

(The following is a synopsis of the minutes of the West Branch City Council meeting. A video recording is available for inspection at westbranchiowa.org. The minutes are not approved until the next regularly scheduled City Council meeting.)

**West Branch, Iowa
Council Chambers**

**City Council
Regular Meeting**

**September 3, 2024
7:00 p.m.**

Mayor Roger Laughlin called the West Branch City Council regular meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Roll call: Council members Tom Dean, Jerry Sexton, Mike Horihan, Jodee Stoolman and Colton Miller were present.

City Staff present: City Administrator Adam Kofoed, City Clerk Leslie Brick, Deputy Clerk Jessica Brown, Police Chief Greg Hall, Sergeant Cathy Steen, Public Works Director Matt Goodale, Parks & Recreation Director Erin Laughlin, and City Engineer Dave Schechinger. Staff attending via Zoom: Finance Officer Heidi Van Auken and Library Director Jessie Shaffer.

APPROVE THE AGENDA

Motion by Dean, second by Horihan to approve the agenda. Motion carried on a voice vote.

APPROVE CONSENT AGENDA

Approve minutes from the August 19, 2024 City Council meeting.

Approve West Branch Fire Department appointment.

Approve a Special Event permit for the Iowa City High X Country West Branch Run on Saturday, October 5, 2024.

Approve a Special Event permit for Fall Fest, sponsored by Main Street West Branch for Friday, October 11 and Saturday, October 12, 2024.

Approve Claims for September 3, 2024.

EXPENDITURES	9/3/2024	
AMAZON.COM	VARIOUS ITEMS	483.35
BAKER & TAYLOR	BOOKS	567.38
CEDAR COUNTY COOPERATIVE	FUEL-MOWERS PW	861.48
DES MOINES PUBLIC LIBRARY	INTERLIBRARY LOAN REPLACEMENT	23.00
DORSEY, RYAN	ILEA TRAINING MILEAGE REIMBURSEMENT	1,013.04
DRISCOLL, MEGAN	SUMMER CAMP FEE REFUND	30.00
HOTSY CLEANING SYSTEMS	POWER WASHER SOAP	445.50
IOWA DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE	DV PREVENT TRAINING-STEEN	175.00
KIRKWOOD COMM. COLLEGE	BLS PROVIDER FEES-POLICE	36.00
LYNCH'S PLUMBING	CUBBY IRRIGATION VALVE	948.80
MENARDS	CUBBY BATHROOM DRYWALL	150.14
QC ANALYTICAL SERVICES	LAB ANALYSIS	1,362.00
STATE INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTS	CHEMICALS	250.38
THE HOME DEPOT PRO	BLDG SUPPLIES-PARKS	121.61
THOMAS HEATING & AIR	BLOWER MOTOR SERVICE-TH	433.00
VEENSTRA & KIMM	VARIOUS PROJECTS	42,759.76
TOTAL		49,660.44
PAYROLL-WAGES, TAXES, EMPLOYEE BENEFITS	8/30/2024	54,304.20
PAID BETWEEN MEETINGS		
IA DNR	NPDES FEE FY25	210.00
JOHN DEERE FINANCIAL	WEED SPRAY, BALL MOUNTS-PW	259.94
QUILL	OFFICE SUPPLIES-POLICE	41.02
STATE HYGIENIC LAB	LAB ANALYSIS	250.38
US BANK CORP. CARD	CREDIT CARD PURCHASES	2,145.63
VARIOUS VENDORS	UB REFUNDS	48.22
METLIFE	INSURANCE	2,416.59
SISCO	INSURANCE	21,316.16
VARIOUS VENDORS	UB REFUNDS	1.25
ALLIANT ENERGY	ALLIANT ENERGY	17,503.96
ICAP	FY25 INSURANCE PREMIUM	80,531.00

JOHNSON CONTROLS	FIRE ALARM INSPECTION & MONITORING	1,049.49
LINN COUNTY REC	STREET LIGHTS	304.80
PITNEY BOWES PURCHASE POWER	REPLENISH POSTAGE-LIBRARY	143.60
ARNOLD MOTOR SUPPLY	OIL DRI-FIRE	225.36
CJ COOPER & ASSOCIATES	FIRE DEPT DRUG TESTING	371.35
CULLIGAN WATER TECH	WATER SOFTENER SERVICE	74.23
FELD FIRE EQUIPMENT	AIR COMPRESSOR SERVICE-FIRE	1,046.00
HEIMAN FIRE EQUIPMENT	UNIFORMS-FIRE	1,038.00
LINDE GAS & EQUIPMENT	AIR TANKS RENTAL-FIRE	64.35
OMNISITE	SEWER WIRELESS ALARMS SERVICE	245.8
PAPAS TRUCK & TRAILER REPAIR	191 SERVICE-FIRE	1,111.79
PARKSIDE SERVICE	MOWER TIRES-PW	772.92
QUILL	OFFICE SUPPLIES-CITY	9.34
RIVER PRODUCTS COMPANY	ROCK FOR RESURFACING	491.63
TOTAL		131,672.81
GRAND TOTAL EXPENDITURES		235,637.45

FUND TOTALS		
001 GENERAL FUND		42,756.36
022 CIVIC CENTER		1,068.68
031 LIBRARY		6,861.54
036 TORT LIABILITY		58,143.40
110 ROAD USE TAX		6,289.34
112 TRUST AND AGENCY		24,300.71
321 WIDENING WAPSI CREEK		6,595.41
324 WW TREATMENT FACILITY		6,840.00
330 EASTSIDE WATER MAIN PH2		15,166.25
331 CEDAR JOHNSON RD RECON		13,898.32
600 WATER FUND		24,545.79
610 SEWER FUND		28,546.86
740 STORM WATER UTILITY		624.79
GRAND FUND TOTAL		235,637.45

The Council had no comments.

Motion by Dean, second by Horihan to approve the Consent agenda. AYES: Dean, Horihan, Stoolman, Miller, Sexton. NAYS: None. Motion carried.

PRESENTATIONS / COMMUNICATIONS / OPEN FORUM - NONE

PUBLIC HEARING / NON-CONSENT AGENDA

Resolution 2024-94 Approve the Site Plan for Lot 4, The Meadows Part 3, West Branch. / Move to action.

Laughlin questioned if the sidewalk shown on the site plan would connect to the roundabout. The Developer confirmed that the portion of the sidewalk in question has already been installed and the site plan shows the two sidewalks connecting. Kofoed added that the site plan was previously approved by Planning & Zoning and that a few updates were made per the State Fire Marshall which are reflected on this latest submission. Horihan asked how many dwelling units the assisted living center would have. Developer, Chad Kuene stated that there will be forty-three units and that some would be available for lease.

Motion by Dean, second by Sexton to approve Resolution 2024-94. AYES: Dean, Sexton, Horihan, Stoolman, Miller. NAYS: None. Motion carried.

Resolution 2024-95 - Approving Change Order #2 in the amount of \$983.00 for the Phase 2 Eastside Water Main Improvement Project. / Move to action.

Kofoed explained that the original plan was to replace a portion of the driveway at St. Bernadette's Church with concrete, which was the cheaper option. But due to the driveway abutting a chip and seal street, asphalt was determined to be the best option and is the reason for the change order.

Motion by Sexton, second by Horihan to approve Resolution 2024-95. AYES: Sexton, Horihan, Dean, Miller, Stoolman. NAYS: None. Motion carried.

Resolution 2024-96 - Approve Invoice #34740 in the amount of \$2852.50 to Impact7G for the Wapsi Creek Widening SRF Sponsored Project. / Move to action.

Sexton questioned what type of public outreach activities were involved for project. Schechinger explained that as a requirement of the forgivable SRF loan, Impact7G is required to inform the public of the project and how SRF funds are being used. Kofoed added that Impact7G will be attending the upcoming dog fair at Beranek Park and will be handing out literature and dog waste bags as part of the public outreach. Kofoed said that there will also be a public meeting at some point.

Motion by Dean, second by Sexton to approve Resolution 2024-96. AYES: Dean, Sexton, Stoolman, Miller, Horihan. NAYS: Dean. Motion carried.

Discussion – Update on proposed economic development overlay district.

Kofoed said the Historic Preservation Commission, Main Street West Branch (MSWB) and Planning & Zoning have all discussed the proposed overlay district and agree that one should be developed and have tentatively agreed on the location for the district. MSWB has identified Main Street as an area for future economic development and would like to see compatibility with what is already there.

Laughlin asked Kofoed to explain the “purpose and reason” behind creating an overlay district. Kofoed said that he receives calls on a regular basis from developers and prospective businesses showing interest in West Branch. Kofoed said currently the city has no “protections” in place for Main Street with the current zoning regulations and what happens there other than in the downtown historic district area.

Miller asked if this new overlay district would affect the Heritage Hill project which is a planned unit development that the city already had an agreement with the property owners. Kofoed said current projects would be “grandfathered” and there would be no effect on the Heritage Hill project.

Laughlin asked Kofoed what the next steps would be to complete this initiative. Kofoed said that both commissions and MSWB will be discussing the topic again at their next regularly scheduled meetings and that the more tedious process will be to determine and agree on what will be allowed in the overlay district from building structures, materials use, and type of businesses to maintain the look and feel that West Branch is trying to attract and maintain. Kofoed said more information will be shared in October.

CITY ADMINISTRATOR REPORT

Kofoed asked the Council to schedule a work session for Monday, September 30th for meeting with the city’s financial advisor and prepare the for upcoming Capital Improvement Plan. Kofoed said he also made initial contacts with trash vendors who have expressed interest in servicing the city, but that responses are not due back to the city until mid-December. Kofoed also said that a few Developer Agreements will be coming to the Council in October but that first the Council will need to amend the Urban Renewal Plan and hold a public hearing.

CITY ATTORNEY REPORT - Absent

CITY ENGINEER REPORT

Schechinger noted that Boomerang is still working on punch list items to finish the project. He also said that progress is being made on the Phase 2 Eastside Water Main Project, however some services have been difficult to find on North 4th Street.

STAFF REPORTS

Parks & Rec Director Laughlin reported that youth fall sports are starting next week with flag football, volleyball, soccer and girls running group. Laughlin also mentioned that the adult softball league which is new this year has six teams and is going very well.

Police Chief Hall addressed the council and asked them to consider removing the current 8-mile residency requirement for the police department. He said removing the requirement will help with officer retention and future recruitment efforts. Hall added that many of the surrounding communities have eliminated their residency requirement due to issues with retention and recruitment and he feels that West Branch needs to

change with the times or will suffer the same issues going forward. Hall said police officers need to be able to leave “the office” (meaning the city) when off duty for their well-being. Living in the town you work should be a choice, not a requirement for their line of work. He said the department is now fully staffed with five police officers and that he is pleased with his “team”. With the five officers, on-call time has now been all but eliminated so the need for a residency requirement is not necessary. Hall said he takes a squad car home since he is always on-call, and that Steen also takes a squad car home because she lives locally but the remaining two cars will stay in town. Horihan (former police chief) agreed that residency requirements do affect recruitment efforts and is supportive of Chief Hall’s recommendation. Horihan went on to praise Hall with his relationship building with Cedar County and has done an excellent job with recruiting a new department. Dean also was supportive with Hall’s recommendation and agreed to look at the requirement again. Miller asked to play devil’s advocate and questioned “no requirement”. He asked what would happen if someone lived out of state or if bad weather or illness would prevent an officer from showing up for duty. Miller was hesitant to agree to total removal, but rather extending the mileage requirement. Hall said he would work with City Administrator Kofoed to come up with some agreeable terms for the Council to consider in the near future.

COMMENTS FROM MAYOR AND COUNCIL MEMBERS

Dean said he forwarded another video of I-80 traffic coming through town on Saturday morning due to an accident to Representative Kaufman and that he had not yet received a response. Sexton asked if those videos should be sent to IDOT instead. Horihan thanked staff for the signage placed at the crosswalk on West Main Street by the middle and high school. He said the signage will improve safety.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn by Miller, second by Sexton. Motion carried on a voice vote. City Council meeting adjourned at 7:46 p.m.

Roger Laughlin, Mayor

ATTEST:

Leslie Brick, City Clerk