

## City Attorney

To: Finance Committee

From: Attorney Steven T. Chesebro

Date: June 6, 2025

Subject: Bond Schedule Updates

## Background

Section 800.037 of the Wisconsin Statutes and Section 38-4 of the Watertown General Ordinances provides that the Municipal Court, with the approval of the governing body of the municipality, shall set the deposit schedule for ordinance violations.

The last update to the Bond Schedule was approved on August 17, 2021 by Resolution 9263. The original request was based upon Judge Sweet requesting a review and update of the Bond Schedule, in part due to recent ordinances which have created potentially new municipal forfeitures.

The Deepfake Ordinance does justify updating that violation with a specified forfeiture amount and is associated with Ordinance 410-39(C). Judge Sweet also identified that the Cat License Ordinance has long since been repealed and should also be removed from the Bond Schedule. The other changes proposed to the Bond Schedule were in collaboration with other Departments or discussions with Judge Sweet regarding offenses that they felt were more serious offenses than the current bond schedule reflects by comparison to other citations. Judge Sweet has reviewed and approved the proposed changes to the Municipal Bond Schedule.

When approved, copies of the Bond Schedule are currently required by Watertown Ordinance 38-4 to be kept in the offices of the City Clerk and Police Department. Judge Sweet has proposed that this Ordinance be modified to permit the official version of the Bond Schedule to be kept by the Municipal Court with copies being provided to the City Clerk and Police Department and any other department requesting a copy.

The adopted and approved Bond Schedule shall supersede all previous Bond Schedules and would become effective as of the date noticed in the resolution.

## Financial Impact

It is anticipated this would have minimal financial impact on the City's overall budget. To the extent it does have an impact it would result in an increase in revenue received from municipal forfeitures.

## Recommendation

Adopt the updated Bond Schedule with an effective date on or after August 1, 2025. If any other offense listed is of substantial concern to council members, they may consider revising the forfeiture amount associated with that violation as well. Doing so would require the Judge to approve the updated amounts.