

*(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**

**April 21, 2025  
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 present; Tom Dean, Colton Miller, Mike Horihan, Tom Dean, Jerry Sexton and Jodee Stoolman.

City Staff present: City Administrator Adam Kofoed, City Clerk Leslie Brick, Finance Officer Heidi Van Auken, Police Chief Greg Hall and Park & Recreation Director Erin Laughlin.

Attending via Zoom: Library Director Jessie Schafer and Deputy Clerk Jessica Brown.

**APPROVE THE AGENDA**

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

**APPROVE CONSENT AGENDA**

Approve minutes from the April 7, 2025 Special City Council meeting.

Approve minutes from the April 7, 2025 City Council meeting.

Approve a Special Event Permit for “Summer Kickoff 2025”, sponsored by Main Street West Branch for June 13 and 14, 2025.

Approve a Special Event Permit for “Summer Kickoff Road Race”, sponsored by West Branch Girls Track & Field on June 14, 2025.

Claims for April 21, 2025.

EXPENDITURES	4/21/2025	
AERO RENTAL	SODCUTTER RENTAL-P&R	159.50
AMAZON.COM	VARIOUS PURCHASES	610.65
ANTHONY TATMAN	MMPI-2 EVALUATION - POLICE	150.00
BROWN, JESSICA	IMFOA MILEAGE REIMBURSEMENT	187.60
CAPITAL ONE	SUPPLIES, PROG PRIZES-LIBRARY	96.25
CEDAR COUNTY RECORDER	RECORDING FEES	94.00
DONAHUES CARPET	CARPET CLEANING - LIBRARY	575.04
ELITE HOLDING COMPANY	SOCCER REVERSIBLES-P&R	255.00
IOWA ASSN. MUN. UTILITIES	QUARTERLY SAFETY TRAINING DUES	978.00
KANOPI	ON DEMAND VIDEO SERVICE	22.00
LRS HOLDINGS	TRASH & RECYCLING MARCH 2025	18,808.00
LYNCH'S PLUMBING	UNCLOG N DOWNEY MAIN	540.00
MAINSTAY SYSTEMS OF IOWA	WATCHGUARD 3 YRS - POLICE	1,778.00
MENARDS	SHELVES, BLDG SUPP-PW, P&R	684.07
MIDWEST UNDERGROUND CONTRACTORS	EAST SIDE WATER MAINS PH2	38,589.22
MOPPY MO'S	CLEANING SERVICES	945.00
NEUZIL & SONS	CEDAR JOHNSON RD TREE FELLING	7,695.00
OFFICE OF AUDITOR OF STATE	AUDIT FY24 FILING FEE	625.00
OLSON, KEVIN	LEGAL SERVICES APRIL 2025	1,500.00
OVERDRIVE	DIGITAL & AUDIO BOOKS	579.83
PARKSIDE SERVICE	MOWER TIRE REPAIR	89.48
PAUL, BARBARA	FITNESS CLASS REFUND	25.00
PLUNKETT'S PEST CONTROL	PEST CONTROL-CITY OFFICE, TH	114.54
PROTECT YOUTH SPORTS	BACKGROUND CHECKS-P&R	94.50
PYRAMID SERVICES	TOOLS-PW	79.60
QUILL	COPY PAPER-LIBRARY	53.42
RIVER PRODUCTS COMPANY	ROCK FOR BRUSH PILE	2,947.74
SCHAFER, JESSICA	MILEAGE REIMBURSEMENT	32.90
STATE HYGIENIC LAB	LAB ANALYSIS	1,184.00
TIPTON CONSERVATIVE	SUBSCRIPTION-LIBRARY	46.00
US BANK CORPORATE CARD	CREDIT CARD PURCHASES	3,180.75
VEENSTRA & KIMM	VARIOUS PROJECTS	54,604.12
WEST BRANCH REPAIRS	VEHICLE REPAIRS, PARTS	590.25
TOTAL		137,914.46
PAYROLL-WAGES, TAXES, EMPLOYEE BENEFITS	4/11/2025	58,087.41

PAID BETWEEN MEETINGS

SISCO	HEALTH & FLEX CLAIMS 4/14/2025	735.16
AT&T MOBILITY	WIRELESS SERVICE	210.04
BAKER & TAYLOR	BOOKS	510.66
LEAF CAPITAL FUNDING	COPIER LEASE-LIBRARY	142.02
LIBERTY COMMUNICATIONS	LIBERTY COMMUNICATIONS	1,447.95
LINN COUNTY REC	STREET LIGHTS	307.50
QC ANALYTICAL SERVICES	LAB ANALYSIS	802.00
QUILL	BLDG. & OFFICE SUPPLIES	311.50
WEX BANK	VEHICLE FUEL	1,039.30
SISCO	HEALTH CLAIMS 4/7/2025	81.10
TOTAL		5,587.23
GRAND TOTAL EXPENDITURES	201,589.10	

FUND TOTALS		
001 GENERAL FUND	57,248.19	
022 CIVIC CENTER	407.27	
031 LIBRARY	7,816.14	
110 ROAD USE TAX	8,368.12	
112 TRUST AND AGENCY	10,843.14	
321 WIDENING WAPSI CREEK	3,455.00	
330 EASTSIDE WATER MAIN PH2	38,869.22	
331 CEDAR JOHNSON RD RECON	54,558.22	
600 WATER FUND	7,815.91	
610 SEWER FUND	11,688.04	
740 STORM WATER UTILITY	519.85	
GRAND FUND TOTAL	201,589.10	

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

**PRESENTATIONS / COMMUNICATIONS / OPEN FORUM**

Pete Tuttle, resident of Water Street asked the Council for an update on the tree removal from his property from the creek widening project. City Engineer Schechinger gave an update on the project. Several residents were in attendance to address the Council regarding the upcoming special Planning & Zoning Commission meeting scheduled for Tuesday, April 22<sup>nd</sup> that has agenda item requesting the commission to “review and approve a recommendation from Mayor Laughlin’s East Side Urban Renewal Area boundary proposal”. The information on the website regarding the meeting includes a map of the east side of town that the City is proposing to designate as “slum and blight”. Residents expressed their concern over such a designation and why there was no communication notifying residents of the city’s intention and many said they heard about on social media. City Attorney Olson briefly explained the Urban Renewal law (per State Code) and said that city’s only have two options: designating an area as a “urban renewal area” or “slum & blight”. Council members responded that this designation is needed in order for the city to provide additional infrastructure, trails, a swimming pool or recreation center and other things residents are asking for. Another council member said this designation would open up grants for residents in the affected area, but when asked how that would work, it was indicated that there was no formal plan in place. Mayor Laughlin encouraged residents to attend the Planning & Zoning Commission meeting to hear his proposal and provide feedback at that time.

**PUBLIC HEARING / NON-CONSENT AGENDA**

Public Hearing – Regarding Adoption of the Final Proposed Budget for Fiscal Year 2026.

Laughlin opened the public hearing at 7:17 p.m. Resident Kandi Tuttle, asked the Council to explain the budget numbers for the new fiscal year. Kofoed gave a brief review of where the city spends the tax dollars annually noting that thirty percent is spent on utilities (water, sewer, storm water), twenty-one percent on capital projects, fourteen percent each on public works and public safety and the remaining on debt service payments, employee salaries and benefits. There were no other public comments. Laughlin closed the public hearing at 7:23 p.m.

Public Hearing – Public hearing on proposal to enter into a General Obligation Corporate Purpose Loan Agreement.

Laughlin opened the public hearing at 7:24 p.m. There were no public comments. Laughlin closed the public hearing at 7:25 p.m.

First Reading Ordinance 826 – Amending Chapter 105 – Solid Waste Control. / Move to action.

Brick stated that public works opened the new yard waste site last week (located on the north side of the sewer lagoons) on Fawcett Drive. Brick said signage has been erected to direct residents to the new site. She also mentioned that signage indicates “no contractors” are allowed to dump there which led to a discussion on whether or not the city would accept chips from contractors. Those chips could be used for the new sewer lagoons. Brick said she would confirm with Goodale and update the ordinance as needed for the second reading. Other changes to the ordinance are to remove the trash and recycling cart size language since that is something dictated by the private contractor and would eliminate the need for future Code changes should the city change contractors and/or offerings in the future.

Motion by Miller, second by Dean to first reading of Ordinance 826. AYES: Miller, Dean, Stoolman, Horihan, Sexton. NAYS: None. Motion carried.

First Reading Ordinance 827 – Amending Chapter 106 – Collection of Solid Waste. / Move to action.

Brick explained the ordinance change is to remove the current trash and recycling fees from the code since they will also change annually. Brick said these fees will be available for residents on the city’s website, schedule of fees and the contract with the vendor. Miller asked if the water and sewer rates could be removed from the Code for the same reason, but Olson replied that water and sewer is a city “enterprise” or “utility” and it is required to be in the Code. There were no other comments.

Motion by Dean, second by Sexton to first reading of Ordinance 827. AYES: Dean, Sexton, Horihan, Stoolman, Miller. NAYS: None. Motion carried.

Resolution 2025-42 – Adopting the Final Budget for Fiscal Year 2026 (July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2026). / Move to action.

Finance Officer Van Auken, who spent many hours on the annual budget, reviewed both projected revenues and expenditures for the FY26 budget. Van Auken explained the differences in from the FY25 and FY26 budget where many of the changes are due to inflation, increased utility costs, fire department salaries, building inspections, and special projects such as a new comprehensive plan, use of LMI funds, cost associated with the city election in November, resurfacing the roadways in the municipal cemetery and additional TIF rebate payments. The Council thanked Van Auken for her work on the budget.

Motion by Dean, second by Miller to approve Resolution 2025-42. AYES: Dean, Miller, Sexton, Horihan. NAYS: Stoolman. Motion carried.

Resolution 2025-43 - Approving 28E Agreements between the City of West Branch, Iowa and the Boards of Trustees of Cass, Gower, Graham, Iowa, Scott and Springdale Townships for the purposes of fire protection and aid and assistance for other emergencies or disasters relating to life and property, or hazardous materials. / Move to action.

There were no comments.

Motion by Sexton, second by Miller to approve Resolution 2025-43. AYES: Sexton, Miller, Stoolman, Dean, Horihan. NAYS: None. Motion carried.

Resolution 2025-44 - Allowing a street closure and the consumption of alcohol on a public street within the City of West Branch, Iowa on Saturday, June 14, 2025 on the 100 block of North Downey Street for a community event. / Move to action.

Motion by Miller, second by Dean to approve Resolution 2025-44. AYES: Miller, Dean, Horihan, Stoolman, Sexton. NAYS: None. Motion carried.

Resolution 2025-45 – Setting a time and place for a Public Hearing for the purpose of soliciting written and oral comments on the City’s proposed Amendment to the fiscal year 2025 budget. / Move to action.

Motion by Sexton, second by Miller to approve Resolution 2025-45. AYES: Sexton, Miller, Horihan, Stoolman, Dean. NAYS: None. Motion carried.

Resolution 2025-46 – Resolution of support of the application of BBCO, LLC. for funding via the Workforce Housing Tax Credit Program and pledging City monies for the same. / Move to action.

Horihan asked for clarification on the “one thousand dollar per residential unit” and if this resolution is for supporting Phase 4 of Heritage Hill. Kofoed confirmed that this request is for Phase 4. Olson added that the city is not paying actual “cash”, just pledging support of one-thousand dollars per residential unit. Horihan also questioned the original Developers Agreement which provides for four million, five hundred thousand dollars of tax rebates. Horihan also requested the Council provide consistency in the amount of tax increment financing (TIF) rebates given out in the future and reminded the Council that Finance Officer Van Auken suggested that the Council adopt a TIF application for future developer requests to ensure that process is consistent.

Motion by Dean, second by Sexton to approve Resolution 2025-46. AYES: Dean, Sexton, Miller. NAYS: Horihan and Stoolman. Motion carried.

Resolution 2025-47 – Approving an Agreement with Lark Land, Inc. for water and sanitary sewer improvements necessary for future development. / Move to action.

Schechinger said that when Meadows Part 6 was being planned, it was suggested that the Meadows developer install a deeper sewer line and extend the water main to the west side of Cedar-Johnson Road to allow for future growth in Johnson County and to avoid disruption to those services when new development occurs. Schechinger said the city Code allows for the city to direct the developer to install additional infrastructure and reimburse them for the extra costs associated with it. Kofoed said the extra costs will be paid for by the Cedar-Johnson Road reconstruction project.

Motion by Miller, second by Sexton to approve Resolution 2025-47. AYES: Miller, Sexton, Stoolman, Horihan, Dean. NAYS: None. Motion carried.

Resolution 2025-48 – Resolution taking additional action on proposal to enter into a General Obligation Corporate Purpose Loan Agreement Bond. / Move to action.

Stoolman asked how much of West Main Street would be repaired with the bond proceeds and Laughlin said plans were to go from the bridge (over the creek) to the round-about. Kofoed said there would still be approximately \$1.5 million left over for other projects that public works are preparing to present to Council.

Motion by Sexton, second by Dean to approve Resolution 2025-48. AYES: Sexton, Dean, Stoolman, Horihan, Miller. NAYS: None. Motion carried.

Resolution 2025-49 – Approving the City Clerk job description and approval to post the position. / Move to action.

Motion by Sexton, second by Miller to approve Resolution 2025-49. AYES: Sexton, Miller, Dean, Stoolman, Horihan. NAYS: None. Motion carried.

Discussion – Greenview Subdivision street lights (sponsored by Councilperson Sexton)

Sexton stated that he has been talking with Linn County REC on getting more street lights for the Greenview Subdivision and that it was determined that many of the properties have the electrical in the rear yards or side yards and that easements would be needed to access them, which is not always an easy task. Through Sexton’s discussions with REC, they provided a quote for 4 additional street lights at a cost of \$28,435.99. Based on the overdue need for extra lighting and the upcoming road project that will affect the subdivision, the Council agreed that this was an expense that should be made and that the cost of the additional lights should be paid out of the Cedar-Johnson Road Reconstruction project. The Council directed Kofoed to bring back a resolution for the next council meeting.

**CITY ADMINISTRATOR REPORT** – No report

**CITY ATTORNEY REPORT** – No report

**CITY ENGINEER REPORT**

Schechinger reported on the Meadows Part 6 progress and said utilities are complete and that water mains were being pressure tested. He also said conversations have started with Boomerang on the project timeline and alternate phasing proposed by the contractor.

**STAFF REPORTS**

Library Director Jessie Schafer reported on the weeks activities that brought a lot of traffic through the library doors, both children and adult activities were well attended.

**COMMENTS FROM MAYOR AND COUNCIL MEMBERS - NONE****ADJOURNMENT**

Motion to adjourn by Miller, second by Sexton. Motion carried on a voice vote. City Council meeting adjourned at 8:21 p.m.

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Roger Laughlin, Mayor

ATTEST:

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Leslie Brick, City Clerk