

**CALL TO ORDER** The meeting was called to order at 5:30 PM. Members present: Fruit, Walters, Schultz. Also present were Director of Public Works Jasen Glasbrenner and Municipal Services Specialist Darcy Perkins. The meeting was properly noticed.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES** Motion by Schultz to approve the June 19, 2025 meeting minutes. Seconded by Walters. Motion carried by voice vote.

**APPROVAL OF BILLS** The bills from 6/18/2025-7/17/2025 were presented totaling \$65,731.67. Motion by Walters to approve the bills as presented. Seconded by Schultz. Motion carried by voice vote.

**PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT REPORTS PRESENTED BY DPW JASEN GLASBRENNER**

- Streets: Continued crack sealing, brush collection, and prep for August chip sealing. Crews also performed downtown string trimming, street sweeping before July 4, and assisted with airport mowing. The end loader motor has been ordered; delivery and installation are pending.
- Buildings & Grounds: Supported summer events, addressed graffiti removal, and assisted Parks & Rec operations. Seasonal staffing remains well below target, prompting use of subcontractors for mowing and trimming at five sites. Buildings & Grounds Crew Lead position has been reposted with interviews underway.
- Airport: FAA awarded \$429,567 in infrastructure funding. The runway crack repair project and master plan are progressing. Lighting repairs completed; a few remain pending.
- Cemetery: Two full burials and continued demand for plot information. SOP development is ongoing. Cemetery maintenance continues to strain staff capacity (~120 hours/week). Subcontractors were used for trimming support.
- Forestry: Tree trimming coordinated with Utilities; some removals completed. Tree cutter license renewals processed. Tree Board meeting scheduled for 7/23.
- Equipment Issues: Ongoing problems with the Bobcat tractor and LS tractor. The 2017 Ferris mower is awaiting throttle repairs. Equipment reliability has impacted productivity, especially in slope mowing.
- Operational Updates:
  - Department hours proposal (7:00 a.m.–3:30 p.m.) will go to Personnel Committee.
  - Staff working with the City Attorney to explore issuing citations for overgrown yards as an alternative to direct abatement.
  - Considering subcontracting future cemetery grave digging services.
  - Ordinance Review: Staff intends to bring forward an ordinance revision to clarify responsibility and oversight for park property management, currently split between Public Works and the Park Board.
- Deferred Maintenance: Photos were presented showing widespread infrastructure deterioration, including bridges, signs, trails, and landscaped areas. Director emphasized the need for prioritization, coordination with volunteers, and transparency about resource limitations.
- Community Engagement: Staff acknowledged volunteer efforts and community feedback, noting the importance of balancing public expectations with budget and staffing realities.
  - Emphasis on fostering a unified team structure.

**DISCUSSION OF POSSIBLE ACTION ITEMS**

**4. Maintenance Concerns - Black Trails**

Director Glasbrenner reported the trails are currently unmowed due to staffing constraints and outlined four management options: resume full maintenance (not viable), designate as unmaintained, decommission, or pursue volunteer partnerships. The committee discussed the trail's tourism and community value, cost per user, liability concerns, and feasibility of volunteer involvement (e.g., Scouts, Friends of the Pine).

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**COUNCIL ROOM AT THE MUNICIPAL BUILDING, 450 S. MAIN STREET, RICHLAND CENTER, WI 53581**

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Motion by Walters to postpone to a future meeting for further evaluation and exploration of partnership options. Motion carried unanimously. Seconded by Schultz. Motion carried unanimously.

**5. Deferred Maintenance Concerns - Ocooch Living History Gardens**

Committee discussed the site's condition, potential for repurposing (e.g., low-maintenance landscaping or art installations), and concerns about lingering grant obligations. Staff reported no known ongoing DNR requirements, pending final confirmation. Site visits were recommended.

Motion by Schultz to postpone to a future meeting pending confirmation of grant status and exploration of future options. Seconded by Walters. Motion carried unanimously.

**6. Deferred Maintenance Concerns - Pine River Raceway**

Volunteer Frank Brown committed to continuing maintenance, noting time and resource limitations. The committee discussed minimum upkeep expectations and the importance of the site's appearance due to its inclusion on tourism signage.

Motion by Walters to postpone to the September meeting for an update and evaluation. Seconded by Schultz. Motion carried unanimously.

**7. Purple Heart Sign Expansion Proposal**

Motion by Schultz to approve the placement of two Purple Heart signs, one on City-owned parcel #276-1741-0300 and the other, with approval of the landowner, at the approximate address of 2250 US Hwy 14 E. The maintenance of the signs will be managed by the Public Works Department in accordance with WisDOT and City requirements. Seconded by Walters. Motion carried unanimously.

**8. Sale of 2016 Ford Explorer Interceptor**

Staff reported the vehicle received a high bid of \$2,025, below the initial \$5,000 minimum. Due to mechanical issues and limited value, the committee discussed setting a more realistic minimum.

Motion by Walters to set a minimum bid of \$2,500 for the next auction, with staff authorized to accept a lower bid at their discretion if necessary. Seconded by Shultz. Motion carried unanimously.

**REPORTS, REQUESTS, AND CONCERNS**

**Walters:**

- Requested a five-year maintenance plan prioritizing safety and liability issues, especially for structures such as bridges and piers. Suggested starting with the most critical items for future budgeting.

**Fruit:**

- Requested a five-year maintenance plan prioritizing safety and liability issues, especially for structures such as bridges and piers. Suggested starting with the most critical items for future budgeting.

**SET NEXT MEETING DATE** The next meeting was scheduled for Thursday, August 21<sup>st</sup> at 5:30 PM.

**ADJOURNMENT** Motion to adjourn by Schultz, seconded by Walters. Motion carried by voice vote. The meeting adjourned at 7:45 PM.

*Minutes recorded by Darcy Perkins.*