



City Council Meeting Agenda Item

Meeting Date:	October 6, 2026
Agenda Item:	Update on Food Pantry Lease.
Staff Contact (name, email, phone):	Kevin Boehm, kboehm@whitewater-wi.gov , 262-473-0122

BACKGROUND

(Enter the who, what when, where, why)

The City of Whitewater and the Whitewater Food Pantry have been working to identify a long-term solution for the Food Pantry's continued use of space within the Whitewater Armory.

At the April 21, 2026 Common Council meeting, Council directed staff to continue evaluating occupancy of the proposed first-floor location, including the development of associated costs and policy considerations, and to return the item for further consideration no later than the second Council meeting in June.

At the May 20, 2026 Park and Recreation Board meeting, Board members requested additional time to further evaluate the Food Pantry's space requirements, utility needs, and potential solutions to concerns that had been raised. The intent was to develop a solution that addressed the operational needs of the Food Pantry while also considering the City's use and management of the Armory.

A subcommittee of the Park and Recreation Board subsequently met with representatives of the Food Pantry and other interested parties on June 23 and July 20, 2026. Through these meetings, the parties reviewed the Food Pantry's space and operational needs and worked toward an agreement that would allow the Food Pantry to continue serving the community while reducing the financial burden of the elevator repairs for the City.

As a result of those discussions, the City and Food Pantry reached an agreement regarding the Food Pantry's future occupancy of the first floor of the Armory.

On September 16, 2026 a formal lease agreement was executed and signed by both the Whitewater Food Pantry and the City of Whitewater.

LEASE AGREEMENT

The lease will become effective January 1, 2027, and has an initial term of five years with an option to renew.

Major provisions of the agreement include:

- Annual lease payment of \$1.00.
- Use of the kitchen and designated smaller storage areas on the first floor of the Armory.
- Ability to utilize the main common area of the first floor in conjunction with Food Pantry operations.
- On the three identified dates each year when additional space is needed, the Food Pantry will be permitted to utilize additional space within the building in accordance with the lease agreement.

- The Food Pantry is required to maintain liability insurance, naming the City of Whitewater as an additional insured in the amount of \$2,000,000. The required insurance coverage has been secured.
- The Food Pantry will be responsible for the actual electrical costs associated with operation of the Food Pantry.
- City staff will assist the Food Pantry with relocating its operations to the first floor of the Armory in preparation for the January 1, 2027, effective date.

The agreement provides the Food Pantry with dedicated space necessary for its ongoing operations while allowing the City to retain use of the larger portions of the Armory for recreation programs, community activities, and other municipal purposes.

PREVIOUS ACTIONS – COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

(Dates, committees, action taken)

April 21, 2026 – Common Council: Council directed staff to continue evaluating occupancy of the proposed first-floor location, including associated costs and policy considerations, and return the matter for further consideration.

May 20, 2026 – Park and Recreation Board: The Park and Recreation Board requested additional time to evaluate space requirements, utility needs, and potential solutions to concerns raised regarding the proposed arrangement.

June 23 and July 20, 2026 – Park Board Subcommittee: The Park Board subcommittee met with representatives of the Food Pantry and other interested parties to review operational needs, space requirements, utilities, building use, and potential solutions. These discussions resulted in an agreed-upon framework for the Food Pantry's future use of the Armory.

September 16, 2026: A formal five-year lease agreement between the City of Whitewater and the Whitewater Food Pantry was executed by both parties.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

(If none, state N/A)

N/A

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

This item is being presented to the Common Council as an update regarding the completion of the Food Pantry lease agreement and the resolution of the space and operational issues previously discussed by the Common Council and Park and Recreation Board.

The lease becomes effective January 1, 2027, and City staff will work with the Food Pantry to complete the relocation to the first floor of the Armory.

Staff will also continue working with the City Attorney's Office to develop consistent standards and guidelines for future lease agreements involving City-owned property. This will help establish a more uniform approach to items such as insurance requirements, utilities, maintenance responsibilities, terms of use, lease duration, and other provisions that should be considered when the City enters into lease agreements with outside organizations.

ATTACHMENT(S) INCLUDED (If none, state N/A)
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Copy of executed lease agreement
