

(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**

**June 16, 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.

City Staff present: City Administrator Adam Kofoed, (retiring) City Clerk Leslie Brick, (incoming) City Clerk Alycia Horras, Public Works Director Matt Goodale, Park & Recreation Director Erin Laughlin, City Attorney Kevin Olson and City Engineer Dave Schechinger.

Attending via Zoom: Finance Officer Heidi Van Auken, Police Chief Greg Hall, Library Director Jessie Schafer

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 June 2, 2025 City Council meeting.

Approve minutes from the June 9, 2025 Special City Council meeting.

Approve a Class E Retail Alcohol License for Rashika LLC dba Jack & Jill, 115 E. Main St., West Branch.

Appoint Emilie Walsh to the Planning & Zoning Commission, term expiration December 31, 2027.

Approve Claims for June 16, 2025.

EXPENDITURES		6/16/2025
AMAZON.COM	BLDG SUPPLIES, SUMMER PROG-LIB	480.11
BAKER & TAYLOR	BOOKS	90.74
CASEYS GENERAL STORES	CASEY'S TIF REBATE #12	23,166.00
EMV HOLDINGS	EMV HOLDINGS TIF REBATE #8	7,500.00
GRIEBAHN INDUSTRIES	NAME PLATE-P&R COMMISSION	26.00
KANOPY	ON DEMAND VIDEO SERVICE	22.00
KIRK, DANIEL T	SUMMER PROG PERFORMER FEE	495.00
LRS HOLDINGS	TRASH & RECYCLING MAY 2025	18,870.50
MEADOWS DEVELOPMENT	MEADOWS TIF REBATE #4	140,059.00
MISCELLANEOUS VENDORS	SR. FITNESS REFUNDS	180.00
MOPPY MO'S	CLEANING SERVICES	1,067.50
NELSON, CATHERINE	SR. FITNESS CLASS REFUND	45.00
OVERDRIVE	DIGITAL & AUDIO BOOKS	4.48
PROTECT YOUTH SPORTS	BACKGROUND CHECKS-CITY, P&R	43.50
REINHARD, BRADLEY THOMAS	OPTIC FOR RIFLE-PD	130.00
THOMAS HEATING & AIR	AC REPAIR LIFT STN BLDG	1,861.90
TROUTLEAF NATIVE PLANTS	OUTDOOR PLANTINGS-LIBRARY	450.00
U.S. POSTAL SERVICE	PO BOX ANNUAL RENTAL	74.00
VEENSTRA & KIMM	VARIOUS PROJECTS	38,505.50
WEX BANK	VEHICLE FUEL	1,416.45
TOTAL		234,487.68
REGULAR PAYROLL		63,332.90
FIRE BI-ANNUAL PAYROLL		41,338.65
PAYROLL-WAGES, TAXES, EMPLOYEE BENEFITS	6/6/2025	104,671.55
PAID BETWEEN MEETINGS		
UMB BANK	GO BOND PAYMENTS	1,218,995.00
AT&T MOBILITY	WIRELESS SERVICE	210.04
IOWA ONE CALL	UTILITY LOCATION SERVICE	52.20
LEAF CAPITAL FUNDING	COPIER LEASE-LIBRARY	142.02
LIBERTY COMMUNICATIONS	LIBERTY COMMUNICATIONS	1,523.35
PIP PRINTING & MARKETING	BUSINESS CARDS-POLICE	73.34
IOWA FINANCE AUTHORITY	SRF LOANS: WATER, SEWER	651,113.58

VARIOUS VENDORS	UB REFUNDS	137.70
JOHN DEERE FINANCIAL	SUPPLIES, UNIFORMS-PW	170.51
STATE INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTS	CHEMICALS	257.89
TOTAL		1,872,675.63
GRAND TOTAL EXPENDITURES		2,211,834.86
FUND TOTALS		
001 GENERAL FUND	91,068.49	
022 CIVIC CENTER	280.00	
031 LIBRARY	6,764.01	
110 ROAD USE TAX	5,663.04	
112 TRUST AND AGENCY	13,526.96	
125 T I F	170,725.00	
226 DEBT SERVICE	1,218,995.00	
321 WIDENING WAPSI CREEK	16,268.50	
330 EASTSIDE WATER MAIN PH2	180.00	
331 CEDAR JOHNSON RD RECON	20,251.50	
600 WATER FUND	7,356.46	
603 WATER SINKING FUND	114,856.12	
610 SEWER FUND	9,127.36	
611 SEWER FUNDS SPECIAL	536,257.46	
740 STORM WATER UTILITY	514.96	
GRAND FUND TOTAL	2,211,834.86	

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

PRESENTATIONS / COMMUNICATIONS / OPEN FORUM

Kim Gaskill (daughter of Katherine Gaskill) who owns property in West Branch along the Wapsinonoc Creek, spoke on behalf of her mother in regard to the recent “slum & blight” designation for her property. Ms. Gaskill asked the City to remove their property from the designation. Gaskill said the property is used for rental income and grassland easements and they have no interest in being a part of the City’s plan to help a developer. Gaskill asked the mayor schedule a meeting with her family to discuss their options. Laughlin stated that the City would like to plan for a trail along the creek and (on Gaskill property), which Katherine Gaskill replied “no bike trail will be allowed”. Miller asked the Gaskill family if they would be willing to consider a land purchase (for the trail) and Ms. Gaskill said they would be willing to consider and discuss the matter with the Mayor at a future date.

Sally Peck, 223 N. Downey Street addressed the Council regarding the recent slum & blight designation stating that she objects to the designation as she feels it will affect property values.

PUBLIC HEARING / NON-CONSENT AGENDA

The mayor held a moment of silence for the passing of former Fire Chief Dick Stoolman who passed away on Saturday, June 14, 2025.

Third Reading Ordinance 828 – Amending Chapter 18 – City Clerk. / Move to action.

ORDINANCE NO. 828

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 18 – CITY CLERK

BE IT ENACTED by the City Council of the City of West Branch, Iowa:

Section 1. Amendment. Section 18.01 is hereby amended by deleting it in its entirety and replacing it with the following:

18.01 APPOINTMENT.

The Council shall appoint by majority vote a City Clerk to serve at the discretion of the Council and has the duties, powers, and functions prescribed in this chapter, by State law, and other ordinances of the City.

(Insert new section after current subsection)

18.02 COMPENSATION.

The City Clerk is paid such compensation as specified by resolution of the Council.

Renumber all remaining sections after these changes.

Section 2. Conflicts. All ordinances or parts of ordinances not specifically provided for and in conflict with the provisions of this ordinance are hereby repealed.

Section 3. Adjudication. If any section, provision, or part of this ordinance shall be adjudged to be invalid or unconstitutional, such adjudication shall not affect the validity of the ordinance as a whole or any section, provision or part thereof no adjudged invalid or unconstitutional.

Section 4. Effective Date. This ordinance shall be in full force and effect after its passage, approval and publication as required by law.

Passed and approved this 16th day of June, 2025.

First Reading: May 19, 2025
Second Reading: June 2, 2025
Third Reading: June 16, 2025

Roger Laughlin, Mayor

ATTEST:

Leslie Brick, City Clerk

Motion by Dean, second by Miller to approve the third reading of Ordinance 828. AYES: Dean, Miller, Stoolman, Horihan, Sexton. NAYS: None. Motion carried.

Second Reading Ordinance 829 - Amending Chapter 165 of the Code of Ordinances by incorporating Residential Livability Flexible Front Yard Allowances. / Move to action.

No discussion.

Motion by Dean, second by Miller to approve the second reading of Ordinance 829. AYES: Dean, Miller, Sexton, Horihan. NAYS: Stoolman. Motion carried.

Resolution 2025-67 - Hiring and Appointing Alycia Horras as City Clerk for the City of West Branch and setting the salary for fiscal year 2026. / Move to action.

Kofoed announced Horras and stated that she comes from the City of Keota and was their City Administrator/City Clerk for the past two years. Horras also has over fifteen years of banking experience to contribute to the role. The Council welcomed Horras to her new role.

Motion by Sexton, second by Dean to approve Resolution 2025-67. AYES: Sexton, Dean, Stoolman, Horihan, Miller. NAYS: None. Motion carried.

Resolution 2025-68 – Approving Pay Estimate Number 1 in the amount of \$162,928.26 to Boomerang Corp for the 2025 Cedar-Johnson Road Reconstruction Project. / Move to action.

Sexton asked Schechinger for an update on the project. Schechinger reported that the west side of Cedar-Johnson (between Serenity and Ember Lane has been poured and that the east side is scheduled to be poured on Tuesday. He said Boomerang is moving quickly on the north end of the project but that they ran into a small issue on the south end that they are addressing. Overall, the project is moving along and he said he is happy with their progress.

Motion by Dean, second by Sexton to approve Resolution 2025-68. AYES: Dean, Sexton, Stoolman, Horihan, Miller. NAYS: None. Motion carried.

Resolution 2025-69 – Approving a quote from Motorola Solutions for the purchase of body cameras for the West Branch Police Department. / Move to action.

Chief Hall explained that the department is in need of new body cameras and a grant received from the Cedar County Community Foundation in the amount of \$7,500 will help cover the first year start up fees. Hall said the cameras will use a cloud-based system and that annual cloud fees are approximately \$3000.00 (with a 5-year contract.)

Motion by Dean, second by Horihan to approve Resolution 2025-69. AYES: Dean, Horihan, Miller, Stoolman, Sexton. NAYS: None. Motion carried.

Resolution 2025-70 – Resolution authorizing and approving a certain Loan Agreement, providing for the issuance of \$4,150,000 General Obligation Corporate Purpose Bonds, Series 2025, and providing for the levy of taxes to pay the same. / Move to action.

Motion by Dean, second by Miller to approve Resolution 2025-70. AYES: Dean, Miller, Stoolman, Sexton, Stoolman. NAYS: None. Motion carried.

Resolution 2025-71 – Authorizing the Transfer of Funds. / Move to action.

Van Auken explained that this is an annual process of moving money from fund to fund in order to pay out debt obligations and funding the library (which is done annually each June.)

Motion by Dean, second by Sexton to approve Resolution 2025-71. AYES: Dean, Sexton, Horihan, Miller, Stoolman. NAYS: None. Motion carried.

Resolution 2025-72 - Approving the Workers' Compensation Proposal with Iowa Municipalities Workers' Compensation Association (IMWCA) for Fiscal Year 2026. / Move to action.

Van Auken said this year's proposal was a slight increase (approximately two thousand dollars) over last year. Motion by Dean, second by Sexton to approve Resolution 2025-72. AYES: Dean, Sexton, Stoolman, Miller, Horihan. NAYS: None. Motion carried.

Resolution 2025-73 - Setting Strategic Goals & Priorities for the City of West Branch for 2025 and beyond. / Move to action.

Kofoed stated that he will present the Council goals (as discussed during goal setting) each June for the Council to review and provide direction to himself and staff on various goals and priorities.

Motion by Dean, second by Miller to approve Resolution 2025-73. AYES: Dean, Miller, Horihan, Stoolman, Sexton. NAYS: None. Motion carried.

CITY ADMINISTRATOR REPORT - None

CITY ATTORNEY REPORT - None

CITY ENGINEER REPORT

Schechinger said the Wastewater Treatment Facility project should be ready to be accepted as complete in the next couple of weeks. He also said FEMA has been provided the proof of publication and that they should be giving the City a permit to proceed this week. The project will then be ready to go out to bid.

STAFF REPORTS

Parks & Rec Director Laughlin informed the Council that power is being installed at the green space (Casey's former site) and that it should be ready for use for Hoover's Hometown Days. She also stated that the Park & Rec commission will be tasked with naming the park.

COMMENTS FROM MAYOR AND COUNCIL MEMBERS

Mayor Laughlin stated Summer Kickoff was a success and well attended. He also stated that the Cassabaum project on Beranek Drive is now complete. Horihan gave his condolences to the Stoolman family on the passing of former Fire Chief Dick Stoolman. Dean commented that Baker Ave. (south of town) is taking quite a beating from all of the heavy truck traffic from the I-80 project. Goodale said he is aware and has been discussing with IDOT. He also asked to discuss rebating franchise fees back to the school (at a later date). Dean also informed the Council that the fire department has been extra busy the past couple of weeks with more than 30 calls, some very serious.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn by Miller, second by Sexton. Motion carried on a voice vote. City Council meeting adjourned at 7:48 p.m.

Roger Laughlin, Mayor

ATTEST:

Leslie Brick, City Clerk