

(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**

**October 6, 2025
7:00 p.m.**

Mayor Roger Laughlin called the West Branch City Council regular meeting to order at 6:59 p.m.
Roll call: Council members present; Colton Miller (zoom), Mike Horihan, Jerry Sexton, Tom Dean and Jodee Stoolman.
City Staff present: City Administrator Adam Kofoed, City Clerk Alycia Horras, Finance Officer Heidi Van Auken, Parks and Rec Director Erin Laughlin, City Lawyer Kevin Olsen, and City Engineer Eric Gould.
Attending via Zoom: Deputy Clerk Jessica Brown and Library Director Jessie Schafer

APPROVE THE AGENDA

Motion to Approve the Agenda by Dean, second by Sexton. Motion carried on a voice vote.

APPROVE CONSENT AGENDA

Approve minutes from the September 15, 2025 City Council meeting.
Approve the submission of the Annual Street Finance Report for FY25
Approve the Monthly Financial Report for July 2025
Approve Claims for October 6, 2025.

EXPENDITURES		10/6/2025	
AMAZON.COM	VARIOUS ITEMS - LIB	121.73	
BARNHART'S CUSTOM SERVICES	NUISANCE ABATEMENT	1,575.00	
BOOMERANG CORP	CEDAR JOHNSON RD PAY EST 4	844,850.72	
CODEWORK	SOFTWARE NEW LICENSES- LIBRARY	831.60	
CROELL	SIDEWALK REPAIR	720.00	
FRIIS, ALCIA	MILEAGE TO CDR CTY - FRIIS	25.20	
GOERDT INSPECTION	BLDG INSPECTIONS	1,840.00	
IA DEPT OF PUBLIC SAFETY	WARRANTS & ARTICLES SYSTEM	1,200.00	
IA MUNICIPAL FIN OFFICERS	IMFOA REGISTRATION - FRIIS	225.00	
KOFOED, ADAM	TRAINING MILEAGE - KOFOED	172.20	
MUNICIPAL SUPPLY	WATER METER ANNUAL FEE	7,375.00	
PLUNKETT'S PEST CONTROL	PEST CONTROL - LIBRARY	50.00	
STATE INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTS	CHEMICALS	257.89	
STERICYCLE	SHREDDING SERVICES	194.70	
THE HOME DEPOT	PARK TRASH BAGS - P&R	<u>37.75</u>	
TOTAL		859,476.79	
PAYROLL-WAGES, TAXES, EMPLOYEE BENEFITS		9/26/2025	69,310.52
PAID BETWEEN MEETINGS			
ALLIANT ENERGY	ALLIANT ENERGY	22,792.96	
AMAZON.COM	VARIOUS ITEMS - LIBRARY, P&R	1,162.31	
BAKER & TAYLOR	BOOKS	72.61	
BOUND TREE MEDICAL	MEDICAL SUPPLIES - FIRE	236.79	
CAPITAL ONE	VARIOUS ITEMS - LIBRARY	232.63	
CJ COOPER & ASSOCIATES	PREEMPLOYMENT TEST - PW	75.00	
CULLIGAN	WATER SOFTENER SERVICE	30.49	
HATFIELD CONCRETE	SIDEWALK CROSSING/REPAIR	2,900.00	
IOWA ONE CALL	UTILITY LOCATION SERVICES	105.30	
KANOPY	ON DEMAND VIDEO SERVICE	26.00	
LIBERTY COMMUNICATIONS	LIBERTY COMMUNICATIONS	1,620.67	
LINN COUNTY R.E.C.	STREET LIGHTS	310.75	
LRS HOLDINGS	TRASH & RECYCLING, TRASH STICKERS	20,637.50	
LYNCH'S EXCAVATING	CEDAR JOHNSON RD MEADOWS CONNECT	10,555.16	
MISCELLANEOUS VENDOR	P&R SPORTS REFUND	75.00	
OFFICE EXPRESS	OFFICE SUPPLIES - CLERK	67.98	
OLSON, KEVIN D	LEGAL SERVICES SEPTEMBER 2025	1,500.00	
OVERDRIVE	DIGITAL & AUDIO BOOKS	596.30	
PARKSIDE SERVICE	FLAT TIRE REPAIR - PW, PD	88.04	
PLUNKETT'S PEST CONTROL	PEST CONTROL - TH, CLERK, TH	164.54	
PYRAMID SERVICES	CEMETERY EQUIP MAINT - PW	807.71	
TYLER TECHNOLOGIES	PAYROLL TRAINING - FRIIS	925.00	
UNIVERSITY OF IOWA HEALTH	DRUG TEST - PW	21.00	
USA BLUE BOOK	MARKING FLAGS FOR SEWER - PW	2,598.90	

VEENSTRA & KIMM	VARIOUS PROJECTS	35,448.95
WB COMMUNITY SCHOOL	INDOOR ACTIVITIES - P&R	320.00
WEST BRANCH REPAIRS	BATTERY REPLACE - FIRE	616.85
WEST BRANCH TIMES	LEGAL PUBLICATIONS	485.80
WEX BANK	VEHICLE FUEL	1,393.13
ACTION SEWER & SEPTIC	JETTING SAGR CELLS - PW	474.00
AMAZON.COM	VARIOUS ITEMS - LIBRARY, P&R	989.15
CASSABAUM, LEE & PATRICIA	LAND PURCHASE - FINAL PAYMENT	4,750.00
CURTIS L CASPER	LAWN MOWING - NUISANCE	75.00
DIAMOND VOGEL	STREET PAINT	872.50
DIRK WIENEKE	CUBBY & LIONS LAWN CARE-P&R	2,490.00
ELITE HOLDING	YOUTH VBALL SHIRTS - P&R	701.50
HAWKINS	CHEMICALS	4,121.69
KIESLER POLICE SUPPLY	AMMUNITION INSTR. SCHOOL - PD	1,317.95
L. L. PELLING	ST SEALCOAT & 1/3 CEMETERY RD	74,697.02
MPEC	OIL - PW	83.04
NOEL AUTOMOTIVE	VEHICLE BODY REPAIR - POLICE	470.50
OVERDRIVE	DIGITAL & AUDIO BOOKS- LIBRARY	338.44
STATE HYGIENIC LAB	LAB ANALYSIS	1,833.00
STATE INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTS	BUG PRODUCTS - P&R	113.18
US BANK CORPORATE CARD	CREDIT CARD PURCHASES	7,099.37
BAKER & TAYLOR	BOOKS	146.42
BI-STATE REGIONAL COMM	MAC MEETING - KOFOED	17.04
JOHN DEERE FINANCIAL	SUPPLIES - PW	523.94
L. L. PELLING	NATURE TRAIL RESURFACING-P&R	17,234.50
MEDIACOM	CABLE SERVICES	41.90
MENARDS	VARIOUS ITEMS - PW, P&R	115.30
VERIZON WIRELESS	VERIZON WIRELESS	424.71
CARDCONNECT	ANNUAL COMPLIANCE SERVICE FEE	219.00
SISCO	HEALTH CLAIMS 9-15-2025	406.03
SISCO	HEALTH CLAIMS 9-22-2025	133.47
UMB BANK N.A.	BOND FEE GO 2023	600.00
METLIFE	INSURANCE PREMIUM	2,324.12
SISCO	INSURANCE PREMIUM	<u>15,517.61</u>
TOTAL		243,997.75
GRAND TOTAL EXPENDITURES		1,172,785.06
FUND TOTALS		
001 GENERAL FUND	135,898.76	
022 CIVIC CENTER	967.78	
031 LIBRARY	10,337.31	
110 ROAD USE TAX	48,798.58	
112 TRUST AND AGENCY	29,431.64	
226 DEBT SERVICE	600.00	
321 WIDENING WAPSI CREEK	5,632.95	
326 ROUNDABOUT MAIN & CEDAR	28,400.00	
331 CEDAR JOHNSON RD	855,405.88	
600 WATER FUND	34,004.63	
610 SEWER FUND	22,377.78	
614 WASTEWATER LIFT STATION	245.00	
740 STORM WATER UTILITY	684.75	
GRAND FUND TOTAL	1,172,785.06	
REVENUE-FISCAL YEAR 2025		
FUND JULY		
001 GENERAL FUND	53,483.73	
022 CIVIC CENTER	330.00	
031 LIBRARY	132.00	
036 TORT LIABILITY	429.33	
110 ROAD USE TAX	27,409.43	
112 TRUST & AGENCY	5,063.32	
121 LOCAL OPTION SALES TAX	31,926.53	
125 TIF	2,479.25	
226 DEBT SERVICE	2,314.35	
300 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT RESERVE	572.43	
331 CEDAR JOHNSON RD RECON	3,529,500.00	
332 W MAIN ST IMPROVEMENT	520,774.70	
500 CEMETERY PERPETUAL FUND	360.00	
600 WATER FUND	77,005.66	
610 SEWER FUND	100,271.22	
740 STORM WATER UTILITY	<u>6,390.74</u>	
TOTAL	4,358,442.69	

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 -

DVIP – Domestic Violence Proclamation that October is Domestic Violence Intervention Awareness Month. There are 8 to 12 clients per month from the West Branch area that reach out for DVIP services. Some of the issues are lack of transportation, price of gas, affordable housing and lawyer fees. West Branch does a great job of taking care of its own. The housing coordinator works with West Branch Village and some private landlords to help with housing. Affordable housing for the Iowa City area would amount to \$700 - \$1200 a month with very few available under \$1000.00. How can West Branch help with the efforts? By getting the word out and sharing knowledge of having the DVIP services connect with them.

PUBLIC HEARING / NON-CONSENT AGENDA

Public Hearing – Request for Proposals for Audit Services for Fiscal Years 2026 thru 2028.

Mayor Laughlin called the Public Hearing to order at 7:07pm. Finance Officer Van Auken shared that late August 2025 requests were sent out to various vendors to request information and quotes for annual audit services for the FY 2026, 2027 and 2028. Our current contract ends with the completion of the audit for FY 2025. Deadline to submit this information by sealed envelope was Friday, October 3, 2025 at 2:00pm. We received 2 RFPs at that time.

With no questions or comments, the Public Hearing was closed by the Mayor at 7:09pm.

Public Hearing – Proposed Development Agreement with Parkside Partners.

Mayor Laughlin called the Public Hearing to order at 7:09pm.

Faye Goodspeed shared a letter that she wrote to the council urging them to reconsider the current plan stating that there were concerns of lack of resources for this big of a development with our emergency services teams. She shared concerns of the pressure this addition would put on our current infrastructure such as the water system and if we were ready for that. She shared that our medical facility, Food Pantry and School Operations would all be overloaded with the addition of 200 rental units and 500-600 more people added to the community.

Michael Bayer shared that when he purchased his home (321 Elm St), 2 years ago, there was an assisted living area that was planned to be across from the development. He is concerned that with the current plan has a major lack of green space, the TIF agreement of 75% payout for 20 years is concerning looking at comparable data and there is a significant concern with the traffic flow for an additional 500 to 600 people within this area coming in and out every day. He shared that there will be a need for traffic control at Elm Street and Downey. Michael is incredibly concerned that the property values of those that purchased homes in the area will drop significantly with 200 rental units coming in. The original plat also showed a grocery store and this would be needed with the addition of this many people to the community.

JoAnn Armbruster shared that since she moved into the area 2 years ago, the area (327 Elm St), has been deemed a Slum and Blight area and now has a development of 200 rentals going in to significantly increase the traffic and a clear lack of green space for the area. JoAnn has a real concern for the resale of her home and the loss of value in this area. She shared her concern for the parking and roadside parking in the area as well. Mayor Laughlin shared that he doesn't believe that the Parkside plan that is under discussion would result in a slum area. He shared that the units will have the required 2 parking spaces per unit. The Public Hearing was called for adjournment by the Mayor at 7:24pm.

Public Hearing – Proposed Development Agreement with Forza Enterprises, LLC

Mayor Laughlin called the Public Hearing to order at 7:24pm.

Forrest Brown spoke about his plans with the automobile dealership located at 205 Tidewater Drive. Browns currently has approximately 200 employees within it's 5 locations. There are 2 locations in West Branch, 1 in Elkader and one in Guttenberg with Victory Ford in Dyersville. The new development would combine Ford and Chrysler into the location at Tidewater Drive. After looking

at other areas, they chose to stay in the West Branch area and redevelop the property at Tidewater Drive. Daughter, Raegan is working at this location now and learning to grow within the business as well. There are currently 30 employees working for Brown's West Branch and this expansion would increase their team to 60 when they are at full capacity. The Browns believe that it is important to give back to the community and last year for their 60th Anniversary they challenged themselves to raise \$60,000.00 to give back to the communities they serve. They ended up raising \$65,000.00 and the services in WB that received a large donation from that fundraiser was the WB Food Pantry and WB Fire Department. The Browns have also purchased two Level 3 Rapid Chargers that will fully charge a vehicle within 20 – 60 minutes depending on the level of charge it has. These chargers will be beneficial to the community and those traveling on the interstate, as they choose to utilize them within WB, bringing them into our community as well. Last year Browns retailed approximately 800 vehicles and they are looking to almost double that with their expansion. Mayor Laughlin closed the Public Hearing at 7:33pm.

Resolution 2025-108 Approving Development Agreement with Forza Enterprises, LLC/ Move to Action

Councilperson Stoolman shared that she would be no vote to this resolution and agreement. She thanked the Browns for their commitment to the community, but shared that she was a no vote due to the amount of TIF offered with this agreement. She didn't agree with residential developers, such as Parkside Partners receiving a rebate of 75% TIF and Brown's only receiving 25%.

Motion by Sexton, second by Dean to approve Resolution 2025-108. AYES: Sexton, Dean, Horihan, Miller. NAYS: Stoolman. Motion carried.

Resolution 2025-112 Approval of Final Site Plan for Brown's Dealership – Forza Enterprises / Move to Action.

- Motion by Dean, second by Horihan to approve Resolution 2025-112. AYES: Dean, Horihan, Miller, Stoolman, Sexton. NAYS: None. Motion carried.

Resolution 2025-107 Approving A Service for Annual Audit RDF / Move to Action.

Motion by Dean, second by Sexton to TABLE Resolution 2025-107. Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

Resolution 2025-95 Approving A Developer's Agreement with Parkside Partners, LLC, Including Tax Increment Rebate Payments / Move to Action –

Mayor Laughlin stated that when he was on the P&Z Commission from the 90's to 2015, this area was laid out to be a multi-family housing area. That is the reason for his strong support of the project. With Work Force Housing Tax Credits, this allows the ability to cut the payoff time of the TIF obligation to the developer, drastically. Councilperson Horihan shared that he never considered the area to be slum and blight, it was just undeveloped. The agreement with the previous developer was 75% TIF over 10 years and now we are at 75% TIF over 20 years. The water system will need to be expanded and this will rush that expansion significantly. He is not in support of the TIF agreement with this project. Council person Dean shared that we went for 2 years with no building permits causing no raises for department heads, no public works replacement hired and when city hall was being closed due to mold, the city had to borrow \$250,000.00 to build the current building we are in today. The current amount of Work Force Housing Tax Credits received between Heritage Hill and the Parkside developments are \$3.5million and BBCO has paid approximately \$400,000.00 to contractors that were left without payment from the previous developer of this area. Councilperson Stoolman asked where the difference from the 75% TIF payout that is in the agreement, to the reduction to make it 48% after all the WFH tax credits? She asked what is the long term maintenance plan? What is the plan to increase the funds needed for increasing our infrastructure to support the huge addition of homes and residents? City Lawyer Olsen explained briefly, about the WFH Tax Credit process. The IEDA awards these credits. Developers are awarded \$1million in credits and then the developer sells that credit to someone, like a bank for instance to be able to utilize the credit. The developer makes money off of the sale of this credit and then they can utilize those funds however they would like. This option of WFH tax credit has to be reapplied for each year to continue to get the benefit of that additional income and continued rebate to the city.

Motion by Dean, second by Sexton to approve Resolution 2025-95. AYES: Dean, Sexton, Miller. NAYS: Horihan, Stoolman. Motion carried.

Third Reading and Adoption – Ordinance 831 – Amending Chapter 92 – Water Rates. / Move to Action.

ORDINANCE NO. 831

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 92 – WATER RATES

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

1. **Amendment.** Section 92.05.04 and 92.10, is hereby amended by deleting it in its entirety and replacing it with the following:

92.05 SERVICE DISCONTINUED.

Water service to delinquent customers shall be discontinued or disconnected in accordance with the following:

(Code of Iowa, Sec. 384.84)

1. Notice. The billing clerk shall notify each delinquent customer that service will be discontinued or disconnected if payment of the combined service account, including late payment charges, is not received by the date specified in the notice of delinquency. Such notice shall be sent by ordinary mail to the customer in whose name the delinquent charges were incurred and shall inform the customer of the nature of the delinquency and afford the customer the opportunity for a hearing prior to the discontinuance or disconnection.
2. Notice to Landlords. If the customer is a tenant, and if the owner or landlord of the property or premises has made a written request for notice, the notice of delinquency shall also be given to the owner or landlord. If the customer is a tenant and requests a change of name for service under the account, such request shall be sent to the owner or landlord of the property if the owner or landlord has made a written request for notice of any change of name for service under the account to the rental property.
3. Hearing. If a hearing is requested by noon of the day preceding the shut off, the City Administrator shall conduct an informal hearing and shall make a determination as to whether the discontinuance or disconnection is justified. The customer has the right to appeal the City Administrator's decision to the Council, and if the Council finds that discontinuance or disconnection is justified, then such discontinuance or disconnection shall be made, unless payment has been received.
4. Fees. A fee of \$50.00 shall be charged before service is restored to a delinquent customer account during normal business hours. No fee shall be charged for the usual or customary trips in the regular changes in occupancies of property.

92.10 TEMPORARY VACANCY.

Water service may be severed upon notice to the Superintendent or other authorized person whenever the premises is to be unoccupied, and if the premises is unoccupied for more than one month, a proportionate reduction on the minimum charge for water service will be allowed.

2. **Conflicts.** All ordinances or parts of ordinances not specifically provided for and in conflict with the provisions of this ordinance are hereby repealed.
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 not adjudged invalid or unconstitutional.
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 on the 6th day of October, 2025.

First Reading: September 15, 2025

Second Reading: October 6, 2025

Third Reading: October 6, 2025

Roger Laughlin, Mayor

ATTEST:

Alycia Horras, City Clerk

Motion to Waive the 2nd Reading of Ordinance 831 – Amending Chapter 92 by Miller, second by Horihan.

AYES: Miller, Horihan, Stoolman, Dean. NAYS: None. Motion carried.

Motion by Dean, second by Sexton to approve and adopt Ordinance 831 – Amending Chapter 92. AYES: Dean, Sexton, Horihan, Stoolman, Miller. NAYS: None. Motion Carried.

Second Reading – Ordinance 832 – Amending Chapter 55 – Animal Protection and Control / Move to Action

Motion by Sexton, second by Miller to approve the Second Reading of Ordinance 832 – Amending Chapter 55. AYES: Sexton, Miller, Stoolman, Horihan. NAYS: Dean. Motion carried.

Resolution 2025-109 Amending the City of WB Schedule of Fees / Move to Action.

Removing the verbiage and fee for after hours reconnection, with the adoption of the amendment to Ordinance 831 – Chapter 92.

Motion by Dean, second by Sexton to approve Resolution 2025-109. AYES: Dean, Sexton, Miller, Stoolman, Horihan. NAYS: None. Motion carried.

Resolution 2025-110 Approving Change Order Number 3 in the amount of \$1,500.00 to the contract with Boomerang Corp for the 2025 Cedar-Johnson Road Reconstruction Project. / Move to Action -

Motion by Dean, second by Sexton to approve Resolution 2025-110. AYES: Dean, Sexton, Stoolman, Miller, Horihan. NAYS: None. Motion carried.

Resolution 2025-111 Approval of Invoice 10782 and 10783 from Barnhart's Custom Services, LLC for dirt hauled from the Cedar-Johnson Road Project / Move to Action.

Motion by Sexton, second by Dean to approve Resolution 2025-111. AYES: Sexton, Dean, Stoolman, Miller, Horihan. NAYS: None. Motion carried.

Resolution 2025-113 Approving Pay Estimate Number 5 in the amount of \$341,044.03 to Boomerang Corp for the 2025 Cedar-Johnson Road Reconstruction Project. / Move to Action

Motion by Sexton, second by Dean to approve Resolution 2025-113. AYES: Sexton, Dean, Horihan, Miller, Stoolman. NAYS: None. Motion carried.

Discussion – None

CITY ADMINISTRATOR REPORT – A lot of increased comraderies in the city office and showing that the team is growing together.

CITY ATTORNEY REPORT – None

CITY ENGINEER REPORT – The Cedar-Johnson Road project is close to all pavement work. The area by Serenity is all formed up and ready. They have Orange Street tied in completely, it is just not open yet. They are working to complete a few more things to avoid heavy traffic issues in this area. Mayor Laughlin asked about the seeding and Schechinger shared that the developers usually put down permanent seed to set over the fall and winter. They will see how it did and comeback to overseed if needed in the Spring.

Wapsi Creek widening – They started on the south end of the creek widening project today. They will cross over where the old sale barn was and use Barnhart's area to move back and forth.

STAFF REPORTS -None

COMMENTS FROM MAYOR AND COUNCIL MEMBERS – Mayor Laughlin stated that they needed to schedule a special meeting in order to have a closed session for the city admins annual evaluation. Tuesday, October 14th was agreed upon so that all council persons and the mayor can be present. This will be held at 5:30pm that evening. Council person Horihan shared that there was a major accident along the interstate last week. The Wbfd was already dispatched to an incident in Downey and the Wbpd responded to the call. A dump truck struck a road worker and the victim was bleeding out. Police Chief Hall and Sargent Steen worked with the victim and were able to put a tourniquet on the wound to allow time to get to the hospital for care, which saved this individuals life. He shared his gratitude for the job they did and continue to do each day. Horihan also stated that some areas are sending PD officers to some EMR training to help with first response work. This is something we could look into and discuss in the future.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn by Sexton, second by Miller. Motion carried on a voice vote. City Council meeting adjourned at 8:14 p.m.

Roger Laughlin, Mayor

ATTEST:

Alycia Friis, City Clerk