



City of Fort Atkinson
City Manager's Office
101 N. Main Street
Fort Atkinson, WI 53538

**CITY COUNCIL MEETING
IN PERSON AND VIA ZOOM
TUESDAY, JULY 15, 2025 – 7:00 PM
CITY HALL – SECOND FLOOR**

MINUTES

1. Call meeting to order

President Jaeckel called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

2. Roll call

Present: Cm. Huckabee, Johnson, Lescohier, Schultz and President Jaeckel. Also present: City Manager, City Clerk/Treasurer/Finance Director, City Attorney, Director of Public Works, Director of Neighborhood Services, Public Works Superintendent, Fire Chief and Police Chief.

3. Public Hearings

*a. Public Hearing relating the adoption of the **Jefferson County Hazard Mitigation Plan** in the City of Fort Atkinson. (Peterson, Fire Chief)*

Chief Peterson introduced the Jefferson County Mitigation Plan that was officially adopted by the County on April 21, 2025. To remain eligible for FEMA Hazard Mitigation Assistance (HMA) grant funding, each non-township municipality within the county must formally adopt the plan by resolution. Adopting the plan allows Fort Atkinson to:

- Maintain eligibility for federal mitigation grant programs, including FEMA's Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) and Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP)
- Support coordinated countywide mitigation efforts
- Align with state and federal emergency management expectations
- Demonstrate proactive risk-reduction strategies to residents and businesses.

The public hearing opened at 7:02 pm.

After no comments, the public hearing was closed.

4. Public Comment

Steve Benson, 202 Memorial Drive - Spoke in support of the Pledge of Allegiance being on the City Council Agenda.

Bill Camplin, 18 S Water Street West - He was a former member of the City Council. He shared comments on prior discussion regarding the Pledge being on the City Council Agenda.

Adam Thompson, 365 Ramesh Avenue - Requested the Council not add the Pledge of

Allegiance to the City Council Agenda.

John Callan, 522 Robert Street - Not in support of the Pledge of Allegiance being on the City Council Agenda.

Miles Allie, 407 Council Street - Spoke in support of the Pledge of Allegiance being on the City Council Agenda.

John Beauchamp, 307 S. Third Street East - Spoke in support of the Pledge of Allegiance being on the City Council Agenda.

Mateo Santana, 506 Hillcrest Drive - Spoke in support of the Pledge of Allegiance being on the City Council Agenda.

Laurie Wohlgemuth, 307 E Milwaukee Avenue - Spoke in support of the Pledge of Allegiance being on the City Council Agenda.

Bill Shipley, 101 Sherman Avenue East - Spoke in support of the Pledge of Allegiance being on the City Council Agenda.

Terri Nelson, 213 Sherman Avenue West - Spoke in support of the Pledge of Allegiance being on the City Council Agenda.

Ron Martin, 409 Nadig Drive - Spoke in support of the Pledge of Allegiance being on the City Council Agenda.

John Hausz, 104 Jefferson Street - Spoke in support of the Pledge of Allegiance being on the City Council Agenda. He commented on the amendment that was approved by Council for section 2-53 at the meeting on July 1st.

5. Consent Agenda

Schultz moved, seconded by Johnson to approve the Consent Agenda items 5.a through 5.e. as presented with correction to the City Council minutes regarding Public Comment that resident Bill Camplin spoke *not* in support of the Pledge of Allegiance being added to the Council Agenda. Motion carried with the correction.

- a. *Review and possible action relating to the **minutes of the July 1, 2025 City Council meeting** (Ebbert, Clerk/Treasurer/Finance Director)*
- b. *Review and possible action relating to the **minutes of the July 8, 2025 Plan Commission meeting** (Ebbert, Clerk/Treasurer/Finance Director)*
- c. *Review and possible action relating to **building, plumbing, and electrical permit report for June 2025** (Draeger, Director of Neighborhood and Building Services)*
- d. *Review and possible action relating to the City Clerk-issued **License and Permit Report for June** (Ebbert, Clerk/Treasurer/Finance Director)*

- e. *Review and possible action relating to **City Sewer, Water, and Stormwater Utility Financial Statements** as of June 30, 2025 (Ebbert, Clerk/Treasurer/Finance Director)*

6. **Petitions, Requests, and Communications**

None.

7. **Resolutions and Ordinances**

- a. *Review and possible action on a Resolution adopting the **Jefferson County Hazard Mitigation Plan** (Peterson, Fire Chief)*

Chief Peterson stated that the Jefferson County Board of Supervisors officially adopted the updated Jefferson County Hazard Mitigation Plan on April 21, 2025. To remain eligible for FEMA Hazard Mitigation Assistance (HMA) grant funding, each non-township municipality within the county must formally adopt the plan by resolution.

Adopting the plan allows Fort Atkinson to:

- Maintain eligibility for federal mitigation grant programs, including FEMA's Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) and Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP)
- Support coordinated countywide mitigation efforts
- Align with state and federal emergency management expectations
- Demonstrate proactive risk-reduction strategies to residents and businesses.

Lescohier moved, seconded by Schultz to approve the Resolution adopting the Jefferson County Hazard Mitigation Plan. Motion carried.

- b. *Third reading and possible adoption of a proposed Ordinance amending Section 2-53 of the City of Fort Atkinson Code of General Ordinances relating to the **Order of Business for City Council meetings** (Houseman, City Manager)*

Manager Houseman stated this is the third reading of the Ordinance to amend section 2-53. The Ordinance Committee met on June 5, 2025, and recommended that the City Council approve the Ordinance to amend Section 2-53 of the City of Fort Atkinson Code of General Ordinances relating to the Order of Business for City Council meetings by a vote of 3-0. The Council performed the first reading of this Ordinance at the meeting on June 17, 2025, and directed the City Manager to prepare it for a second reading at the meeting on July 1, 2025 by a vote of 3-2. The Council performed the second reading of this Ordinance at the meeting on July 1st. The Council directed staff to amend the ordinance to add a public comment period for matters on the agenda by a vote of 4-1. The Council directed the City Manager to prepare the amended ordinance (Substitute Amendment #1) for a third reading at the meeting on July 15, 2025. Upon additional review of the proposed amendment to the ordinance as requested by the City Council at the meeting on July 1st, staff found another section of the ordinance that needed to be adjusted to accommodate the new public comment period. That adjustment to Section 2- 54(f) is also included in Substitute Amendment #1.

Cm. Schultz stated he found value in adding a second public comment section to the City Council Agenda that addresses non-agenda items.

Schultz moved, seconded by Lescohier move to adopt Substitute Amendment #1, an ordinance amending Sections 2-53 and 2-54 of the City of Fort Atkinson Code of General Ordinances relating to the Order of Business including Consent Agenda, public comments for matters on the agenda and general public comment at City Council meetings but not adopting or adding item (3) Pledge of Allegiance. Johnson requested clarification on the purpose of two public comment periods. Schultz provided clarification and examples of items that can be expressed during the 'general public comment' section. Schultz withdrew his motion and Lescohier seconded the withdrawal of the motion.

Manager Houseman clarified the proposed substitute amendment addresses the following items:

1. Addition of the Pledge of Allegiance
2. Addition of the Consent Agenda.
3. Adjusting the first Public Comment for matters on the Agenda.
4. Adding general public comment for matters not on the Agenda.

Huckabee moved, seconded by Schultz to separate sections of the Substitute Amendment #1, Section 1. (3) Pledge of Allegiance, Section 1. (4) Consent Agenda, Section 1. (6) Public comment on matters on the Agenda, Section 1. (13) General public comment and Section 2. (f) (2) Other that addresses the prohibited topics for the general public comment. <A vote was not taken.>

Lescohier moved to postpone this item to the next Council meeting, August 5th. Seconded by Schultz. Motion carried 4-1, Jaekel opposed.

- c. *First reading of an ordinance to amend Section 34-2 of the City of Fort Atkinson Code of General Ordinances relating to **Fire Inspection Records and Reporting** (Peterson, Fire Chief)*

Chief Peterson stated the Fort Atkinson Fire Department is responsible for conducting annual fire inspections for up to 700 occupancies each year. These inspections ensure compliance with the City's fire prevention code, which requires businesses to maintain fire protection systems—including fire alarms, sprinklers, extinguishers, and cooking hood suppression systems—through certified annual inspections. Currently, there is no formal requirement for businesses to submit documentation of these inspections or proof that cited fire code violations have been corrected. In many cases, violations noted during the department's annual inspections must be corrected by the business or its fire protection service provider, but confirmation of compliance is often delayed or incomplete. The proposed ordinance change grants the Fire Chief authority to require electronic submission of inspection documentation, along with evidence that any fire code violations identified— either by the department or a certified contractor—have been resolved. The format and method of submission will be determined by the department, improving efficiency, recordkeeping, and accountability in the compliance process. The Ordinance Committee reviewed this ordinance amendment at the meeting on June 5, 2025 and recommended that staff present the ordinance to the City Council at a future meeting.

Huckabee moved, seconded by Schultz to direct the City Manager to prepare the ordinance for a second reading and possible third/final reading at the meeting on August 5, 2025. Motion carried.

- d. *First reading of an ordinance to create Section 18-82 of the City of Fort Atkinson Code of General Ordinances relating to **Certificates of Occupancy for Changes of Use** (Draeger, Director of Neighborhood and Building Services)*

Director Draeger discussed that currently, the City of Fort Atkinson does not require a new Certificate of Occupancy when a building or tenant space undergoes a change in use. This has created challenges in verifying compliance with applicable codes, particularly when the new use differs significantly from the previous one in terms of zoning regulations, building code classifications, and fire safety standards. Without a formal review process, critical life safety and code compliance issues may go undetected. Requiring a Certificate of Occupancy for all changes of use would ensure that all applicable codes are reviewed and enforced prior to occupancy. This approach, common in many municipalities, not only helps safeguard public health and safety but also provides clarity for business owners by identifying zoning, building, and fire code requirements upfront. The proposed ordinance establishes a requirement that a new Certificate of Occupancy be obtained whenever there is a change in use or occupancy classification of a building or tenant space, even in cases where no building alterations are proposed. This requirement will apply to both residential and non-residential properties with the focus on commercial, since it is rare that a residential property will have a change of use or occupancy.

Huckabee moved, seconded by Johnson to direct the City Manager to prepare the ordinance for a second reading and possible third/final reading at the meeting on August 5, 2025. Motion carried.

- e. *First reading of an ordinance to create Section 1-16 and amend various other sections of the City of Fort Atkinson Code of General Ordinances relating to **Fees for Procedures, Reinspections, and Permits** (Draeger, Director of Neighborhood and Building Services)*

Director Draeger addressed how the City of Fort Atkinson is currently limited in its ability to recover the costs associated with code enforcement efforts. The primary enforcement mechanism available is through municipal citations, which are often perceived as aggressive and are difficult to collect. This results in a reactive and punitive system that does little to encourage voluntary compliance or provide flexibility in enforcement. To address the challenges of Code Enforcement, staff is proposing an ordinance that establishes a reinspection fee procedure for follow-up inspections required due to noncompliance with City codes. This ordinance introduces a new general section in the Municipal Code that authorizes the City to assess fees for reinspections across various code enforcement programs. The reinspection fees would also allow the responsible party to understand that there is a real cost to their actions. The Ordinance Committee reviewed this ordinance at the meeting on June 5, 2025, and recommended that staff present the ordinance to the City Council at a future meeting.

Lescohier moved, seconded by Schultz to direct the City Manager to prepare the ordinance for a second reading and possible third/final reading at the meeting on August 5, 2025. Motion carried.

8. Reports of Officers, Boards, and Committees

a. *City Manager's Report (Houseman, City Manager)*

No action was taken.

9. Unfinished Business

a. *Review and possible action relating to updated invoices from WE Energies for **gas and electric installations at Ridge View Estates** (Houseman, City Manager)*

Manager Houseman reminded the Council that on May 20, 2025, they reviewed and approved invoices from WE Energies to provide gas and electric services to the Ridge View Estates Subdivision, most of which is currently owned by the City. Since that time, WE Energies has re-evaluated their plan for providing both gas and electric services. The new plans for gas service require boring underground to install the pressurized gas pipe. The previous plan included trenching the pipes, which was less expensive. The new plans for electric service include service to the multifamily building on the south side of Trillium Drive, which is currently under construction. The updated gas service plan includes boring for certain areas due to the installation of public infrastructure. The cost is reimbursable at a rate of \$4,091 per unit within the first five years of the development. The updated electrical service plan includes extending electrical service south from the south end of Marigold Drive across Trillium Drive to serve the multifamily development, then east and north across Trillium to loop back into the rest of the system. The cost is reimbursable at a rate of \$1,757 per unit within the first five years of the development.

Schultz moved, seconded by Huckabee to approve the updated invoices from WE Energies for projects 5031866 and 5031867 to provide gas and electric service to the Ridge View Estates Subdivision in the amount of \$31,500.82. Motion carried.

b. *Review and possible action relating to the **Final Plat for Ridge View Estates Phase 1** (Draeger, Director of Neighborhood and Building Services)*

Director Draeger reviewed the action taken by the Plan Commission who previously reviewed and recommended approval of the Ridge View Estates Preliminary Plat on January 28, 2025, and again on May 13, 2025. The overall subdivision consists of approximately 47 acres and includes the creation of 77 lots, three outlots, and associated public rights-of-way. The development is proceeding in multiple phases. This request is for approval of the Final Plat for Phase 1 of 2 total Final Plat phases, which corresponds to Phase 2 as identified in the Preliminary Plat review memo.

This phase includes: Lots 6 through 61, Outlot 2, Associated portions of Marigold Drive, Peony Place, and Banker Road

The zoning for the lots was finalized by the City Council on July 1, 2025, as follows:

- Lots 6–50 and 52–61: Zoned SR-5 (Single-Family Residential)
- Lot 51: Zoned MRM-12 (Multi-Family Residential)
- Outlot 2: Zoned CON (Conservancy)

Schultz moved, seconded by Johnson to approve the final plat for Ridge View Estates Phase 1 subject to the conditions outlined below:

- Add note of compliance with Co. Ord. 16-33 to the Surveyor's Certificate on sheet 1
- Correct distance of Westerly line of Lot 19 on sheet 2
- Add distance of Easterly line of Lot 40 on sheet 2
- Any other recommendations by City Council

Motion carried.

10. New Business

*a. Review and possible action on the **sewage pumps emergency repair at the Police Department** (Bump, Police Chief)*

Chief Bump provided that on June 5, 2025 the Police Department facility was overcome with the smell of raw sewage. Investigation led staff to the basement sump pump room where there are two large crocks, one sump crock and one sewage crock that contained pumps. Wastewater personnel informed staff that immediate assistance from a plumber was needed. Staff got an emergency response from Dunkleberger Plumbing, a local plumber commonly used by City Departments for plumbing needs. The plumbers were able to clear out the crock but indicated that it would fill up again soon as the remaining pump was at the end of its useful life. Dunkleberger Plumbing was able to identify the availability of replacement pumps that were of similar specs. A verbal estimate of \$6,000-\$7,000 per pump was provided. The City Manager confirmed this incident did qualify under the City Policy for emergency repairs. The official quote was obtained later that day for \$6,000 per pump for a total project cost of \$12,000.00. I directed Dunkleberger Plumbing to move forward and complete the project as quickly as possible. Pumps were set to arrive for installation on June 10 or 11, 2025. During that time, the sump room was continuously monitored 24/7 to prevent another sewage back-up. The installation was completed to the satisfaction of staff after the pumps arrived that week.

Lescohier moved, seconded by Schultz to approve the emergency repair/replacement by Dunkleberger Plumbing in the amount of \$12,000.00 be applied to the Police Department's building supply and repair account. Motion carried.

11. Claims, Appropriations and Contract Payments

*a. Review and possible action relating to the **Verified Claims** presented by the Director of Finance and authorization of payment (Ebbert, Clerk/Treasurer/Finance Director)*

Schultz moved, seconded by Huckabee to approve the list of Verified Claims as presented. Motion carried.

12. Miscellaneous

- a. *The City Council will adjourn into closed session pursuant to State Stat. §19.85(1)(e) to **conduct other specified business**, where competitive or bargaining reasons require a closed session [City Fire/EMS Agreements with Town Partners] (Houseman, City Manager)*
- Schultz moved, seconded by Huckabee to convene in closed session pursuant to State Stat. Section 19.85(1)(e) to conduct other specified business where competitive or bargaining purposes require a closed session [City Fire/EMS Agreements with Town Partners]. Motion carried unanimously.

13. Adjournment

Schultz moved, seconded by Huckabee to adjourn. Meeting adjourned at 9:31 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Michelle Ebbert
City Clerk/Treasurer/Finance Director