

Richland Center Common council

September 2, 2025 Meeting Minutes

Full minutes can be found at richlandcenterwi.gov/meetings

CALL TO ORDER: Meeting was called to order by Mayor Coppernoll at 6:31 PM. Members present were Ron Fruit, Karin Tepley, Tom McCarthy, Rachel Schultz, Melony Walters, Douglas Martyniuk, Steve Downs, and Ryan Cairns. Absent: None. Clerk Keller certified the meeting was properly noticed.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: Mayor Coppernoll recommended amending the agenda. Motion by Alderperson Walters to approve the agenda as amended. Seconded by Alderperson Downs. Motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Motion by Alderperson Walters to waive the reading and approve the minutes of the August 5, 2025 regular meeting as presented. Seconded by Alderperson Schultz. Motion carried unanimously.

CITY AND UTILITY DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORTS AND CONCERNS:

Director Jasen Glasbrenner reported that site preparation has begun at Panorama Estates, continued pre-development agreement work with Cobblestone Hotels, finalizing softball field dugout plans, coordinating with the Bureau of Aeronautics on airport master planning, chip sealing of approximately 38 blocks, and a delay in the reconstruction of the Church and Court Street lot.

Clerk Amanda Keller reported that property revaluation notices have been mailed with Open Book scheduled for the following week, noting the higher assessed values reflect current market trends and do not necessarily result in increased property taxes. The final impact depends on the mill rate set during budget adoption in November. Clerk Keller announced her resignation effective October 1.

Administrator Ashley Oliphant expressed appreciation to Clerk Keller for her service and reported Matt Williams, Zoning Administrator, has transitioned to serve as Buildings and Grounds Lead. Applications will be accepted to fill the Clerk and Zoning Administrator vacancies. Requests for proposals for the Symons Recreation Complex and for garbage collection are currently under review. Oliphant noted the recent city-wide revaluation produced an average residential increase of 76 percent and clarified that the process does not create new tax revenue but rather redistributes the levy in a more equitable manner.

Parks and Rec Director Jodi Meiden reported that the pool season concluded successfully. Fall programming is underway, and the pool will be closed for the season at the end of September.

Library Director Stacy Pilla reported that free State Park passes are available to residents, and the Library Board currently has a city resident seat vacancy. She also noted an increasing demand for use of the library's meeting rooms, the completion of parking lot seal coating and repairs to the air conditioning system and dehumidifier. Upcoming projects include carpet cleaning, floor waxing, installation of a new digital sign, and repairs to exterior concrete and railings.

Chief Billy Jones reported that the National Night Out event was well attended and successful. Departmental activity for June and July included a combined total of 391 calls for service, resulting in 53 criminal arrests and 40 traffic citations resulting in approximately \$6,100.

Utility Manager Scott Gald reported work on the 2026 utility budget is underway. Recent work includes a new transformer at Doudna School, lowering of lines on USH 14 East, and installation of 1,500 electric and 430 water AMI meters. A wastewater pipe crossing under the Pine River is scheduled for September, and acquisition of a new jet truck is under consideration. Successful lead and copper compliance sampling received DNR approval. City-wide water main flushing is scheduled for late September into early October. Gald also noted successful collaboration with Neighborhood Housing Services and reminded residents of the annual Customer Appreciation Night on October 8.

MAYOR AND ALDERPERSONS:

Aldersperson Ron Fruit commended the library for its summer reading program.

Aldersperson Karin Tepley announced that the Historic Preservation Committee has received its new plaque honoring Governor Thompson, reminded residents that September is Library Card Sign-Up Month, and requested quarterly reports from Running taxi service.

Mayor Todd Coppernoll reported construction activity has begun at Panorama Estates, noted vacancies on the Utility Commission and the Historic Preservation Committee, highlighted the success of the “Murder in the Right Place” event, and recognized Neighborhood Housing Services for beginning construction of a new single-family home.

TREASURERS REPORT: Financial Officer Misty Molzof presented the monthly Treasurer’s and City Utilities reports.

PAYMENT OF BILLS: Motion by Aldersperson Cairns to pay the amended bill list in the amount of \$364,131.79. Seconded by Aldersperson Downs. Motion carried by roll call 8-0.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION AND ACTION

Blighted Property Enforcement at 695 N Chestnut St: Administrator Oliphant reported that an order to raze the vacant structure was issued on June 4, with the 90-day compliance period expiring September 6. Attorney Windle confirmed legal service was properly completed. Motion by Aldersperson Martyniuk to direct the City Administrator to solicit bids for demolition at 695 N Chestnut St. Seconded by Downs. Motion carried by roll call 8-0.

Structure of Tourism Department: Attorney Windle recommended the Council begin the process of transitioning into an independent nonprofit organization. Motion by Aldersperson Fruit to direct the City Administrator to explore restructuring tourism department as independent entity. Seconded by Aldersperson Tepley. Motion carried by roll call 8-0.

PLANNING COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION

Reconsideration of Application for a Conditional Use Permit by Guru Ramdas Shaa, LLC with a Recommendation for Denial by the Planning Commission: Mayor Coppernoll reported the applicant for Guru Ramdas Shaa, LLC previously indicated his intent to use the property as a staging area for a tree trimming business. The Planning Commission reconsidered the request and recommended denial. Attorney Windle explained that under the commercial general zoning district, the ordinance expressly prohibits such uses within 100 feet of a residential district. Motion by Aldersperson Walters to deny the application for a Conditional Use Permit by Guru Ramdas Shaa, LLC in accordance with the Planning Commission’s recommendation. Seconded by Aldersperson Tepley. Motion carried by roll call 8-0.

FINANCE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTION

Consider approval of contract with Chrome Fireworks & Displays, LLC for City Fireworks for June 27, 2026: Aldersperson Cairns presented the annual fireworks contract with Home Fireworks Display LLC. Motion by Aldersperson Cairns to approve contract with Chrome Fireworks & Displays, LLC for City Fireworks for June 27, 2026. Seconded by Aldersperson Tepley. Motion carried by roll call 8-0.

Revised Agreement for Symons Recreation Complex: Administrator Oliphant presented a revised agreement between the City and Richland County governing the Symons Recreation Complex. Motion by Aldersperson Cairns to approve the revised Symons Recreation Complex agreement. Seconded by Aldersperson Downs. Motion carried by roll call 8-0.

Stori Field Pre-Development Agreement: Mayor Coppernoll noted the property had been acquired from the School District with the intention of addressing the city’s critical need for housing. Council members reviewed the single-

story design, stormwater management, preservation of the sledding hill, and the size of remaining green space, with requests for additional details including whether the number of duplexes could be reduced to balance development with continued recreational use. Motion by Alderperson Walters to postpone the decision to approve the Stori Field Duplex incentive package, including the \$1.00 land sale, until the following meeting and direct the City Administrator to gather additional information and developer input. Seconded by Alderperson Schultz. Motion carried by roll call 8-0.

Cobblestone Hotels Incentive Package: Director Glasbrenner presented the negotiated pre-development agreement with Cobblestone Hotels. Alderperson Walters expressed concerns that the package remained weighted in favor of the developer compared to initial recommendations provided by Ehler's Financial Analysis. Motion by Alderperson Cairns to approve the Cobblestone Hotels incentive package as outlined in the proposed Pre-Development Agreement and to authorize staff to execute a development agreement. Seconded by Alderperson Tepley. Motion carried by roll call 7-1, with Walters opposed.

Wisconsin Surplus Auction Reserve Pricing: Alderperson Cairns reported on the sale of items that had been listed multiple times on Wisconsin Surplus without meeting the established reserve prices and that the Finance Committee reviewed the matter and recommended authorizing staff to waive reserve pricing at their discretion. Motion by Alderperson Cairns to approve that staff be authorized to adjust or waive reserve prices for unsold Wisconsin Surplus equipment at their discretion, provided bids meet or exceed the highest previously received offers. Seconded by Alderperson Tepley. Motion carried by roll call 8-0.

PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTION

Temporary Alcohol Beverage License for St. Marys Parish Festival on September 20, 2025 from 4PM-10PM: Motion by Alderperson Fruit to approve the Temporary Alcohol Beverage License for St. Marys Parish Festival on September 20, 2025 from 4PM-10PM. Seconded by Alderperson Downs. Motion carried unanimously.

Temporary Alcohol Beverage License for the Greater Richland Area Chamber Suits & Sequins Wine Walk on September 26, 2025 from 5PM-8PM: Motion by Alderperson Fruit to approve the Temporary Alcohol Beverage License for the Greater Richland Area Chamber Suits & Sequins Wine Walk on September 26, 2025 from 5PM-8PM. Seconded by Alderperson Tepley. Motion carried unanimously.

Temporary Alcohol Beverage License for Richland County Performing Arts Council Central Ave Fall Bash Block Party on September 27, 2025 from 2PM-6PM: Motion by Alderperson Fruit to approve the Temporary Alcohol Beverage License for Richland County Performing Arts Council Central Ave Fall Bash Block Party on September 27, 2025 from 2PM-6PM. Seconded by Alderperson McCarthy. Motion carried unanimously.

An Ordinance Amending Section 980.06 Relating to Persons Authorized to Issue Citations and Consolidating Citation Authority: Administrator Oliphant presented an ordinance amending Section 980.06 of the Municipal Code to consolidate citation authority into a single section and extend it to include the Zoning Administrator, Director of Public Works, City Attorney, and City Administrator or designee. Motion by Alderperson Fruit to adopt Ordinance No. 2025-06, An Ordinance Amending Section 980.06 of the Municipal Code of the City of Richland Center Relating to Persons Authorized to Issue Citations and Consolidating Citation Authority. Seconded by Alderperson Martyniuk. Motion carried by roll call 8-0.

An Ordinance Amending Section 300.10(4) Relating to Forfeitures for Public Nuisances: Administrator Oliphant presented an ordinance amending Section 300.104 of the Municipal Code to establish a forfeiture range of \$100 to \$500 for public nuisance violations, aligning the code with statutory requirements and providing enforcement flexibility. Motion by Alderperson Fruit to adopt Ordinance No. 2025-07, An Ordinance Amending Section 300.10(4) of the Municipal Code of the City of Richland Center Relating to Forfeitures for Public Nuisances. Seconded by Alderperson Downs. Motion carried by roll call 8-0.

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

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- Mike Grindemann, 548 Stori Dr - Expressed concern that developing Stori Field would eliminate an important recreational green space and increase neighborhood traffic.
- Chris Younger, 606 Stori Dr - Stated that Stori Field is heavily used by local children and opposed replacing it with duplex housing.
- Ellen Keller Evans, 678 Stori Dr - Noted that Stori Field is a valued community space and urged the City to consider alternative sites for housing development.
- Greg Dettmann, 480 E 5th St - Opposed the proposed sale price of \$1 for St Stori Field and emphasized the field's long-standing role as a neighborhood asset.
- Tom Nelk, 875 N Chestnut St - Shared that Stori Field was a reason for choosing his home location and opposed converting it to housing.
- Alfonso Salazar, 969 Cedar St - Acknowledged the need for housing but urged that Stori Field be preserved as a green space important to youth and families.
- Alan Matteson, 1097 Valley View Dr - Recommended delaying the project, citing the availability of other housing opportunities in the community.
- Al Pellett, 554 E 4th St - Described Stori Field as a unique recreational resource for the city and opposed its development.
- Sherry Steiner, *address not provided* - Raised concerns about the environmental impact of developing Stori Field and suggested exploring other potential building sites.

CLOSED SESSION

Closed Session for the Purpose of Discussing Purchasing Public Property: Motion by Alderperson Downs to enter Closed Session. Seconded by Alderperson Schultz. Motion carried unanimously at 9:30 PM.

Reconvene in open session: Motion by Alderperson Walters to reconvene into open session. Seconded by Alderperson Downs. Motion carried unanimously at 10:12 PM.

Motion by Alderperson Downs to approve an appraisal and survey in service of a potential sale. Seconded by Tepley. Motion carried by roll call 8-0.

ADJOURNMENT: Motion by Alderperson Tepley to adjourn. Seconded by Alderperson Walters. Motion carried unanimously at 10:12 PM.

Meeting minutes recorded by Clerk Keller