



Common Council Visioning Session

Whitewater Municipal Building, 2nd Floor, Cravath
Lakefront Conference Room, 312 West Whitewater
St., Whitewater, WI 53190 *In Person and Virtual

Thursday, May 14, 2026 - 5:30 PM

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Citizen participation is welcome during topic discussion periods.**

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AGENDA

MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

President Singer called the meeting to order at 5:30pm.

ROLL CALL

PRESENT

Council President Patrick Singer
Councilmember Orin Artsmith
Councilmember Steven Sahyun
Councilmember Brian Schanen
Councilmember Neil Hicks
Councilmember Gavin Kelleher

City Manager John Weidl
City Attorney Steven Chesebro
HR Director Sara Marquardt

Chief of Staff Becky Magestro
City Clerk Heather Boehm

ABSENT

Councilmember Michael M. Smith

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A councilmember can choose to remove an item from the agenda or rearrange its order; however, introducing new items to the agenda is not allowed. Any proposed changes require a motion, a second, and approval from the Council to be implemented. The agenda shall be approved at each meeting even if no changes are being made at that meeting.

Motion to approve the agenda made by Councilmember Artsmith, Seconded by Councilmember Schanen.

Voting Yea: Council President Singer, Councilmember Artsmith, Councilmember Sahyun, Councilmember Schanen, Councilmember Hicks, Councilmember Kelleher

CONSIDERATIONS

Question 1: What inspired you to serve or continue serving on the Whitewater City Council, and what impact do you hope to make during your term?

Orin Artsmith - So a lot of my motivation looked pretty different this go around a lot of it was about representing the renter population and the renter experience in the city, ensuring that all parts of our population are remaining part of that conversation. I really want to continue exploring creative development opportunities creating and supporting Community resources and discussing things that will improve our community. I also really wanna look into ways that we can specifically support the renter population, whether that's holding landlords accountable in different ways or what that might look like. I think that that's an experience that's been a little overlooked in our community.

Gavin Kelleher - Alright, I think that kinda what got me to run was just seeing an opportunity to kind of be a megaphone for that student seat and kind of reforming that student seat. I think there's definitely a lot of opportunity to increase the accessibility and visibility of that student seat and kind of meet students where they're at in a way that makes sense to them to kind of get that, build that bridge and increase that connecting. So that was kinda my initial reason to run.

Steven Sahyun - I think the participation in the democratic process is more than just voting, also assisting the city or those agencies to function. So, trying to participate in that.

Brian Schanen - I think part of it was and I and there was a Council member at one point in time that said, "my first term is to figure out what I'm doing. And then my second term is to do what I was hoping to do", or something to that effect. But I think there's a lot of things that I learned in in my first term and that I can apply into the second term. Things around, how can we help things with property taxes and encouraging business and where our areas maybe where for example, city code is just falling out of step with what current practice is, for lack of a better term. You know something that you know there's so

much code in there, but then all of a sudden, you look at it and like, wait, why is this in there? And it's like, well, it was written in there at some point in time and things have changed over here. So now we have, you know, when something happens, two different processes written in code.

Patrick Singer - So I had served for a number of years and got tired. And you know, it was it. It does get exhausting. Obviously, the current political climate, even 6-7 years ago, it's a lot harder to even serve at a local level. But I think you know, getting back on three years, 2 and change ago. You know, one of the reasons I wanted to get back on is seeing one the community grow and you know, since I've been back on and serving with a number of you, you know, just the part we have with staff and John and the team. I mean, I've seen a lot of city staff over the years and nothing against those other ones, but I would say our team right now is some of the best we have at many of the department levels. So, you know, it's always nice when you have that partnership between the policy makers and those that have to do the work on a daily basis and we have some opportunity in whitewater. I mean challenges for sure, but we also have opportunity and we've seen that with growth in housing and hopefully some more on the industrial side. But really, it's how do we help the city succeed in an environment where money's tight, the rules from the state are not always helpful in terms of allowing us to do what we need to do to differentiate ourselves. So how do we get creative and how do we support our taxpayers and build new taxpayers and new growth so.

Neil Hicks - My relatively the same as it was last year, so I ran for Aldermanic District 5 to try to also help Jefferson County be represented. It's difficult. It's a lot of business, but the other the other half that's not business besides my subdivision is elderly and they don't necessarily talk to you a lot. So, there's trying to get them more involved. They still pay taxes. They're still part of the community. They should still be involved. You don't see them out very often, so it'd be nice to get them to attend more meetings just to see the process and help them to get their voice heard. But on a whole, I wanna see this city. Like I said, there's opportunity in the city. I don't think we're tapping it properly and I don't think we're growing how we should be. I just want to see it start moving forward. Working past some of the past issues, hopefully with people or sleeper people and just moving forward.

Question 2: What are your highest priorities for the city of Whitewater over the next one to three years and how should the Council and staff measure progress and success in those areas?

Gavin Kelleher - I've just got three here. I think that one that was super important to me when I ran it and still is, is supporting our immigrant communities in Whitewater. We obviously all know we have that influx of immigrants, and I think that being from Minneapolis and kind of witnessing how tensions arose there, really made me want to come here and contribute to that. You know, not have that environment here. I think we can measure that by how much collaboration we have between residents, immigrants, community programming. Do immigrants feel safe to be a part of those things? And I think there's great steps happening to achieve the Immigrant Support Coalition I think are doing a great job. So just continuing that. The next thing would be increasing collaboration between the city and the university. I think that's one of the huge opportunities that Whitewater has is our student population. Again, kind of getting creative to get students, you know, in a way that's attractive to them because it's just it's not the same as it was to reach people. So, I think you know trying to do it in a way that is accessible to students and then ensuring that our tenants are seen and that there's accountability for our landlords is super

important to me. I think that increasing visibility on tenant rights is a way we can do that and then figuring out ways to ensure that accountability. So, we have a clean and fair system.

Steven Sahyun - I'd say improving the environment for the city residents and visitors is a big priority for me. Improving the environment, both in terms of opportunity to enjoy what Whitewater has to offer. Our great parks, improving their parks. Having useful and efficient ways of improving the parks is one of my priorities. I had this grand vision that came to improve the bike paths, but at this point I was just be happy, just got repainted.

Brian Schanen - Finding some sort of relief for taxpayers and what that looks like I think is still plenty to be defined. Number two is, I think, finding a clear way of approaching the capital improvement plan. There's a lot of different moving parts to it and so finding better ways to be able to digest that information and make it forward choices on it. And then the third one is how can we support our what I'll call the next gen, or the younger generation of residents, so not necessarily the college students, but those late 20s, 30s maybe early 40s, for example, we get a lot of great feedback during Council meetings from the public. But if I look at the demographic of that, it's not people that look like me at my age and so being able to hear some more of those, those voices I think would be helpful to you know what, what brought them here? What kept them here, those types of things.

Patrick Singer - So before I would say mine, I would bring up what Mike sent us. Because this aligns with Mike, unfortunately he couldn't be here tonight due to some family commitments, but his emphasis in terms of goal was resources towards the downtown. I know he's brought that up before, but that was something that he just wanted conveyed, so we get that on the record. He's always welcome to fill out the whole survey with that or the questionnaire, put that in the record. So, in terms of my priorities some of those things that have already been mentioned are things I definitely align with. I think one of the things in terms of that affordability and how do we get creative in the face of increasing costs and limited funds. You know, we went to referendum twice for very important reasons but that well is probably dry now, just given you know the cost of things. So you know what other opportunities we could look into? In terms of economic growth, you know, how do we differentiate ourselves amongst other communities instead of, you know, everybody's got TIF a lot of communities have TIF, we don't have a lot of other tools. So, you know, looking at things like permit holidays, other things that we can do organizationally to make us more welcoming in terms of development across the spectrum, whether it be residential, commercial, industrial and then last thing would be a proactive pedestrian safety. So, you know this has come up a number of times around the middle school and Starin Road, it's clearly a topic. So just looking at like how do we comprehensively look at pedestrian safety, which includes vehicular and people on foot or bike or scooter or UTV. Understanding that there's certain things like, you know, Main Street is inherently dangerous, we can't shut Main Street down. But what other things could we do? Same thing with Starin Rd. There's gonna be people, there's going to be cars. But are there things the city can do when we're designing roadways or other physical interventions to help. Sometimes save people from themselves.

Neil Hicks - I just think about reading what I did last year, adjusting it from there. I don't really get time to build this out ahead of time, but a lot of it's still relative pretty relative. This year I have 4 four things I'd like to see. Obviously, taxes, I think everybody knows what happened in December, January and there. That hurt a little bit. School relations were already doing a good job with Sam, so I just want to keep improving that I know. I was sitting here, I was talking about a second master officer, but. I think

we're doing good where we're at right now. The big one now for me is twofold. It's downtown and code enforcement. The downtown I think is good and just my opinion, but I think we're really gonna start spending some time looking down there. We lost two businesses, we're about to lose a third and we're just going to have empty storefronts everywhere downtown. I don't know what the answer is. Obviously, leave that up to you guys, come up with ideas. I don't know. I mean, I don't know what we can do to get people to rent out the first doors and not keep them for storage and put paper up against the wall in the windows so you can't see in. Simple things. Somehow revitalize at least downtown Main Street, and then we can branch out. Actually, that's four businesses, four businesses we're losing here. In the code enforcement, that's just been very recent, but starting to notice a lot of little things like grass, obviously with the spring here, vehicles parking on the grass and on the dirt. I think some of the problem is our code enforcement works I think 8am-5pm hours. So, they're out and they see that nobody's there. They're at school or they're at work. Now you come home at 5:00pm and you got three cars parked off on the side, and code enforcement's not going to be around to look at that stuff. Maybe adjust hours with MCE or something to the COA cache or some of these other things that happen outside of the main day.

Brian Schanen - So if I just add to that real quick, just even the consistency, there's things where I've heard, you know, somebody's like. Well, I got a ticket for this and somebody else was like, well, I didn't. And then it's like in the classroom as a professional background, if I tell one student, you can't say that I have to be consistent to the next student.

Orin Artsmith - I also had four. Which are housing development, business development slash downtown. Community engagement and liveliness and resource development. For measuring housing development, I think we should continue making data informed decisions. So really comparing to the data that says where we should be compared to what the data says, where we are now. And I think if we really focus on remaining informed by that data, that can kind of insulate from negative feedback we're getting from people who really want us to be focused on business, we should really be leaning into the data there, I think. But alongside that, business development I think is super important. The downtown like you all said, of course a lot of that is gonna be measured by estimated jobs created. I think community engagement and liveliness is some of the hardest to measure. But I really think that creating, I think that leans a lot into our downtown is if we're creating opportunities for people to reasons for people to be places, be outside. If nobody's walking around in the downtown, nobody's going to want to put a business there. But I think also, and this isn't a Ding in any particular business, but I think a lot of the hours downtown are normal business hours. So, people who are working at other locations can't come outside of their working hours to come. Many students are working multiple jobs, so they're not able to come during those times. So, I think exploring opportunities to make our downtown awake longer, if that makes sense. And then resource development, I've been working on a public health resource for a while that I'm hopeful will be up and running soon. Figures crossed but I think there's a lot of room for, I spoke with Chief Meyer about this. I've seen an increase of police and EMS calls related to mental health in the city pretty recently, so I think continuing to develop and communicate resources about that. And I'm sure more resources opportunities will come up eventually. I think that's somewhere we're really strong, but that also ties to how we communicate about those resources. I think the sign by the Birge Fountain, I know it's a touchy topic, but I think that's it's been great. I see resources I don't even hear about all the time, so I'm really excited about it. I think it's a great way to continue getting the people more. But yeah, those are my four.

Patrick Singer - I think that downtown, just piggyback on that. I mean the issue is even many years ago it's the internet with commerce and that like you don't have a lot of your non-pod type; you know it's not sustainable even in larger communities where there's more bodies and dollars flowing through. So, it's how do we get well we can I have 8000 bars, well, we can't have 8000 because we have a cap, but you know, bars are obviously the calling card right now. There's been restaurants here and there. Unfortunately, the Black Sheep went out. Fanatic sounds like they're an operational, but you know that that's an area. But you know, looking at other things like axe throwing or activities because there's one thing that you know, when I had a conversation with the Chancellor in the past. He's like, "you guys need to get more stuff to do in Whitewater". He's like, "I love Whitewater, but there's just not a lot to do". So how do we find the things to do? While at the same time, there has to be a market, and they have to be open to market. They have to be viable. But I think that's where I see the downtown probably heading, not necessarily more food and liquor, but looking into like how do we find experiences because your ma and pa suit shop, or even you know the shoe shop those type of things are not as viable as they used to be. So how do we pivot in the light of that economic reality?

Steven Sahyun - What to do in light of? You know, Amazon. It's like if you have Amazon, a lot of the retails difficult.

Patrick Singer - I mean, I joked. Like if we could move Main Street like right up against campus, that might help. Because you know some of the State Street up against UW Madison. Not that that doesn't have its issues, but there is a gap between where we have a huge population center up on campus, and the downtown and well, we are a very walkable community. But that's just an observation over the years in terms of like, what is A modern downtown look like? And maybe that's where we could bring Mason and some resources in. To say like, we're not the own community struggling with this issue, what do you do with downtown's when, what they used to be, is not what they can be today?

Brian Schanen - And I've heard too, even it's not just from a customer standpoint, a lot of these small businesses they're distributors. They'll only go to businesses that do X amount business and there's no amount of unfortunate economic reality; there's no amount of business that the downtown store is going to do to get to reach whatever benchmarks it is that the suppliers are looking for.

Steven Sahyun - Are you thinking of maybe having a comparative analysis between, you know, cities with comparable size that have biomedical? I mean, we can do a study and yeah, and we look at if what are what are the other cities that have these viable downtowns doing that make them so attractive.

Patrick Singer - And what is a viable? What is a viable downtown? You can drive up to Fort, or you can drive to Lake Mills. I mean you. We all have our empty storefronts. We all have facades that maybe need a little bit of work, so it's not even looking around, you know, Janesville, it's, you know, there's some very good things and then there's some parcels and fronts that are like, so, you know, there's not gonna be a perfect fit, but what do we see from like an urban planning and economic development side in terms of what is success?

Steven Sahyun - What are some successful downtowns doing that we might not be doing now?

Patrick Singer - And understanding we can't throw a million dollars at a problem.

Gavin Kelleher - Yeah, I think the experiences route is super important. Not everything's about students, obviously, but in looking at the businesses that succeed in Whitewater, I think that correlation is huge. You look at your sweet spot. You look at your Jessica's, they're always busy because students want to go there, and then the bars, right? Because students will make the walk if it's something they wanna do, they can go party. They'll go and get a copy and study. They'll go. So, I think finding those like in between of like okay, it's not a coffee shop, it's not a bar, but like an axe throwing or an arcade or something that engages people. So, they wanna come down and they're not. You know, you can't have 300 bars that. You're saying, but definitely I think there's options for middle ground places that kind of serve an experience or even like a live music venue. Something that gets people to come there.

Patrick Singer - In looking at even you know your franchisees, because the reality is the sweet spot type things you know but you see them in most communities we have sweet spot here. But when things like Duncan or Starbucks and those larger corporate entities start to come in you know that usually has a negative effect on those that don't have that vast. So like, even targeting that we're, you know, we're not just talking, you know, ma and pa axe throwing or ma and pa coffee shop. But you know what, what are some actual like maybe not blue-blooded corporate type options but be open to that as well even.

Orin Artsmith - Will, the comprehensive plan have suggestions in that vein for the downtown.

John Weidl - Probably not. That's something we'll have to, that can be studied. We can get Burke or someone who they adjusted the industrial park and they'll do it. So, the next one kind of melds in with kind of what we're already talking, but I will start with Steven.

Question 3: What opportunities or challenges do you believe will most influence the city's future? And how should the Council prepare to address them?

Steven Sahyun - Well, we heard a lot about in the last year about the Lakes District and I think that's a major area that is a challenge, it's an opportunity. I think the parks are also a challenge and an opportunity that we can use to promote Whitewater. I think a lot of the things that we do, we should be able to begin in, in terms of the long-term planning, we want to look at growth, but growth in an intelligent way. Right. So that we can say this is going to provide not just the short term boost, but long-term impact that will be really beneficial not just to whitewater but to the region. Because we are kind of our little regional players here and we go out, we go out to La Grange, we go out to Fort, we go down to Janesville, and we should look at the larger area that we serve. What are the opportunities that we have to be that center?

Brian Schanen - I think one of the things that I think for the most part, the city actually does a really good job of it. But just given the current state of levels above the city of Whitewater, when we go to that.

And staying focused on what the city is doing and can do. I think is super important. I think when we've looked internally and looked within the city, we found the answers in the ways that we can do it in the Whitewater way without falling into the noise of whatever it is that's happening at the state or national levels. And I think that's super important.

Patrick Singer - Kind of hit up the money issue money. But how do we get creative in that? I know we've had a discussion already about garbage and recycling fee but providing relief but even expanding that. What other ways are there to diversify how we are, not that there's many the state allows, but you

know, are there other models of a fee or service fee that could be applied. I don't even know public safety, right fee, you know, and that potentially captures revenue that we're not getting from taxable parcels. So, you know, how do we look at that? But also understanding like it can't be, you know, raised fees and raise levy at the same time. I would say, you know, it has been mentioned, just the university is we have a symbiotic relationship. Without them we're Palmyra, without us they don't have basic ability to be government to pave the roads and things like that. But you know, it's been made mention about the enrollment clip, and you know what does that impact look like? You know what does that trajectory looking like? Because even when things, years ago, when enrollment is dipped, you know that does have an impact on the rental market, which can have an impact on. Single family but used to be single family homes. And how do we kind of see that coming and be proactive in that because that will have a direct impact on our community on the off campus and then kind of the ongoing transportation links issue, you know you lookout at Milton where there's all that growth around the roundabout on 26, the bypass. You look at Fort Atkinson; you know where the 26 bypass is. You look up at Johnson Creek and it's helpful to have those four-lane links to be able to maximize the economic opportunities that you can attract. I mean, it's been on the books since late 60s, early 70s in terms of making 12, four lanes from at least Elkhorn to here. It's just no political will in the state to make that happen, because our ultimate goal was to take 12 four lanes all the way to Madison. It's probably even less of a likely.

Neil Hicks - Yeah, I'll check that off my list if that's if that's something. Opportunities. I think Somerset coming here is a decent opportunity, not only for the city as far as incumbent jobs, but just. Bringing additional workers in at some point, you know, I think it says 60 in the next five years. So, I think it's a good.

John Weidl - Even them having to come within city limits instead of driving to where they're currently at will benefit in terms of spillovers at gas stations, airports, groceries.

Neil Hicks - And another opportunity, I think, is our housing. So, I think we've got a decent mix right now and about to see that continue strategically so you know the atmosphere with multifamily and we know the atmosphere obviously using any sort of money city or any housing. But at the same time, I think we need to keep on expanding not just sit status quo that. Originally John mentioned there was somebody else interested in the plan possibly by 12 & P. You know, maybe that's a good segue. That's right on the bypass, you know, the more people drive on the bypass, they see how this housing going up. Maybe some people start thinking, oh, I'll look at their for housing. So, if we can develop more along the bypass that kind of gets more visibility to what the city has to offer. They'd go and help us. Challenges, taxes. That's the only word I'll say on that. And upper end housing. So I think I keep on mentioning it, but we do have a lot of entry-level housing. We've got a lot of middle ground housing, but we don't have anything growing for upper end. But it's not upper end, I guess larger houses that it's sort of like estate size, but you know just larger a lot, a larger house. Just personally, process. What's our hold back? But then for not opportunity and challenge the university, it goes both ways. They wouldn't be here without us. They wouldn't be here without that, but it also breaks. We create problems for our students and students, create problems for residents, so it goes both ways and I think it's just gonna be an ongoing bout challenge or battle to figure out how to work that out both ways forever.

Orin Artsmith - I wrote three of each for challenges. The tug of war between housing and businesses. What is gonna make someone mad or what is gonna make someone happy. The balance between that I

think will be a chance to figure out. The effects of state and federal changes beyond our control. I've already been mentioned and I have lakes and landmarks, wants versus lakes and landmarks, experiences and costs. Those are ongoing discussions; I'm on both of those committees. So, I hear a lot about it, but I think that they're very valuable parts of our community and I see in the next couple years us having to weigh. Opportunities to improve those compared to opportunities to just kind of let them sit where they are now. So, kind of balancing the cost of that versus how we value them as part of our community. And determining what's worth investing in and what doesn't feel right. And with lakes in particular, I think a lot of that conversation happens around what do the people who live on the lake really want? And what does our community want to see from the lake as at large? And balancing those wants and needs, I think, is important. For opportunities, I think there's a lot of great grant opportunities that we've been tapping into. I think that'll continue to be seen. Especially on a state level housing and business development continuing is an opportunity. Increasing our tax base. Really excited for Somerset to do that and housing developments we have coming in and then I think always there are opportunities to collaborate, and we have a lot that are untapped I think. I think there's a lot of great collaboration going on too, and I think continuing to lean into that is going to be one of our strongest. Things that gets us through any things going on.

Gavin Kelleher - All right. Couple challenges that we've already been over but just rising costs and then retaining residents. But I think that affordability is a challenge but can also kind of be an opportunity in Whitewater. I mean, people can't afford to live anywhere in the country right now. And I think Whitewater has that opportunity to be not as expensive as your Madison, as your Milwaukee, as your medium-sized communities. So, kind of using that as a calling card could be valuable because people can't afford those communities anymore. A lot of people can't, so kinda balancing, you know, keeping our costs low. But then creating something that's worth it that people wanna live here for. And I think there's definitely opportunity for that.

Question #4: How can council and city administration work together most effectively to achieve shared goals and strength, communication, trust?

Brian Schanen - I think this is one of the areas that Council has grown a lot in the last two and a half, Three years. This is where I'm gonna put it in the input, the one on ones with John or other city employees are super helpful to have those conversations to learn things, bounce ideas off of each other. You know, explain thought processes on different things. I know there's been a number of times we've had topics coming up on Council and it's been super helpful to be able to talk more about it outside the noise, let's say, of the public meetings. Of course, taking in all the things that are said in those public meetings, but also to knowing those moments when you just need to sit and think. And then I think things like what we're doing tonight are also super helpful. We'll be able to look and say, you know, on a more macro level. Where have we been? Where are we going as opposed to just, you know, the more regular Council meetings where we're looking at a specific proposal, a specific ordinance or things like that where we're kind of getting into the into the weeds, if you will, as opposed to that you know. 50,000-foot view. I look back at some of the things that we were saying at the last vision session last year and I'm like we hit a lot of those things over the course of the last 12 months and that, you know, it's one of those things. You don't see that incremental thing. But you don't see those incremental things on a weekly. You look at it a year later.

Patrick Singer - I'm gonna go pretty much everything Brian said. I think socializing things as they're coming down the Pike earlier. So, there are no surprises, has been better. But there's a balance because, you know, we got to let City staff do their work and not micromanage. But just, you know, I think we found an equilibrium on that, which is very helpful. And I think to your point, Brian, like even kicking stuff to the committees has been helpful because in staff are usually there and it's more conversational like this, where at the Council meeting, we're trying to not turn it into a free for all, which I know. Some people get very upset that they can't just speak whatever they want. So, I think that having that and using those tools to be able to make sure people feel heard and we have a good dialogue but also not creating potential chaos and disruption at the Council meeting. I think does help. In that ability to work together, not only between staff and Council, but also the public, Council and so.

Neil Hicks - I just want to back up for a second and as far as the lakes, to be honest, I mean, I drove by last week, they look great. They look great. Yeah, and maybe it's because it's early in season, but I think the water level's up. I think there's just a number of reasons that are helping. And it's, I mean, they may not look like they did 10 years, 20 years ago, but. They look good. It's still a spot that people talk about.

John Weidl - Yes, you know the we're gonna redo it. I don't wanna go down the rabbit hole of well, the lakes, but we're gonna redo the deck boards and stuff over by the dam. It's all in the works.

Orin Artsmith - So I totally agree. And the higher water levels will also help nitty gritty, but they will lower some of the cattail would go off some more of the cattails as well. So, I got to go canoe with Michelle. Kayak was the words I meant. It was really cool. I recommend taking her up on that if you're interested.

Neil Hicks: Yeah. I mean, it's even awesome just to drive by the other side of the dam and see kids just out there fishing. Get rid of the carp for us, but at the same time it's just it's nice to see them out there doing something versus sitting at home. Video games are messing around with the skate park so.

Brian Schanen - And honestly, I think that Park that's there now makes it easier because they're not like standing there on the sidewalk being like, I hope, a car doesn't get me as I try to.

Neil Hicks - I still is going forward. I know I mentioned it, but I'd like to see how we can branch out to Prairie Village and Fairhaven so like a meeting at Prairie Village, it has a beautiful building and has a beautiful room. Like if we could do a meeting there just to get in the middle of summer when they drive their golf carts down.

Brain Schanen - If I could just jump off that, because there's an idea that I tossed through my head a couple of times is we have 5 aldermanic districts in the city if and City Hall resides in one of them., university resides in another, and then high school resides in another. So over the course of a two year period, the average per the term of a Council member, if there was a Council meeting in each of those other four districts like it would be a two year cycle, but that way then the time somebody has gone all the way through the year they had a meeting in every district.

Orin Artsmith - This is already an upcoming agenda item, right?

John Weidl - If you want to carry this forward and you could theoretically do what the you do the outgoing Council members that year. You could do basically design it, so you know which half of the

Council you do in any given year. So, no one gets lost in the shuffle and serves 2 years and didn't have a meeting in their ward.

Neil Hicks - The website. So, I went to it last week or the week before and I haven't spent a lot of time on it, but it seems like it's gone backwards. As far as functionality, OK let me just say I'm not gonna say it's bad. I just wanna look at it, but first glance I click on it, and I couldn't find what I was looking for, it took quite a bit of digging around and finally popped up.

John Weidl - Wasn't it designed literally off what people use most, kind of rose to the accessibility.

Becky Magestro - It's the same as the high school. We're the same platform.

John Weidl - But please give us your notes. You saw what we did with GIS. If anyone can make it better, we will work on it.

Neil Hicks - The other thing would just be the pre-info, like I said, the more, as some of these things that we see maybe controversial, the more we get on ahead of time in terms of, maybe not surprising people for a second. They agree without an Agenda for 18 months.

John Weidl – But I hear you. That's understood because it doesn't just apply to them. I get it for financial stuff, borrowings.

Neil Hicks - So yeah, the only other thing would be like, so Majkrzak last year said, "provide a way to search work by word or topic in the meeting minutes." And I think that's so that'd be one of the still pretty nice to see right now.

John Weidl - We'll put a memo together on what the process is.

Patrick Singer - You can search within the PDF, but they're saying like search across every you have an index.

Neil Hicks - What I was looking for there, the thing that came to mind is.

John Weidl - They're not gonna wanna pay for it. But we put it together. We can at least tell you it exists. It's very, very expensive.

Neil Hicks - I was looking for the part packet on Dunkin' Donuts to look at something for Windows to see if they're getting rid of the installation book in front. Getting to the website to get to like meetings and minutes and agendas was great. But then you still got to search manually. You have to dig through; you have to open each one and then you got to search through that.

Brian Schanen - Which meeting did this thing come up?

Orin Artsmith - All three of my things are continue things, which is a good feeling. Continue processes of communication that were established. I really liked and would actually love if it could be sent to us again, just as fine again. But the chart about who to contact for what? That was super helpful last year. If we could have that again at some point that would be great. Continuing to and improving intentionally transparent information sharing. So that was the sharing things ahead of time and sharing things with us

earlier. All of that and then continuing to lean into new and developing communication resources. So, the sign coming up I think is a great example but also examining ways to reach people where they're at, which we've been talking about a lot lately. So, I'm not gonna go forever about that.

Gavin Kelleher - Coming at this from a new Council member perspective, stuff like this has been great. The onboarding has been great, but I think the more of this style is create for those to have these conversations 'cause you can't really do that at the Council meetings like we've kinda touched on. And then that increased invisibility that you're just touching on I think is great. So those things are greater than like a one-on-one with John. I know I have mine coming up, but continuing those conversations, I think it's a great way to really talk out what we're trying to get done and actually get it done.

John Weidl - I would like to say this, some of you get immense amount of satisfaction isn't the right word. It's extremely beneficial to do the one on ones. Some of you will just call me when you need something. Someone like Greg, I don't hear from them ever. And that's considered the best thing possible with Greg, not contact me. No in his world, like in Greg's world, silence to him is like the best thing. It's the best compliment you can get. My point is, whatever version works. So, if it's the one on ones, yes. But I want each one of you to feel comfortable that you can reach me in whatever way is best for you. I think the one on ones are good because it allows us each one of you, who we've gotten onto a tangent conversation about something that go around and turn it into an action. So, I hear you. I just wanna clarify, like people who don't necessarily do all the one-on-one shouldn't yield pressure. Just make sure you have a way to communicate with me directly. If you need something, even if it's a text message.

Orin Artsmith - It's not super quick to jump in. Sorry Steve, I had another example of the like types of intentionally transparent communication. I've really enjoyed has been the staff reports on different things that we bring up or just ask for more information about. Even when we put it in consent agenda, I think that being out and just people having access to it to read it.

John Weidl - It has been like you're working on a Department of Corrections that might issue statements to correct the record when necessary. Just staff a reply and it goes in the record and they send eventually. Once things are searchable in theory like someone goes and knows what they're looking for, they can find it.

Orin Artsmith - it's also great for like when we have questions. It's just something that comes back to us and it's also something we can point to. And we're like, hey, I thank you for sharing your opinion. Here's the data.

Patrick Singer - Like when people in the public had questions, but I think we've stabilized, and I think that does help because it gives staff the time to prepare their remarks instead of like let me give it a one off. Question like hey, when does this get done? Brad can be like, oh, that's on the schedule for that. But if it's more substantial, instead of being off the cuff.

Steven Sahyun - You know, I haven't been having a chat with John. Do you worry about sort of workout some of these ideas is sort of like, I don't know, I just thought of this idea, would this be good idea or not? You know, just something that to have that. Connection is good, but maybe we could also try one on ones with other staff members or with the foundation. So that we can have a better connection with

some of these other entities in town. So, they can get to know us and we can get to know them. Better, so to the functioning mode, the city. But that we rely on. But we don't necessarily see who it is.

John Weidl - It's not a terrible idea. Pretty much we have to notice it as a public meeting. But right now, like we agreed with Whitewater Community Foundation, we probably do other things, Rotary certain clubs, et cetera. That's not a terrible idea. That should probably be less of a one-on-one and more as like a. Semiformal not formal, but semi structured public meeting where we provide refreshments for different, but that's a good idea to get.

Neil Hicks - Not throwing everyone under the bus but just talking to somebody in town last weekend, Community Space. So the food pantry discussion up here at parks and rec probably ruffled some feathers in community space and she being Cindy is one of the ones that runs it, she would like the Council to come and see what they actually do so she can answer or rebut some of the comments made at Parks & Rec, but just the concept of like, can the Council go out and see some of our foundation or chamber or community space.

John Weidl - It would be publicly noticed, so other people have the ability to be there. If you are going to be going discussing business. It has to be on the agenda.

Steven Sahyun - Maybe you know if you could have a list of these various entities included who we could contact and if we want to do like one on ones. Just something to make it easier to reduce the resistance of a big nonprofit list. Putting it out to contact those people on their own time and have, like one or one. If they're, if they're open to that.

John Weidl - Yep, I have staff about a month ago put together a list of every nonprofit in Whitewater. I forget what happened, but it seemed useful at the time, so we did it.

Orin Artsmith - I was just gonna say I just recently started hearing at the community space. They give great tours.

Patrick Singer - It's not just that between Council and city administration, you know, we have our own outreach and engagement. And so, it's a staff have done a great job. I mean, Michelle, with the stuff she's done with the lakes, Mason is making a ton of connections. And even in the areas where maybe the city doesn't always have the best reputation, you know, being showing up and building those relationships like at the rental association or GWC. Or like that that that goes a long way in terms of when you build those personal relationships, it's like oh, it's. So hard it's not a big bad city. You know what I mean? That that does help, but I think staff deserve credit for John You on down for being proactive and engaging. Even maybe when some of those environments are not the most welcoming or friendly.

Orin Artsmith - I remember when I did like the recheck like I was a new Council member. With the library, they sounded super interested in hosting a public meeting of some kind in their new space. So that might be a good place to be great or some activity related thing. I know it's hard to move our AP equipment around, so I don't wanna make us do that all of the time.

Patrick Singer - Alright, we got one more regular question then I'll open number six and seven up. Just up in case anybody has any thoughts on those, but I'll start with five.

Question 5: So, if you'd accomplish one meaningful change or initiative for the City during your term, what would it be?

Patrick Singer - I don't know that I have one particular pet issue. I think just in general you know being able to leave whitewater better than where we found it and speak the momentum that we've already seen in terms of some of those areas for growth. But just making sure Whitewater is competitive in the regional and local marketplace in terms of attracting talent, business and residents.

Neil Hicks - I'm gonna repeat almost exactly what I said last year. So clean up its act. Certain places look trashy with trash, weeds and nuisances, and I think. I don't know if that's improved at all since last year. Again, going back to the code enforcement with vehicles out on the lawn and weeds. People just not cutting their grass and all kinds of simple little things that I don't wanna bring up totters, but grass is one thing. We'll leave the totters alone here. But you drive downtown, there's still paper up on Windows. Like it just doesn't look attractive. I don't know how to fix it other than just code enforcement, which then that opens up another can of worms.

John Weidl - We can at least report on how address by address if something could be done or not be done. So, you know. Because sometimes someone has enough money, chooses not to want to rent out the first story of their building. There's almost nothing the city can do to fill that vacancy. And we can at least report on what percentage of our vacancy is driven. Already working on that. I get it to find out our vacancy rate was at our meeting. Who's meeting? I had a meeting with someone where we talked about vacancy rate. One of the I already got them on it's 15%. Healthy is somewhere between 5:00 and 10:00, so that I should figure out how many of them are vacancy by choice. So we're, I hear you and it may be the best we can do is just report on when we can do something and when we can't and then we go after the things where we can do something right.

Neil Hicks - It just goes along with the whole downtown, but not just downtown. You go out to drive anywhere else. There's issues out there as well, but to continue to explore ways that the school, district, city and university can work together. Like I said, the school district is definitely improved. The university's always been not a great discussion, and I think there's always improvement there. The other two things that want to keep on our way on, it's just having an upper level of housing available. I think that brings some people, especially as business grow. Maybe that CEO was what you're going to have upper-level executives that are going to want to be close and they're going to probably not live in a small 2000 square foot house, so. Then the third is one that we brought up. We actually had DPW on Tuesday I know Brad's looking at it, but. I'd like to see at the at least the city look into. Bringing some positions in House. Such as. An engineer and a drafter, so if we're spending \$600,000 for an engineer to come out and watch projects and do cleanup tasks, build drawings like that shows for what five or six projects \$600,000. Even if we only do those every other year, we could still have people full time less than \$6000 and they can do that for us. 'cause, along with other things, so. It'd be nice to see how we could maybe capitalize on bringing some talent in house to get rid of or reduce the need to use external services so much. This was specific to what was on the DBW agenda. I mean specific projects doing specific things. They do other stuff that we're probably not gonna bring it all in house.

Steven Sahyun - At least the information of what an in-house person could do versus what the services that was in town. And what are the costs and benefits, right?

Orin Artsmith - Public health resource development. I've been working on this for two years, so I'm really impressed across that will continue. I talked earlier about mental health, resource sharing and communication. I like to see an implementation of a housing project and the next graduating students or current university faculty and staff do housing or business startups, which is in the works. And then implementation of tenant rights and experience support. So how can we make sure the Community's informed about their rights?

Gavin Kelleher - Piggyback right off of that tenants' rights, I think and that visibility. Kind of educating people on what you know they should expect. Especially, you know, our students, I think also. Immigration just again making this a safer community because you know, we have these people and they're not going anywhere, so. Continuing that collaboration and then I had one more, I'm working. I think that kind of increasing the visibility like has been going on with Council and city management but. To students especially are I think it's there's a lot of opportunity there.

Steven Sahyun - Well, one of the things that you know, in my mind seems it would be great to have would be have Main St. through Esterly to Mound Park be a single lane each way with a turn lane. It would reduce pedestrian accidents for people going across the street ideally. But I recognize the challenges of that, and I always realized that you know something that. It may not be a possibility. But improving the bike path, making a nice loop. Something where you could bike around the town. On a complete circuit would be something that would be an accomplishment that I'd love to happen. Might that be possible. Probably isn't possible.

Brian Schanen - Get rid of all the bedrock under the city of Whitewater. Realistic note It was very eye opening or exciting to see. During the comprehensive plan conversations, something was brought up that somewhere between 2:00 and 5% of Whitewater grads remain in the city of Whitewater after graduation. We could get that number up a little bit higher. One of the ways I think that we can help. Reduce tax burden, especially among higher age demographics as they increase the base pay. That is younger working in paying into all of those systems all the way up from local.

Patrick Singer - So then the last questions and I'll just open it up for anybody wants to throw anything else out there, because some of these are kind of, we've talked a little bit about it.

Question 6: How can the city better engage residents, students, businesses, community organizations and local decision making and civic life? So, we already heard searchable PDFs and some of those health meetings. Outward engagement. So, is there anything else anybody wanted to add?

Brian Schanen - Yeah, I have one that was a weird, possibly pie in the sky idea that I have. So, some of the work I'm doing as a student has talked about has looked at ways of or the importance of engaging people in the community and kind of creating that invitation that they. Feel like they can. Engage in those spaces, right? So, for example, like if somebody doesn't come to you and say, hey, you wanna go out for dinner tonight, you're not just gonna, like, walk up to some random person at the table and be like, hi, my name is Brian. Nice to meet you. Can I have dinner with you? So, one of the thoughts I had would be what would be, for example, the cost of having a form letter go to every dorm room? On campus that is signed, signed by like the city manager and all of the council members basically saying hi, welcome to the City of Whitewater. You have questions? Don't be afraid to reach out with just that little kind of like that. The city is recognizing hi. You are part of our population.

Gavin Kelleher - Yeah, kinda off of that. I like the idea. I don't know if the letter in the mailboxes is the way to do it. Just I was having this conversation, I think with Becky at one point, but I don't know how many students ever even checked their mailboxes, so I think I love the idea. But finding a way kind of to again, like reach students where they're at because, like, just unfortunately, students don't grab the newspaper by campus. They don't check their mail. So, figuring out how to get creative to do that. But I totally agree and love it. People aren't gonna come to collaborate unless they feel like they're wanted.

Brian Schanen - And I think it can help reduce some of the problems because right if students are hearing from people, you know, the students are here four years and then they're leaving and then the. Student is also thinking I'm here for four years and then I'm leaving, right? Well, yeah. Then you're not going to like. Take that ownership of. Maybe I shouldn't jump in Birge fountain.

Orin Artsmith - I bet you could build that into Warhawk welcome material

Gavin Kelleher - or NSS?

Orin Artsmith - Yeah, more people do Warhawk welcome than new student seminar, though. Because you aren't required to take new student seminar. It's very heavily encouraged, but more people do more Warhawk welcome. You might be able to build that into like the physical materials that they get from their peer mentors. I know we table at Warhawk welcome, but if they're like. Actually, getting that material that they're more likely to do that than walk up to our table.

Neil Hicks - So on the other side of that, I feel like I'm aging myself. So they don't open their mailbox. But if we go the other route, so elderly homes and Prairie Village and Fairhaven. Yeah, they want paper mail. Yes, they don't use the phone. Some have phones, of course, but they want paper. So, we could do the same thing, but the opposite route. Go to Fairhaven, print off 100 copies. Someone just sliding that around the doors.

Patrick Singer - And they're not exactly know even with either using the university and sending out e-mail or something or going they won't open it forever. Communities and being able without having to pay postage, yeah.

Heather Boehm - Every dorm, and it was about 800 to \$1000 to print for postcards for me to send.

Patrick Singer - Oh yeah, but if we could deliver them and then once? Leverage those or entity those to produce the postage costs that would.

Orin Artsmith - Yes, do not e-mail, they will. They will not open it.

Gavin Kelleher - I mean, unfortunately we have like just this generation is not all that. Not proactive, you know, necessarily. So, I think I think what right? You know, social media, but I think if it cost that much to just mail that, figuring out creative ways that that money could be used a different way. I think you know, yeah.

Becky Magestro - What you're saying on the like the new the welcome to students. I think part of our problem with voting and everything I see is that we don't our contacts aren't consistent every year who that person is and why we can put that in. Said Mailer. Yeah, we don't have those.

Orin Artsmith - I'm literally about to e-mail you the name of the person who runs first year experience.

Patrick Singer - Years ago when the town gown was a little A bit trickier because there was a lot of students living in predominantly single-family neighborhoods. When there's more corporation, there was some material that was created, specifically targeted, and was distributed during Warhawk Welcome or whatever it was called at the time, so that that has existed. It wasn't like scolding, you know, because you wanted, not paid like condescending. But it was like, hey, welcome to the city. Here's some information. On kind of like, yeah, expectations? Even things like, you know, opposite side or you know, or winter parking or some things like that just so people one there was that. Oh hey, the city like is acknowledging me and two giving some pro tips prior to it.

Brain Schanen - Is that weird. Like you go through, I've just been flying up lately through airports. If you sit in an airport, you're gonna hear. Hi. I'm so and so, the mayor of so and so. Welcome to so and so. And you're like, even though, like, I know I'm just passing through and about to get on a plane and 1/2 a 11 hour. I'm like, yeah, well, I'm glad that you know, you're excited to hear that I'm here.

Neil Hicks - But in the future, if we have issues like that where we're putting those stuff to all the students, is there something that also could do some of that work. So, say print off 1000 something cards can also go to the residence halls and feel like I'll take 401. You take 402.

Orin Artsmith - You can't go under all the doors. They will kick you out of the building if you do that. You're not allowed to slide anything under the doors. Fire hazard. The RAs can't even do it. They aren't supposed to do it, but the buildings also all have keycard access. You have to live in that building to get in that building.

Patrick Singer - Actually, could like WSG because usually it seemed like to send stuff out. No matter the means, even to get stuff on the table, pants and things like that, you had to have, like, a quote-on-quote sponsor kind of thing. But like, would WSG fall under that category. So, like working with that to leverage a student or to help and I know get that together.

Gavin Kelleher - Neil's idea of getting out there personally, I think that's huge. I think even John. I mean, I don't know if you know he's not here, so but uh, like uh, you know. Some idea that that students get to meet their city manager? I mean, both students probably don't know what you know, the city manager is and how it's different from a mayor. But I think that in person connection is huge, whereas like that, that piece of paper is for a different population needs that wants that. But for the younger. Population just doesn't do it. It's almost just like a waste of that resource.

Neil Hicks - I'm sure there's regulations, but at the end of the day, I'm sure John can talk to Chancellor. Yeah, but yeah, you're not supposed to do this. You're not supposed to do that, but right where the.

Patrick Singer - But we are the city. Here's what we wanna do. How do we legal make it happen? Alright Anybody else have anything on item 6, Steve?

Steven Sahyun - Talking to new students, it's great, but I think where the city could really do something significant is to welcome new residents.

Brian Schanen - Like a welcome wagon.

Patrick Singer - We used to have a packet I thought years ago that went to like the Realtors that the Realtors would.

Steven Sahyun - It would be nice to have a letter from the city manager in the City Council welcoming new residents, those people who have just bought those new houses that were, depending on people buying, you know, half a half a meeting with a new residence. The town was letting him know what the city has to offer. I think might be a really neat experience for you people coming in.

Orin Artsmith - Or you can include a copy of the city guide for the year. And thinking about that too, I wonder a great opportunity for partnering with our landlords, new renters in town. How can we connect with them?

Becky Magestro - We did that last year. On they've had something at the lakefront Cravath building.

Orin Artsmith - Yes, I don't solely mean events. I suppose I was thinking of like contact.

Steven Sahyun - Or meet and greet opportunities with the residents. I think, you know, if we could have something scheduled so that we have more meet and greets. We've done a couple I think, been not really well attended but you know it's we're making an effort.

Patrick Singer - I think where would it help and it kind of came up. Not that I don't think this would have been a solved for all the issues that came up with the Slater development. It's like when we do have a large development or some big initiative is do a neighborhood meeting, you know have a developer. That's the vein in which it's kind of coming in just to do that outreach on site because that's like I said, build that relationship it's not some random spooky person behind the curb. Think to ask questions. They get to engage with that. Like, how do we? More proactive in engaging that because you're still gonna get people that are gonna be anti whatever everything but the people that you can reach are gonna help offset some of that stuff.

Steven Sahyun - Then the third item they have is the, you know, I've seen Milwaukee last weekend on Friday and it's been this been about 5 minutes. I thought, oh, UW Whitewater billboard and a UW whitewater That's labeled City bus in Milwaukee go by. It was like Whitewater, Whitewater. You know, it's like we I see that in Milwaukee. It's like I see it at airport even you know, it's like you have to put your advertising into the city too. But is there some way that a good job of that or is or are? We already doing something like that or I don't know.

Patrick Singer - Where does the Chamber come in that, you know it's like we have resources, but at the same time. They're finite and like, how do we leverage all of these organizations to help with some of that marketing?

Brian Schanen - And I think too some of the conversations we've had about the prime. The other, the Discover whitewater. That, I think is.

Orin Artsmith - When I did my refresh with city staff, one of the questions I asked everybody was what is one thing you wanna see more? From city staff and attendance at city events was brought up a couple of times. I think that. It would be super beneficial even if it's not just city sponsored events, but like going. I know we did this last summer but not intentionally but going to the city market prior to City

Council on Tuesdays and maybe we make an initiative to try to invite someone a an event to the next Council meeting or meet someone at the city market I'm walking over to the Council meeting. Do you wanna walk with me? Do you wanna see what we're talking? I think doing some of those more. Just showing up with your family or your people. At an event so that you seem more like a person. Like I know I could make it effort to do that more too, but I think that's something that we could all do. Pretty consistently together is having a presence at those events.

Patrick Singer - John, I think you recognize a lot of city staff throughout the city manager update. But if there's other ways, we can recognize staff that have gone above and beyond. Would you know, I think we're all open to that.

Orin Artsmith - And the other thought I had was with the new form to apply for a proclamation, which is like how Pat did the historical. Reservation, I think we could more intentionally engage local partnerships that way of like is there something you wanna see recognized this month? Apply for recognition at a Council meeting. Some of the meetings with the most attendants I've ever seen are things recognizing local community members or local community events. So, if we have connections with people who we know are doing awesome things or who we know are connected to an upcoming holiday or anything like that, I don't think there's any harm in encouraging people to use that system more. I recognition is a personal value of mine. But I think it's really important to recognize the awesome work that people are doing in our community.

Brian Schanen - And in celebration too. So often in a Council meeting, right? You know something comes up and. There's a good chance, then, that if it's going, someone's. Going to have a public comment. If I roll the dice, it's going to likely be you shouldn't. So, like having those moments where we're like. Is also just, you know, it helps.

Patrick Singer - Yeah, and it's coming from the community. It's not. Sarah or Steven or John, like we're gonna pick up this like, or even Melton.

Neil Hicks - Yeah, both of your comments relate exactly to the school district as well. Your network, the school district, of course, but. There was at the last meeting. There's probably 50-60 people in there, but it was because they're giving. They were giving away an award. Couple of awards for different things. That's the most people I've ever seen ever at a school board meeting. They all left after that. Yeah, fine. Yeah, but they were all there.

Patrick Singer - Well, we did that Methodist Orange or whatever. That was OK, now it was back to start and then then it got a little empty after that.

Neil Hicks - So, will there be some way? I don't know if we do like an employee, outstanding employees or the month or something. Not that you want to drag him into a meeting.

Patrick Singer - Who does the hometown hero? It's probably Stoneman and her and I forget who else is involved.

Steven Sahyun - Do they do that on a monthly basis or weekly basis or? Someone they get nomination. OK, when they get nominations. Can we have the hometown hero, we could recognize them as they come.

Patrick Singer - Yeah, I think the challenge with you know it depends on what it's like. You know, some people have certain ideological beliefs or that we don't wanna miss, like, get in the middle of that. Yeah, but I think, you know, just real quick to Orin's point about staff. It's like I know you have your employee picnic. Managers in that serve of food and that. But if you wanted to invite Council, you have to notice it. But like for us to serve, you know, just so we have visibility and some serve the food. Or, you know, and I threw this out there a dunk tank.

Orin Artsmith - Tell us to do it. We'll do it.

Patrick Singer - But even across, you know, I think that many years ago in this confirm we had these school district and different university administration is, you know, like a celebrity but like a softball. Oh yeah. Between yeah, between the two to raise money for checks. You know, maybe tie it out with the Gala, you know, just to have something, you know, showcase Treyton's Field of Dreams, or do it out at the university just to build some sense between the organizations, but also provide an opportunity for the community to cheer and cheer. And it was fun.

Orin Artsmith - I really think though it is important that over those were prioritizing the events that are more public facing, like the Fire Department Pancake Breakfast. I'm looking for council members when I go. Like who do I know, right? And I think city staff deserve the support for the hard work they're doing to further what we want to see. And I think that's a tangible way we can support. That.

Patrick Singer - The last one real quick. I mean, does anybody have a crystal ball that they wanna enlighten us all in terms of what? What Whitewater you know will look like?

John Weidl - Yeah, I think our population will be bigger than it is today in 10 years. Yeah, if we avoid the population Cliff, that would be I. I not that the Council shouldn't go first, but like that's how I want you thinking about the issue like that big, not I hope we have sent a postcard to yeah, yeah.

Orin Artsmith - I really struggled with this one. But I think the word I really landed on is community. Obviously, whitewater is our community, and it feels like our community, but like I want to be able to go anywhere in town and feel like I am somewhere that is a very lively and engaged community. I want to be able to walk downtown and not be the only person I see on the street. You know like. Community with a capital C is what I want this place to feel like.

Patrick Singer - Yeah, I think just having been here for a number of years, I mean this there's a there's a stand. I mean, whitewater doesn't change dramatically even over the last 30 years. But yeah, the growth like how do we continue to grow? How do we diversify? Yeah, I originally grew up in Racine where? Everything is, you know, contingent on like manufacturing and that and then the 80s hit and Kenosha had diversified a little bit better. And so, we're like the university is important, but how do we also? Expand the reliance or reduce the reliance. On the university and have some other opportunities for growth that are just maybe not driven exclusively by.

Neil Hicks - I just want to throw out the broken record with growth. I want to see growth. I don't know if you may have heard of put in the next 10 years. There may be a significant transmission line right very close to us that could bring in power. If it is a substation here, we could have a lot of ability to bring in power manufacturing. I can get you information on it. I think we're going to be asked it, but ESC is gonna

say it's gonna happen. So sure. If it makes a three-year 700 kilob rebuild, you can get power to build anything you want at that point. Data centers. Even just grow. You know, it doesn't. We don't want them, right? But you know, if we could, if we could pull some manufacturer that hey, on the whitewater, it's a small community, but it's you know it's whatever you know. There's opportunity, I think in the next 10 years, I hope we can snag it for what's worth

Patrick Singer - Like anything else in 10 years that everybody wants to throw up there right now.

Orin Artsmith - I would like to not see a data center in 10 years.

Brian Schanen - 4 lane highway.

Orin Artsmith - Yeah, the bridge. I know where is a bridge to somewhere.

Patrick Singer - That may be 100 years. Not the bridge to nowhere.

Steven Sahyun - The improved environment. Make sure that the growth doesn't come at the cost of our environment.

Patrick Singer - OK. Anything else otherwise? So, we did have agenda for discussion on the strategic plan which was included in the packet. I know in the past too, we've kind of after we all let out on the on the table, we want city staff kind of go back, synthesize all that together, see how. That aligns. We can maybe go just to look at the, you know, top tier ones, if there's something somebody really wants to put on the table to say. Maybe we need to add this tweak. We can do that, but you know, it's like 30 some page document the stuff. So, I figured we could just start with. High, high end and then if people want to get into the nitty gritty, we definitely can. Otherwise, we can let City staff take back the information that we just gave them and see how the lines and refresh and talk about it.

John Weidl - From my perspective, do the five goals still make sense?

Patrick Singer - That's what I'm on page 13 because that's what I was gonna read off. I let you go on anything else. So, 2024 to 2025 long term strategic goals increase affordable housing for families. I think we saw those through lines already with some of the stuff. Maybe increase housing overall? But increase in communication without a newspaper in quotes. I mean maybe that could be reworded in terms of like expanding communication opportunities sort of reach a diverse, yeah. Cross section.

Brian Schanen - I was very excited. The other day I turned on my guide on TDs and there was channel 990. I was like awesome. I actually clicked on it for a minute and then I think I was hit. It was taking a vote about the Stonehaven development.

Neil Hicks - If I could add one thing to the channel, can we get subtitles. So, there's a lot of good stuff, but you don't know what they're actually like. Some of the stuff you know.

John Weidl - We can ask. That's all we can do. Or you have to find out if maybe we have to add subtitles to our stuff before it goes there.

Patrick Singer - Or you gonna watch it through YouTube, which does the auto subtitles or teams and then like.

Neil Hicks - But yeah, I guess I'm not looking for that. Just like on the bottom, like what it's about. Oh, like what item you're on?

Orin Artsmith - Like you're not like you don't mean captions. You mean like a lower third?

Neil Hicks - Not captions, not captions. Just like a banner.

Brian Schanen - Well like A sports thing and they're talking about like. Will Jordan love return to the Packers?

Patrick Singer - Anything else on newspapers and we are still legally required to, post in them. Unfortunately,

John Weidl - I get that increased communication's gonna incorporate the stuff we talked about. Yeah, reaching out.

Patrick Singer - So maybe just reframe that in a way that doesn't shout out newspaper because it's much bigger than that. Support thriving business and grow the tax base. I think we already covered that improve the city's retention or recruitment. Retention and diversity.

John Weidl - This is where there's probably a spot, we get all our markers. Unless you guys are seeing an issue, this is an opening to lift something into the planning.

Orin Artsmith - I think this would be a great place to put community engagement in some way. I know engagement is super vague and there's probably things from this that are. More actionable that you can, but I think that community. Yeah, that engagement liveliness point has really threaded through what all of us have been saying. I think it's a good spot for it,

Patrick Singer - But I think overall we still wanna be an employer that. You know is responsive and adaptive to the market and treats our employees correctly so that it needs to be evolved. And then align and ensure sure expenditures with available resources. This kind of gets to our tap.

John Weidl - We will pivot that to be a little more clear if that's where I think that's that holds. But we will make it more explicit that let us go back through the transcripts and. Look at how the things were said, but we'll have something to do with. Holding the line on the mill rate, I'm gonna say like it's way too wonky. But I can hear. I see a lot of heads nodding, OK.

Patrick Singer - Like, yeah, how do we manage less with more and that's essentially what it's.

Brian Schanen - And I think too we've talked about it in our one on even going back to the communication was. Making sure that our use of AI is speaking with the city of Whitewater voice. So, for lack of better term AI, slang.

Patrick Singer - All right, all we really need, we'll come back to a bunch of stuff and they're all in the packet. So, if somebody does have thoughts and wanna transmit that to John or to Sarah, you know, and then I think when we followed up again, we did it at a regular meeting. Yes, so it wasn't. I mean, we

could do this again if we really wanted to or we can do it. We had it on agenda for a regular meeting and then if we need to punt it and say, hey, we wanna get a more conversating.

John Weidl - And I would say based on what I've heard, I don't when you guys started talking about your goals, I think we got to the fifth person before we even got a first repeat on anything. We probably do need the larger facilitated. Not today. Later this year, early next year, it's probably time to even see you guys get your own. I don't know if we get noticed, but they're pulling staff in a lot of directions. If we try and take on the breadth of what was discussed. So that'll need prioritization by. The 7th once Mike is back to seven of you. We were an inch wide and a mile deep and we really wanna be a mile deep and an inch wide or whatever. I'm like three things, right? OK.

Steven Sahyun - I think prioritizing is highly desirable because a lot of the time it's that need be coming up may not be actionable, may not be relevant, may not be viable. And so having a chance to say yes? No, let's just focus on these. These other ideas. We're just ideas. Taking that whole thing is saying you have to work on all these ideas. We're just bringing out some ideas.

John Weidl - No, I get it. That's true. I will bring it back to you and I speak very direct. The list is very broad and wielding prioritization.

Neil Hicks - So that you had mentioned kind of doing this more often like a more open nonformal effect, but what we can change this to like a twice a year, December, may and then maybe updates in December.

John Weidl - like around budget time might be? The right time to do it right.

Brian Schanen - I was gonna actually say, like, at least maybe November, by the time before papers even start going out for candidacy and stuff.

Orin Artsmith - And it's good to refresh. What we have set as the goals before we are budgeting in that direction.

Neil Hicks - It's nice. Like I said, to have the open forum very structured Council meeting.

1. Discussion regarding City Council Goals and Priorities.
2. Discussion and Possible Action regarding the City of Whitewater Strategic Plan.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn at 7:10pm made by Councilmember Schanen, Seconded by Councilmember Artsmith. Voting Yea: Council President Singer, Councilmember Artsmith, Councilmember Sahyun, Councilmember Schanen, Councilmember Hicks, Councilmember Kelleher

Anyone requiring special arrangements is asked to call the Office of the City Manager / City Clerk (262-473-0102) at least 72 hours prior to the meeting.

The City of Whitewater's strategic goals for 2026–2028 are: expanding single-family home development, strengthening community communication, supporting a thriving business community, increasing access to healthcare resources, improving staff recruitment and retention efforts, advancing transportation options, and prioritizing expenditures based on available resources.