

*(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

November 17, 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; Colton Miller , Mike Horihan, Jerry Sexton, and Jodee Stoolman. Tom Dean was present by zoom for part of the meeting. Incoming Council member Chantry Noel.

City Staff present: City Administrator Adam Kofoed, City Clerk Alycia Horras, Public Works Director Matt Goodale, Finance Officer Heidi Van Auken, Parks and Rec Director Erin Laughlin, Library Director Jessie Schafer, City Lawyer Kevin Olsen, and City Engineer Dave Schechinger.  
Attending via Zoom: Deputy Clerk Jessica Brown, Police Sargent Cathy Steen,

APPROVE THE AGENDA

Motion to Approve the Agenda by Miller, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Sexton. Motion carried on a voice vote.

APPROVE CONSENT AGENDA

Approve minutes from the November 3, 2025 City Council meeting.  
Approve Claims for November 17, 2025.  
Approve Class C Retail Liquor License for the Down Under, 102 W Main St, Ste. 2 (Pending Passing Inspection)

EXPENDITURES 11/17/2025		
AMAZON.COM	VARIOUS ITEMS - LIBRARY, P&R	278.57
BEAN & BEAN	GRAVE OPENING	1,400.00
CY'S TREE SERVICE	TREE REMOVAL	27,500.00
HAWKINS INC.	CHEMICALS	3,788.74
IA LAW ENFORCEMENT ACAD	RYAN FIREARMS SCHOOL	1,250.00
KANOPY	ON DEMAND VIDEO SERVICE	29.00
KIMS CUSTOM PAINTING	PAINTING CLASS	225.00
LEAF CAPITAL FUNDING	COPIER LEASE - LIBRARY	142.02
LIBERTY COMMUNICATIONS	LIBERTY COMMUNICATIONS	1,634.66
LINN COUNTY R.E.C.	STREET LIGHTS	327.87
MOPPY MO'S	JANITORIAL SERVICES - LIBRARY	455.00
PARKSIDE SERVICE	TIRE REPAIR-PW	284.43
SISCO	HEALTH CLAIMS PD 11-10-2025	107.04
USA TODAY	ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION	400.35
WB COMMUNITY SCHOOL	VOLLEYBALL PRACTICE	300.00
	TOTAL	38,122.68
PAYROLL-WAGES, TAXES, EMPLOYEE BENEFITS 11/7/2025		60,497.76
PAID BETWEEN MEETINGS		
ALATORRE	WINDOW CLEANING - CITY	86.00
ALLIANT ENERGY	ALLIANT ENERGY	18,777.01
ALTORFER	SKIDLOADER REPAIR - PW	1,793.24
AMAZON.COM	BOOK - LIBRARY	433.87
ARNOLD MOTOR SUPPLY	SHOP SUPPLIES - PW	19.58
CEDAR COUNTY RECORDER	RECORDING FEES	58.00
CEDAR COUNTY TREASURER	CASSABAUM LAND TAXES	85.00
E O JOHNSON	COPIER MAINTENANCE - CITY	186.37
IMWCA	IMWCA FY26 INSTALLMENT 5	3,768.00
IOWA RURAL WATER ASSOC.	DUES 1-1-26 TO 12-31-26	415.00
LRS HOLDINGS	TRASH & RECYCLING OCT 2025	20,067.50
MACQUEEN EQUIPMENT	HURCO VAC TRAILER - PW	68,500.00
MOPPY MO'S	CLEANING SERVICES - POLICE	595.00
MUNICIPAL SUPPLY	WATER METERS	17,057.50
OFFICE EXPRESS	OFFICE SUPPLIES - CLERK	35.98
PROTECT YOUTH SPORTS	BACKGROUND CHECKS - P&R	92.00
QUILL	OFFICE SUPPLIES - CITY	54.78
RACOM CORPORATION	CAMERA ANTENAS	1,690.00
SCHAFER, JESSICA	MILEAGE REIMBURSMENT-SCHAFER	40.60
VEENSTRA & KIMM	VARIOUS PROJECTS	51,816.96
WEX BANK	VEHICLE FUEL	1,789.97
SISCO	HEALTH CLAIMS 11-3-2025	56.00
SISCO	HEALTH CLAIMS 11-10-2025	107.04
VARIOUS VENDORS	UB REFUNDS	120.08
	TOTAL	187,645.48
GRAND TOTAL EXPENDITURES		286,265.92
FUND TOTALS		
001 GENERAL FUND	118587.68	
022 CIVIC CENTER	729.28	
031 LIBRARY	7173.44	
110 ROAD USE TAX	25902.5	
112 TRUST AND AGENCY	13916.37	
321 WIDENING WAPSI CREEK	12467.8	
331 CEDAR JOHNSON RD RECON	27623.1	
600 WATER FUND	44217.85	
610 SEWER FUND	35172.61	
740 STORM WATER UTILITY	475.29	
GRAND FUND TOTAL	286265.92	

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

PRESENTATIONS / COMMUNICATIONS / OPEN FORUM -

Forest Brown shared his experience leading up to the approval of the building contract, the misunderstanding of the max payout amount over the 10 year period. His concern wasn’t about the 25% amount of the TIF Rebate, it was about the cap of \$101,000.00 that was placed on it. The council stated that it was in line with the Dental Office that received the same amount of rebate. Forest’s concern was that the building he is constructing has a value of \$3.2million where the other building was approximately \$1million. The valuation is a percentage and should have a higher cap. At the current rate, the TIF rebate will be capped out within around 3 ½ years vs the full 10 years. He is asking for a reconsideration of a higher cap to allow for a rebate for the full 10 year period.

PUBLIC HEARING / NON-CONSENT AGENDA

Third Reading Ordinance 833 -/- Move to Action.

ORDINANCE NO. 833

AN ORDINANCE PROVIDING THAT GENERAL PROPERTY TAXES LEVIED AND COLLECTED EACH YEAR ON PARCELS LOCATED ON LOT 1, PEDERSEN VALLEY, PART ONE; LOT 28, THE MEADOWS SUBDIVISON, PART 4B AND VARIOUS LOTS IN THE PARKSIDE HILLS DEVELOPMENT IN THE CITY OF WEST BRANCH, COUNTY OF CEDAR, STATE OF IOWA, BY AND FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE STATE OF IOWA, CITY OF WEST BRANCH, COUNTY OF CEDAR, WEST BRANCH COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT, AND OTHER TAXING DISTRICTS, BE PAID TO A SPECIAL FUND FOR PAYMENT OF PRINCIPAL AND INTEREST ON LOANS, MONIES ADVANCED TO AND INDEBTEDNESS, INCLUDING BONDS ISSUED OR TO BE ISSUED, INCURRED BY SAID CITY IN CONNECTION WITH SAID WEST BRANCH URBAN RENEWAL AREA.

WHEREAS, KBH Holdings, LLC and the City of West Branch entered into that certain development agreement for the construction of an urban renewal project located on Lot 1, Pedersen Valley, Part One, West Branch, Iowa, (the “KBH Property”); and

WHEREAS, KLM Investments, LLC and the City of West Branch entered into that certain development agreement for the construction of a project located in the Meadows Subdivision, Parts 4A and 4B, West Branch, Iowa, namely upon Lot 28, The Meadows Subdivision, Part 4B, West Branch, Iowa (the “Meadows Property”); and

WHEREAS, Parkside Partners, LLC and the City of West Branch entered into that certain development agreement for the construction of an urban renewal project on the following parcels:

1. Lots 4 through 8, 10 and 13, Parkside Hills, West Branch; Cedar County, Iowa;
2. Lots 1 and 2, Parkside Hills Second Addition, West Branch, Cedar County, Iowa;
3. Lots 1 through 28, Parkside Hills Third Addition, West Branch, Cedar County, Iowa;
4. Lots 1 through 16, Parkside Hills Fourth Addition, West Branch, Cedar County, Iowa;
5. Units 1 through 12 of Parkside 24 Residential Condominiums, 202 Sycamore Drive, to West Branch, Cedar County, Iowa, as shown in Book 1742 at Page 305 in the Cedar County Recorder’s Office and a 1/24th interest in the common elements; and
6. Units 1 through 12 of Parkside 24 Residential Condominiums, 204 Sycamore Drive to West Branch, Cedar County, Iowa, as shown in Book 1742 at Page 305 in the Cedar County Recorder’s Office and a 1/24th interest in the common elements;
7. Units 101, 103, 105, 107, 109, 111, 113, 115, 117, 119, 310, 312, 314, 316, 320, 322, 324, 326, 328, 330, 332 and 334, of Parkside Hills Condominiums to West Branch, Cedar County, Iowa, according to the Declaration of Submission of Property to Horizontal Property Regime pursuant to Chapter 499B of the Code of Iowa, recorded in Book 1690 at Page 18 in the Cedar County Recorder’s Office, together with said units undivided interest in the common elements.

(collectively the “Parkside Hills Properties”); and

WHEREAS, the KBH Property, the Meadows Property and Parkside Properties are located in the West Branch Urban Renewal Area; and

WHEREAS, indebtedness has been incurred by the City, and additional indebtedness is anticipated to be incurred in the future, to finance urban renewal project activities within the West Branch Urban Renewal Area, and the continuing needs of redevelopment of the Property within the West Branch Urban Renewal Area are such as to require the continued application of the incremental tax resources of the West Branch Urban Renewal Area; and

WHEREAS, the following enactment is necessary to accomplish the objectives described in the premises.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WEST BRANCH, IOWA, THAT:

Section 1: The taxes levied against the KBH Property and the Parkside Properties by and for the benefit of the State of Iowa, City of West Branch, County of Cedar, West Branch Community School District, and all other taxing districts from and after the effective date of this Ordinance shall be divided as hereinafter in this Ordinance provided.

Section 2: As to the KBH Property and the Parkside Properties, that portion of the taxes which would be produced by the rate at which the tax is levied each year by and for each of the taxing districts taxing the Property in the West Branch Urban Renewal Area upon the total sum of the assessed value of Property, being the first day of the calendar year preceding the effective date of this Ordinance, that date being January 1, 2024, shall be allocated to and when collected be paid into a fund for the respective taxing district as taxes by or for said taxing district into which all other property taxes are paid. The taxes so determined may be referred to herein as the “base period taxes.”

Section 3: That portion of the taxes each year in excess of base period taxes for the KBH Property and Parkside Properties shall be allocated to and when collected be paid into the special tax increment fund previously established by the City of West Branch to pay the principal of and interest on loans, monies advanced to, or indebtedness, whether funded, refunded, assumed or otherwise, including bonds issued under authority of Section 403.9 or Section 403.12 of the Code of Iowa, incurred by the City of West Branch, Iowa to finance or refinance, in whole or in part, urban renewal projects undertaken within the West Branch Urban Renewal Area pursuant to the Urban Renewal Plan, as amended.

Section 4: At such time as the loans, monies advanced, bonds and interest thereon and indebtedness of the City of West Branch referred to in Section 3 hereof have been paid, or the City has provided for the division of taxes for a total of twenty (20) fiscal years for the KBH Property and Meadows Property, or at such time as the indebtedness of the City of West Branch referred to in Section 3 have been paid as it pertains to the Parkside Properties, all monies thereafter received from taxes upon the Property shall be paid into the funds for the respective taxing districts in the same manner as taxes on all other property.

Section 5: All ordinances or parts of ordinances in conflict with the provisions of this Ordinance are hereby repealed. In the event that any provision of this Ordinance shall be determined to be contrary to law it shall not affect other provisions or application of this Ordinance which shall at all times be construed to fully invoke the provisions of Section 403.19 of the Code of Iowa with reference to the West Branch Urban Renewal Area and the territory contained therein.

Section 6: This Ordinance shall be in effect after its final passage, approval and publication as provided by law.

First Reading: October 20, 2025

Second Reading: November 3, 2025

Third Reading: November 17, 2025

Passed and approved this 17 day of November, 2025.

Roger Laughlin, Mayor

ATTEST:

Alycia Friis, City Clerk

Motion by Miller, second by Sexton to approve the Third Reading and Adoption of Ordinance 833. AYES: Miller, Sexton, Horihan, Stoolman, Miller. NAYS: None. Motion Carried.

Resolution 2025-120 Approving the submission of the City of West Branch FY25 Annual Financial Report to the State Auditor's Office./ Move to Action.

Van Auken shared a brief comparison of the Fiscal Year 2024 and Fiscal Year 2025 areas of difference in the report to council, highlighting items such as the FD air packs that were replaced, snow removal was double the expense this year due to weather, and 55% increase in expenses related to the sewer department due to wages and primarily the increase in electricity with the sewer project.

Motion by Miller, second by Sexton to approve Resolution 2025-120. AYES: Miller, Sexton, Dean, Stoolman, Horihan,. NAYS: None. Motion carried.

Resolution 2025-121 Directing the Finance Officer to certify Tax Increment Financing Debt to the Cedar County Auditor./ Move to Action

Motion by Miller, second by Sexton to approve Resolution 2025-121. AYES: Miller, Sexton, Stoolman, Horihan, Dean. NAYS: None. Motion carried.

Resolution 2025-122 Approving the submission of the City of West Branch FY25 Annual Urban Renewal Report./ Move to Action.

Motion by Miller, second by Sexton to approve Resolution 2025-122. AYES: Miller, Sexton, Horihan, Stoolman, Dean. NAYS: None. Motion carried.

Resolution 2025-123 Approving Pay Estimate #1 in the amount of \$124,909.08 to PCI for the 2025 Channel Widening Flood Improvements Project./ Move to Action.

Motion by Miller, second by Horihan to approve Resolution 2025-123. AYES: Miller, Horihan, Stoolman, Dean, Sexton. NAYS: None. Motion carried

Resolution 2025-124 Approving Pay Estimate #6 in the Amount of \$186,750.08 to Boomerang Corp for the 2025 Cedar-Johnson Road Recon Project./ Move to Action.

Motion by Sexton, second by Miller to approve Resolution 2025-124. AYES: Sexton, Miller, Dean, Stoolman, Horihan. NAYS: None. Motion carried

Resolution 2025-125 Approving Change Order #4 in the Amount of \$11,300.00 to Boomerang Corp for the 2025 Cedar-Johnson Road Recon Project./ Move to Action.

Engineer Schechinger shared that the project overall is tracking to about 95% of the project bid and that even with the change orders, there have been a few areas that have come in lower to keep the project on track.

Motion by Miller, second by Horihan to approve Resolution 2025-125. AYES: Miller, Horihan, Stoolman, Dean, Sexton. NAYS: None. Motion carried

Resolution 2025-126 Amending the Employee Handbook (Amendment #6)./ Move to Action.

City Clerk Friis shared a proposal with the Council that would allow the staff to add back the day following Thanksgiving to the Holiday Leave schedule for city department closings. In March Admin. Kofoed brought a proposal to add Juneteenth to the Holiday Leave schedule and the council would approve that if another day was removed to allow a swap. The staff was not properly communicated with and a decision was made to remove the day after Thanksgiving from the Holiday Leave schedule. This day is a high travel day, family get together day and overall, a day that was very important to 95% of the staff. It was stated that the council had no problem with adding Juneteenth and keeping the day after Thanksgiving on the Holiday Leave schedule if there was something else removed such as another holiday or benefit times such as vacation or sick time for an even trade of an additional 8 hour holiday.

The proposal that Clerk Friis shared with the council for their consideration was to remove .19 hours of accumulation of their sick time benefit for each pay period to then reduce the overall annual sick leave accumulation by 5 hours each year in exchange for adding back the day after Thanksgiving to the Holiday Leave schedule. Previously the council had a strong stand on not just adding the day back, but would consider a trade, so this was a way to compromise and give other benefit time off, back to the city. There were several minutes of heated discussion on the topic with some inaccurate information shared by Council person Dean as to what is actually in the handbook for descriptions of each of these time off benefits and discussion about reducing the biweekly accumulation of sick leave for each employee by .31 hours instead to equal a full 8.06 hours annually from the employees sick leave accumulation in exchange for the day after Thanksgiving to be added back to the Holiday Leave schedule by other council members. Mayor Laughlin called for a vote on the original proposal to move forward in our meeting.

Motion by Horihan, second by Stoolman to approve Resolution 2025-126. AYES: Stoolman, Horihan. NAYS: Miller, Sexton. No Vote Given by Council member Dean. Motion Failed.

Council person Dean left the meeting at 8:17pm.

**Discussion/Move to Action –**

Land Lark members discussed the next step of giving back 9.33 acres of area to the city. This includes Outlot B, Part 6; Outlot A, Part 6; Outlot B, Part 4A; Outlot A, Part 4B. Previously the council had requested better care of the areas to remove ruts and areas that wouldn't allow the current city equipment to be able to mow and maintain the area before taking this over. In conversation it was shared by the Mayor and Council that there was still concern of this throughout areas of the Outlots and the request was to mow/maintain the area through the Winter and into a few cuttings in the Spring before the City takes ownership. Land Lark shared their concern with this and are asking the Council to reconsider this to allow them to Quit Claim Deed the area to the city to be done with this part of their project, sharing all the things that they have provided to the city throughout this project.

**CITY ADMINISTRATOR REPORT –** Administrator Kofoed shared an apology with the residents, guests at the Council meeting and staff for the meeting, stating it was the by far the worst meeting that he has had in his time with West Branch. He stated that the residents and staff of the City of West Branch deserved better.

**CITY ATTORNEY REPORT – None**

**CITY ENGINEER REPORT** – Engineer Schechinger shared that the Cedar-Johnson Road project was very close to completion. They were wrapping things up and waiting for the last of the signage to be able to open up. The Wapsi Channel Widening project is going well and is on track for the portion of the project they are looking to complete before the weather shuts them down.

**STAFF REPORTS**

FY25 Annual Report for the WB Public Library was shared by Director Jessie Shaffer – Overall patron visits total 13,977 with 200 programs and 3,924 attendees as well. Library Cards are up with 126 new cards issued and 1265 city residents have a current card. There is an interlibrary loan program that allows libraries to borrow books that they don’t have on hand from other libraries for residents. This resulted in 629 books borrowed and 375 books lent out to area libraries and there is a free delivery service provided with this program to save local funds as well. The library received an anonymous grant to digitize the complete run of the West Branch Times and they now have digitized the issues from 1878 – 2023 with these funds. Overall computer use is up with 3,339 users utilizing every computer in the library, while WIFI use is down with 1,430 users. Projects such as permanent drainage tile installed in the back of the library, interior repainted, updated fire alarm system and camera system and replacing the door to the community room with WIFI door locks to allow use outside of business hours without staff coming back to the building or being present, were put in place this year. To see a full list of the overall report, please visit the library.

**COMMENTS FROM MAYOR AND COUNCIL MEMBERS –**

Mayor Laughlin shared that in the coming months Council and leadership will need to talk about a new Fire Chief as Chief Stoolman looks to retirement. The flags that are put up down town by the American Legion may need some work done with replacing the poles and the city will talk about support with that project.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Motion to adjourn by Miller, second by Sexton. Motion carried on a voice vote. City Council meeting adjourned at 8:55 p.m.

ATTEST:

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Alycia Friis, City Clerk

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Roger Laughlin, Mayor