

(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**

**May 5, 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, Jerry Sexton and Jodee Stoolman. Attending via Zoom: Tom Dean.
City Staff present: City Administrator Adam Kofoed, City Clerk Leslie Brick, Police Chief Greg Hall, Public Works Director Matt Goodale and Park & Recreation Director Erin Laughlin. Attending via Zoom: Library Director Jessie Schafer.

APPROVE THE AGENDA

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

APPROVE CONSENT AGENDA

Approve minutes from the April 21, 2025 City Council meeting.
Approve a Class C Retail Alcohol (12-month) license with Outdoor Service privileges for Cedar’s Edge Golf Course Inc., 3 Ember Lane, West Branch.
Approve a Class C Retail Alcohol (12-month) liquor license with Outdoor Service privileges for The Black Rose LLC., 116 W. Main Street, West Branch.
Approve the appointment of Brian Alatalo to the Parks & Recreation Commission, term expiration 12/31/2026.
Approve the Monthly Financial Report for March 2025.
Approve Claims for May 5, 2025.

EXPENDITURES		5/5/2025	
AERO RENTAL	LIFT RENT REICHERT HOUSE MOVE		1,386.25
BRICK, LESLIE	MILEAGE REIMBURSEMENT-COUNTY		23.80
CEDAR COUNTY COOPERATIVE	FUEL-PW		1,330.51
CJ COOPER & ASSOCIATES	PREEMPLOYMENT TEST-POLICE		75.00
GOERDT INSPECTION	BLDG INSPECTIONS		2,100.00
HAWKINS	CHEMICALS		3,952.06
HOLIDAY INN DES MOINES	IMFOA LODGING		474.88
MACQUEEN EQUIPMENT	STREET SWEEPER PARTS-PW		1,079.66
MENARDS	BORDER FOR TRACK-P&R		1,561.20
QUILL	OFFICE SUPPLIES-CITY, PD		108.79
STERICYCLE	SHREDDING SERVICES		89.93
TROUT, AMBER	P&R 1/2 PITCH REFUND		60.00
TOTAL			12,242.08
PAYROLL-WAGES, TAXES, EMPLOYEE BENEFITS		4/25/2025	65,248.29
PAID BETWEEN MEETINGS			
SISCO	HEALTH CLAIMS 4/21/2025		849.95
SISCO	HEALTH & FLEX CLAIMS 4/28/2025		129.35
BAKER & TAYLOR	BOOKS		294.18
E O JOHNSON	COPIER MAINT - LIB		214.84
JOHN DEERE FINANCIAL	SUPPLIES & UNIFORMS - PW & PD		813.58
MEDIACOM	CABLE SERVICES		41.90
OVERDRIVE	DIGITAL & AUDIO BOOKS		141.48
STATE INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTS	CHEMICALS		257.89
METLIFE	INSURANCE PREMIUM		2,213.32
SISCO	INSURANCE PREMIUM		16,994.66
ALLIANT ENERGY	ALLIANT ENERGY		16,270.89
BAKER & TAYLOR	BOOKS		288.34
BARNHART'S CUSTOM SERVICES	YARD WASTE SITE WORK		2,760.00
BEAN & BEAN	GRAVE OPENING		650.00
CLIA LABORATORY PROGRAM	CERTIFICATE FEE		248.00
CULLIGAN WATER	WATER SOFTENER SERVICE		30.49

ECONO SIGNS	YARD WASTE SIGNAGE-PW	945.43
FIRE SERVICE TRAINING BUREAU	CERT FEES FOR HAZMAT-FIRE	100.00
HARLESS, VERONICA	SR. FITNESS CLASS APRIL	430.00
ILLINOIS LIBRARY ASSOCIATION	SUMMER PROG SUPPLIES-LIBRARY	705.26
IA LAW ENFORCEMENT ACADEMY	MMPI EVALUATION-POLICE	150.00
MPEC	FUEL OIL MIX-FIRE	57.00
PITNEY BOWES PURCHASE POWER	REPLENISH POSTAGE-LIBRARY	100.00
WEST BRANCH TIMES	LEGAL PUBLICATIONS & JOB POST	1,361.93
TOTAL		46,048.49

GRAND TOTAL EXPENDITURES 123,538.86

FUND TOTALS		
001 GENERAL FUND	38,946.70	
022 CIVIC CENTER	456.12	
031 LIBRARY	6,810.97	
110 ROAD USE TAX	12,380.09	
112 TRUST AND AGENCY	29,468.22	
600 WATER FUND	19,671.20	
610 SEWER FUND	15052.63	
740 STORM WATER UTILITY	752.93	

GRAND FUND TOTAL 123,538.86

REVENUE-FISCAL YEAR 2025
FUND MARCH

001 GENERAL FUND	64,526.43
022 CIVIC CENTER	540.00
026 SIGNS ACCIONA DONATION	79.70
031 LIBRARY	1,242.50
036 TORT LIABILITY	12,605.57
110 ROAD USE TAX	22,789.61
112 TRUST & AGENCY	73,019.96
121 LOCAL OPTION SALES TAX	26,907.46
125 TIF	198,966.11
226 DEBT SERVICE	322,995.61
300 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT RESERVE	16,807.42
319 I-80 WATER SEWER LINES	334,008.34
500 CEMETERY PERPETUAL FUND	900.00
501 KROUTH PRINCIPAL FUND	665.89
502 KROUTH INTEREST FUND	311.22
600 WATER FUND	79,703.52
610 SEWER FUND	95,598.11
740 STORM WATER UTILITY	6,033.00
TOTAL	1,257,700.45

Motion by Sexton, second by Miller to approve the Consent agenda. AYES: Miller, Stoolman, Horihan, Dean. NAYS: None. ABSTAIN: Sexton (due to conflict on 6b). Motion carried.

PRESENTATIONS / COMMUNICATIONS / OPEN FORUM - NONE

PUBLIC HEARING / NON-CONSENT AGENDA

Public Hearing – Regarding amending the current budget for fiscal year 2025, ending June 30, 2025.

Laughlin opened the public hearing at 7:03 p.m. There were no public comments. Laughlin closed the public hearing at 7:04 p.m.

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

Brick noted that additional language was added to section 105.12(1) regarding contractors per the Council's request. There were no other comments.

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

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

There were no comments.

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

Resolution 2025-50 – Approving amending the current budget for the fiscal year 2025, ending June 30, 2025. / Move to action.

Kofoed explained a few of the reasons which required the City to amend its current budget explaining that often cities need to do this function for unforeseen expenditures in a given fiscal year. This years amendment includes an increase in liability insurance and self-funded insurance claims, transfer of funds (in/out) for the Phase 2 East Side Water Main project, extra tree trimming expenses and concrete repairs, TIF payments that are in arrears, expenses related to the Cedar-Johnson Road project that the Council approved after the FY25 budget was set, additional water and sewer costs (mostly due to inflation and utility costs) and lastly, an SRF loan payment from the water fund for the Phase 2 East Side Water Main project.

Motion by Sexton, second by Miller to approve Resolution 2025-50. AYES: Sexton, Miller, Stoolman, Dean, Horihan. NAYS: None. Motion carried.

Resolution 2025-51 – Hiring Paul (Kevin) Bailey as a Full-Time Police Officer for the City of West Branch and setting the salary for Fiscal Year 2025/2026. / Move to action.

Chief Hall expressed his deep admiration for Officer Bailey and commended him for his years of prior public service in the Iowa City area. Hall said that Bailey will complete his department and is grateful to Bailey for accepting a position with the West Branch police department.

Motion by Sexton, second by Horihan to approve Resolution 2025-51. AYES: Sexton, Horihan Stoolman, Dean, Miller. NAYS: None. Motion carried.

Oath of Office – Police Officer Bailey

Laughlin administered the oath of office to Office Bailey and welcomed him to the City of West Branch.

Resolution 2025-52 – Approving the annual renewal rates with MetLife for Basic Life, AD&D, Short Term disability, Long Term disability, Dental and Vision insurance. / Move to action.

There were no comments.

Motion by Sexton, second by Horihan to approve Resolution 2025-52. AYES: Sexton, Horihan, Miller, Dean, Stoolman. NAYS: None. Motion carried.

Resolution 2025-53 – Approving the annual renewal rates with Wellmark Blue Cross Blue Shield through the Iowa Community Trust for health insurance. / Move to action.

There were no comments.

Motion by Miller, second by Sexton to approve Resolution 2025-53. AYES: Miller, Sexton, Stoolman, Horihan, Dean. NAYS: None. Motion carried.

Resolution 2025-54 – Approving a Proposal from Linn County Rural Electric Cooperative to install four street lights in the Greenview Subdivision. / Move to action.

Sexton said four new street lights would be placed on existing power poles to help with the issue. Miller asked if easements would be needed for any of the work and Sexton said he didn't believe so. Sexton said he would hand the project and implantation off to the City Administrator and Public Works Director to move the project forward. Miller asked where the money would come from and Kofoed said the Cedar-Johnson Road bond proceeds would be used.

Motion by Sexton, second by Miller to approve Resolution 2025-54. AYES: Sexton, Miller, Dean, Stoolman, Horihan. NAYS: None. Motion carried.

Resolution 2025-55 - Setting a date for Consultation and a date for a Public Hearing on the Proposed Amendment No. 8 to the Amended and Restated West Branch Urban Renewal Plan. / Move to action.

The purpose of this amendment is to include a portion of the Parkside Hills development and other industrial properties to the north of it and declare it as a "slum & blight" district. This allows the City to collect TIF dollars and use them as the see fit in the district. The public hearing is set for June 2, 2025.

Motion by Sexton, second by Miller to approve Resolution 2025-55. AYES: Sexton, Miller, Stoolman, Horihan, Dean. NAYS: None. Motion carried.

Discussion – GO Bond Series 2025 excess funds distribution

Schechinger said he met with Boomerang (who was awarded the Cedar-Johnson Road Reconstruction project) and they quoted \$398 thousand dollars to extend Cedar-Johnson Road from Ember Lane to just south of the city limits. This section of the road is currently a chip-seal surface. Schechinger said the bid includes for grading, drainage improvements and a concrete surface. Sexton said he is in support of the extra concrete and commented that delivery drivers are constantly using his property to get from Lazy Brook Drive to Cedar-Johnson Road. Schechinger reminded the Council that Sexton (owner of Cedar's Edge Subdivision) requested that Birdie Drive (a public street that was not constructed by the developer and would have connected Lazy Brook to Cedar-Johnson Road) be vacated (and returned to right-of-way) in 2022. This street vacation was done via resolution 2022-103. Miller did not feel that spending approximately \$400 thousand dollars to service two driveways was a responsible way to spend the excess bond funds and said that he would rather review the list of projects provided by Public Works Director. Miller said the public works budget isn't able to fund most of the projects provided by Goodale and that any bond "overage" would best be utilized on Goodale's list. Miller also mentioned that if future development occurs west of Cedar-Johnson Road then this section of road could be considered again in the future, just not now while other projects would benefit more residents. Stoolman and Horihan agreed with Miller's stance on the subject. Miller also asked how this bond would be repaid and said he didn't want to see taxes increased along with other user fees (water and sewer rates) that continue to rise each year. Kofoed said the bond will be repaid by a combination of TIF and LOST dollars. Kofoed said Schechinger was needing direction from the Council and based on their comments, the original project will move forward without the extension north of Ember Lane. Kofoed said the discussion regarding the excess funds will come back on the May 19th City Council meeting so that the Council has time to review Goodale's list and provide direction on which projects to move forward with.

Discussion – Mayor Laughlin's revised Urban Renewal Area

Laughlin said that due to overwhelming resident response over the previously proposed "slum & blight" area, he now suggests that the City focus on the Parkside Hills subdivision. Laughlin said he would exclude the zero lot properties that have homes already constructed and occupied, but will include the remaining residential and commercial lots. Laughlin also suggests including commercial properties to the north and all the way up to East Main Street, such as: the City's Public Works shop, other industrial properties on Cookson St., South 4th Street, Beranek Park, Beranek Drive, including Barnhart Custom Service's properties. Miller suggested that that creek be included along with the former railroad land where a future trail could be constructed. Laughlin said the proposed map included in the council packet needs some additional tweaking but took all comments under advisement. Laughlin said he would work with Kofoed on the map and Olson who will prepare the public hearing notice. Horihan stated that he wants all affected property owners to receive the public hearing notice so that they are aware of the Mayor's proposal.

CITY ADMINISTRATOR REPORT – No report

CITY ATTORNEY REPORT – No report

CITY ENGINEER REPORT

Schechinger said that he had a pre-construction meeting with Boomerang regarding the Cedar-Johnson Road project and they have set a May 19th start date. He also reported on discussions with FEMA regarding the Wapsi Creek Widening project. He also gave an update on the West Branch Village sewer meter issue and said that an internal meeting needs to be scheduled to address the on-going issue.

STAFF REPORTS

Goodale informed the Council that hydrant flushing started today and will continue over the next couple of weeks. He also said that the Hoover Presidential Foundation (yellow house) is scheduled to be moved tomorrow and that his department will be busy assisting.

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 8:05 p.m.

Roger Laughlin, Mayor

ATTEST:

Leslie Brick, City Clerk