

**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 THURSDAY, OCTOBER 16,
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, Mrs. Moeller, Ms. Johnson, Mr. Hall and Mrs. Glotzbach

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

INVOCATION: Given by Reverend Kristen Dollar

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

ROLL CALL:

APPROVAL OR CORRECTION OF THE FOLLOWING MINUTES:

Mr. Phipps moved to approve the Public Hearing Meeting Minutes for October 6, 2025 (Flood Control 2026 Budget), Mrs. Collier second, all voted in favor.

Mr. Phipps moved to approve the Public Hearing Meeting Minutes for October 6, 2025 (JCA Holdings ERA), Mrs. Collier second, all voted in favor.

Mr. Phipps moved to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes for October 6, 2025, Mrs. Collier second, all voted in favor.

COMMUNICATIONS – COUNCIL:

Mr. Unruh stated that he just wanted to thank all the Harvest Homecoming committee members and officers, the New Albany Fire Department, New Albany Police Department, the Floyd County Sheriff Department, the EMT professionals, and all of the many, many volunteers and workers that made this year's Harvest Homecoming a huge success.

Mrs. Murphy stated she has the same thoughts. She said she came downtown on Monday afternoon, and it was magical the way things were completely cleaned up and back to order. She just wanted to give a shout out to our street department on how hard they work, and of course, our police and our fire. She then wanted to mention that she had the chance to attend the Golden Thread of Hope Advancing Understanding and Severe Mental Illness Seminar on the 10th of October. She stated it was sponsored by the Clark & Floyd Systems of Care and a lot of good information was shared. She said one thing that she wanted to share with the group is, everyone's familiar with the 911 phone number if you have an emergency, but if you have a mental health crisis, you can dial 988, and that is a different team of people that will come and help assist with that. She then stated there was a ribbon cutting today at the Greenway Commons for Infinity Homes, so congratulations to Mr. Matt Toole for doing that.

Mrs. Griffith said ditto to both Mr. Unruh's and Mrs. Murphy's comments. She stated that the weather was beautiful, and the people were out for Harvest Homecoming and it was just spectacular. She then wanted to give a shout-out to Prosser because they had their manufacturing lab ribbon-cutting yesterday. She said Prosser is such a jewel in our backyard. She stated between Ms. Nancy Campbell, their principal, and Dr. Lanou, they're foresight and everything that they are doing for our community to get our workforce up to par is great. She added they are going to do a ribbon cutting for their plumbing in two more weeks, so be on the lookout for that, too. She didn't realize 26% of the jobs here in Indiana are manufacturing, which she found that out at the ribbon cutting,

and that was fascinating to her because that's a big chunk. She then wished everyone a Happy Halloween.

Mr. Blair stated he does very much agree with the Harvest Homecoming comments. He said it was really successful and he is thankful for everybody that volunteered and made it such.

Mrs. Gohmann said as previously stated, there are a lot of fun Halloween events that are going to be taking place in the city and around southern Indiana. She loves to see the people of New Albany coming out to give the children a fun, safe opportunity to show off their costumes, from the littlest goblins to the teenage zombies. She is also very happy to see so many people here this evening to express their opinions regarding our city government, as is their right. She stated for all we know, there may be a future councilperson or other elected official sitting around here tonight. She said our citizens want more than platitudes; they want answers, whether it is regarding the current controversy over the Glenmill Park Dam or how our tax dollars are spent. She believes that honest openness and, dare she say, transparency would go a long way in alleviating the frustration and distrust that people are feeling. She stated leadership is about responsibility to the moment and service to the people that you are responsible for, and New Albany is a great place to live and to work, and we, the council, as well as the administration, need to work hard to make sure that everybody who lives here feels the same way.

Mr. Fitzgerald said he'd like to thank and congratulate everyone that had a hand in making this year's Harvest a success. He stated that is from the volunteers and organizers to the firefighters, city police, sheriff's departments, the partnerships between Harvest Homecoming, the city, and the county, which was amazing to watch over the past weekend. He had the opportunity to talk with this year's Harvest president, Glenn Dethy and he told him that when they were setting up booths, there was a tree and branches that were touching a food vendor's roof and/or fan on Wednesday night. He drafted a text to send out on Thursday morning, but accidentally sent it on Wednesday evening, not expecting a response until the morning. He believes it was Ms. Krystina Jarboe that responded after midnight, saying that there would be a crew arriving at 7:00 a.m. to take care of that limb. He added that allowed the crew to get in and out before people started to gather for the day, so he just wanted to highlight that because we are having those great partnerships. He does think that Harvest, in reaction to what happened last year, made everyone feel very safe. He added the weather was beautiful and everyone was able to get one place to another fine, so he thought it was a real success. He stated that also during Harvest, he was able to speak to a few folks who wanted to share their stances, of course, about the budget votes. He said a few people thanked him, and a few others reiterated the need for the mayor to make public what we have spent on the dam and the litigation. He thanked the former, and agreed with the latter. He stated as he explained, his vote was not about protecting the mayor or hiding the money, it was about passing a budget. He said three years ago, a legal and political game of chicken commenced around the dam, and while he has regularly voted for the administration to provide that information about the costs involved, and he is still adamant that we should have those numbers, he wasn't willing to use the budget as the sole and final way to get those numbers. He knows there are people who don't agree with his vote or probably believe the reasoning behind it, but he is still committed to continuing having those conversations with those who have disagreed, and will continue to press the administration to provide the information that we have repeatedly requested. He then stated that he thinks the administration uploaded the sidewalk audit to the transparency portal this afternoon. He thinks it's a ranking between one and six of the status of your sidewalks throughout the city. He is excited to dig into it to see where we can improve our infrastructure in the short term and the long term, because he thinks there's a long-term plan for that. He added we want to make sure that our streets and our sidewalks are safe for everyone involved. He said additionally, when double checking, he also noticed that the draft comprehensive plan was posted. He believes that's going to be going through the plan commission sometime this month, so be sure to check that out on the transparency portal. He also contacted Michael Hall and thanked him for all that, and he also indicated that there will be updates for the website soon. He said he previously provided a list of edits

and ideas from colleagues and from residents and people he has talked with, and he's hoping that those are reflected in the updates. He then stated we have heard from organizations like Catalyst, Liberty Place, St. Elizabeth's, among others, that are presenting and are requesting funds for homeless services. He has been wrapping his brain around sort of what we can do that's sort of more holistic, and making sure that's more orderly and how we might be able to support the efforts and missions of these organizations. He has been trying to put around a framework about a grant program that he hopefully will have in the next month or so. He said please let him know if you have any ideas or concerns because he would love to hear them all. He then stated that he finalizing a date for a community meeting on either November 4th or 6th, depending on site availability. He said again, he looks forward to talking with residents about their concerns, along with the challenges and opportunities ahead for the 4th District and the city at large.

Mr. Phipps stated he also wanted to say thanks for all the people who made Harvest Homecoming a success, especially our police department. He, too, felt very safe being there. He then said following what Mrs. Murphy said, and Mrs. Griffith said, Happy Halloween, Happy Days of the Dead, Happy Salvin, and Happy All Saints Day.

Mrs. Collier stated she also would like to thank everybody that had a hand in making this year another successful Harvest, and it seems that everyone had a safe and enjoyable time this year. She then said that she also wanted to address a couple things concerning our previous meeting, and she is just going to start with explaining her reasoning for her vote concerning Mr. Blair's amendment to zero out the city attorney's line item for the city attorney's office for the 2026 general budget. She explained that in her opinion doing so would not have ensured the council would receive the information they were trying to obtain, but in contrast, it would have created additional work for the council attorneys to prepare appropriations as necessary to fund the necessities in the city attorney's office. She stated it would also have increased the potential for negative repercussions to the city in any delay in an appropriation for the city attorney's office could cause. She added with there being no guarantee the council would be given the legal expense figures, there was absolutely nothing positive to be gained, only negative impacts by supporting that amendment. She then said regarding the vote for the 2026 general budget, not approving the budget, again, would not have made any guarantee the council would be provided with the information they are trying to get. She stated however, not approving the budget would force the city to operate using the 2025 budget figures, and the city would not be able to fund the wage increases the union employees were able to negotiate, which in turn could lead to litigation and increased legal expenses if the city does not uphold their obligations as agreed to in those new union contracts. She added that the 2025 budget includes adequate funding for the city attorney's office, so if the opposition felt that the zero funding for that office was the most effective way to gain the information the council has not received, not approving the budget ensures the office would remain adequately funded as their 2026 budget amount would be the same as it was for 2025. She said with nothing to be gained and by not approving that budget, it would create negative ramifications with no guarantee the council would receive anything they are trying to obtain. She stated in her opinion, for the couple of reasons she has just explained, there was no reason to not approve that budget. She said in fact, she felt it would have been very hypocritical of herself to not approve the budget. She added every time she has thanked our union staff for their service, dedication, and sacrifices that they've made to be sure our city is safe and protected would just be hollow words if she would have voted against that budget to fund the much-needed wage increases they were able to negotiate. She is sure our words of appreciation and thanks are nice to hear, but they certainly do not feed their families or pay their bills. She said lastly, she wanted to address a couple of actions by a group that frequents our meetings regularly. She stated that she feels it necessary to bring this up tonight since recently they felt it appropriate to ask a personal friend of hers to sway her to their way of thinking. She said they did not call her or approach her to start a conversation themselves; they felt the best approach was to have a friend use our friendship as some way to influence her. She also said this is shocking and appalling behavior, however, she was not shocked. She stated this same friend was once a member of this organization, and once they became aware that she was a friend of hers, she was told to end that friendship. She asked what kind of upstanding

organization uses these kinds of tactics to bully their members or even attempt to dictate and control what their members can or cannot do in their own personal lives as long as it is nothing illegal or immoral? She said on a particular note, her friend was told that she voted for the mayor. She double-checked the agenda from the last meeting, and there was no line item for the mayor to be voted on. She is left to assume what Mr. Stauffer meant was that she voted the way the mayor wanted her to vote, and she has a couple of things to say about that. She feels it was awfully rich to insinuate the mayor has some influence over her vote, and then immediately after, ask a friend to influence her. She said anyone that actually knows her knows that her vote is just that; it's her vote. She stated Mayor Gahan has never, not once, asked her to vote one way or another. She added she rarely even talks to him about council agenda items unless she initiates the conversation because she has questions. She said this behavior gives her zero inclination to have any affiliation or conduct any business with that kind of organization. She stated she would end by saying, if you want to know why she has the opinion she has, please don't make assumptions, especially public accusations. She said her votes at the previous council meeting do not reflect her support of any lack of transparency. She stated they reflect her firm belief that nothing was to be gained towards guaranteeing transparency by voting with the opposition, but would have created unnecessary issues with negative consequences.

Mr. Dickey stated he wanted to make a few observations about Harvest Homecoming. He said when you have several thousand people like we do come to our downtown; we will and do have issues. He stated particularly what he means by that is while most of the public saw a well-run festival, he got to witness firsthand on at least two occasions our first responders performing extraordinary feats to keep the situation safe, to deal with issues. He said one was a medical emergency that occurred right behind the row of booths on Market Street in which an individual was having some sort of attack. He also said in addition to our four officers who were nearby and were able to respond to that, we also were able to get the EMS crew over to that individual and get them out of the festival without any major incident, without any disruption to the rest of the activities. He thought that was a stellar job. He stated in addition; we had a vendor booth that had an equipment malfunction and caught fire. He said again, the first responders jumped into action, and they were able to douse the grease fire quickly. He stated to the testament of the festival; we were even able to remove the booth from the festival so that it did not hamper or cause any additional issues. He was very impressed with both of those things as well as with the security enhancements. He said there have been a lot of discussions since last year about ways to enhance security and safety at the festival, and he wants to give everyone from the Harvest Homecoming Committee to our Police Department and the Sheriff's Office, great kudos with regards to the enhancements that they put into place. He added those also do not come without cost, and he thinks it was well worth the investment that everyone made to that equipment to ensure that we were safe. He also wanted to make note of Halloween and stated he believes the Board of Public Works will be declaring the Halloween hours if they haven't already. He then stated that we do have our annual All Hallows Eve Trunk or Treat on the riverfront on the 25th of this month from 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m., and he would encourage all families who like to participate in those activities to come and enjoy that opportunity. He also stated that he was at Infinity Homes earlier today and wanted to say how proud he is to be part of that development. He said that has come with the hard work of our Redevelopment Commission, Mr. Matt Toole and Infinity Homes as well as this council, and to see the quality single family homes that are being built and developed there in close proximity to features like the Ohio River Greenway and Loop Island Wetland, is a tremendous asset for our community and is a rich offering of the quality of life we are trying to build in this community. He thinks that has to be applauded. He added we also took measures to try and ensure that those homes are as affordable as possible and he wanted to recognize Ms. Claire Johnson with our redevelopment department for helping and working on that, because again, we have to work with the development community to find the best methods and ways to incentivize that work. He said that takes countless hours sometimes to work out those agreements, so he is very pleased to see what was a blighted area, a derelict area, has now been replaced with beautiful homes. He stated he would also like to remind council members who are going or wish to go to AIM that in conversation with Mrs. Linda Moeller, our controller, we believe that the easiest process, if you haven't

already done your registration, is to go ahead and do your registration and then turn in your receipts and we will reimburse you. He said if anyone has any questions about that, he will be more than happy to assist any member who is wanting to go for all or part of the conference. He stated lastly, and this is a sad note, he learned this morning of the passing of an individual that has been a real advocate and champion of New Albany for a number of years, and that is Mrs. Rosalie Dowell. He said Rosalie Dowell and her husband have been longtime residents and they co-owned the New Albany Heating and Air Conditioning business, which has been located here in our downtown for as long as he has been alive. He stated she was a former police commissioner for the Floyd County Sheriff's Department, a member of Business & Professional Women, and a part of the Mavens Club, which is a little bit of a private club that she started in her garage. He said Rosalie was married to her husband, Lamar, for 64 years and they have a number of kids, grandkids. He just wanted to say that on behalf of the citizens of this city, she will be deeply missed and remembered for all her contributions over a long career of various services and commitments to this community.

COMMUNICATIONS – MAYOR:

Mr. Hall stated that Mayor Gahan would like to thank the volunteers, organizations, everyone involved who helps make Harvest Homecoming such a success. He said we do want to give a special thank you to our public safety teams for their enhanced presence at this year's festival. He said he definitely saw them out and about and thinks everyone was very happy to have their presence. He stated this was a great year for the festival and we're looking forward for many more years of Harvest Homecoming in New Albany. He then stated as a couple of you all mentioned, we did just recently complete a full sidewalk inventory and condition report and this is a major step towards safer, healthier, more connected neighborhoods. He said these findings will help us prioritize future sidewalk repairs and replacements based on needs, safety, and accessibility. He added we do have a goal of bringing 85% of our sidewalks to a 4 out of 5 or better rating over the next 10 years. He stated the full report is available on that transparency portal and it breaks down the sidewalks by the current condition and kind of sets some goals for the next 10 years. He said finally, our annual Trunk or Treat event will be held on Saturday, October 25th and this is definitely one of our favorite events of the year, so he hopes everyone can make it out for this fun and family-friendly event for the community. He added the mayor just wanted to extend his appreciation for your continued support of public events like this in New Albany.

COMMUNICATIONS – OTHER CITY DEPARTMENTS OR CITY OFFICIALS:

ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS:

- **Request for Presentation by Southern Indiana Works – FitzGerald**

Mr. FitzGerald moved to approve the request for presentation by Southern Indiana Works, Mrs. Collier second, all voted in favor.

Mr. FitzGerald stated a few weeks ago at the 10th Anniversary ribbon cutting for Floyd County Brewery, he met Mr. Vince Kinman, who works for Southern Indiana Works. He said he's a business consultant for the organization and we're able to invite him, hopefully, to speak to the council and to the viewers about what Southern Indiana Works does. He stated their mission is connecting qualified workers to an increasing pool of employers as well, employees to employers, so he thinks it'd be worth the time to have him come and share.

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

APPROVAL OF CF-1 FORMS:

INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES FOR FIRST READING:

INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES FOR SECOND READING:

INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES FOR THIRD 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 Collier 3
for the Year 2026**

Mrs. Collier introduced Bill A-25-06 and moved to approve the third reading, Mr. Phipps second, all voted in favor. Bill A-25-06 becomes Ordinance A-25-16.

Mrs. Collier said as was stated at our previous meeting, we had to kind of pull this out from the rest of the budget due to an advertising issue, as Mrs. Moeller explained. She asked that the council approve this to get the rest of the budget off.

Mr. Blair asked if this is only for what we just voted on today?

Mrs. Moeller said it is only for flood control.

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 Collier 3
Pursuant to a Petition Filed by EM Cummings
Veneer, Inc. and Reservation of Permanent
Utility Easement**

Mrs. Collier introduced Bill Z-25-03 and moved to approve the third reading, Mr. Phipps second, all voted in favor. Bill Z-25-03 becomes Ordinance Z-25-17.

Mrs. Collier said as Mr. Kopp stated at our previous meeting, he's here again this evening as a representative for them if anyone has any questions.

INTRODUCTION OF RESOLUTIONS:

COMMUNICATIONS PUBLIC: R-25-16 Sazerac Statement of Benefits

COMMUNICATIONS PETITIONER: R-25-16 Sazerac Statement of Benefits

**R-25-16 Resolution Concerning Statement of Benefits for Murphy
Sazerac of Indiana, LLC DBA Northwest Ordinance
Distilling**

Mrs. Murphy introduced R-25-16 and moved to approve, Mr. FitzGerald second, all voted in favor with the exception of Mr. Unruh who abstained.

Mrs. Murphy stated that Sazerac of Indiana is planning on investing \$2.7M to expand their plant, \$35.3M in the purchase of equipment for the plant, 25 new employees, and \$1.4M in salaries. She said they currently have 357 employees, and they are in the old Pillsbury building, which would have just been vacant if they hadn't come along, so Sazerac is willing to invest in our community and our people. She added they also own the Buffalo Trace Distillery and are involved with Pappy Van Winkle Distillery. She stated Ms. Johnson is here with us this evening and asked if they have anything to share?

Ms. Johnson stated this abatement supports an important expansion by Sazerac of Indiana, which operates locally as Northwest Ordinance Distilling. She said since purchasing the facility in 2018, the company has made consistent investments in New

Albany, growing jobs, expanding production, and strengthening our industrial base. She stated the project before you represents a \$38M reinvestment in this plant, including new production lines and equipment that will allow the facility to remain competitive globally. She said it will also add 25 new full-time positions with an average salary of about \$56,000.00 a year, on top of more than 350 existing local jobs they've already created and maintained. She stated Sazerac evaluated multiple locations for this investment, including sites in other states, and this abatement helps ensure that the expansion and the associated jobs stay right here in New Albany. She added this abatement is structured as a 10-year real property and a 5-year personal property deduction consistent with state statute and local policy. She stated the total estimated savings of roughly \$1.6M will be directly invested into this project, so in short, this is a reinvestment in an existing employer that continues to demonstrate confidence in New Albany's workforce and business climate. She said tonight we have Mr. Mike Scott, the plant manager, Mr. Lance Allison and Mr. Matt Hall from ISI, which have been wonderful partners on this project, as well as Ms. Marie Bontrager and Ms. Leslie Masek from Ernst & Young. She said they would be happy to answer any questions that you may have.

Mr. Unruh stated due to a possible conflict of interest regarding this resolution and after consulting our counsel, he is not going to be involved in discussion and will abstain from the vote. He said he'd like to defer to Mrs. Manning for more information.

Mrs. Manning stated that Mr. Unruh asked her about a potential conflict of interest here, but given that this is a property tax abatement, as opposed to a direct contract between the city and Sazerac, and that Mr. Unruh informed her that his extended family member is not a dependent his, she doesn't believe that this constitutes a conflict of interest, but it's always within a council member's discretion to recuse voluntarily to avoid any appearance of impropriety, so she believes that is what he has chosen to do.

Mr. FitzGerald stated when we were doing the CF1 fund forms earlier in the year, Mrs. Fischer provided information that said that over half the employees were from New Albany. He said he wanted to thank them for that and asked how they target New Albany applicants for the additional employees that are going to be coming with the investments?

Mr. Mike Scott said so we target through Indeed, and a lot of our people we get currently are through referrals because we have an employee referral program. He said there's a \$1,500.00 bonus for referrals, so we've been hiring a lot of brothers, sisters, a lot of sons and daughters, and fathers and mothers. He added we really look for the New Albany area.

Mr. FitzGerald thanked him and said he just wanted to make sure that with the abatements, the residents of New Albany are being targeted for these jobs as well.

Mr. Scott said absolutely.

Mrs. Griffith stated that number seven says the purchase of qualifying equipment needs to be purchased within three years. She asked if they are planning on having everything updated by that time?

Mr. Scott replied yes, that's correct, within 36 months.

Mrs. Griffith asked if he could tell them a little bit about what the expansion includes?

Mr. Scott stated it's a lot of improving processing capabilities and storage capacity, so we're going to be processing for a lot of our sister sites. He said we're going to have some different jobs, improved jobs, more like laboratory technician jobs, and more hourly jobs in the line. He stated there's a variety of things and some positions we don't have currently. He said they've really grown and they set a record case production in August so the team did a fantastic job, and he was telling them that they won the plant of the year last month. He added they've just done an incredible job, and we need to continue to grow because we're kind of maxed out, which is surprising. He added years ago when this

site started, it was a lot smaller in a couple of lines, and now there's 14 lines with improved efficiencies and capacities, so that capacity has freed up more potential for investment.

Mrs. Griffith said that is awesome. She asked if there is still room for you to grow out there?

Mr. Scott stated thanks to the team and the efficiency improvements; there's just more capacity on the current line so we're not going have to do any additional lines. He said there is still room for two more of the high speed, which is hopefully one of those things we get to at some point, but luckily the team continues to get better at producing off the current lines, so we don't really need that just yet.

Mrs. Griffith stated we appreciate you being in New Albany.

Mr. Scott thanked the council for the time tonight and for the consideration. He stated he has been with Sazerac four years and has had the pleasure of leading this site for nine months, which seems like a short period of time, but it's also felt like a long time. He said part of the story that brought him to Sazerac was the New Albany site story. He also said it's been a pleasure to lead for nine months, and in addition to the jobs and the wages, there's tuition reimbursement as well as a bonus program. He stated their team has been maxing out their bonuses at \$7,500.00 annually, and with tuition reimbursement, there's a lot of people that take advantage of that so we really encourage use of that. He added that they also do a lot of promotions from within.

Mr. Blair stated he too, appreciates them locating here, operating here and obviously taking over a vacant facility. He said that was very meaningful. He then said your facility is located in a neighborhood, and invariably when you have industry and residential neighborhoods sharing a property line, there are usually some issues. He stated at one time there were some issues, especially at night with moving of machineries and trucks coming in with backup alarms as well as sight lines as far as fencing and so forth. He then asked if they have had any other complaints from neighbors? He also asked Mr. Fitzgerald if he has gotten anything on what's been resolved or any other issues since that is his district?

Mr. FitzGerald stated he has not heard anything.

Mr. Scott stated that before he came along, they put in an additional fence to kind of provide that barrier. He also stated there's the natural tree line and then the wastewater treatment plant to help with any kind of wastewater and that kind of stuff, and so far, there's been nothing in his nine months.

Mr. Blair stated that typically no news is good news, so that's good that you haven't heard anything.

Mr. Scott said it's something they are very mindful of. He has worked in several factories that are right next to neighborhoods and we want to continue to be good community partners. He stated again, hire from the community, part of the community, and he has moved to the community for all the same reasons. He said we always take that into consideration when we're making changes or making improvements or looking at expansions. He stated there are work streams like on this project specifically as far as how it impacts our neighbors and what to do if there are any disruptions.

Mr. Dickey stated he just wanted to echo how excellent the partnership has been between your organization and the community. He thinks it's an example of the type of relationships we want to promote between business and our government. He thinks that this is a real opportunity for our community and look forward to more of these types of expansions in the future.

Mr. Scott said he appreciates that. He added Sazerac didn't have to bring manufacturing jobs back; they just continued to invest in U.S. manufacturing, and again, that's why he left the company he was with to come to Sazerac.

BOARD APPOINTMENTS:

COMMUNICATIONS – PUBLIC (NON-AGENDA ITEMS):

Ms. Kim Bowles, 930 State Street, stated she really doesn't have a permanent place to stay but her family and she are looking. She knows that there's a lack of funds to help or a lack of resources to help people who truly are homeless and have no place to go. She added there's a lack of affordable housing for everybody. She said they say \$1,200.00, \$1,400.00, \$1,600.00, \$1,800.00, \$2,000.00 is affordable. She asked who is it affordable for? She stated we don't have the resources to afford that type of apartment or even a home that would be rented for that amount. She also stated that she would like to know where the funding is going that was approved in the budget and how things are being spent for other things. She thinks that more of the funding should go toward the affordable housing and for the schools. She thinks that we need to support these children that are coming up because things are going to be a lot different when they get to be her age. She thanked the council and said she appreciates their time.

Ms. Cathy Higgins, 1106 Korb Avenue, stated that she lives here in the city of New Albany and just wanted to express some frustration about what's going on. She said that the mayor is not being held accountable and that is why these people are here. She stated we need answers and we need to know what is going on with that stupid dam. She asked how much has he spent on that thing? She said and to think that you all went on with all your excuses; she heard everything and you went on and said yes, not all of you all, let me please commend the four that voted no. She thanked them because they stood up for them. She stated that they feel like nobody's standing up for them at this point and that is what you all are supposed to be doing. She said we've got enough going on at the federal level to worry about and now our hometown is coming to this? She stated we can't even get our records; we can't even know where our money's going, which is just absurd. She said people that don't even live here are saying, New Albany, what is going on here? She thinks it's absolutely atrocious and that the council needs to do something. She doesn't even care if you impeach him, because at this point, isn't he doing impeachable offenses? She said you don't have to answer that, she is just asking the question, and she doesn't care if you tell him she said it.

Mr. Will Stauffer, 111 Burton Avenue, stated he is an organizer with the Transparency Chapter of Hoosier Action and he is here with their members today to talk about the 5-4 vote last week to approve the 2026 budget. He said first, he'd like to thank Louise, Greg, Stephanie, and Scott for their leadership. He stated they voted no on the budget because they know that the public needs to receive information about the dam, and we want to thank you for your leadership. He said to Adam, Chris, Jenny, Elaine and Don, your vote to approve the budget without receiving information about the dam has been a major violation of your role as public officials. He stated your vote has breached the trust in the community by your refusal to rein in an out-of-control mayor. He said you're independent from the mayor, and you have a fiscal duty that includes oversight, and you have failed in that duty. He stated whether you're a church or business or household, passing a budget without the information and having so much unknown is reckless. He said without knowing how much money there is, it raises serious questions about corruption. He also said your party colleagues at the national level have the courage to shut down the government in order to hold an administration accountable, but you still have not found the courage to hold this administration accountable from your own party about the public fund that no one knows about. He then told Mrs. Collier that he just wanted to correct the record because he has never told someone that they could not be part of Hoosier Action if they didn't talk to her about something, so there must have been some misunderstanding and he would be happy to clear that up later. He then told Mr. FitzGerald that he is his city council person and he appreciates his willingness to meet with them on issues, but meeting with them is not the same as standing with your constituents to hold the mayor accountable. He added you know this is wrong and we need you to act and stand with

your people, and if you're going to say that the budget is not the place to do that, what is the plan? He stated that was a bargaining chip and you gave it away. He told Mrs. Murphy that she stood in front of their members on September 6th and said she believes in transparency and has done nothing since then to hold this mayor accountable. He said you're a former principal; you teach kids and he is sure you've taught them something along the lines of actions speak louder than words. He stated that's why we're here tonight; live by that principle because we need you to act. He told Mr. Dickey that he's the party chair for the Democratic Party in Floyd County and the 9th Congressional District, and this mayor's behavior is hurting your party. He said you have a duty to lead and act and to hold them accountable. He asked what we are supposed to do as the public, file another lawsuit? He said that's not going to help. He stated we're already saying it's wasting public dollars so should we go to the Attorney General? He said that's not something we want to do. He asked what's the plan here? He then stated here's how you make this right. He said to pass a resolution or an ordinance demanding accountability, demanding the vote from the public. He also said work with us and we will work with you. He stated this is a core part of our democracy you signed up to lead, so do your job, find your courage and partner with us.

Mr. William Tomes, 213 West Main Street, Apt. # 2, thanked everybody for being there and thanked all the Hoosiers that showed up tonight to voice concerns. He said he wanted to let the council know a little bit about his history and his background. He stated that one of his grandfathers was deputy sheriff of Georgetown, Dewey Tomes. His other grandfather helped build the Optimus Club in Georgetown, built the first car wash, built subdivisions, drilled for oil, and wired most of the houses and most of the businesses here in New Albany. He said his name was James Edward Davis, so that's the lineage that he comes from. He added that he is a brother, a son, an uncle, and a great-uncle as well as a disabled Gulf War era veteran. He loves New Albany and what you've done with downtown, but he doesn't love is that there is no transparency in this budget with this dam. He then stated that there are no recovery centers in New Albany or homeless shelters in New Albany, so you are failing your community. He also stated that he wanted to be clear when he says that every one of us in here right now is one paycheck away from homelessness. He said we've got to do better, and we've got to do better by our veterans as well as our homeless people. He stated he is in recovery and this October 29th, he will be two years sober. He said this is a disease and it does not discriminate, and our city is not doing anything for it. He stated that Mrs. Murphy is the first person he has hear say anything about suicide prevention and 22 veterans commit suicide every day. He said we can do better. He stated by not showing transparency of this budget, we don't know where this money's going. He asked how do we not know that these are not misappropriated funds? He said we don't because nobody put forth an itinerary to show this. He just thinks the council needs to hold the mayor a little more accountable because you work for the people, and without the people, you know, united we stand, divided we fall. He stated if we don't come together and we don't look for a better answer and demand a better answer from someone that is allocating our funding, we're all doomed.

Ms. Shauna Burns, 2615 Hickory Vale Drive stated she was there on behalf of just New Albanians. She then apologized because she felt like they were attacked, or they felt like they were attacked. She said she would have felt like that too, but she doesn't think that was the case. She stated she is a part of this organization because she wants to be in community with every single person here. She said our organization is truly nonpartisan, and she is truly, truly nonpartisan. She stated we need to know where this money is going. She makes less than \$40,000 a year and she just put in her third tank of gas at over \$70.00 a tank to help the people in our community. She said that's what she does on her level, so quite frankly, she doesn't care if somebody else got a raise this year or not. She is out of money on a weekly basis, but she chooses to do that because she believes our community needs it. She gives rides, she supports people in their endeavor to go to rehab, and she shows up at community events and rub elbows with people who are like-minded and learn new things about the things that are causing our community the most grief. She said she is personally a person in long-term recovery and her grandfather was one of the first of six firemen in New Albany, so her roots here run deep. She stated her heart for this community runs even deeper. She also stated that she just wants to know where this money is going. She said we don't have money to help people, which is what she is

continually hearing over and over and over again. She stated we don't have money for sober living houses, we don't have money for rehabilitation, and we don't have a homeless shelter. She said we want to send them to Jeff, to Louisville or somewhere else, but these are our people and recovery does work. She stated if we invested a little bit more of our time, energy and funding into our community, man, that would make her so proud. She then thanked the council for their time and said she knows that this is not an easy job and you couldn't pay her to do it, but she is asking the council to come on because you know what's right.

Mr. Michael Ens stated that he doesn't have an address and lives in a tent in the woods. He said it ain't your money; it's our money, the voting taxpayers and we, the people, entrusted you to spend it wisely. He added that we, the people, deserve to know where and how it's being spent. He stated that the mayor's lack of transparency and your failure to stand up to him, if it isn't criminal, it should be. He added that all it takes is a misdemeanor for any county or city official to be impeached. He said no one wants that to happen and no one wants to be the subject of an investigation, so just do your job, work for us, and we will work with you. He stated that too many people in this town are struggling to meet their basic needs and the mayor is wasting the people's money on silly lawsuits. He said spend it to help the homeless, funnel it into the schools or into addiction treatment, recovery programs and offender reintroduction programs. He stated to spend it on anything to actually help the people get a leg up but not lawsuits. He added that election day is only about a year away and we, the people, will vote our conscience, amen.

Mr. Tony Hostetler, 1109 Reeds Lane, Jeffersonville, Indiana, stated that his chapter, Care Not Cuffs, organizes around both the recovery and the homeless communities, and advocates for such populations. He said we fight every day for our life in recovery and our right for a public life. He stated those of us in the recovery community are constantly holding courage with each other as far as accountability in many aspects. He said we've built a community of folks just like us that are constantly beaten down by the system, and at this point, have no choice but to attempt to rely on local and state government for help in those communities. He stated this attempt to rely on local and state governments for some real help with the addiction and unsheltered population is doing nothing at this point but giving us more of a feeling of hopelessness. He said we do not feel safe and protected. He is assuming, unfortunately, much of this dam situation is approaching the cost of over a \$1M at this point with no idea where it's coming from in the budget. He stated this money could have been used for much more useful things, such as day shelter for folks struggling with recovery issues, unsheltered, or in danger of becoming unhoused. He said we represent a good-sized population of registered voters in this community and they're angry with the way we are constantly isolated and treated like second-class citizens, so we need your help. He stated again, he is assuming this money has been allocated for other things besides frivolous lawsuits and attempting to save a very hazardous low-head dam in our community. He added our folks are literally out there struggling and dying every day. He said some are on the brink of death every day, and we do not have enough suitable housing or even a safe place to go after business hours. He asked at what point does this come to an end? He stated for one, the members of this council must hold Mayor Gahan accountable for all this money, and secondly, recognize the struggling members of New Albany with money set aside for what we need. He is a man of faith, and he knows many in this room are as well and allowing our less fortunate to constantly struggle and be pushed away and ignored is nothing short of sinful. He said we are not feeling safe and protected; we're rather isolated and alienated. He then thanked the council for their time.

Ms. Laxmi Palde, 919 State Street, stated she is the Environmental Resilience Organizer with Hoosier Action. She said she organizes a lot of young people here, and young people want to know that they can build a future in this town. She stated people are isolated, they're struggling, they're cynical, they feel alienated from their community and don't feel like they have a role and a place to make this place better. She said time and time again, she has talked to people who do not believe that government could actually work for them. She then told Mr. Dickey, Mr. FitzGerald, Mr. Unruh, Mrs. Collier and Mrs. Murphy that their vote is confirming their cynicism. She is an immigrant

and her family came here to Indiana 20 years ago for a better life, for the American dream, the dream that regular people can have the opportunity to thrive. She said that dream is under attack and people are working to the bone to make ends meet. She stated they want to believe that local government at least has their back. She said you are called to lead in this moment; we need leadership and we need you to make the right decision, even when it's the hard one. She stated we celebrate leadership at Hoosier Action, and for that reason, she wanted everyone to stand up and clap for Mrs. Gohmann, Mr. Phipps, Mr. Blair and Mrs. Griffith. She then thanked the council for their time.

Ms. Cisa Kubley, 1926 Ekin Avenue, stated that last week at the city council meeting, she sat here and watched this council fail our community. She said sitting in the same seat a few weeks before that, the previous meeting, she listened to all of them unanimously vote that they needed an executive session because it was that important to get the dam numbers. She stated that gave me hope. She then said Mr. Phipps, Mrs. Gohmann, Mr. Blair and Mrs. Griffith stuck to their convictions that hiding this information from the council and from the public is wrong. She thanked them for their leadership. She then told Mrs. Collier, Mr. FitzGerald, Mr. Dickey, Mrs. Murphy and Mr. Unruh shame on you guys. She said you know better and you know that this is wrong. She stated your job is to represent our community and to uphold our democratic values. She said instead of standing strong with your colleagues, you rolled over and showed the mayor your belly. She stated by approving this budget without the numbers, you are sending a clear message to the public as well as the mayor. She said this vote says that the council lacks the courage to stand up to a mayor who clearly thinks he is untouchable. She also said you are a part of a public institution and you have a duty to this community to be the ethical stewards of our tax dollars. She asked how we can trust you in that duty when you give away your bargaining chips and you let us down? She said you could have waited; you didn't have to pass it last time. She stated if your concern was avoiding unforeseen consequences, you could have voted not to pass the budget to give yourself time to look into what those consequences could have been. She added the entirely foreseen consequence of that vote is that the public is seeing a council that lacks the strength of its convictions. She also added that you know well that the mayor's letter last week was not an answer to your endless requests for this information, it was a blow off and it was another one in a long line of them. She said we are your constituents and your neighbors. She stated we have been here week after week and month after month asking for your leadership on this. She asked at what point will you stand up and say that this administration's behavior and obstruction of transparency is unacceptable? She doesn't care if he's your friend and she doesn't care if he's a member of the same party as you, this is wrong. She said the reason we have requirements around transparency and public records is because it is critical for a functioning democracy. She stated our democracy is under attack all around us and this is how you're going to respond? She said this is a huge breach of public trust in a time when it matters the most. She also said the state has cut the city off at the knees when it comes to funding, and we need strong leadership to get through this. She stated it is time to find your backbone and say that enough is enough; do something.

Ms. Sarah Johnson, 513 Hoffman Drive, stated that she came down here because she felt that it was vital for her to come. She said to think that someone isn't going to sue the city or something isn't going to happen is not reasonable; we're talking about someone dying. She added someone's kid died. She did want to say thank you to Mrs. Collier for standing up for her voice and Will for giving her a voice because he sent her to Washington. She stated that she wanted to say that our community is doing really, really well and she does appreciate everyone, no matter what side, and thanked the council for their service because it does matter. She just wanted to say how grateful she is to be here, to be part of this, and how honored she is that this is the community. She said for example, she is down here disinfecting buttons because I don't want us to get a cold and if she can stop one person from getting a cold, then it's worth it. She also said she has driven people around and it's \$200.00 a week to drive strangers around. She stated this is our town and this is what we do. She said she is very thankful that she has met so many amazing people here. She thanked the council for their time.

Ms. Cherie Ray, 2516 Fairmont Avenue, stated she is actually new to Floyd County and just wanted to say that she served on the correction level for 17 years but only does it part-time now. She changed her career and is now an addiction counselor. She has so many clients who are from this area that have no services, so they're coming over to our area in Jeffersonville. She just wanted to say that she is kind of disappointed because she has heard all these wonderful things about New Albany from the community aspect, and all these people she has met that live in Floyd County. She absolutely adores them and loves them and that's why she moved out here. She said that knowing that there's money that people aren't being accountable for upsets her because she is that person. She wanted the council to know when we're talking about homeless, she served 17 years with the Sheriff's Department and went homeless during her divorce. She stated that could have been her, and to know that there's money out there that can help people like me in that situation and nobody's talking about it and nobody's holding anyone accountable for that is not right. She served, she walked the line, she protected and then ended up homeless, and that's money you guys could be using to stop other people from going homeless. She just wants to say, please think about that because that was her. She said you're looking at somebody who was homeless and that could have helped her. She knows that the council has a lot on their plate and she thinks Floyd County is amazing, but she moved out of Clark County because she wanted to be somewhere where people were held accountable and weren't doing things like Clark County. She wants to make sure that the council knows that there's a lot of eyes out there on you because of what happened in Clark County, and she wants them to be Floyd County and do the right thing. She thanked the council for their time.

Mr. Moolagata Wolf, 1119 Burton Avenue, stated he lives in District 4, which is Mr. FitzGerald's district. He is a due-paying member of Hoosier Action and have been for over four years now. He has also been a resident of New Albany for a little bit over four years now, and this is his time being part of a small community like this. He said over the years, he feels like it's been very disappointing. He stated the relationship that we're trying to build with the mayor and with the city, which is trying to build a city that fits and works for everyone who lives here, has been extremely disappointing. He said he talks to a lot of his other friends who live in other places in Indiana or around the country, and he tells them about the stuff that happens here and how we interact with our city council people, and it is really easy to fall down a spiral of hopelessness when talking about the state of things right now. He stated that being a part of a community and being a part of trying to change your community in whatever way, shape, or form fits you or the people that you love or your neighbors is what people want to do right now, especially young people who feel that hopelessness. He also stated that it's been very disappointing as a young person living here with the relationship we're trying to develop and the involvement that we're trying to have with this community. He thanked the council for their time.

ADJOURN:

There being no other business before the board, the meeting adjourned at 8:21 p.m.

Adam T. Dickey, President

Vicki Glotzbach, City Clerk