



MINUTES OF THE COMMON COUNCIL

TUESDAY, JUNE 03, 2025 AT 6:30 PM

COUNCIL ROOM, MUNICIPAL BUILDING, 450 S. MAIN ST., RICHLAND CENTER, WI 53581 & VIRTUALLY

CALL TO ORDER: Meeting was called to order by Mayor Coppernoll at 6:30 PM. Members present were Ron Fruit, Karin Tepley, Tom McCarthy, Rachel Schultz, Melony Walters, Douglas Martyniuk, Steve Downs, and Ryan Cairns. Absent: None.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: Motion by Alderperson Schultz to approve the agenda with item #17 removed. Seconded by Alderperson Walters. Motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Motion by Alderperson Walters to waive the reading and approve the minutes of the May 6, 2025 regular meeting as presented. Seconded by Alderperson Fruit. Motion carried unanimously.

CITY AND UTILITY DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORTS AND CONCERNS:

Zoning Administrator Matt Williams reported continued permit activity as seasonal projects commence throughout the city. He noted that Taco Bell plans to demolish its existing structure and construct a new facility at the same location beginning in June.

Director Jasen Glasbrenner reported continued progress on the \$2.5 million Congressional Directed Spending Grant, CDI grants, and hotel review with Ehlers, and noted ongoing communication with Panorama Estates regarding development timelines. Glasbrenner also reported Public Works is managing seasonal operations, including mowing, street maintenance, tree planting, and airport planning. He also reported significant maintenance efforts at the Aquatic Center due to aging infrastructure.

Financial Officer Misty Molzof reported that fieldwork for the annual audit is complete, with final results forthcoming.

Clerk Amanda Keller reported ongoing efforts to update and streamline internal processes to improve efficiency, including the revision of licensing forms, record management systems, organizing historical records, and coordinating address updates with the post office.

Utility Manager Scott Gald reported on storm damage response, noting downed trees and equipment impacts. He provided updates on AMI meter installations and coordination with the DOT for upcoming utility adjustments near Rockwell. Gald noted a staffing change in the Water Department, with an open position due to a relocation. He also thanked REC for assisting with park lighting maintenance and highlighted recent community outreach events and scholarship awards.

Police Chief Billy Jones reported that the department is actively recruiting to fill one full-time and two part-time officer positions. He announced the upcoming Cops and Bobbers community event scheduled for June 7 and noted the recent success of the Special Olympics fundraiser held at Dunkin'. The department continues to engage in community outreach and partnership activities.

Library Director Stacy Pilla reported continued progress on summer operations and programming and provided facility and maintenance updates, including obtaining proposals for building improvements.

City Administrator Ashley Oliphant recognized the significant efforts of city staff during the demanding spring season. She highlighted the increased collaboration among departments, noting improved coordination between Public Works, Utilities, Zoning, and other divisions. Oliphant emphasized the importance of cross-departmental teamwork in addressing seasonal demands such as cemetery preparation, event setup, and grounds maintenance. She commended staff for their dedication and adaptability in delivering high-quality public service.

MAYOR AND ALDERPERSONS:

Aldersperson Ron Fruit announced the 2025 trick-or-treating hours in the City of Richland Center will be adjusted to 4:30 PM to 7:00 PM to align more closely with surrounding communities. He also acknowledged the continued success of local events supported by the fire department and parks staff.

Aldersperson Rachel Schultz reported on the Natatorium Board meeting, highlighting an innovation grant to study operational improvements and a facility assessment by Venture Architects. She noted three recent grants awarded, including a \$10,000 grant to support third-grade swim lessons and transportation.

Mayor Todd Coppernoll commended city staff and volunteers for their collaborative efforts in preparing the cemetery and public spaces for Memorial Day, highlighting the strong sense of community and teamwork. He emphasized the importance of continued interdepartmental coordination during the busy spring season.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Financial Officer Misty Molzof presented the finalized April 30, 2025 cash balances report and a preliminary report for May, noting stable cash positions across accounts. Additionally, she provided year-end balance sheets for December 31, 2024, and departmental budget comparisons through April 2025. Molzof explained that the 2024 year-end deficit was primarily due to the Ferguson property purchase, and that excluding this one-time expenditure, the City remained under budget. Reconciliation efforts continue for accounts payable and receivable, with a focus on resolving outstanding balances and improving accuracy through the ongoing financial system transition.

PAYMENT OF BILLS: Motion by Aldersperson Cairns to pay the June 3, 2025 bills as presented. Seconded by Aldersperson Schultz. Motion carried 8-0.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION

Preliminary 2026 Budget Discussion: Mayor Coppernoll continued the discussion of the 2026 budget, highlighting key financial considerations including reduced state transportation aid due to roadway reclassifications, fluctuations in interest revenue, and the need for accurate property assessments to support future budgeting. Administrator Oliphant emphasized that the budget reflects council priorities and encouraged members to actively engage in the process. The discussion will continue in upcoming meetings.

Innovation Planning Grant Award: Administrator Oliphant reported that the City has been awarded a \$62,000 Innovation Planning Grant to evaluate long-term operational sustainability for the Symons Natatorium. The grant will support a comprehensive analysis of current operations, potential efficiencies, and opportunities for shared services with Richland County. An RFP will be issued to engage a firm to conduct the study. Oliphant also announced the award of a second Innovation Planning Grant in the amount of \$32,000 to support evaluation and improvement of GIS services, with a focus on enhancing coordination between the City and Richland County.

Report on Woodman Aquatic Center: Administrator Oliphant provided a detailed update on maintenance and operational challenges at the Woodman Aquatic Center. She reported that aging infrastructure has led to increased repair needs, including issues with heating pipes, chemical control systems, and structural components such as tiles and pool surfaces. Significant staff time has been dedicated to seasonal preparation, with over 120 hours logged by the Parks and Recreation Director in the past month. The report also noted ongoing collaboration with the Wastewater Department for technical support and the pursuit of cost estimates for climatizing the pump house to extend equipment life. These challenges underscore the need for continued planning and investment in the facility.

PUBLIC SAFETY RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTION

Application for Temporary "Class B" Retailer License for the Greater Richland Area Chamber Taste of the Hills event on 6/21/2025 from 4pm-9pm at Krouskop Park: Motion by Aldersperson Fruit to approve a Temporary "Class B" Retailer License for the Greater Richland Area Chamber Taste of the Hills event on 6/21/2025 from 4pm-9pm at Krouskop Park. Seconded by Aldersperson Downs. Motion carried unanimously.

Application for Temporary Class "B" Retailer License for Southwest Partners Inc dba Richland Rejuvenates RC Thunderfest event on 6/28/2025 from 12pm-11pm at Krouskop Park: Motion by Aldersperson Fruit to approve a Temporary Class "B" Retailer License for Southwest Partners Inc dba Richland Rejuvenates RC Thunderfest event on 6/28/2025 from 12pm-11pm at Krouskop Park. Seconded by Aldersperson Tepley. Motion carried unanimously.

Application for Temporary "Class B" Retailer License for AD German Warehouse Conservancy for a private event on 6/21/2025 from 12pm-6pm in the warehouse alley: Motion by Alderperson Fruit to approve a Temporary "Class B" Retailer License for AD German Warehouse Conservancy for a private event on 6/21/2025 from 12pm-6pm in the warehouse alley. Seconded by Alderperson Walters. Motion carried unanimously.

Application for Temporary Class "B" Retailer License for Driftless Angler & Fly-Fishing Show at the Starlight 14 Drive-In on 6/6/2025 from 3pm-11pm: Motion by Alderperson Fruit to approve a Temporary Class "B" Retailer License for Driftless Angler & Fly-Fishing Show at the Starlight 14 Drive-In on 6/6/2025 from 3pm-11pm. Seconded by Alderperson Martyniuk. Motion carried unanimously.

Approval of Alcohol Beverage Licenses: Motion by Alderperson Fruit to approve the list of Alcohol Beverage License Renewals as presented. Motion carried by Alderperson Downs. Motion carried unanimously.

Approval of Municipal Licenses: Motion by Alderperson Fruit to approve the list of Tobacco and Municipal License Renewals as presented. Motion carried by Alderperson Walters. Motion carried unanimously.

FINANCE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTION

Sale of Vehicle and Equipment: Alderperson Cairns presented a request from Public Works Department to authorize the sale of surplus city equipment, including a Case IH tractor, an interceptor vehicle with electrical and transmission issues, a Bandit woodchipper scheduled for replacement, and a 10,000-kilowatt generator. The generator, estimated at \$1,500 in value, may be credited to Wallace Electric toward the final invoice for the new generator installation. Motion by Alderperson Cairns to approve the sale of vehicle and equipment. Seconded by Alderperson Schultz. Motion carried 8-0.

Phone Service for Elected Officials: Alderperson Ryan Cairns presented the Personnel and Finance Committee's recommendation to purchase a web-based phone service that would assign dedicated city-issued phone numbers to elected officials through a mobile application. The proposed system is designed to enhance continuity of communication between officeholders, protect personal privacy, and support compliance with public records requirements. The estimated cost of the service is approximately \$15 per line, per month. Motion by Alderperson Cairns to approve the purchase of a web-based phone service for elected officials. Seconded by Alderperson Tepley. Motion carried 8-0.

Financial Policy Amendment to Meet the Requirements of 2 CFR § 200.302(b)(7): Administrator Oliphant presented a recommendation to amend the City's Financial Policy to include federally required language regarding cost allowability, in accordance with 2 CFR 200.302. The amendment is necessary to maintain compliance with federal grant requirements and was identified during a recent compliance review of the City's transit program. The proposed language outlines standards for determining whether expenditures are allowable under federal awards. Motion by Alderperson Cairns to approve amending the Financial Policy to include Cost Allowability for Charges Against Federal Awards as presented. Seconded by Alderperson Downs. Motion carried 8-0.

Development Incentive Policy: Removed

PLAN COMMISSION RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTION

Consider Conditional Use Permit Application to Allow a Motor Fuel Station at 2393 US Hwy 14 E. (Tax Parcel 276-2471-2200): Zoning Administrator Matt Williams reported a historical review revealed the Kwik Trip located at 2393 US Hwy 14 E has been operating without a required conditional use permit. The Planning Commission recommends approving the permit to bring the property into compliance with zoning requirements in advance of a planned 2026 building expansion. Motion by Alderperson Walters to approve the application of KT Real Estate Holdings LLC. of Richland Center for a conditional use permit to allow a motor fuel station at 2393 US Hwy 14 E. (Tax Parcel ID 276-2471-2200) with conditions as presented. Seconded by Alderperson Downs. Motion carried 8-0.

Consider Petition to Rezone Tax Parcel 022-2741-6000 at 26554 Cty Hwy O: Mayor Todd Coppernoll presented a petition to rezone parcel 022-2741-6000, located at 2655 US Highway 14, from Commercial to Industrial to allow continued storage of LP tanks by Ferrellgas. Despite Planning Commission and ETZ Board recommendation for approval, Zoning Administrator Williams advised that the current use is not permitted under existing zoning ordinances and does not align with the City's Comprehensive Plan or Future Land Use Map. Attorney Windle noted concerns regarding potential spot zoning and nonconformance. Motion by Alderperson Downs to postpone a decision and direct City Administrator Oliphant and Zoning Administrator Williams to work with Ferrellgas to explore alternative solutions. Seconded by Alderperson McCarthy. Motion carried 8-0.

APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES, COMMISSIONS, BOARDS AND CONFIRM APPOINTMENTS: None

PUBLIC COMMENT: Tony Burke provided an update on Town Taxi operations and ridership. Danny Zadra spoke on his volunteer headstone restoration efforts at the city cemetery.

CLOSED SESSION

Closed Session for the purpose of discussing the US Cellular Ground Lease: Motion by Alderperson Tepley to enter Closed Session. Seconded by Alderperson Walters. Motion carried unanimously at 8:24 PM.

****CLOSED SESSION****

Reconvene in open session: Motion by Alderperson Schultz to reconvene into open session. Seconded by Alderperson Downs. Motion carried unanimously at 9:03 PM.

Motion by Alderperson Walters to direct Attorney Windle and Administrator Oliphant to negotiate a cell tower lease agreement with US Cellular. Seconded by Alderperson Downs. Motion carried unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT: Motion by Alderperson Downs to adjourn. Seconded by Alderperson Martyniuk. Motion carried 8-0 at 9:04 PM.

Meeting minutes recorded by Clerk Keller