



**CITY COUNCIL MEETING
IN PERSON AND VIA ZOOM
THURSDAY, APRIL 9, 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, Lescohier, Johnson, Schultz and President Jaeckel. Also present: City Manager, City Attorney, City Clerk/Treasurer/Finance Director, Director of Neighborhood Services, Public Works Superintendent, Fire Chief, Police Chief, Captain and Director of Parks & 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 as presented items 4.a. through 4.i. Motion carried.

- a. *Review and possible action relating to the **minutes of the March 11, 2026, Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee meeting (Ebbert, Clerk/Treasurer/Finance Director)***
- b. *Review and possible action relating to the **minutes of the March 17, 2026, City Council meeting (Ebbert, Clerk/Treasurer/Finance Director)***
- c. *Review and possible action relating to the **minutes of the March 24, 2026, Plan Commission meeting (Ebbert, Clerk/Treasurer/Finance Director)***
- d. *Review and possible action relating to the **minutes of the March 25, 2026, License Committee meeting (Ebbert, Clerk/Treasurer/Finance Director)***
- e. *Review and possible action relating to the **minutes of the March 26, 2026, Transportation and Traffic Review Committee meeting (Ebbert, Clerk/Treasurer/Finance Director)***
- f. *Review and possible action on a **Special Event: Hagerty Scott Spoerl Agency – Client Appreciation Car Show May 30, 2026, 9 am - 3 pm (Ebbert, Clerk/Treasurer/Finance Director)***
- g. *Review and possible action on a **Special Event: Chamber of Commerce Cheese Crawl, Saturday, June, 13, 2026, 2:00-5:00 pm (Ebbert, Clerk/Treasurer/Finance Director)***

- h. *Review and possible action on a **Special Event: Parks & Recreation Paint The Sky Festival, Saturday, May 30, 2026, 12:00 - 2:00 pm at Ralph Park** (Ebbert, Clerk/Treasurer/Finance Director)*
- i. *Review and possible action relating to **Renewal Alcohol Beverage License Application** for Fort Atkinson Generals Baseball Team, for use at Jones Park for a Class “B” Fermented Malt Beverage license (Ebbert, Clerk/Treasurer/Finance Director)*
- j. *Review and possible action on a **Special Event: Farmers Market Holiday Shop Hop, Saturday, December 5, 2026, 9:00 am - 3:00 pm** (Ebbert, Clerk/Treasurer/Finance Director)*
- k. *Review and possible action on a **Special Event: Fort Farmers Market, Saturdays from May 2, 2026, until October 31, 2026, 8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.** (Ebbert, Clerk/Treasurer/Finance Director)*
- l. *Review and possible action on a **Special Event: Trinity Worship in the Park, Thursday, June 11, 2026, from 5:00 to 8:00 pm at Barrie Park** (Ebbert, Clerk, Treasurer, Finance Director)*

5. Public Hearings

None.

6. Public Comment for Matters on the Agenda

None.

7. Petitions, Requests, and Communications

- a. *Review and possible action to proclaim **April 24, 2026, as Arbor Day** in the City of Fort Atkinson (Williamson, Superintendent of Public Works)*
Lescohier moved, seconded by Schultz to proclaim April 24, 2026 as Arbor Day in the City of Fort Atkinson. Motion carried.
- b. *Review and possible action on a proclamation recognizing **Telecommunicators Week April 12-18, 2026, in the City of Fort Atkinson** (Bump, Police Chief)*
Huckabee moved, seconded by Schultz to approve the proclamation recognizing Telecommunicators Week April 12-18, 2026 in the City of Fort Atkinson. Motion carried.
- c. *Review and possible action relating to a Proclamation **Recognizing Municipal Treasurers Week April 19-25, 2026** (Houseman, City Manager)*
Huckabee moved, seconded by Johnson to approve the proclamation recognizing Municipal Treasurers Week April 19-25, 2026 in the City of Fort Atkinson. Motion carried.

8. Resolutions and Ordinances

- a. *Review and Possible action on a resolution relating to **“Less Mow May,”** a temporary exception to Section 102-121(b)(1) of the City of Fort Atkinson Municipal Code (Houseman, City Manager)*

Manager Houseman stated that Heart of the City has proposed a temporary exception to Section 102-121(b)(1) of the City of Fort Atkinson Municipal Code, which would allow for grass to exceed the stated eight-inch maximum, to facilitate the promotion and education of habitat necessary for the successful emergence and survival of pollinators in the month of May. This effort, previously known as "No Mow May" has been successfully implemented in the City since 2021. However, research in the last several years has shown that mowing every 2-3 weeks is better for pollinators. As such, Heart of the City has requested that the City provide the same exception as in previous years, but call the month "Less Mow May."

Lescohier moved, seconded by Schultz to approve the Resolution relating to Less Mow May, a temporary exception to Section 102-121(b)(1) of the City of Fort Atkinson Municipal Code from May 1, 2026 to May 31, 2026. Motion carried.

- b. *Second and possible third/final reading of an ordinance relating to a **Zoning Map Amendment** to change the zoning district for the property located on Mehta Lane (parcels 226-0614-3231-000 and 226-0614-3242-001) from Suburban Mixed Use (SMU) to Multi-Family Residential-12 (MRM-12) (Draeger, Director of Neighborhood and Building Services)*
- Director Draeger stated the applicant is proposing a Zoning Map Amendment (ZMA) to rezone two vacant parcels in Fort Atkinson from Suburban Mixed Use (SMU) to Multi-Family Residential (MRM-12) to allow development of six apartment buildings with 12 units each (72 total units). The properties are located at the west end of Mehta Lane on the northwest side of Fort Atkinson near the USH 26 bypass and are currently vacant.

Lescohier moved, seconded by Huckabee to suspend the rules and offer a third/final reading of the Ordinance. Motion carried.

Schultz moved, seconded by Lescohier to adopt the ordinance relating to a Zoning Map Amendment to change the zoning district for the property located on Mehta Lane (parcels 226-0614-3231-000 and 226-0614-3242-001) from Suburban Mixed Use (SMU) to Multi-Family Residential-12 (MRM-12). Motion carried.

- c. *Second and possible third/final reading of an ordinance relating to a **Zoning Map Amendment for the property located at 23 N. Water St. E. and the westerly adjacent vacant lot (parcels 226-0514-0322-008 and 226-0514-0322-009), to change the zoning from Downtown Historic Mixed Use (DHMU) to Downtown Historic Mixed Use with a Planned Unit Development Overlay (Draeger, Director of Neighborhood and Building Services)***

Director Draeger provided that Premier Bank owns two parcels between Main Street and Edward Street with frontage on N. Water Street East in the City of Fort Atkinson. One parcel is a gravel parking lot, and the other contains a vacant former auto alignment shop. The applicant proposes demolishing the existing building and combining the parcels to develop a paved, 15-stall off-site parking lot to support Premier Bank staff and customers.

Huckabee moved, seconded by Johnson to suspend the rules and offer a third/final

reading of the Ordinance. Motion carried.

Schultz moved, seconded by Lescohier to approve the Zoning Map Amendment for the property located at 23 N. Water St. E. and the westerly adjacent vacant lot (parcels 226-0514-0322-008 and 226-0514-0322-009), to change the zoning from Downtown Historic Mixed Use (DHMU) to Downtown Historic Mixed Use with a Planned Unit Development (PUD) Overlay. Motion carried.

- d. *Second and possible third/final reading of an ordinance relating to amendments to various sections of the **Zoning Ordinance, Chapter 15** of the City of Fort Atkinson Code of General Ordinances, relating to the review and approval of Signs (Draeger, Director of Neighborhood and Building Services)*

Director Draeger introduced the City of Fort Atkinson Zoning Ordinance Section 15.10.30 outlines the process for Zoning Text Amendments that reflects Wisconsin State Statutes Section 62.23(7)(d). The proposed changes are based on the recognition that Plan Commission review of many sign types is an additional step, which may delay a property or business owner's sign project. Before Plan Commission consideration, staff have already worked with applicants to ensure full compliance with ordinance standards.

Huckabee moved, seconded by Schultz to suspend the rules and offer a third/final reading of the Ordinance. Motion carried.

Lescohier moved, seconded by Schultz to adopt the ordinance amendments to various sections of the Zoning Ordinance, Chapter 15 of the City of Fort Atkinson Code of General Ordinances, relating to the review and approval of Signs. Motion carried.

- e. *Review and possible action relating to a **Resolution amending the Covenants of the Klement Business Park** (Draeger, Director of Neighborhood and Building Services)*

Director Draeger shared the Klement Business Park covenants that have been in place since the creation of TID #6 in 1999. The City Council adopted the current Zoning Ordinance, Chapter 15 of the City of Fort Atkinson Municipal Code, on October 20, 2020, with amendments on October 17, 2023, and August 1, 2024. On March 17, 2026, the City Council closed TID #6, which included the land in the Klement Business Park, and intends to create a new Mixed Use TID in its place to allow development to be incentivized for the first time in over 15 years. The proposed amendments outlined in the attached redlined version of the Covenants document would enhance the park's development potential while preserving consistent, high quality aesthetic standards in line with the rest of the City of Fort Atkinson. Aligning the covenant requirements with the Chapter 15 Zoning Ordinance would also promote greater continuity in design standards across the City.

Schultz moved, seconded by Huckabee to adopt the resolution amending the covenants of the Klement Business Park and direct staff to mail a copy of the amended covenants to all property owners within the Klement Business Park. Motion carried.

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 **2025 Year-End Financial Information** (Houseman, City Manager)*

Manager Houseman stated that starting with the 2021 Year-End Financials, she has presented highlights of the year-end financial information that encompasses the following goals:

1. Provide the actual number and percentage of 2025 property taxes collected;
2. Provide a listing of general fund revenue accounts 15 percent over or under the 2025 budgeted amount in accounts with \$5,000 or more (Table 1);
3. Provide a listing of general fund expenditure accounts 15 percent over or under the 2025 budgeted amount in accounts with \$5,000 or more (Table 2);
4. Provide an estimated net increase (or decrease) to the City's General Fund balance (Table 3);
5. Provide an estimated summary of the ending balance in all funds, along with any necessary explanation of changes (Table 4);
6. Request the City Council authorize the carry-over of outstanding positive balances from certain accounts to 2026 (Table 5).

Schultz moved, seconded by Huckabee to approve the 2025 funds requested to be carried over to 2026 as listed in Table 5, for a total of \$412,571.49. Motion carried.

- b. *Review and possible action related to the **Water Management Assistance Program for the Fort Atkinson Aquatics Center at Rock River Park** (Dayton, Parks and Recreation Director)*

Director Dayton shared that the Fort Atkinson Aquatic Center at Rock River Park is a roughly 350,000-gallon facility that regularly hosts over 40,000 visitors during its 11-week season. In accordance with state pool code, Parks Department Aquatic Specialist, Mat Thomson, CPO, must check chemical levels daily and make necessary adjustments. Proper chemical management is vital for our operations' success and the safety of our patrons. The Parks and Recreation Department has maintained a long-standing partnership with Carrico Aquatic Resources, Inc., which has been the primary pool service provider for over 18 years.

Lescohier moved, seconded by Johnson to authorize staff to enter into the Water Management Assistance Program with Carrico Aquatic Resources, Inc., for the 2026 pool season at a cost not to exceed \$18,400.00 as outlined in the contract. Motion carried.

- c. *Review and possible action relating to a proposal from MRA for **Performance***

Management Program Development Services (Houseman, City Manager)

Manager Houseman updated that in 2025, the City commissioned a Classification and Compensation study that resulted in a recommendation for a new performance-based pay plan for full-time non-represented City employees. In 2026, the City transitioned from a three-step pay plan to an open-range merit pay plan. City staff has asked the City's human resources consulting company to provide a proposal for a performance management program to assist in implementing the merit-based pay plan. The City does not employ any staff trained in Human Resources or performance management. Therefore, staff sought a proposal from the City's HR consultant for such assistance.

Huckabee moved, seconded by Johnson to approve the proposal for Performance Management Development Services from MRA at a cost of \$14,000 using contingency funds and authorize the City Manager to execute. Motion carried.

d. ***Review and possible action relating to the 2025 Department of Natural Resources annual Recycling Report (Navin, Director of Public Works)***

Manager Houseman discussed how the City is required to submit an Annual Report to the Department of Natural Resources on the City's recycling activities for the year. The report documents that the City recycled 820.31 tons of materials listed on DNR's Table #1: newspaper, cardboard, magazines, etc. in 2025, compared to 920.12 tons in 2024. The City recycled 131.72 pounds per capita. The City has met the collection standard for the annual grant.

Lescohier moved, seconded by Johnson to approve the 2025 Department of Natural Resources annual recycling report and authorize Staff to execute on behalf of the City. Motion carried.

e. ***Review and possible action relating to an increase in Court Costs for the Fort Atkinson Municipal Court as permitted by 2025 Wisconsin Act 113 (Houseman, City Manager)***

Manager Houseman stated that 2025 Wisconsin Act 133 (AB 443) has been signed into law by Gov. Tony Evers. The law allows municipalities to increase municipal court fees by up to \$10 per matter. This is the first allowable increase in court costs since 2013. Each citation payment is distributed among several designated funds and entities: Forfeiture, Court Costs, Penalty Surcharge, Jail Surcharge, State Crime Laboratory Fee and Parking Only.

Schultz moved, seconded by Johnson to approve the increase in Municipal Court fees by \$10 per 2025 Wisconsin Act 113, as shown in the attached Table 2 with an effective date of May 1, 2026. Motion carried.

f. ***Review and possible action relating to the 2026 CIP Boiler Replacement Project for the Police Department (Bump, Police Chief)***

Chief Bump discussed that the Police Department is set to replace the boilers within the Police Department building in 2026. Funds are established in the 2026 CIP Budget under the Police Outlay Account in the amount of \$90,000.00 for this project. These funds were budgeted for the replacement of the 2-boiler system and software updates to the

thermostat that operates the Boiler/HVAC system. The 2026 CIP Budget for the Boiler Replacement Project for the Police Department was set at \$90,000.00. The quotes and planning for this project were completed in mid-2025 and placed in the 2026 CIP. Staff recommends the City Council approve the proposal from Total Mechanical for the replacement of the Boiler System at \$86,500 and thermostat at the Police Department. Total Mechanical provided the lowest proposal for the project and has done previous work in City facilities. The company is a trusted service provider. Staff is also requesting approval to move forward with the software upgrade on the thermostat system with Masters Building Solutions at \$12,100 to ensure seamless control with the newly added system within the computer-based thermostat control system. The total cost is \$8,600 over the approved budget amount; however, there are funds available in Fund 16 (CIP) to cover the difference.

Lescohier moved, seconded by Huckabee to approve the 2026 CIP boiler replacement project for the Police Department building at a cost not to exceed \$98,600. Motion carried.

- g. *Review and possible action relating to **Alcohol Beverage License Application** for K&S Restaurants, LLC for use at 88, 90, 96 S Main Street for a "Class B" Intoxicating Liquor and Class "B" Fermented Malt Beverage license (Ebbert, Clerk/Treasurer/Finance Director)*
Clerk Ebbert stated that the location of 88, 90, 96 S. Main Street had been operated by Bridge @ River & Main, LLC dba Bridge with adjacent businesses Proof and Good to Go. A "Class B" Intoxicating Liquor and Class "B" Fermented Malt Beverage license was used at Bridge and Proof as the properties were contiguous internally and owned/operated by the same LLC and Agent. Good-to-Go is also contiguous however did not sell or allow consumption of alcohol. K&S Restaurants, LLC has an offer to purchase and operate at 88, 90 and 96 S. Main Street and submitted an Alcohol Beverage License Application for a "Class B" Intoxicating Liquor and Class "B" Fermented Malt Beverage License. Documentation was properly completed and submitted for review. License Committee met and reviewed the submission recommending approval to the City Council.

Schultz moved, seconded by Lescohier to approve the Alcohol Beverage License Application for a "Class B" Intoxicating Liquor and Class "B" Fermented Malt Beverage License for K&S Restaurants, LLC dba Proof Speakeasy & The Bridge @ River and Main for use at 88, 90 & 96 S. Main Street for the licensing period of April 10, 2026 to June 30, 2026 contingent upon payment of licensing fees. Motion carried.

- h. *Review and possible action relating to **Alcohol Beverage License Application** for Chroma Art Studio, LLC for use at 112 N. Main Street for a "Class C" Wine License (Ebbert, Clerk/Treasurer/Finance Director)*
Clerk Ebbert provided that Jessica Turner, owner of Chroma Art Studio, LLC provided an Alcohol Beverage License Application for a "Class C" wine license for use at 112 N. Main Street. A "Class C" wine license allows for consumption by the glass on site or in one unopened original container for consumption on premise where it is sold. The open container may be taken for consumption off the premises only in compliance with Wis.

Stat. 125.51(3r) (i.e., "recorked" bottle). The premise includes the east end of the first floor of the building, two event spaces and a small office space. The wine can be stored, sold and consumed in the areas described in the premise. Note that effective May 1, 2024, Act 73 eliminated previous limitations on eligibility for "Class C" wine licenses (i.e., no longer has to be a restaurant). License Committee met and reviewed the submission recommending approval to the City Council.

Huckabee moved, second by Johnson to approve the Alcohol Beverage License application for a "Class C" Wine License for Chroma Art Studio, LLC for use at 112 N. Main Street from April 10, 2026 through June 30, 2026, contingent upon payment of license fees. Motion carried.

- i. *Review and possible action relating to **Alcohol Beverage License Application** for Topsy Trail Liquors, for use at 313 Madison Avenue for a "Class A" Intoxicating Liquor license (Ebbert, Clerk/Treasurer/Finance Director)*

Clerk Ebbert provided information that in September 2025, Stop-N-Go / Kwik Trip #1502 operating at 313 Madison Avenue closed their business. Upon closure, a "Class A" Intoxicating Liquor and Class "A" Fermented Malt Beverage license was surrendered to the City. At that time, there were no interested parties in the license. In February 2026, two inquires were made within the same week for the "Class A" Intoxicating Liquor license. Both parties were provided required applications and the City of Fort Atkinson Alcohol License Questionnaire. The two applicants for the available license were • Honey Be A Flower, LLC d/b/a Honey Be A Flower for use at 126 N. Main Street • Topsy Trail Liquors, Inc d/b/a Topsy Trail Liquors for use at 313 Madison Avenue. The City does not have criteria outlined in ordinance relating to choosing between multiple applications for a single available license. The License Committee and the City Council have discretion in choosing the application that is most in line with the goals of the City. The License Committee met on March 25, 2026 and reviewed the submissions by both applicants. Applicants were present and provided backgrounds of their business and business plans should they be issued the "Class A" license. The Committee discussed the questionnaire responses and thanked applicants for their interest in doing business in Fort Atkinson. Ultimately, the Committee recommended the City Council approve the license for Topsy Trail Liquors, due the facts that it is a new business occupying a vacant building and that the license is integral to business operations.

Huckabee moved, seconded by Lescohier to approve the application for a "Class A" Intoxicating Liquor License to Topsy Trail Liquors for use at 313 Madison Avenue for the licensing period of April 10, 2026, through June 30, 2026, contingent upon payment of license fees. Motion carried.

- j. *Review and possible action relating to **Alcohol Beverage License Application** for Topsy Trail Liquors, for use at 313 Madison Avenue for a Class "A" Fermented Malt Beverage license (Ebbert, Clerk/Treasurer/Finance Director)*

Clerk Ebbert stated that Topsy Trail Liquors, Inc has an offer to purchase property located at 313 Madison Avenue to operate a retail store. This location was the former Stop-N-Go /

Kwik Trip #1502 that closed in September 2025. License Committee met and reviewed the submission recommending approval to the City Council.

Lescohier moved, seconded by Johnson to approve the Alcohol Beverage License application for a Class "A" Fermented Malt Beverage for Topsy Trail Liquors Inc for use at 313 Madison Avenue from April 10, 2026, through June 30, 2026, contingent upon payment of license fees. Motion carried.

- k. *Review and possible action relating to **Cigarette, Tobacco and Electronic Vaping Device Retail License Applications** for Topsy Trail Liquors, for use at 313 Madison Avenue (Ebbert, Clerk/Treasurer/Finance Director)*

Clerk Ebbert stated that Topsy Trail Liquors, Inc has an offer to purchase property located at 313 Madison Avenue to operate a retail store. This location was the former Stop-N-Go / Kwik Trip #1502 that closed in September 2025. The premise description was provided that reflects the applicants' application submissions for Alcohol and Cigarette Licensees. License Committee met and reviewed the submission recommending approval to the City Council.

Huckabee moved, seconded by Johnson to approve the Cigarette and Tobacco Products Retail License Application for Topsy Trail Liquors Inc for use at 313 Madison Avenue for the licensing period of April 10, 2026, to June 30, 2026, contingent upon payment of license fees. 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)*

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

15. Adjournment

Huckabee moved, seconded by Schultz to adjourn. Meeting adjourned at 8:24 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle Ebbert

City Clerk/Treasurer/Finance Director

