



**CITY COUNCIL MEETING
IN PERSON AND VIA ZOOM
TUESDAY, JANUARY 20, 2026 – 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, City Attorney, Director of Public Works, Director of Neighborhood Services, Public Works Superintendent, Fire Chief, Police Chief, Captain and Director of Park & Recreation.

3. Pledge of Allegiance

President Jaeckel led the Pledge of Allegiance.

4. Consent Agenda

Huckabee moved, seconded by Johnson to approve the Consent Agenda items 4.a. through 4.f. Motion carried.

- a. *Review and possible action relating to the **minutes of the January 6, 2026, City Council meeting** (Ebbert, Clerk/Treasurer/Finance Director)*
- b. *Review and possible action relating to the **minutes of the January 13, 2026, Plan Commission meeting** (Ebbert, Clerk/Treasurer/Finance Director)*
- c. *Review and possible action relating to **building, plumbing, and electrical permit report for December 2025** (Draeger, Building Inspector/Zoning Administrator)*
- d. *Review and possible action relating to the City Clerk-issued **License and Permit Report for December 2025** (Ebbert, Clerk/Treasurer/Finance Director)*
- e. *Review and possible action relating to **City Sewer, Water, and Stormwater Utility Financial Statements as of December 31, 2025** (Ebbert, Clerk/Treasurer/Finance Director)*
- f. *Review and possible action relating to the **2025 Year-end building, plumbing, and electrical permit** report (Draeger, Building Inspector/Zoning Administrator)*

5. Public Hearings

None.

6. Public Comment for Matters on the Agenda

None.

7. Petitions, Requests, and Communications

None.

8. Resolutions and Ordinances

None.

9. Reports of Officers, Boards, and Committees

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

No action was taken.

10. Unfinished Business

None.

11. New Business

*a. Review and possible action relating to a contract for **Code Enforcement services** with Municipal Code Enforcement (MCE) (Draeger, Director of Neighborhood and Building Services)*

Director Draeger provided that over the past several years, the City has faced ongoing challenges in providing consistent and timely code enforcement as workloads across multiple departments have steadily increased. Currently, the Police Department and the Neighborhood and Building Services Department work collaboratively to contact property owners, issue notices, and pursue enforcement actions when violations of municipal ordinances are identified. Historically, the majority of these activities have been handled by the Police Department and the Building Inspector, creating a significant and growing demand on departmental resources. A contributing factor to this inconsistency is that the City's designated code enforcement position within the Police Department is a part-time role. This staffing structure has made it difficult to fill the position, to maintain continuity, and ensure timely follow-through on enforcement cases. To address these challenges and improve the consistency, responsiveness, and overall level of service provided to the public, the City is requesting authorization to enter into a contract with Municipal Code Enforcement (MCE), a professional code enforcement services provider. The City is proposing to contract with Municipal Code Enforcement (MCE) for part-time code enforcement services, with a target of 15 hours per week, at an estimated cost of \$38,220.00. While the full cost of the service is not yet fully reflected in the adopted budget, existing funding sources include \$18,000 allocated within the Police Department budget, revenue generated through reinspection fees adopted in 2025, and revenue associated with the new building services agreement with the Town of Koshkonong. This

contract shall begin February 2, 2026 and end on December 31, 2026.

Lescohier moved, seconded by Schultz to approve the code enforcement services contract with Municipal Code Enforcement and direct the City Manager to execute. Motion carried unanimously.

- b. *Review and possible action relating to a **Right of Way Negotiating Contract** between the City of Fort Atkinson and Gruber Consulting, LLC for the Banker Road Redesign project (Navin, Director of Public Works)*

Director Navin stated that the Banker Road relocation and redesign project is supported by a \$1.4 million grant that the City was awarded in August of 2024, from the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT). This project requires several temporary limited easements (TLEs) from property owners for grading and tree removal, and WisDOT requires that the City provide certified real estate acquisition services to obtain such easements. The City is required to follow strict state and federal real estate acquisition procedures to remain eligible for those funds. Under the WisDOT Local Program, any project receiving state or federal funding must undergo a formal Right of Way (ROW) Certification. This process requires the City to prove that all necessary property interests are identified in the preliminary plans and have been legally acquired before the project can be advertised for construction bids. The City must follow the federal Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act, which ensures property owners are treated fairly and provided with proper brochures, valuation studies, and written offers for even small TLEs. It is important to note that this contract does not cover the cost of the fees paid to property owners for the TLEs so that the City's contractors can access their property to complete the project. Those associated fees will be addressed through the landowner negotiations and costs are based on the federal Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act. Typically starting at \$500 per property and going up from there. Given the nature and size of the TLEs, staff does not anticipate the total expense to be more than \$5,000, which will also be paid for using TID #9 funds.

Lescohier moved, seconded by Huckabee to approve the Right of Way Negotiating Contract for the Banker Road Redesign project with Gruber Consulting, LLC, for \$19,950 using TID #9 funds and authorize the City Manager to execute. Motion carried.

- c. *Review and possible action related to the purchase and installation of two new **rapid flashing beacons** and upgrades to two existing rapid flashing beacons at a cost not to exceed \$73,235.92 (Navin, Director of Public Works)*

Director Navin began that in 2024, the City engaged Strand Associates and Vandewalle & Associates to hold community forums and gather feedback regarding the future planning of the Janesville Avenue and Main Street corridors. Through this planning process, it was recommended to install improved crosswalks that include Rapid Flashing Beacons (RFBs) to create safer pedestrian crossings. Staff is requesting to use the remaining funds (\$21,118.44) to upgrade the existing RFBs at the intersections of Whitewater Avenue and McComb St. as well as Madison Avenue and Roosevelt St. These RFBs are outdated and

have exceeded their useful life. To address these needs, the City budgeted \$45,000 in the 2025 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) for the design, procurement, and installation of RFBs. The City's planned approach was to utilize ARPA funds from Fund 22 to provide a local match for a 50/50 grant from the Fort Atkinson Community Foundation (FACF). The City submitted two grant requests to FACF on September 15, 2025:

1. Janesville Avenue RFB: A total project cost of \$31,127.36, with a grant request of \$15,563.68.
2. Main Street & N. Water Street RFB: A total project cost of \$16,635.76, with a grant request of \$8,317.88.

The FACF Board of Directors met on October 28, 2025, and approved both grant requests for a total of \$23,881.56. These grants will be paid upon the receipt of invoices related to the project work, and the funds must be utilized by June 30, 2026. This partnership allows the City to implement over \$47,000 in safety infrastructure while only utilizing approximately \$23,881 in City funds. Of the \$45,000 included in the 2025 CIP, \$23,881 will be used for the RFBs as described above. Staff is requesting to use the remaining budgeted funds (\$21,118.44) to upgrade the existing RFBs at the intersections of Whitewater Avenue and McComb St. as well as Madison Avenue and Roosevelt St. The total cost of the upgrades is \$25,472.80, which is \$4,354.26 over the CIP budget. Staff recommends using 2026 operating funds from the traffic control supplies account (01-54-5441-0600) to cover the project balance. The City budgeted \$26,200 in the traffic control supplies account in 2026.

Huckabee moved, seconded by Johnson to approve the purchase and installation of new rapid flashing beacons at N. Main Street/North Water Street and Janesville Avenue/Jones Park and the materials to upgrade the existing rapid flashing beacons at the intersections of Whitewater Avenue/McComb St. and Madison Avenue/Roosevelt St. at a total cost not to exceed \$73,235.92 using the funding sources identified in the staff report. Motion carried.

d. *Review and possible action relating to the **Purchase of Traffic Signal Controls associated with the Carbon Reduction Program** (Navin, Director of Public Works)*

Director Navin discussed that in February 2024, the City of Fort Atkinson was awarded funding from WisDOT through the Carbon Reduction Program (CRP). This federal program provides funding for projects that reduce transportation emissions and requires states to develop comprehensive carbon reduction strategies. The City's proposed strategy included the purchase of traffic signal optical-based smart traffic management systems for four intersections along Main Street. Participation in the program requires the City to pay the costs over the Federal limit. The Federal limit is 80% of the estimated total cost.

The original total estimated cost when the City applied for the grant was \$184,020 with 80% covered by Federal funds and the remaining 20% covered by the City. In 2024, staff included \$42,000 in the City's budget for this project (ARPA), as can be seen in the attached resolution in Table 2. The updated estimated project cost is \$97,514.28 with 80% (\$78,011.42) covered by Federal funds and the remaining 20% (\$19,502.86) covered by

the City. Staff proposes to use funds included in the Assigned Fund Balance - ARPA account for the City's portion of this project.

Schultz moved, seconded by Lescohier to approve the purchase of traffic signal controls associated with the Carbon Reduction Program at a cost not to exceed \$97,514.28, with 80% reimbursement from the Wisconsin DOT. Motion carried.

- e. *Review and possible action related to a request to purchase a **ProPhoenix Operating System Software replacement** for the Fort Atkinson Police Department (Lindsey, Police Captain)*

Captain Lindsey stated that the Police Department needs to purchase the most current version of the Microsoft Windows Operating System (OS) that operates the server to support the ProPhoenix Public Safety Software platform. The current operating system is from 2016 and is at the end of its life. The ProPhoenix Public Safety software is crucial to the Police Department's operations. This system serves as the comprehensive database for the Police Department. This system feeds the Records Management System (RMS), Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) as well as the in-car Wireless Digital Assistant (WDA), creating seamless integration throughout the Department. There are no competitive or comparison quotes. This complies with the purchasing policies outlined in the Financial Stability Guidebook, section 1.9(3). Ignatek is the sole vendor for the Department's IT needs and ProPhoenix is the sole vendor for the department's public safety software. The items quoted are the current version to replace the end-of-life operating system. Funds to purchase the new operating system and associated costs come from the 2026 Capital Improvement Budget as outlined in the City's Computer Replacement Schedule. The 2026 Capital Improvement budget outlined a total cost of \$15,000, with the proposal coming in under budget at \$14,775.

Lescohier moved, seconded by Huckabee to approve the purchase of the Microsoft Operating System Software for the Police Department at a cost not to exceed \$14,775. Motion carried.

- f. *Review and possible action relating to the **purchase of Class A Uniforms** from donated funds for the Fort Atkinson Fire Department (Peterson, Fire Chief)*

Chief Peterson shared that in 2024, the Fire Department received a generous donation in the amount of \$25,000 designated for professional equipment and uniform needs of the Department. After review, staff determined that using these donated funds for the purchase of professional Class A dress uniforms was appropriate and consistent with the intent of the donation. Class A uniforms are required for formal and ceremonial functions such as promotions, funerals, memorial services, and official events, and are a standard expectation in the fire service. The original invoice from Galls totaled \$21,554.22. The negotiated settlement amount of \$20,000 represents a reduction of \$1,554.22, or 7.2 percent. The uniform purchase was funded entirely through the \$25,000 donation to the Fire Department. No general fund dollars were used for this purchase. The negotiated settlement reflects responsible stewardship of donated funds by ensuring payment only for uniforms that were substantially delivered and corrected, while recognizing the

additional costs incurred due to vendor errors. Staff intends to reserve the remaining donated funds for 2026 and 2027 Class A uniforms for new Department members.

Huckabee moved, seconded by Johnson to approve payment of \$20,000 to Galls to resolve the Class A uniform purchase and authorize settlement consistent with this agreement. Motion carried.

12. Miscellaneous

None.

13. Public Comment for Matters Not on the Agenda

None.

14. 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)*

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

15. Closed Session

- a. *The City Council may go into closed session pursuant to State Stat. §19.85(1)(e) to **deliberate or negotiate the purchasing of public properties**, where competitive or bargaining reasons require a closed session (Houseman, City Manager)*

Schultz moved, seconded by Huckabee to go into closed session pursuant to State Statute 19.85(1)(e) to deliberate or negotiate the purchasing of public properties, where competitive or bargaining reasons require a closed session. Motion carried unanimously.

16. Adjournment

Lescohier moved, seconded by Huckabee to adjourn. Meeting adjourned at 8:09 pm.

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