



CITY COUNCIL MEETING

Monday, April 21, 2025 at 6:00 PM

Council Chambers - City Hall, 3rd Floor
1717 E. Park Street, Two Rivers, WI 54241

MINUTES

1. CALL TO ORDER

Council President Stechmesser called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

3. MOMENT OF SILENCE IN MEMORY OF JODI MILLER, TWO RIVERS POLICE DEPARTMENT

4. ROLL CALL BY CITY CLERK

Councilmembers: Mark Bittner, Doug Brandt, Shannon Derby, Bill LeClair, Darla LeClair, Tim Petri, Bonnie Shimulunas, Scott Stechmesser, Adam Wachowski

ALSO PRESENT: Kassie Paider, Finance Director; Jeff Dawson, Library Director; Mike Mathis, Parks and Recreation Director; Matt Heckenlaible, Public Works Director; Dave Murack, Fire Chief; Joe Metzen, Tourism Director; Rick Powell, IT Supervisor; Andrew Sukowaty, Water Utility Director; Brian Delleman, Electric Utility Director; Ben Meinnert, Police Chief; Sean Griffen, City Attorney and Greg Buckley, City Manager

5. CONSIDERATION OF ANY COUNCIL MEMBER REQUESTS TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS MEETING FROM A REMOTE LOCATION

None.

6. PUBLIC HEARING

A. 25-071 Public Hearing on Final Resolution Authorizing Special Assessments for Costs Incurred for Removing Existing Pavement, Excavation, Installation of Storm Service Laterals, Grading and Graveling, Portland Cement Concrete Paving, Driveway Approaches, Carriage Walks, Repair, Replacement or Construction of Sidewalks, and Miscellaneous Related Work - Harbor Street from Pilon Court to 16th Street, 16th Street from Harbor Street to Emmet Street, and Emmet Street from 16th Street to 17th Street

Recommended Action:

Motion to waive reading and adopt the final resolution

Council President Stechmesser opened the first call for public input.

No one spoke.

Council President Stechmesser closed the first call for public input and opened the second call.

No one spoke.

Council President Stechmesser closed the second call for public input and opened the third

and final call.

No one spoke.

Council President Stechmesser closed the third and final call for public input.

Motion carried with a roll call vote.

Motion made B. LeClair by seconded by Shimulunas

Voting Yea: Bittner, Brandt, Derby, B. LeClair, D. LeClair, Petri, Shimulunas, Stechmesser, Wachowski

B. 25-072 Public Hearing on Proposed Ordinance Amending Section 10-1-20A of the Municipal Code, Entitled "R-1 Single Family Residence District," to add Short Term Rentals as a Permitted Use

Recommended Action:

Motion to waive reading and adopt the ordinance, as recommended by the Plan Commission

Council President Stechmesser opened the first call for public input.

Susan Robitaille (2313 Jefferson Street) – Spoke in opposition to proposed zoning changes affecting R-1 residential areas. She stated that 3 of the 4 families on her block have submitted written objections. She expressed concern about non-resident property owners operating short-term rentals as businesses in residential neighborhoods, which she believes violates the intent of R-1 zoning. Robitaille emphasized broader community concern, noting that over 104 people have signed a petition calling for reform of short-term rental (e.g., Airbnb) regulations throughout the city.

Council President Stechmesser closed the first call for public input and opened the second call.

No one spoke.

Council President Stechmesser closed the second call for public input and opened the third and final call.

No one spoke.

Council President Stechmesser closed the third and final call for public input.

Motion carried with a roll call vote.

Motion made by Brandt seconded by Bittner

Voting Yea: Bittner, Brandt, Derby, B. LeClair, D. LeClair, Petri, Shimulunas, Stechmesser, Wachowski

7. INPUT FROM THE PUBLIC

Jeff Dahlke – 3727 Adams Street – Expressed concern about the difficulty of installing solar power in Two Rivers, noting confusion over whether it is allowed and suggesting that working with WE Energies may be the only viable option. Described the situation as disturbing. Also raised concerns about responsiveness from council members to a recent email sent to all; noted that Bonnie Shimulunas responded promptly, Adam Wachowski responded after several days, and Tim Petri

responded after three weeks. Emphasized that it is the duty of elected officials to respond to citizens and mentioned that there has been talk of a potential recall due to lack of responsiveness.

Mr. Buckley stated that he had provided a written reply to Mr. Dahlke's "Contact the Council" communication; he noted that it was sent on April 19, ten days after Mr. Dahlke's May 9 communication. Mr. Dahlke acknowledged receipt of that reply.

Terry Farber (3047 Adams Street) – Stated that he recently returned to the city and reported finding a large tank in the river behind his house. His wife contacted the city, and the response was prompt: the city engineer assessed the situation, the fire department removed the tank, and Public Works disposed of it. He expressed appreciation for the quick and effective response.

8. COUNCIL COMMUNICATIONS

Letters and other communications from citizens

Councilmember Petri reported receiving a citizen concern about a police car parked outside of Lenny's II. He also clarified that he responded to Jeff Dahlke's email in 8 days, not three weeks as was stated during public input.

Councilmember Bittner shared a concern he received from a citizen regarding drug and criminal activity on the south side of the city, asking for clarification on what is really happening in that area.

Councilmember Shimulunas noted that all councilmembers received an inquiry about how long political signs can be displayed. City Attorney Sean responded, explaining that campaign signs are considered a form of First Amendment expression and that legal scholars are cautious about regulating political signs due to potential constitutional concerns.

9. COUNCIL REPORTS FROM BOARDS/COMMISSIONS/COMMITTEES

Councilmember D. LeClair reported on the Main Street Committee beginning of festival season, go to the Main Street website to see events for 2025.

Councilmember Brant reported on the Environmental Advisory Board sharing the educational series was very successful over winter; the Board is assisting Parks and Recreation with grants.

10. CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

A. Invited Guests

B. Status Update/Reports

1. Staffing Updates

Mr. Buckley reported the ongoing recruitments: City Planner/Community Development Director – accepting applications; Accounting Clerk – accepting applications; City Manager Recruitment – position profile and video have been posted. Application deadline is, April 28, 2025; Recruitment for Seasonal Position – now hiring for many Parks and Recreation seasonal positions.

2. Two Rivers Fire Department Ambulance 5 Back In Service

Mr. Buckley reported the Ambulance 5 remount has been completed. It will be placed in service on April 25. The total cost was \$205,000, \$70,000 state grant and \$135,000 CIP funds. Over \$100,000 saved.

3. Introduction of Fire Department Youth Apprentice, Christopher Parker-- Chief Murack
Fire Chief Dave Murack reported the TRFD has a Youth Apprentice, Christopher Parker. Christopher is a Junior at Two Rivers High School. He is active in community service and

numerous sports. He aspires to be a Firefighter/Paramedic. He will be assigned to appropriate shift work, be embedded with the shifts, participate in TRFD operational/station/community/training tasks.

4. Police Department Entry Team-- Chief Meinnert

Police Chief Ben Meinnert reported there has been a newly created entry team to help with situations where the SWAT team isn't needed but additional skills and forced entry is needed. Creation of K9 program, in addition to that an additional detective position, the metro officer is a full-time position with metro then bring back the information. Put together a team that handles low level drug team, it is a local entry team, not a SWAT team or Metro team, more minor level security risk where SWAT isn't needed. Can train those officers for drug offenses and build those drug cases that won't rise to the level handled by the Metro Drug unit.

5. Police Chief's 2024 Officer and Citizen Awards

Chief Meinnert reported the Police Department recently held its 2024 awards banquet. Lt. Karen Elsenpeter has 30 years of service. Lt. Logan Tlachac has 5 years of service. Officer Brad Dimmick received the Life Saving Award in recognition of his life saving efforts on January 26, 2024, when he began lifesaving measures on a man not conscious and not breathing at Mc Donalds. The professional response by Officer Dimmick resulted in saving the life of a citizen in the City of Two Rivers. Officer Seth Tobison received the Life Saving Award in recognition of his life saving efforts on March 30, 2024, when he began lifesaving measures on a person believed to have overdosed. The quick and tactical response by Officer Tobison resulted in saving the life of a citizen in the City of Two Rivers while also keeping others safe.

Officer Justin Krueger received the Life Saving Award in recognition of his life saving efforts on June 3, 2024, when he forced entry into a room where a person was believed to be attempting self-harm. There he located the person hanging by a shoelace gasping for air. Officer Krueger's quick thinking and professionalism resulted in not only saving the life of a citizen in the City of Two Rivers, but also ensuring she received the care she needed. Officer Justin Jackson received the Merit Award in recognition of his heroic actions on August 18, 2024, where he became aware of two females struggling to swim 75 feet off the Lake Michigan shoreline in troubling waters. Officer Jackson dropped his gear without hesitation and courageously swam out to assist both females to safety despite total exhaustion and consideration for his own safety. Oscar Garcia received a Citizen Award in recognition of his willingness to report suspicious activity on April 17, 2024, which was critical in locating and arresting a suspect involved in a rash of crimes across Wisconsin, including within Two Rivers. Steven Leigl Jr and Derek Kielkopf both received Citizen Awards for their heroic efforts on August 18, 2024, where they assisted a Two Rivers officer in rescuing two females in treacherous Lake Michigan waters.

6. Explore Two Rivers Opportunity Grants-- Joe Metzen

Mr. Buckley reported Explore Two Rivers recently awarded six Opportunity Grants. The grants were awarded to Ice Age Trail Scenic Trail Building Project; Harmony Lives On The Schmitt Brothers Stage; Ethnic Fest; Bryan Lee Memorial Blues Festival; SnowFest; Bands on the Beach & Friday Night LIVE Concert Series.

7. State Highway 42/Memorial Drive Project

Mr. Buckley reported last week, storm drains were replaced beneath Memorial Drive/STH 42 at Columbus Street. Washington Street Bridge to close April 21 for 3 weeks. This closure will include closure of the sidewalks and Mariners Trail segment between the 12th/Lake intersection by McDonalds and 16th Street. Through travelers on the trail system should detour via Madison and 16th Streets. City crews will be replacing the colored concrete crosswalks in the 15th Street intersection while the bridge is closed. That intersection will, however, remain open to traffic, with lane closures.

8. Neshotah Park Upgrades-- Mike Mathis

Parks and Recreation Director Mike Mathis reported the JC Shelter is finished with new concrete floor. New climbing wall and bamboo jungle will be installed within the next couple of weeks.

9. Community House Roof Project

Mr. Buckley reported last week, Crafts, Inc. of Manitowoc completed putting a new roof over the stage area at the historic J.E. Hamilton Community House. This project was included in the City's capital budget for 2025.

10. Woodland Drive Compost Site Is Open

Mr. Buckley reported the Woodland Drive Compost Site is open for the 2025 season. The site is open Monday-Friday, 7 AM – 6 PM; Saturday 8 AM – 6 PM.

11. Lead Service Laterals Replacement

Mr. Buckley reported the lead service lateral replacement project started back up in early April. Pavement restoration will begin again in the near future. As of Monday, April 14, 2025, 98 public side water services, 68 public side sanitary laterals, 28 private side water services, and 11 private side sanitary laterals have been replaced.

12. Energy Conservation Incentives Awarded to L.B. Clarke School Project

Mr. Buckley reported Two Rivers Utilities is proud to partner with Focus on Energy and WPPI to provide rebates that support energy efficiency projects. During L.B. Clarke Middle School's recent addition and renovation, the School District received incentive rebates through the New Construction Design Program in the amount of \$23,338.

Diane Johnson, Two Rivers Public Schools Superintendent, and Adam Rohrer, Director of Maintenance and Operations, participated in the process for building design and components to save on electric and gas usage along with promoting a healthier educational environment. Additionally, these elements are predicted to save the school and taxpayers approximately 19% or \$25,000 annually on utility costs compared to a baseline design. This was all possible with the Two Rivers Utilities partnership with Focus on Energy and WPPI's Energy Services Manager, Tom Boldt. New or existing businesses in Two Rivers are encouraged to take advantage of these and other programs by contacting the utility for information.

13. Community and Economic Development Update

Mr. Buckley reported Rush Logistics will break ground for its new 6,000 square foot facility in the Woodland Industrial Park on Tuesday, May 6 at 2:00 PM. Growth Garage/Darkside Strength Project new 2,800 square foot building to be constructed by Growth Garage to accommodate expansion by existing tenant Darkside Strength – will open up 1,200 square foot commercial space for new tenant.

14. Upcoming Events

- a. Parks and Recreation and Lester Public Library event, "Let's Celebrate Arbor Day!"
Saturday, April 26, 2025, 10:00AM-12:00PM at Lester Public Library
- b. National Drug Drop-Off Day, Saturday, April 26, 2025, 9:00AM-12:00PM
Manitowoc County Drive-Thru Event at Froedtert Holy Family Memorial Hospital
- c. Coffee with a Cop, Wednesday, April 30, 2025, 10:00AM-11:00AM, at the Senior Center
- d. Two Rivers Public Schools Art Show, April 30-May 20, 2025 at Lester Public Library
- e. Two Rivers High School Show Choir Concert, Thursday, May 1, 2025, 1:00PM,
at the Senior Center
- f. Hamilton Wood Type & Printing Museum, "Exhibit Reception: Kathleen O'Connell,
Hand-Lettering as Creative Practice," Thursday, May 1, 2025, 5:00PM-7:00PM

- g. Heart-a-Rama, May 1, 2, 3, and May 8, 9, 10, 2025, 6:00PM in the Community House gym
- h. Visit by Two Rivers Representatives to Sister City of Domazlice, Czech Republic-- 2025 Liberation Day Observance

15. Upcoming Vacancies on Citizen Boards and Committees

Mr. Buckley reported there are vacancies to be filled with new appointees on the following Boards and Committees: Advisory Recreation Board; Zoning Board of Appeals (2 Alternates); Community Development Authority; Business Improvement District Board; Committee on Aging; Environmental Advisory Board and Plan Commission. Applications can be found online at www.two-rivers.org. Click on "Government" then "Boards, Commissions and Committees" for a fillable PDF application or contact the City Manager's Office for a paper form. Please file an application by Friday, May 2 to be assured of consideration. Appointments are for terms commencing May 1, 2025 – City Manager's recommended new appointments and re-appointments be presented at the May 5 and May 19 Council meetings.

C. Legislative/Intergovernmental Update

- 1. State Senator Devin LeMahieu and State Representative Paul Tittl Will Hold a Joint Listening Session on Monday, April 28, 3:30 PM to 4:30 PM in the Council Chambers at City Hall

- 2. Recent Meeting with Representatives of U.S. Army Corp of Engineers Chicago District Office, Regarding Harbor Issues

Mr. Buckley reported that last Thursday, the City Engineer Matt Heckenlaible and Parks and Recreation Director Mike Mathis met to discuss harbor issues. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers conducted a design review to explore long-term solutions for surge problems and costly dredging. Significant shoaling has caused commercial fishing boats to bottom out. Maintenance dredging is scheduled for 2027, and the city is looking into potential emergency funding to address the shoaling sooner.

11. CONSENT AGENDA

A. **25-073** Presentation of Minutes

- 1. City Council Regular Meeting, April 7, 2025

Recommended Action:

Motion to waive reading and adopt the minutes

B. **25-074** Minutes of Meetings

- 1. Library Board, March 11, 2025
- 2. Environmental Advisory Board, March 18, 2025
- 3. Plan Commission, March 10, 2025
- 4. Plan Commission Special Meeting, March 19, 2025
- 5. Public Works Committee, April 2, 2025
- 6. Public Utilities Committee, April 7, 2025
- 7. Advisory Recreation Board, April 9, 2025

Recommended Action:

Motion to receive and file

C. **25-075** Department Reports, April 2025

- 1. City Clerk
- 2. Electric

3. Fire
4. Inspections
5. Library
6. Parks & Recreation
7. Police
8. Public Works
9. Safety
10. Tourism

Recommended Action:

Motion to receive and file

D. 25-076 Applications and Petitions

1. Application for Temporary Class "B" Beer and "Class B" Wine License for Friends of Two Rivers SnowFest for SnowFest Wine and Beer Walk, May 17, 2025
Downtown Two Rivers
2. Application for Block Party Permit, Kevin's Kustom & Klassic Kars LLC for Block Party at 1915 Jefferson Street, closing 1900 block of Jefferson Street, May 17, 2025,
11:30AM-3:30PM

Recommended Action:

Motion to approve the applications and authorize issuance of the license and the permit

RECOMMENDED ACTION FOR CONSENT AGENDA

Motion to approve the Consent Agenda with the various actions recommended

Motion carried with a voice vote.

Motion made by Shimulunas seconded by Bittner

Voting Yea: Bittner, Brandt, Derby, B. LeClair, D. LeClair, Petri, Shimulunas, Stechmesser, Wachowski

12. CITY COUNCIL - FORMAL ITEMS

A. 25-077 Proclamation of Municipal Clerks Week, May 4-10, 2025

Recommended Action:

Motion to waive reading and adopt the proclamation

Motion carried with a roll call vote.

Motion made by Derby seconded by B. LeClair to read and adopt the proclamation

Voting Yea: Bittner, Brandt, Derby, B. LeClair, D. LeClair, Petri, Shimulunas, Stechmesser, Wachowski

B. 25-078 Award of Bid for Reconstruction Project-- Harbor Street, 16th Street, and Emmet Street

Recommended Action:

Motion to award the contract to Vinton Construction Company of Manitowoc, based on its lowest qualified bid, in the amount of \$1,531,442.38

Motion carried with a roll call vote.

Motion made by D. LeClair seconded by Bittner

Voting Yea: Bittner, Brandt, Derby, B. LeClair, D. LeClair, Petri, Shimulunas, Stechmesser, Wachowski

C. 25-079 Resolution Authorizing Outdoor Recreation Grant Application to Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources for Upgrades to Riverside Park

Recommended Action:

Motion to waive reading and adopt the resolution

Motion carried with a roll call vote.

Motion made by B. LeClair seconded by Derby

Voting Yea: Bittner, Brandt, Derby, B. LeClair, D. LeClair, Petri, Shimulunas, Stechmesser, Wachowski

13. FOR INFORMATION ONLY

1. City Council Work Session, Monday, April 28, 2025
2. City Council Regular Meeting, Monday, May 5, 2025-- will include ordinance amendments on trees and short-term rentals licensing, as discussed at the March 31, 2025 work session
3. City Council Regular Meeting, Monday, 19, 2025

14. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to dispense with the reading of the minutes of this meeting and adjourn this meeting at 7:45 PM.

Motion carried with a voice vote.

Motion made by Derby seconded by Bittner

Voting Yea: Bittner, Brandt, Derby, B. LeClair, D. LeClair, Petri, Shimulunas, Stechmesser, Wachowski

Respectfully submitted,

Amanda Baryenbruch