

**Wednesday, June 18, 2025, 6:00 pm**

In-PERSON/VIRTUAL MEETING

Room 2044, City Hall

**By Phone or Zoom Meeting:**

<https://us06web.zoom.us/join>

For the Public, Members of the media and the public may attend by calling: (US) +1 (646)931-3860

Meeting ID: 617-065-5357

Pass Code: 959083

All public participants' phones will be muted during the meeting except during the public comment period where applicable.

**RDA STRATEGIC PRIORITIES**

~~1) 100 W. Main St. block demolition, Town Square design etc., and publicizing town square project for possible funding from sources other than the City.~~

2) Facilitating quality development in downtown, and

3) Creating an approach and working to attract development projects downtown.

1. Pledge of Allegiance
2. Roll Call
  - A. Present: Mason Becker, Steve Board, Ald. Berg, Ryan Wagner, Dave Zimmermann
  - B. Virtual: Ald. Arnett
  - C. Absent: Jacob Maas, Todd Huhn
  - D. Other attendees: Schmidt, Broere, Kaddesh. Virtual: Zach Goodrow (WDT)
3. Determination of Quorum and Call to Order at 6:04 pm
4. Approval of meeting minutes
  - A. Regular board minutes 5.21.25
  - B. RDA special board minutes 6.9.25

**Berg motioned to approve**  
**Zimmermann seconded the motion. Motion carried.**
5. No public comment
6. Old Business:
  - A. Rock River District Vision
    - a. Development update:
      - i. Becker discussed Intrepid Investments discontinuing work on two downtown sites.
      - ii. Also discussed North Town Partners presentation and TIF request discussion at Finance Committee meeting this coming Monday for the Oxbow project at the former Johnsonville site.
  - B. Discussion of future goal setting:
    - b. Review and possible action: WEDA Economic Development 101 Proposal.
      - i. Becker presented a proposal from WEDA for Economic Development 101 session, which could include the mayor, council, and other city stakeholders.  
**Board motioned to approve spending \$1,000 from the RDA marketing budget to bring the program to Watertown.**  
**Wagner seconded the motion. Motion carried.**  
Becker will work to schedule this with WEDA.

7. New Business:

**A. Introduction of new board members:**

- a. Todd Huhn was appointed by the council last night. Huhn is currently out of the country. Wagner gave a short recap of his work history.

**B. Election of RDA vice-chair:**

- a. This item was tabled until next month

**C. Review and discuss: RDA history and mission:**

- a. This item was tabled until next month

**D. Review and discuss: Presentation from resident on downtown market concept.**

- a. Resident Gene Schmidt gave a presentation on his idea for a downtown German-style open-air market. Schmidt suggested this could be located next to the Bentzin Family Town Square.
- b. Discussion and questions followed. Board members suggested he discuss with the Tourism Commission and create a business plan.

**E. Review and discuss: Messaging calendar update:**

- a. The RDA board members reviewed proposed July-December 2025 messaging calendar prepared by Becker.
- b. Suggested adding mentions of Economic Development 101 and possibly sharing of information from other groups such as the Greater Watertown Community Health Foundation.
- c. Board members can email other suggestions to Mason.

8. Status Reports:

**A. Housing Rehab Grants:**

- a. Becker gave an updated recap of the current status. He discussed investigated sources of other funds to continue the program in the future

**B. Beltz Foundation Grants:**

- a. Becker has had discussions with several local businesses about applying. Encouraged board members to let him know if they talk to any other downtown business owners interested.

**C. Proposed Citywide Sign Grant Program**

- a. Becker has been discussing the details of the proposal with Attorney Chesebro. He hopes to launch the program this summer. Wagner mentioned rationale for the idea.

**D. Social media/messaging update:**

- a. No report this month. Will have one next month.

**E. Council update:**

- a. Berg discussed the prior night's Common Council meeting and how it was mostly license approvals, etc. He also mentioned good attendance at the open house of the new fire station.
- b. Arnett concurred.

**F. Executive Director update:**

- a. Becker briefly upcoming meeting with a local company interested in learning more about the Rock River District project and discussions with the Greater Watertown Community Health Foundation about a potential funding idea.
- b. Items for next agenda:
  - i. Discuss creation of a Budget & Finance Committee. Wagner will work on this
- c. Next meeting July 16, 2025, at 6 pm

9. Adjournment at 7:13 pm

**Berg motioned to adjourn.**

**Wagner seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously. Meeting adjourned.**