MINUTES OF MEETING OF TOWN COUNCIL
TOWN OF BREMEN, INDIANA
May 11, 2026

The Town Council of the Town of Bremen, Indiana, met in regular session at 4:30 p.m. on Monday, May 11, 2026, at the Bremen Town Hall pursuant to notice previously published. Council Members Mike Leman, William Daily and Alex Mikel 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 Trent Stouder, Police Department; Austin Langdon, Superintendent of the Street Department; Chief Matt Neher, Fire Department; Matt Cunningham, Superintendent of the Wastewater Department; Dan Byam Town Engineer and Anthony Wagner, Town Attorney.

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

MINUTES: Mr. Mikel made a motion to approve the minutes of the April 27, 2026 meeting, which was seconded by Mr. Daily and carried by a vote of 3 ayes, 0 nays.

CLERK-TREASURER: Ms. Atkins submitted the allowance docket for approval; Mr. Daily made a motion to approve the allowance docket as submitted, which was seconded by Mr. Mikel and carried by a vote of 3 ayes, 0 nays. Ms. Atkins also submitted the docket of claims for approval; Mr. Mikel made a motion to approve the docket as submitted, which was seconded by Mr. Daily and carried by a vote of 3 ayes, 0 nays. Ms. Atkins then submitted pay request number 8 from JPR for their work on the wastewater treatment plant project in the amount to $22,942.50. Mr. Mikel made a motion to approve pay request number 8 as submitted, which was seconded by Mr. Daily and carried by a vote of 3 ayes, 0 nays. Ms. Atkins told the Council that she had made the latest payment to the manufacturer of the Village Shops project structures and told the Council that the department was still getting adjusted to the changes to the Town software. Ms. Atkins explained that the utility bills were going out as scheduled, but some bills were delivered late by the post office.

TOWN ATTORNEY: Mr. Wagner presented Resolution 2026-6, honoring Virginia and RT Henke. He explained that Virginia Henke died several years before but that RT had passed only recently. Mr. Wagner told the Council that the Henkes had been important volunteers in the Bremen Community and that their efforts had resulted in several successful major projects, most notably the move and restoration of the historic train depot. Mr. Leman read the resolution on to the record; Mr. Mikel made a motion to approve Resolution 2026-6 as submitted, which was seconded by Mr. Daily and carried by a vote of 3 ayes, 0 nays. The Council thanked the Henke family members in attendance. Mr. Wagner then presented Resolution 2026-7, which was required to fix a tax abatement issue for a property annexed in the Center Street annexation. Mr. Daily made a motion to approve Resolution 2026-7 as submitted, which was seconded by Mr. Mikel and carried by a vote of 3 ayes, 0 nays. Mr. Wagner then explained the proposed actions that he and Mr. Fraine had discussed for addressing the concerns the Council had heard at the previous meeting regarding tobacco shops, convenience stores and gas stations.

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

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

PUBLIC COMMENTS: Kimberly Savick appeared on behalf of Baker Tilly and presented the scope of work proposal for utility system development charges. She explained that the fees were charged in addition to tap fees and used to help recover growth-related costs. She explained the proposed services and that the total cost would not exceed $12,000.00 for both the water and sewer utilities. Mr. Cunningham told the Council that they had added similar language into the Lake of the Woods Service Agreement and that both he and Mr. Aguayo were in favor of the study. Mr. Mikel also expressed his support but suggested tabling the request for consideration by the full Council at a later meeting.

Ms. Savick then presented the Financial Management Report for the water utility. She explained that the utility had a substantial increase in its cash balance due to the liquidation of investments and that the utility still had an amount well over the recommended reserve level. She noted that the utility experienced decreased consumption from large commercial users and would be expecting cash losses annually for the next several years due to the decreased demand and higher expected capital expenses. Ms. Savick told the Council that the utility cash balances would decline to the recommended level by 2029 without any rate increase. The Council discussed the report. Ms. Savick concluded by recommending a 14% rate increase that would increase the average residential bill from $31.00 to $35.00 and noted that the increased amount would still be under the state average.

Ms. Savick then presented the wastewater utility report. She noted that the wastewater department had the same increase in cash reserves due to investments, but that the department also benefitted from an existing rate increase. She told the Council that the Wastewater Department saw a corresponding decrease in usage compared to the Water Department and that all of their projections assumed rate increases due to the construction projects. Ms. Savick said the report concluded that an 82% increase in 2027 would be necessary, although the increase could be reduced to 62% if the interceptor project was omitted. Ms. Savick told the Council that the increase would raise the average users wastewater bill to $99.00 per month, which would be over the state average of $51.00.

Gabe Hartzler from Baker Tilly presented the quarterly council report and explained that the report was limited to certain funds. He told the Council that they were currently working on a larger, long-term plan that would account for upcoming legislative changes. Mr. Hartzler said that the current spending was under 25% for the year so far, but that the revenue proportions were skewed by the liquidation of the investments. Mr. Hartzler noted that the motor vehicle fund was likely to drop due to the state gas tax suspension, but that the Wastewater Department looks strong and the Water Department revenue should increase as the weather warmed. The Council thanked Mr. Hartzler and Ms. Savick for their presentations.

Jared Siple appeared before the Council and asked Mr. Wagner several questions about the process of amending the zoning ordinance. Mr. Siple told the Council that he had submitted a letter for the last meeting and proceeded to read the letter to the Council. He explained that he lived behind the proposed gas station and expressed concerns for his sleep schedule, air quality and property values.

Tammy Hudson appeared and expressed concern about unregulated illegal vapes and stated that another store front selling tobacco products was not good for Bremen. Ms. Hudson presented a petition with over 200 signatures.

Dr. Robert Kolbe asked Mr. Wagner if convenience stores were being discussed in the zoning ordinance, which Mr. Wagner confirmed. Mr. Leman thanked all the members of the public who appeared and encouraged their participation in future proceedings. Mr. Siple asked several more questions.

DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS: Mr. Fraine submitted his report.

DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORTS:

Chief Stouder submitted his report on behalf of the Police Department.

Mr. Aguayo submitted his report on behalf of the Water Department.

Mr. Langdon submitted his report on behalf of the Street Department.

Mr. Cunningham submitted his report on behalf of the Wastewater Department.

Chief Neher submitted his report on behalf of the Fire Department.

Mr. Wright submitted his report on behalf of the Electric Department and presented quotes for installing lights at the high school soccer field in the park. Mr. Wright explained that the department's plan was still to pay for the project and provide as much of the work to the department as possible. Mr. Mikel asked who would bear the monthly costs and Mr. Wright explained that he was still discussing that with the school. Mr. Daily made a motion to approve the lowest quote submitted to Mr. Wright, which was seconded by Mr. Mikel and carried by a vote of 3 ayes, 0 nays.

Mr. Mikel asked Mr. Langdon if his department was declaring equipment in his report as surplus equipment yet and Mr. Langdon confirmed that the department was waiting.

Mr. Daily made a motion to approve the Department Head Reports, which was seconded by Mr. Mikel and carried by a vote of 3 ayes, 0 nays.

TOWN ENGINEER: Mr. Byam gave the Council an update on the wastewater treatment plant project and explained that Thieneman had begun installing the earth retention system. Mr. Byam submitted pay request number 9 for the project, payable to Thieneman Construction in the amount of $642,0003.30 and noted that the amount listed on the agenda was incorrect. Mr. Mikel made a motion to approve pay request number 9 as amended, which was seconded by Mr. Daily and carried by a vote of 3 ayes, 0 nays. Mr. Byam also submitted pay request number 10 for the project in the amount of $19,885.77 and explained that this amount was the scheduled payment for the retainage. Mr. Mikel made a motion to approve pay request number 10 as submitted, which was seconded by Mr. Daily and carried by a vote of 3 ayes, 0 nays. Mr. Byam told the Council that the PIR report was nearly complete, and that they had obtained a permit from CSX for the repairs on Legner Street. Mr. Byam also told the Council that they had completed the meeting for the 2026 CCMG project and that the Stock Street project plans would be out for review shortly. Mr. Byam confirmed that JPR was already working with Mr. Langdon on the 2027 CCMG application.

COUNCIL COMMENTS: Mr. Mikel asked if any Council Member had sat in the meetings for the utility reports and stated that at least one member should begin attending those. The Council discussed sending the liaisons to future meetings.

Mr. Mikel also asked to implement day-to-day operational budgets for the Town Departments. Mr. Daily asked Mr. Fraine his opinion and Mr. Fraine replied that each of the departments does have a budget. Mr. Mikel expressed concern that more controls were required but Mr. Fraine stated his belief that the departments were well monitored. Mr. Fraine agreed to check with his local counterparts to see how many other communities use similar budgets. Mr. Leman expressed concern that the Council Members would have difficulty monitoring budgets due to their full-time jobs, but also a lack of department knowledge. Mr. Mikel expressed his opinion that the current system was a poor way to manage an operation of the Town's scale. Mr. Cunningham told the Council that the Department Heads wanted input into the decision and expressed concern that they would be micromanaged. Mr. Wagner asked Mr. Mikel how quickly the decision would need to be implemented and he estimated that it could be implemented in February; Mr. Wagner suggested that the discussions continue with the full Council until then.

Ms. Atkins reminded the Council that the next meeting would be on Tuesday, May 26, 2026 due to the Memorial Day holiday.

ADJOURNMENT: Mr. Mikel made a motion to adjourn the meeting, which was seconded by Mr. Daily and carried by a vote of 3 ayes, 0 nays.

ATTEST:

Meghan Atkins,
Clerk-Treasurer, Town of Bremen

Michael Leman, President