

**MINUTES OF MEETING OF TOWN COUNCIL
TOWN OF BREMEN, INDIANA
March 24, 2025**

The Town Council of the Town of Bremen, Indiana, met in regular session at 4:30 p.m. on Monday, March 24, 2025, at the Bremen Town Hall pursuant to notice previously published. Council Members Michael Leman, William Daily, Alex Mikel, Bryan Miller and David Bailey were present. Also present were Keith Fraine, Director of Operations; Meghan Atkins, Clerk-Treasurer; Ben Wright, Superintendent of the Electric Department; Henry Aguayo, Superintendent of the Water Department; Chief Brad Kile, Police Department; Austin Langdon, Superintendent of the Street Department; Matt Cunningham, Superintendent of the Wastewater Department; Brian Main, Superintendent of the Park Department; Chief Matt Neher, Fire Department; Nate Lockwood, Cemetery Sexton; Dan Byam, Town Engineer and Anthony Wagner, Town Attorney.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: The Council recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

MINUTES: Mr. Miller made a motion to approve the minutes of the March 10, 2025, meeting, which was seconded by Mr. Daily and carried by a vote of 5 ayes, 0 nays.

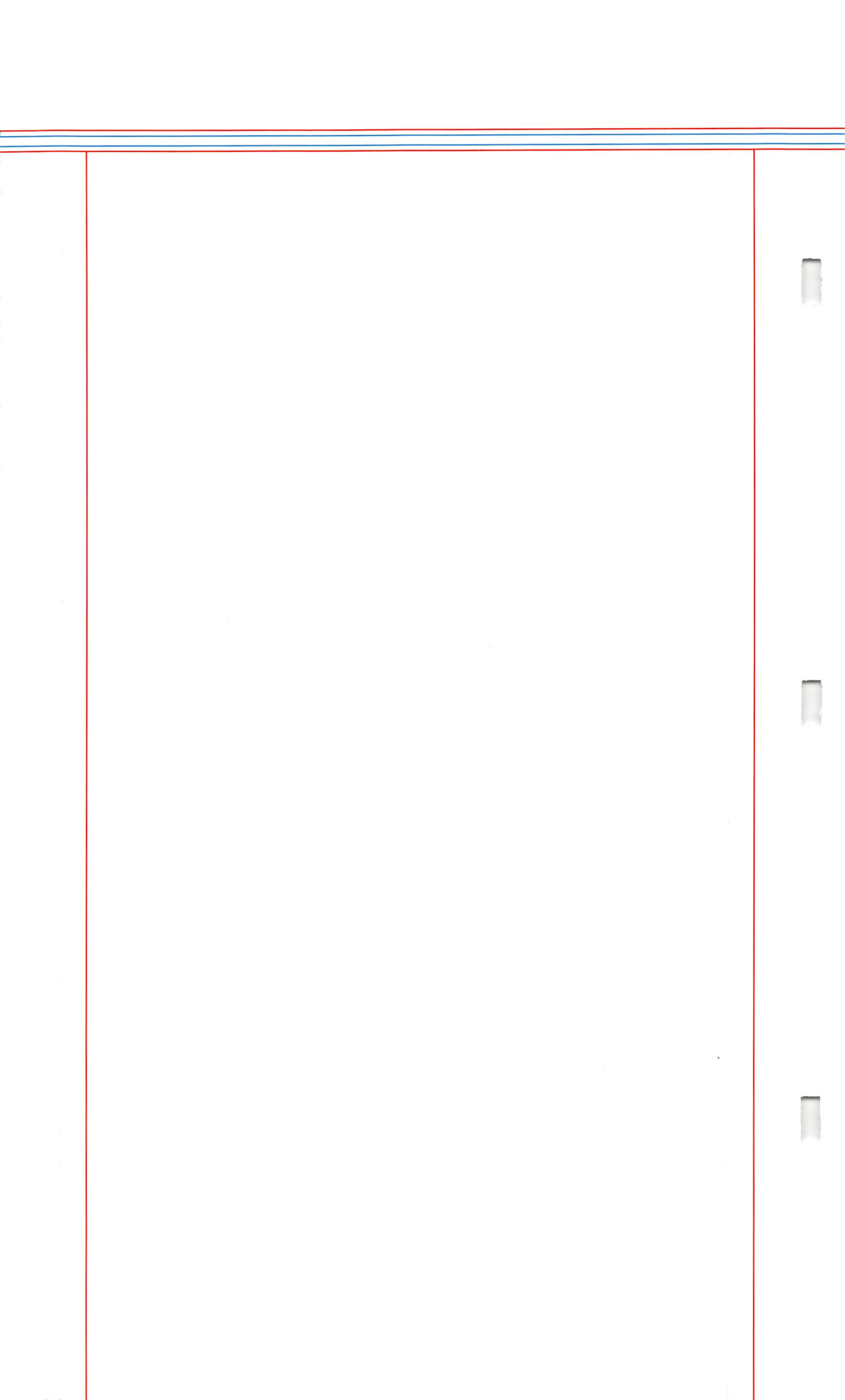
CLERK-TREASURER: Ms. Atkins presented the docket of claims together with the fund report; Mr. Bailey made a motion to approve the docket as submitted, which was seconded by Mr. Mikel and carried by a vote of 5 ayes, 0 nays. Ms. Atkins told the Council that she had submitted the proposed scope of work for Baker Tilly in the Dropbox folder.

TOWN ATTORNEY: Mr. Wagner asked the Council to conduct the public hearing for Ordinance 3-2025 regarding amendments to certain charges in the Electric Code. Mr. Daily made the motion open the public hearing, which was seconded by Mr. Mikel and carried by a vote of 5 ayes, 0 nays. Mr. Leman called for public comments regarding Ordinance 3-2025, but none were offered. Mr. Daily made a motion to close the public hearing, which was seconded by Mr. Miller and carried by a vote of 5 ayes, 0 nays. Mr. Miller made a motion to approve Ordinance 3-2025 on second and third readings, which was seconded by Mr. Daily and carried by a vote of 5 ayes, 0 nays. Mr. Wagner told the Council that Mr. Byam had contacted him regarding new cyber security requirements from the State Revolving Fund. Mr. Byam explained that the State Revolving Fund has begun requiring a cyber security plan be implemented for all applications. Mr. Byam and Mr. Wagner recommended that the Council hire cyber security consultants to develop a plan for the entire Town operations rather than only utilities. The Council asked Mr. Fraine to gather information from the recommended consultants. Mr. Wagner told the Council that it could approve the SRO agreement, pending approval by the school board of trustees, and that the Redevelopment Commission had already approved the agreement. Mr. Leman suggested that the Council wait until the school approves the document and the remaining Council Members agreed. Mr. Wagner also told the Council that the Redevelopment Commission had taken over the services agreement with the Chamber of Commerce.

NEW BUSINESS: No new business was brought before the Council.

OLD BUSINESS: No old business was brought before the Council.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: Vicki Brown appeared on behalf of Dustin's Place to follow up on her request from December, 2024, for funds to renovate a facility for their operations. Mr. Leman expressed his reluctance to pay from the general fund and stated that the Town could not support all groups with good projects. Ms. Brown replied that



Dustin's Place was not requesting operating funds, only funds for the building project and suggested that the use the remaining opioid settlement funds. The Council asked how those funds had been dedicated and Mr. Wagner and Ms. Atkins told the Council that they would clarify what funds were presented and unencumbered. Mr. Mikel made a motion to table the matter until the next meeting, which was seconded by Mr. Daily and carried by a vote of 5 ayes, 0 nays.

Jeff Rowe from Baker Tilly appeared before the Council regarding several matters. Mr. Rowe gave a brief update regarding the wastewater project with the Lake of the Woods, explaining that his office was working on getting the plans submitted to SRF and that a draft study of the Lake of the Woods wholesale rate had been circulated to JPR and Ms. Atkins. Mr. Rowe then addressed the proposal for five (5) new scopes of work and gave a brief explanation of each. Mr. Daily asked if the Town would see an advantage from engaging Baker Tilly, and Mr. Rowe explained that it would assist Ms. Atkins as a new Clerk-Treasurer and hopefully present new options in the budgeting process to the Council. Ms. Atkins expressed her support for the new services and suggested that the fees be split with the Redevelopment Commission and the utility departments as well. After discussion by the Council, Mr. Mikel made a motion to approve the new scope of services with Baker Tilly, which was seconded by Mr. Bailey and carried by a vote of 5 ayes, 0 nays.

Kimberlee Savick and Mr. Rowe presented the Financial Management Report for the Water Department. Ms. Savick noted that the utility would have negative annual balances within the next five (5) years if it maintained current rates, resulting in reserves below the recommended level. She also noted that large user receipts had declined in 2024 by 8.9 million gallons, based on lower usage by several of the utility's largest customers. Mr. Rowe recommended a rate increase of 10.8% due to the decrease in services by large users and upcoming capital improvements. Mr. Mikel expressed his support for the increase as he believed wells 7 and 8 would need to be cleaned in the near future. Mr. Daily asked that the increase be staggered over two (2) increases and the other Council Members agreed. Mr. Rowe noted that the new rate would still be lower than the State average for comparable communities. Mr. Mikel added that the Spencer Street plant would need a major overhaul within 10 years. Mr. Mikel also restated his request for day-to-day operational budgets from the utilities. The Council asked Mr. Rowe and Mr. Wagner to work on a new rate ordinance that would have a 5.4% increase to begin July 1, 2025 and another 5.4% increase to begin on January 1, 2026.

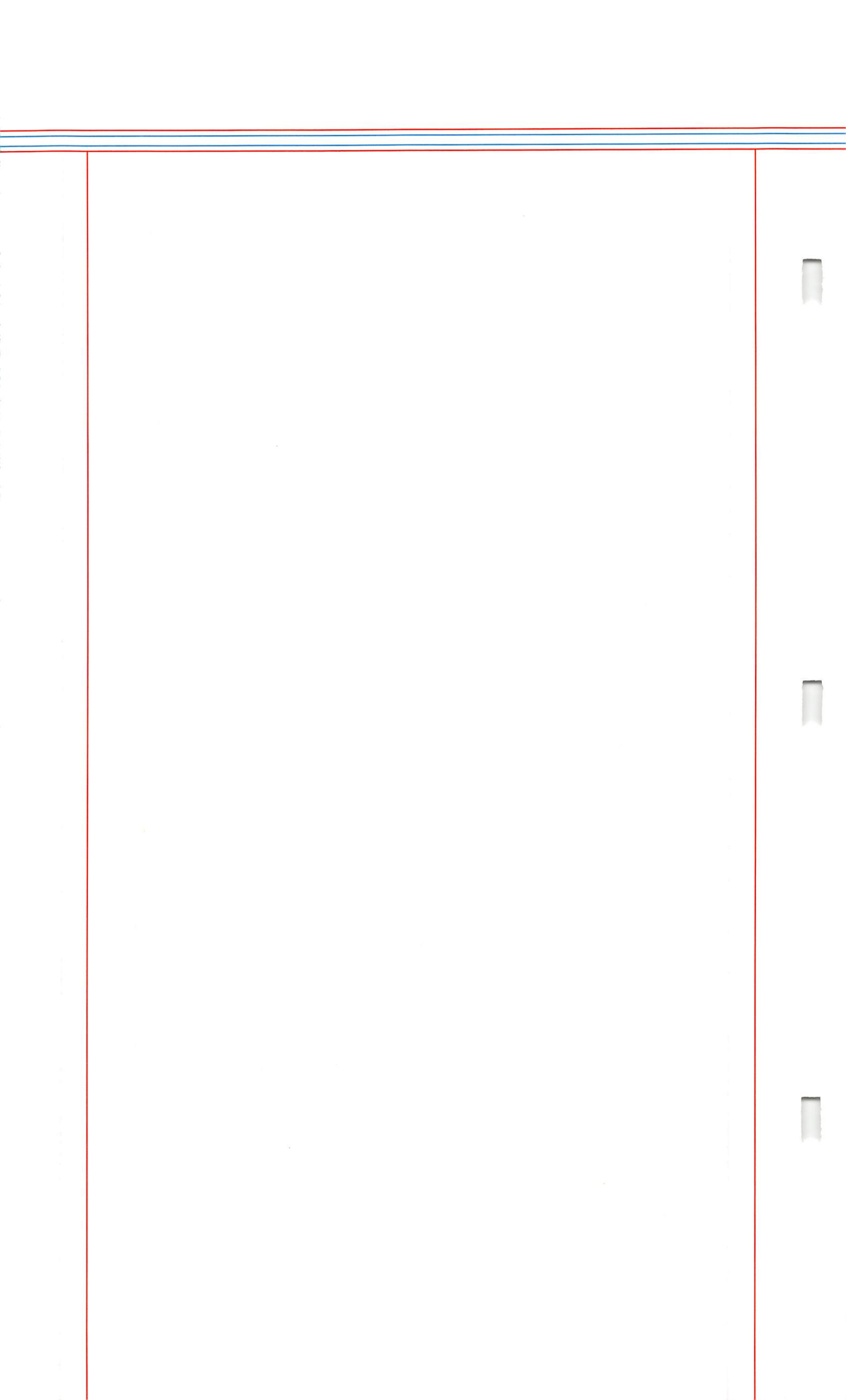
Ms. Savick and Mr. Rowe also presented the wastewater report. They noted an increase in the department funds but pointed out a similar decrease in larger user receipts due to the decrease in water flow. They also anticipated a negative fund balance by 2029 if no changes were made. Mr. Rowe recommended a 16% rate increase due to additional costs for the new wastewater treatment plant as well as the decrease in large user receipts. Mr. Rowe suggested that the Council wait until bids for the wastewater treatment plant project were received. Mr. Byam noted that the cost for the wastewater treatment plant had increased due to a change of scope with the project. The Council Members agreed to take no action until the bids from the wastewater treatment plant project were received.

DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS: Mr. Fraine submitted his report.

DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORTS:

Mr. Wright submitted his report on behalf of the Electric Department.

Mr. Lockwood told the Council that cemetery clean-up would begin the next week and that the new excavator was currently at the dealer and should arrive to the department soon.



Mr. Main told the Council that he had advertised for the open park position but that he may need to use rolling interviews until a suitable candidate was located. Mr. Main also told the Council he was struggling to hire lifeguards, as he had only two applicants and needed eight. The Council asked Mr. Main questions about the wages for both positions and other obstacles. After full discussion, the Council directed Ms. Atkins to submit an amended wage ordinance to increase the pay for lifeguards to \$12.00 per hour. Mr. Main told the Council that the Park Board had not been in favor of a pay increase for the Assistant Pool Manager position, but the Council authorized him to advertise a pay range of \$52,000.00 – \$60,000.00.

Mr. Langdon had no new information to report on behalf of the Street Department.

Mr. Aguayo told the Council that his SKEDA was not working properly and had not been updated since 2014. He estimated the cost to replace the software was \$80,000.00 and noted that he had budgeted \$90,000.00 for it. He also stated that this was the best price that he had found as the next quote he had was for \$200,000.00. Mr. Mikel explained that the current software was proprietary and the department would need to go through Primex and Gasvoda & Associates, Inc. Mr. Mikel made a motion to declare an emergency contract with Primex/Gasvoda to update the SKEDA software for the Water Department, which was seconded by Mr. Daily and carried by a vote of 5 ayes, 0 nays. Mr. Aguayo also told the Council that the department had two wells with faulty check valves that needed to be replaced but also that each well would need to be chemically cleaned. He told the Council that the process would cost \$12,000.00 for each well. The Council determined the expense was an operational cost and authorized Mr. Aguayo to perform the work.

Mr. Cunningham had no new information to report on behalf of the Wastewater Department.

Chief Neher had no new information to report on behalf of the Fire Department.

Chief Kile had no new information to report on behalf of the Police Department.


Mr. Mikel made a motion to approve the Department Head Reports, which was seconded by Mr. Miller and carried by a vote of 5 ayes, 0 nays.

TOWN ENGINEER: Mr. Byam told the Council that JPR would be sending the SRF an update regarding the wastewater treatment plant/interceptor project, which would include an asset management plan certification that needed to be executed by Mr. Leman. Mr. Byam explained that the certification was not quite ready, and Mr. Leman expressed concern that he would be out of town the next week. Mr. Mikel made a motion to allow Mr. Leman to e-sign the document, which was seconded by Mr. Miller and carried by a vote of 5 ayes, 0 nays.


COUNCIL COMMENTS: Mr. Mikel asked Chief Kile if the Police Department had received its new vehicle, but Chief Kile replied that the vehicle had not been delivered yet.

ADJOURNMENT: Mr. Mikel made a motion to adjourn the meeting, which was seconded by Mr. Bailey and carried by a vote of 5 ayes, 0 nays.

ATTEST:



Meghan Atkins,
Clerk-Treasurer, Town of Bremen



Michael Leman, President

