

Wednesday, June 18, 2025, 6:00 pm

In-PERSON/VIRTUAL MEETING

Room 2044, City Hall

By Phone or Zoom Meeting:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/join>

For the Public, Members of the media and the public may attend by calling: (US) +1 (646)931-3860

Meeting ID: 617-065-5357

Pass Code: 959083

All public participants' phones will be muted during the meeting except during the public comment period where applicable.

RDA STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

1) ~~100 W. Main St. block demolition, Town Square design etc., and publicizing town square project for possible funding from sources other than the City.~~

2) Facilitating quality development in downtown, and

3) Creating an approach and working to attract development projects downtown.

1. Pledge of Allegiance
2. Roll Call
 - A. Present: Mason Becker, Steve Board, Ald. Berg, Ryan Wagner, Dave Zimmermann
 - B. Virtual: Ald. Arnett
 - C. Absent: Jacob Maas, Todd Huhn
 - D. Other attendees: Schmidt, Broere, Kaddesh. Virtual: Zach Goodrow (WDT)
3. Determination of Quorum and Call to Order at 6:04 pm
4. Approval of meeting minutes
 - A. Regular board minutes 5.21.25
 - B. RDA special board minutes 6.9.25

Berg motioned to approve
Zimmermann seconded the motion. Motion carried.
5. No public comment
6. Old Business:
 - A. Rock River District Vision
 - a. Development update:
 - i. Becker discussed Intrepid Investments discontinuing work on two downtown sites.
 - ii. Also discussed North Town Partners presentation and TIF request discussion at Finance Committee meeting this coming Monday for the Oxbow project at the former Johnsonville site.
 - B. Discussion of future goal setting:
 - b. Review and possible action: WEDA Economic Development 101 Proposal.
 - i. Becker presented a proposal from WEDA for Economic Development 101 session, which could include the mayor, council, and other city stakeholders.
Board motioned to approve spending \$1,000 from the RDA marketing budget to bring the program to Watertown.
Wagner seconded the motion. Motion carried.
Becker will work to schedule this with WEDA.

7. New Business:

A. Introduction of new board members:

- a. Todd Huhn was appointed by the council last night. Huhn is currently out of the country. Wagner gave a short recap of his work history.

B. Election of RDA vice-chair:

- a. This item was tabled until next month

C. Review and discuss: RDA history and mission:

- a. This item was tabled until next month

D. Review and discuss: Presentation from resident on downtown market concept.

- a. Resident Gene Schmidt gave a presentation on his idea for a downtown German-style open-air market. Schmidt suggested this could be located next to the Bentzin Family Town Square.
- b. Discussion and questions followed. Board members suggested he discuss with the Tourism Commission and create a business plan.

E. Review and discuss: Messaging calendar update:

- a. The RDA board members reviewed proposed July-December 2025 messaging calendar prepared by Becker.
- b. Suggested adding mentions of Economic Development 101 and possibly sharing of information from other groups such as the Greater Watertown Community Health Foundation.
- c. Board members can email other suggestions to Mason.

8. Status Reports:

A. Housing Rehab Grants:

- a. Becker gave an updated recap of the current status. He discussed investigated sources of other funds to continue the program in the future

B. Beltz Foundation Grants:

- a. Becker has had discussions with several local businesses about applying. Encouraged board members to let him know if they talk to any other downtown business owners interested.

C. Proposed Citywide Sign Grant Program

- a. Becker has been discussing the details of the proposal with Attorney Chesebro. He hopes to launch the program this summer. Wagner mentioned rationale for the idea.

D. Social media/messaging update:

- a. No report this month. Will have one next month.

E. Council update:

- a. Berg discussed the prior night's Common Council meeting and how it was mostly license approvals, etc. He also mentioned good attendance at the open house of the new fire station.
- b. Arnett concurred.

F. Executive Director update:

- a. Becker briefly upcoming meeting with a local company interested in learning more about the Rock River District project and discussions with the Greater Watertown Community Health Foundation about a potential funding idea.
- b. Items for next agenda:
 - i. Discuss creation of a Budget & Finance Committee. Wagner will work on this
- c. Next meeting July 16, 2025, at 6 pm

9. Adjournment at 7:13 pm

Berg motioned to adjourn.

Wagner seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously. Meeting adjourned.