

(The following is a synopsis of the minutes of the West Branch City Council meeting. The full text of the minutes is available for inspection at the City Clerk's office. The minutes are not approved until the next regularly scheduled City Council meeting.)

**West Branch, Iowa
Council Chambers**

City Council Work Session

**October 17, 2011
6:30 p.m.**

Mayor Don Kessler opened the Work session by welcoming the audience and the following City staff: City Administrator Matt Muckler, Administrative Assistant Ashley Borland-Kaalberg, City Attorney Kevin Olson, Fire Chief Administrator Dick Stoolman, Park and Rec Director Melissa Russell and Public Works Director Matt Goodale.

Council members: Mark Worrell, David Johnson, Robert Sexton, Dan O'Neil and Jim Oaks.

Bob Haug, Executive Director, Iowa Association of Municipal Utilities – End of Natural Gas Franchise Agreement Options for Cities in Iowa

Haug provided information for the City to consider concerning their options with the natural gas franchise agreement. Options include renewing the franchise, going without an agreement (at least for a while), or considering the conversion to a municipal gas utility. In Iowa, Haug reported that the franchise to provide gas service is of limited value to the city. Council members inquired about the process that a city would go through to convert to a municipal gas utility. Haug reported that the process is challenging and costly, but that the city could benefit from current interest rates were West Branch to acquire the gas system. Haug reported that other cities of similar size operate their own gas utility and have benefited by operating their own system. IAMU can provide training and the organization coordinates a mutual aid system composed of municipal gas utilities throughout the state. The first step in exploring the possibility of converting to a municipal gas utility would be to obtain a feasibility study.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned by Kessler. City Council Work Session adjourned at 6:55 p.m.

Don Kessler, Mayor

ATTEST: _____
Ashley Borland-Kaalberg, Administrative Assistant