



## MINUTES OF THE COMMON COUNCIL

TUESDAY, JANUARY 07, 2025 AT 6:30 PM

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

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**CALL TO ORDER:** Meeting was called to order by Mayor Coppernoll at 6:30 PM. Members present were Ron Fruit, Karin Tepley, Tom McCarthy, Mark Chambers, Kevin Melby, Melany Walters, Steve Downs, and Ryan Cairns. Absent: None.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** Motion by Alderperson Melby to waive the reading and approve the minutes of the December 3, 2024 regular and December 10, 2024 Special Session meetings as presented. Seconded by Downs. Motion carried unanimously.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA:** Motion by Alderperson Tepley to approve the Council agenda. Seconded by McCarthy. Motion carried unanimously.

### **CITY AND UTILITY DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORTS AND CONCERNS:**

Utility Manager Scott Gald reported a reduction in the wastewater bill from \$16 to \$14 per thousand starting in January. Multiple departments are collaborating on projects, including fiber distribution with Frontier. The city has been using the grapple for various utility needs and plans to remove 40 trees from parks. Cross training among in the Utility Office is underway with no plans to rehire an accounting coordinator. Audit work beginning this week, and park lights will be removed with the help of electric staff.

Zoning Administrator Matt Williams reported ongoing efforts improve records management for the department. Through this process some expired conditional use permits were identified, and the parties involved have been cooperative in working towards resolving these issues.

Director Jasen Glassbrenner reported on economic development efforts, emphasizing collaboration with the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WDC) on community investment grants. A grant for Rockbridge is nearing closure after the final payment is received. A preliminary application for funds to redevelop the old Gables restaurant is in progress and will go before the Council for approval. Additionally, solicitation proposals for potential hotel development in the Orange Street area have been published.

Director Glassbrenner also reported the Public Works responsibility of snow and ice removal, noting the rapid wear of equipment like snowplow blades, necessitating frequent replacements. The department is planning to streamline mowing and park facilities maintenance efforts.

Clerk Amanda Keller announced that the Clerk's office has collaborated with the county to implement a new online property tax payment system. She also reminded the Council and the public about the upcoming elections: the Spring Primary scheduled for February 18th and the Spring Election on April 1st, during which four Council positions will be available for election.

City Administrator Ashley Oliphant reported current open positions at the City: Buildings and Grounds Crew Lead, Financial Officer, and a part-time Recreational Scorekeeper.

### **MAYOR AND ALDERPERSONS:**

Alderperson Ron Fruit reported from the Tourism Commission that the Township of Henrietta has adopted a room tax and the Village of Cazenovia is finalizing a similar measure soon. Fruit also emphasized the need for maintaining the Pine River as Mark McCauley will no longer be continuing to manage the Pine River Paddle although a local person has expressed interest in taking on the business.

Alderperson Karin Tepley reported Library Director Stacy Pilla was appointed to the Governance Board of the PARTNER school and continues with Real pilot program in partnership with CESA 3. Mary Peterson-Smith has resigned but will remain involved in other capacities; her position will be posted soon. Tepley also reported the

Historical Preservation has received an email confirming progress on the Governor Vernon Thomson Memorial plaque.

Aldersperson Melony Walters expressed appreciation for all city employees and acknowledged their daily efforts to continue advancing the City of Richland Center.

Aldersperson Kevin Melby announced that Partners in Prevention received their second five-year grant to educate young people on making healthy choices. A key focus has been compliance checks for alcohol sales and recent efforts have improved this rate to 90%.

Aldersperson Steve Downs requested an agenda item the following month to discuss renaming of the Municipal Landfill.

**TREASURER'S REPORT:** Motion by Aldersperson Walters to approve the Treasurer's Report as presented. Seconded by Downs. Motion carried 8-0.

**PAYMENT OF BILLS:** Motion by Aldersperson Tepley to pay the January 7, 2025 bills as presented. Seconded by Aldersperson Melby. Motion carried 8-0.

#### **FINANCE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTION**

5. **Purchase of a New Chipper for Public Works:** Aldersperson Cairns Reported the Public Works Department and Utilities will share the cost of the new chipper. The current chipper is 25 years old but will be sold once replaced. Two bids were received and reviewed by Public Works, Utilities, and the Finance Committee which recommended the purchase of a Bandit CB90 from Brooks Tractor for \$29,754.60 based on compatibility with existing equipment. Motion by Aldersperson Cairns to approve the purchase of a new Bandit CB90 from Brooks Tractor for approximately \$29,754.60 using funds from the budgeted 2025 Outlay. Seconded by Tepley. Motion carried 8-0.
6. **Sale of 2011 Zamboni 200 from Buildings & Grounds Equipment Fleet:** Aldersperson Ryan Cairns reported Public Works Director Jasen Glasbrenner continues to review Building and Grounds equipment and identified a 2011 Zamboni 200 which has gone unused for years and valued at approximately \$16,000 to be sold through Wisconsin Surplus. Motion by Aldersperson Cairns to approve the sale of a 2011 Zamboni 200. Seconded by Melby. Motion carried 8-0.
7. **Sale of 2011 Ford F350 Truck from Buildings & Grounds Fleet:** Motion by Aldersperson Cairns to approve the sale of a 2011 Ford F350 Truck. Seconded by Downs. Motion carried 8-0.
8. **Cost Share for Airport Runway Repair:** Aldersperson Cairns reported the airport runway requires a crack seal repair. The Public Works and Finance Committees recommended approving \$4,000 from the Airport Capital Outlay Account to get preliminary work done which will be an 80/20 State/Sponsor split. Motion by Aldersperson Cairns to approve the \$4,000 Sponsor commitment for the Richland Center Airport 2025 crack seal project. Seconded by Tepley. Motion carried 8-0.
9. **2025 Contract Award for the Shared Ride Taxi Program:** City Administrator Ashley Oliphant reported the existing Shared Ride Taxi contract expired due to delays with the RFP process and a Special Session has been scheduled for January 15, 2025 to establish a new contract. Without an active contract, the city is ineligible for grant reimbursement. To avoid service disruption, the city may consider funding the taxi program temporarily, with a request to approve up to \$10,000 from unallocated contingency funds until the new contract is in place. Motion by Aldersperson Walters to allocate up to \$10,000 from unallocated contingency to fund the Shared Ride Taxi Service until January 15, 2025. Seconded by Tepley. Motion carried 8-0.

#### **PERSONNEL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTION**

10. **Public Outreach Services Contract with SWWRPC:** Aldersperson Walters reported the City has been working with Southwest Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission for public outreach associated

with ongoing projects and is now looking to establish a six-month contract, amounting to \$3,350, that will encompass the creation of press releases, radio content, and social media communications aimed at keeping the public informed in collaboration with the county to improve information sharing. Administrator Oliphant confirmed funding for these services is allocated in the 2025 budget under community development miscellaneous expenses, with the possibility of reassessing the contract's continuation after the initial six-month period. Motion by Alderperson Walters to approve the Contract between the City and Southwest Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission for Public Outreach Services until June 30, 2025, not to exceed the cost of \$3,350 funded from Community Development Miscellaneous budget. Seconded by Downs. Motion carried 7-1.

11. **Reclassification of Municipal Services Specialist from a Limited Term to a Permanent Position:** Alderperson Walters reported that Jasen Glasbrenner has assumed a dual role as both Public Works Director and Economic Development Director, a change recognized by the Personnel Committee as necessitating additional administrative support. Darcy Perkins, initially hired for a limited-term position, has exhibited exceptional performance and initiative. She continues to make significant contributions by supporting Director Glasbrenner and both departments. The current budget allows for the transition of her role to a permanent hourly position without requiring additional funding. Motion by Alderperson Walters to approve the reclassification of the Municipal Services Specialist from a limited term position to a permanent position effective January 1, 2025. Seconded by McCarthy. Motion carried 8-0.

#### **PLANNING COMMISSION RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTION**

12. **Application of Richland Hospital for a Conditional Use Permit to Allow a Pharmacy at 451 N Park St (Tax Parcel ID 276-1696-0900):** Mayor Todd Coppernoll reported the Richland Hospital sought clarification on permit requirements to open a pharmacy in their building where there had been one previously. Zoning Administrator Williams determined the hospital is zoned as residential and therefore requires a conditional use permit for the new pharmacy. The Planning Commission reviewed the request and unanimously recommended approval. Motion by Alderperson Downs to approve the Application of Richland Hospital for a Conditional Use Permit to Allow a Pharmacy at 451 N Park St (Tax Parcel ID 276-1696-0900). Seconded by Walters. Motion carried unanimously.
13. **Application of Richland County for a Conditional Use Permit to Allow a Communication Structure on Tax Parcel ID 276-2101-0100 (Tower Hill):** Zoning Administrator Matt Williams reported Richland County is seeking to house a new communication system on Tower Hill to enhance the police and emergency services. The structure will accommodate essential equipment, including wiring, repeaters, and a satellite tower. The Planning Commission reviewed the Conditional Use Permit application, held a public hearing, and unanimously recommend its approval. Motion by Alderperson Melby to approve the application of Richland County for a Conditional Use Permit to Allow a Communication Structure on Tax Parcel ID 276-2101-0100 (Tower Hill). Seconded by Downs. Motion carried 8-0.

#### **PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTION**

14. **2025 Municipal Taxi Licenses:** Motion by Alderperson Melby to approve the 2025 Municipal Taxi License for Running Inc. and Towne Taxi. Seconded by Downs. Motion carried 8-0.

**APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES, COMMISSIONS, BOARDS AND CONFIRM APPOINTMENTS:** None

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Suzanne Fish reported that the Symon's Rec Foundation is hosting a free two-hour swim event for children on January 25th, featuring inflatable pool rafts, music, and popcorn. The event aims to attract families and encourage

community participation, offering a unique opportunity to use rafts usually reserved for private parties. Organizers hope for a strong turnout.

Tony Burke expressed concerns about the Shared Ride Taxi RFP process and communication barriers he felt, highlighting financial challenges and need for better services for elderly and disabled residents. Mr. Burke also requested clarity on the decision-making process.

Heidi Shiere voiced dissatisfaction with the current transit services, citing difficulties in reaching taxi services. She expressed frustration with the lack of communication and assistance from transit supervisors.

**ADJOURNMENT:** Motion by Alderperson Tepley to adjourn. Seconded by Walters. Motion carried unanimously at 7:42 PM.

*Meeting Minutes Recorded by Clerk Amanda Keller*