albany. She said she would love to have some conversation about everyone's feelings after seeing the data? She asked if this something that you can support since we are in the realm? She also asked if we need the 10% or could we decide to have that pulled back because that's within our legality of pulling back? She added she could be the one that's just booed and hated up here, but she's okay with that because she truly wants to make sure in the future, we're not setting up the people in two years to fail. She said she stands behind that as far as our salary goes, too.

**Mr. Phipps** stated that he has a different proposal, another amendment that's going to be more drastic. His amendment was going to be leave the clerk and the mayor alone, let them get their 10% raise, and then reduce the council line item to zero because we haven't done our job tonight. He said we have not held the administration accountable for the money on the dam. He's not going to play with the mayor's salary or the clerk's salary. He is more than willing to play with his own salary to say he's putting his money where his mouth is. He added if he was willing to cut the \$250,000.00 over there, he's willing to cut all of our collective salary because we didn't do our job.

**Mr. Fitzgerald** stated he would not be in favor of that for the pure fact, something could happen to us and it goes back to what he said last meeting. He said a working person should be able to afford to do public service and live, and he knows that a lot of people might be able to do this without a salary. He stated if something, God forbid, happens to any of us and we have to caucus another member in, it's not their fault and they're not going to get paid next year as well. He also stated that as he said last meeting, most of his salary goes towards, if he goes to the AIM conference, it would go towards the housing. He also does attend a lot of dinners that support organizations that would be asking us for money anyway.

**Mrs. Collier** said she would just like all of us to ask ourselves, if we we're not in the exact financial position that we are in individually, and somebody else had to step into our shoes for whatever reason that might be, what type of person would be willing to do this? She stated it does take a certain kind of person to do this, especially for the salary that we get. She added it really takes that pool down of the potential candidates that are willing to apply because we know what we go through. She said yes, we are getting paid \$15,000 a year, but a lot of us work well over 40 hours a week some weeks with fielding calls, emails and meetings because some weeks are like that. She added by saying some, she is being generous. She said if somebody had the option to do public service as a supplemental thing instead of maybe an alternative second job, how many of them could

do that and sustain what they need to accomplish for their family and fulfill serving the public? She stated that's where she is at on this because we can do it because of our own individual situations, and we are blessed. She said not everybody is blessed in those ways that may want to step into our shoes in the future, because anything could happen at any time as you know the past term showed us unfortunately.

**Mr. Phipps** stated Mrs. Collier makes a good point.

**Mr. Blair** stated as somebody who just stated numerous times that he likes data; he really appreciates Mrs. Griffith putting this chart together because it's very good. He said it does show that in 2024, for council members, for like cities, the average salary is \$15,140.00 and New Albany is right at \$15,000, so we're right at the average. He asked if that means everybody else is getting 10% raises this year? He could maybe think they should just have some kind of a cost-of-living raise, and that would still keep them within average or within the comparable jobs of other council members. He really does appreciate the data, and it tells him is they probably should just continue to give a normal increase, and they will stay on par with our cohorts.

**Mr. Phipps** stated he didn't get a second, so that's fine.

**Mr. Dickey** stated he recognized a second.

**Mr. Fitzgerald** asked for a point of clarification. He asked if Mr. Phipps was saying zero it out or make it a zero percent increase?

**Mr. Dickey** stated the numbers would read, if this motion passes, council members and president of the council would be \$0.00.

**Mrs. Griffith** said she thought he said zero increase.

**Mr. Dickey** said \$0.00 is what he heard.

**Mr. Blair** said legally we can't do that; we can't lower the amount.

**Mr. Phipps** said oh, that's true.

**Mr. Dickey** said no, you can decrease the amount to any number you want.

**Mrs. Griffith** stated zero increase is what she heard.

**Mr. Blair** stated he thought Mr. Phipps was saying take our salary below what it is now.

**Mr. Dickey** said yes, he is saying zero.

**Mr. Phipps** said Mr. Blair is right because Ms. Manning just said legally, we can't.

**Ms. Manning** stated the numbers that are before you have 10% in there and Mr. Phipps is saying is reduce by 10% and that would be fine.

**Mr. Phipps** said let's bring it down to what it is this year, yes.

**Mr. Griffith** stated that what she heard on the amendment was no raise for us, not zero completely.

**Mr. Fitzgerald** stated he is glad he asked the question.

**Mr. Phipps** stated now he is thinking that he was the one in the past that always said if we don't at least have the same increase that the other city employees get, then it's going to be behind. He said he is not concerned about himself; he is concerned about the people that are going to be sitting in this seat in the future. He added in those years, we didn't do

our job to keep it at pace, so if you want to go with Mrs. Griffiths idea and holding ours at 4%, he's okay with that. He said that's the cost of living, so he seconds that one.

**Mr. Dickey** stated we're need to get control of what the motion is.

**Mr. Phipps** said alright and rescinded his original motion.

**Mr. Dickey** said so Mr. Phipps is rescinding his motion and Mrs. Griffith is rescinding her second. He then asked what the new motion is?

**Mrs. Griffith** stated she would make a motion that the council only receives a 4% increase for cost of living versus the 10%.

**Mrs. Murphy** stated she would just have concerns that if you have a citizen who wants to be a public servant, and they choose not to be a public servant because they can't afford to, we may be missing out on some fine talent out there. She said as we mentioned, those of us currently on the board have salaries or retirement benefits or whatever financially so we can do this, but if there is someone that financially couldn't do it without that salary and they would be a fine public servant, she doesn't want to leave them behind.

**Mr. Dickey** voted no on the amendment and explained that he has had a principle in this position for a number of years that if we're going to have a consistent percentage, he thinks it needs to be consistent for all employees so that it does not fall subpar. He said he is staying true to his previous position.

**Mr. Phipps** wanted to clarify his vote on the actual salary ordinance. He stated because he said he's not in the business of dictating other people's salaries, he is going to vote yes on this because he doesn't want the clerk to be penalized for this. He voted yes.

**Mrs. Gohmann** stated she is in kind of the same position as Mr. Phipps. She said she would vote against this; however, the clerk should not be penalized so she is going to vote in favor.

**Mr. Blair** stated as his understanding, the clerk wasn't even part of, she's part of this vote, but not as far as the increases go, so he is going to vote no.

**Mrs. Griffith** said she is voting no to stay consistent.

#### **INTRODUCTION OF RESOLUTIONS:**

#### **COMMUNICATIONS PUBLIC: R-25-15 JCA Economic Revitalization Area**

#### **COMMUNICATIONS PETITIONER: R-25-15 JCA Economic Revitalization Area**

<b>R-25-15</b>	<b>A Confirmatory Resolution of the City of New Albany, Indiana for the Designation of an Economic Revitalization Area and for Real Property Tax Abatement</b>	<b>Murphy</b>
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**Mrs. Murphy** introduced **R-25-15** and moved to approve, **Mr. Phipps** second, all voted in favor.

**Mr. Fitzgerald** moved to change the public hearing time in the resolution from 7:00 p.m. to 6:45 p.m., **Mr. Phipps** second, all voted in favor.

**Mrs. Murphy** stated this is just our final action for the 15.88 acres at 321 Hausfeld Lane to become an ERA. She said we passed a resolution on September 4th in support of this and there were no remonstrances or no objections at the public hearing, so she would like to see the council support this resolution.

**Mr. Dickey** stated that Ms. Johnson is here as staff, and he believes she has the property owner with her.

**Ms. Johnson** stated this is the last step and this is the confirmatory resolution, as Mrs. Murphy stated. She said we're very excited for Mr. Stumler's investment in our city, and she is happy to answer any questions that anyone may have.

**Mrs. Murphy** thanked Mr. Stumler for what he has done for our city.

**Mr. Dickey** stated he knows it's been a long meeting, and he appreciates Mr. Stumler hanging in there with us. He also stated that the lack of questions probably means that this is going to be receiving a very affirmative vote. He just wanted to thank Mr. Stumler again for his investment in our community and seeing this out. He said he is very supportive of this and very supportive of the work that he does.

**Mr. Stumler** thanked the council for their time and said he appreciates their consideration.

**Ms. Johnson** stated she would just ask for one small amendment. She said in the fourth whereas clause, it says that the public hearing was set for 7:00 p.m. on October 6th, and it was actually published at 6:45 p.m.

**Mr. Dickey** stated so we have a technical correction and said he needed a motion to make that amendment.

**Mr. Blair** thanked Mr. Stumler for his investment, and said he is guessing this is not his first long night, so he votes yes.

#### **BOARD APPOINTMENTS:**

#### **COMMUNICATIONS – PUBLIC (NON-AGENDA ITEMS):**

#### **ADJOURN:**

There being no other business before the board, the meeting adjourned at 8:55 p.m.

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Adam T. Dickey, President

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Vicki Glotzbach, City Clerk