



MINUTES OF THE COMMON COUNCIL – SPECIAL SESSION

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 29, 2026 AT 5:30 PM

COUNCIL ROOM, MUNICIPAL BUILDING, 450 S. MAIN ST., RICHLAND CENTER, WI 53581 & VIRTUALLY

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order by Mayor Tepley at 5:33 PM. Present: Bradley Wegner, Chris Jarvis, Frank Hoffman, Melony Walters, Steve Downs, and Ryan Cairns. Absent: Rachel Schultz and Douglas Martyniuk.

Keller confirmed the agenda was properly posted with no subsequent amendments.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: *Motion by Cairns, second by Downs to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried unanimously (6-0).*

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

2027 Health Insurance

Administrator Oliphant presented the Personnel Committee's review of health insurance options and requested Council selection of a 2027 plan. A resolution to change the plan was due to the Department of Employee Trust Funds (ETF) by October 1. Continuing the current P02 plan could increase employer costs approximately \$216,000 across all funds, including \$132,000 for the General Fund, exceeding estimated levy growth. Estimates reflected maximum costs; actual costs would vary by employee enrollment and plan selection.

Council compared P02 with no deductible, P04 with \$500 single/\$1,000 family deductibles, and P07 with \$2,000 single/\$4,000 family deductibles. P04 was projected to cost approximately \$99,000 less than P02, while still increasing costs approximately \$117,000 over 2026. Members discussed private coverage, employer premium contributions, and the implications of leaving ETF.

Council members favored P04 as a balance between budget constraints and employee affordability. Concerns about P07 included greater out-of-pocket costs, particularly for lower-paid employees. Oliphant emphasized the need to control costs while retaining employees and services.

Potential health savings, reimbursement, and flexible spending arrangements were discussed. Oliphant explained that additional information would be needed before selecting or structuring an arrangement; none was adopted. Retirees remaining on the City's ETF coverage would also be affected by a plan change. Staff reported that a change would delay open enrollment to December, with ETF indicating a January 1 effective date if the resolution was submitted by October 1.

Motion by Wegner, second by Downs to adopt the Existing Employer Option Resolution for the Wisconsin Public Employers' Group Health Insurance Program, Deductible HMO–Standard PPO with Dental, P04 option, as presented. Upon roll call vote, motion carried unanimously 6-0.

GENERAL GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

Connect Communities Grant Application and Request for Municipal Accounting and Bookkeeping Services

Cairns introduced Connect Communities' request for City fiscal and accounting support if awarded a Small Business Development Grant (SBDG) prior to submitting the application due October 2nd. Walters clarified that the General Government Committee had referred the matter to Council for consideration.

Jarvis questioned a competing grant application already submitted by Southwest Partners and expressed concern about added staff accounting and audit responsibilities beyond the annual participation fee originally contemplated. Mayor Tepley explained that the grant aligned with Connect Communities' downtown development purpose and they would handle application, reporting, and recipient selection, while City assistance would include receiving draws, issuing checks, and submitting supplied forms.

Motion by Jarvis, second by Walters to deny the Connect Communities Grant Application Request for Municipal Accounting and Bookkeeping Services. Upon roll call vote, motion carried 5-1 with Cairns opposed.

ADJOURNMENT: *Motion by Walters, second by Hoffman to adjourn at approximately 6:32 pm. Motion carried unanimously (6-0).*

Meeting adjourned at approximately 6:32PM.

Meeting Minutes Recorded by Clerk Amanda Keller