



## MINUTES OF THE COMMON COUNCIL

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 2026 AT 6:30 PM

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

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**CALL TO ORDER CALL TO ORDER:** The 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.

**Others Present:** Ashley Oliphant, City Administrator; Darcy Perkins, Municipal Services Specialist; Scott Gald, Utilities Superintendent; Billy Jones, Police Chief; Stacy Pilla, Library Director; Jodi Mieden, Parks and Recreation Director; Media; Nova Video representative; and members of the public.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA:** *Motion by Tepley, second by Schultz to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried 8-0.*

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** *Motion by Downs, second by McCarthy to waive the reading of the minutes of the January 6, 2026 meeting in lieu of printed copies and approve said minutes. Motion carried 8-0.*

### **CITY AND UTILITY DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORTS**

**Clerk/Treasurer's Office:** Molzof stated that January was busy with tax payments, election requirements, annual deadlines, in addition to the regular monthly duties and thanks to the team, we made it.

**Parks & Recreation:** Mieden stated that during the slow time staff are busy cleaning and organizing the buildings; a Kids Night Out was recently held where the Lions Club provided snacks, and there were about 40 kids in attendance; basketball league began and there are currently five teams; a twilight hike is being planned for February 13<sup>th</sup>; and early planning for the summer guide, summer programs, and staffing is underway.

**Library:** Pilla stated that the DPI annual report is due soon, the Library is working on a community survey to aid in updating the Library Strategic Plan and can be found on the website, Facebook, and on paper flyers.

**Utility:** Gald stated that Electric AMI Meters are 66% installed, and Water AMI Meters are 30% installed; electric crews are working on cutting trees along the primary and secondary lines, and plans are underway for replacement/relocation of lines along Hwy 14; the city and utility have recently moved forward with sharing a server and overall it is going well; and the utilities are looking at getting rid of fax lines to save some money.

**Police:** Jones reported that in the month of January there were 187 calls for service, 32 criminal arrests were made, two juvenile cases, one emergency detention, three warrants/probation assists were made, and at least four traffic citations; however, there has been an issue with the citation reporting software and this figure may change.

**Administrator:** Oliphant reported that she recently attended a county meeting regarding the ambulance service, the county hired a firm to perform a study on the ambulance, and she will be attending future ambulance service meetings; Finley Hamblin was hired as a full-time employee in the buildings and grounds; city staff are transitioning from the old insurance company to the new one, have had to file a claims already this year, and there will be an elected official training sometime after the April election for elected officials; and the department head meetings are under review and may see some changes to make them more efficient and productive.

### **MAYOR AND ALDERPERSONS**

**Schultz:** Shared that her husband Dale Schultz and their exchange student from Buenos Aires are present to observe how Common Council meetings are conducted.

**Tepley:** The 1<sup>st</sup> Connect Communities meeting was held about a week ago; two of Vernon Thompson's grandchildren were located and will be receiving packets from the City regarding the memorial.

**Mayor Coppernoll:** Fruit, McCarthy, and Mayor Coppernoll have decided not to run for office this year, and their last meeting will be in April, 2026; and realizing that there were no homeless or warming shelters in Richland Center,

a group including Mike Brenninger and his family got together opened up a building and staffed it 24 hours per day for 10 days during the most recent cold weather. This was used by 9 or 10 people who needed shelter and literally saved the life of one person. Mayor wanted to publicly thank Mike Brenninger, his family, and the members of the community who provided support in any way.

**TREASURER'S REPORT** *Motion by Schultz, second by Walters to approve the Treasurers report as presented, including 12/31/2025 cash balances, 12/31/2025 balance sheets, and 12/31/2025 summary of revenue and expenditures by department. Motion carried 8-0.*

**PAYMENT OF BILLS** *Motion by Cairns, second by Downs to approve bills entered from December 31, 2025 through February 3, 2026, as presented in the amount of \$2,428,7637.37, which includes \$15,028.10 of Greater Richland Tourism bills, and \$2,413,709.27 of general fund bills. Upon roll call vote, all members voted aye, motion carried 8-0.*

### **ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION AND ACTION**

Presentation by NHS Director Craig Woodhouse: *No action.*

Woodhouse presented on who NHS of Southwest Wisconsin is, services they provide, and terminology pertaining to housing types.

MSA 2025 Street Rating Project Report: *No Action.*

Zach Adams, MSA presented the 2025 Street Rating Project Report that is reported to WI DOT through WISLR, used for funding, planning, and budgeting purposes. MSA recommendation is to continue to use the pavement ratings tools in your planning and budgeting processes and to share with utilities to coordinate capital improvement planning.

Report on Proposed Campus Housing Project: *No Action.*

Oliphant stated that Glasbrenner attended the County Executive and Finance Committee Meeting, they discussed the city's proposal in closed session, and when they came out of closed session, they did not act. The county has hired SEH to assist with the redevelopment process, including issuing a Request for Proposals (RFP). The city is able to resubmit their proposal during the RFP solicitation period as will any other interested party, in approximately four months.

Lydia's House Lease and Operating Agreement: *Motion by Tepley, second by Walters to allow the Administrator or Attorney to draft and execute an agreement with Lydia's House with no fees, as reviewed and recommended by the City Attorney. Motion carried 8-0.*

Oliphant stated that this property was unexpectedly transferred to the City by SWCAP causing a disruption to the operations of Lydia's House. Operations have ceased at the direction of the Lydia's House Board until such time as an agreement or lease is executed with the City.

Facility Use Agreement with the Richland School District: *Motion by Walters, second by Tepley to approve the Updated Facility Agreement between the Richland School District and the City of Richland Center July 1, 2026-June 30, 2028. Upon roll call vote, all members present voted aye, motion carried 8-0.*

Mieden reported that bi-annual joint-use contract with Richland School District was reviewed by both parties and ready for approval. The 2026 contract has minor changes due to the sale of Stori Field and the need to modify dates and ensure proper insurance coverage.

### **PLAN COMMISSION RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTION (COPPERNOLL)**

Sale of RDA-Owned Property at 300 W Union Street (Parcels 276-1687-6000 & 276-1687-8000): *Motion by Tepley, second by Downs to accept the Plan Commission Report and approve the sale of RDA-owned property located at 300 W. Union Street, as presented. Upon roll call vote, all members present voted aye, motion carried 8-0.*

RDA Chair John Collins reported successful negotiations with the buyer who will bring a new business to the city. The buyer will construct a 5,000-square-foot sales facility under a developer's agreement. This project will mark the successful disposition of the RDA's last remaining holding in the Orange Street Commons.

Hive Drive Infrastructure Project: Motion by Walters, second by Schultz to accept the Plan Commission Report for the Hive Drive Infrastructure Project and authorize City staff to proceed with final design and next steps. Upon roll call vote, all members present voted aye, motion carried 8-0.

Coppernoll stated that this became a city street in 2001 but was not originally designed to meet formal street standards with lighting, sidewalk, stormwater infrastructure, etc. Grant money has already been allocated for this project for infrastructure improvements.

Olipphant stated that the report from Plan Commission has been provided as required by our ordinance, and additionally, as the County works on redeveloping the former UW campus and density increases, these improvements will allow safe pedestrian and vehicular travel.

#### **FINANCE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTION (CAIRNS)**

Award Landfill Monitoring Services Agreement: Motion by Cairns, second by Downs to approve the execution of a landfill monitoring agreement with Mi-Tech Services, Inc., at a cost not to exceed \$11,000.00. Upon roll call vote, all members present voted aye, motion carried 8-0.

Consider Acceptance of a Non-Monetary Donation and Naming Proposal Application: Motion by Cairns, second by Walters to suspend the rules, waive the reading, and adopt Resolution 2026-01, authorizing acceptance of a non-monetary donation for trail improvements and the naming of the "Dale Bender Community Wellness Trail". Upon roll call vote, all members present voted aye, motion carried 8-0.

An Ordinance Amending Chapter 321 Relating to Control of Weeds, Grasses and Brush: Motion by Cairns, second Schultz by to suspend the rules, waive the reading, and adopt Ordinance 2026-01, amending Chapter 321 relating to control of weeds, grasses, and brush. Upon roll call vote, all members present voted aye, motion carried 8-0.

A Resolution Establishing the Forfeiture Schedule and Administrative Fee for Abatement of Weeds, Grasses and Brush: Motion by Cairns, second by Downs to suspend the rules, waive the reading, and adopt Resolution 2026-02, establishing the forfeiture schedule and administrative fee for abatement of weeds, grasses and brush. Upon roll call vote, all members present voted aye, motion carried 8-0.

An Ordinance Amending Chapter 606 Relating to Removal of Snow and Ice from Public Sidewalks: Motion by Cairns, second by Downs to suspend the rules, waive the reading, and adopt Ordinance 2026-02, amending Chapter 606 relating to removal of snow and ice from public sidewalks. Upon roll call vote, all members present voted aye, motion carried 8-0.

A Resolution Establishing the Forfeiture Schedule and Administrative Fee for Sidewalk Snow and Ice Removal Violations: Motion by Cairns, second by Downs to suspend the rules, waive the reading, and adopt Resolution 2026-03, establishing the forfeiture schedule and administrative fee for sidewalk snow and ice removal violations. Upon roll call vote, all members present voted aye, motion carried 8-0.

#### **PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTION (FRUIT)**

Approval of Licenses: Motion by Fruit, second by Tepley to approve Class "B" Temporary Picnic License, to Richland County Performing Arts Council, for the February 14, 2025. Upon roll call vote, motion carried unanimously (8-0).

#### **APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES, COMMISSIONS, BOARDS AND CONFIRM APPOINTMENTS**

Mayor Coppernoll introduced the two mayoral candidates, Karin Tepley, and Elijah Kramer, and District 2 candidate Frank Hoffman.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Suzanne Fish personally invited everyone to the Race for Grace on Saturday, May 9, 2026, at its new location at the High School.

**ADJOURNMENT:** *Motion by Tepley second by Walters to adjourn at approximately 8:10 pm. Motion carried 8-0.*

*Meeting adjourned at approximately 8:10 pm.*