

Common Council Minutes
Wednesday, May 7, 2025 at 6:00 p.m.

The Common Council of the City of Neenah, Winnebago County, Wisconsin, met in regular session at 6:00 p.m., May 7, 2024, in the Council Chambers of Neenah City Hall.

Mayor Lang is the chair.

Present: Aldermen Bruno, Erickson, Linski, Ellis, Steiner, Pollnow, Lendrum, Weber, and Council President Borchardt. Staff present Director of Finance Rasmussen, Director of Community Development & Assessment Nieforth, Director of Public Works Kaiser, City Attorney Rashid, and City Clerk Nagel.

Also Present: Parks & Recreation Director Kading, Fire Chief Teesch, Police Chief Olson, Assistant Police Chief Bernice, Police Lieutenant Wagner, and those noted on the attached Meeting Sign-In Sheets.

Mayor Lang called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

- I. The City Clerk called a voice roll call as the Mayor/Aldermen recorded their attendance in the RollCall-Pro System followed by the Pledge of Allegiance led by Alderman Steiner.
- II. Greater Fox Cities Convention & Visitors Bureau Update to the City of Neenah by Executive Director Seidl. (Attachment)
Director Seidl went through her presentation and answered any questions of the Council. A copy of Director Seidl's presentation is included in the council packet.
 - A. Motion to receive and place on file. **(RollCall-Pro)**
MSCRP Borchart/Ellis to receive the presentation and place it on file.
- III. Proclamations
 - A. Poppy Days, May 23 and 24, 2025
Mayor Lang read the Poppy Days Proclamation aloud, followed by a moment to sign the proclamation with pictures.
 - B. Letter Carriers' Food Drive Day, May 10, 2025
- IV. Introduction and Confirmation of Mayor's Appointment(s)
 - A. Appoint Frank Cuthbert to the Plan Commission for a three-year term ending 2028.
 - B. Appoint Flo Bruno as a citizen member of the Neenah Arts Council for a three-year term ending April 2028.
 - C. **(UC)**
Seeing no objections, the Mayor's appointments were ordered approved.

Clerk Nagel swore in the newly appointed committee/commission members. The members took an opportunity to briefly address the Council.

V. Approval of Council Proceedings

- A. [Approval of the Council Minutes and Proceedings of April 15, 2025 Organizational and Regular Council Meeting. \(UC\)](#)

Seeing no objections, the Minutes and Proceedings were ordered approved.

VI. Public Forum

- A. Speakers should give their name and residential address (not mailing address) and are allowed five minutes to speak on any topic.

1. Cattee Van Linn, 421 East Doty Avenue – Spoke on Group 764 which is a predatory group towards young adults and child. This is a serious crime, in which the Department of Justice has declared a national emergency. She believes that the city has been a victim of this network. She trusts that the City Council will do what it can to fight against human trafficking and the actions of Group 764 that are taking place in the city.
2. Bernice Meyer, 116 Armstrong Street – Frank Cuthbert read a statement on behalf of Ms. Meyer who is having trouble with her voice. The statement was on the location of the Carpenter Preserve Parking lot. The proposed location for the Carpenter Preserve parking lot was deemed an environmental sensitive area (ESA) at the time of the extension of Shootingstar Drive. Ms. Meyer is wondering why the ESA changed on the parcel.
3. Bob Lace, 765 Oak Street – The Marine Corp is celebrating its 250 anniversary this year. For the past twenty years Mr. Lace has been an Honor Guard at the corner of Drew and College in Appleton, and an Honor Guard for the Memorial Day Parade in Appleton. He was asked to be this year's Grand Marshal for the Flag Day Parade. He will be the only Marine in the number one car for the Flag Day Parade with great honor. The Council and gallery acknowledged Mr. Lace's service and dedication to our country with a standing ovation.
4. Carmon Clark, 1078 Oxford Court – Spoke on the wheel tax. Given the financial instability of the economy, it is the responsibility of all levels of government to find a way to take the burden off citizens that are struggling in today's financial situation. A wheel tax unfairly burdens individuals with wear and tear of industrial trucks. Mr. Clark urges the Council to review the budget for funds that are not allocated for a specific item or contractors that are providing duplicative services. The people who will be taxed are not causing the problems on the streets. If there is a time when the TARF is reinstated in the future, it be the more equitable avenue of sharing the burden.
5. Scott Becher, 1061 Green Acres Lane – Neenah is at heart a manufacturing city. The wheel tax is a bad idea, it shifts the burden onto the residents. Other ways of funding need to be explored, what are other communities doing? Neenah has bad roads. Our city has a PACER score 5.6 which is the lowest in the Fox Cities. Other funding needs to be looked at including money set aside for Arrowhead Park. We need to think of other funding options other than putting the burden on our citizens.

VII. Mayor/Council consideration of public forum issues

A. None.

VIII. Consent Agenda

A. Temporary Extension of Licenses Premises Application to Greene's Pour House, Robert Greene, for Oktoberfest/Block Party, 134 W Wisconsin Avenue, Neenah, to be held on May 17, 2025, from 1:00 PM to 9:00 PM. **(PSSC)**

B. Temporary "Class B" Wine Only Beverage License to Future Neenah, 135 W. Wisconsin Avenue, Neenah, for a Wine Walk in the 100 and 200 Block of W. Wisconsin Avenue, to be held on May 10, 2025 from 11:00 AM to 3:00 PM. **(PSSC)**

C. **(UC)**

Seeing no objections, the Consent Agenda was ordered approved.

IX. Reports of standing committees

A. [Regular Public Services and Safety Committee meeting of April 29, 2025:](#) (Chairman Lendrum/Vice Chair Weber) (Minutes can be found on the City website)

1. Committee recommends Council approve the purchase of the Richo Theda 360 Camera and the Canon EOS R6 Mirrorless Camera at a cost not to exceed \$15,000.00 with funding from the Capital Equipment Budget.

(RollCall-Pro)

MSCRP Lendrum/Weber to approve the purchase of the cameras as recommended by Committee, all voting aye.

Alderman Lendrum read part of Lt. Wagner's memo which is on the city website. Lt. Wagner was present to field any questions.

2. Receive the approved Special Event Permits. **(Information Only, No Action Required)**

B. [Regular Finance and Personnel Committee meeting of April 28, 2025:](#) (Chairman Steiner/Vice Chair Erickson) (Minutes can be found on the City website)

1. Committee recommends Council approve reallocating the \$7,000 in CIP funds for the youth furniture to repair the seawall. **(RollCall-Pro)**

MSCRP Steiner/Bruno to approve the reallocation of CIP funds as recommended by Committee, all voting aye.

2. Committee recommends Council approve the transfer of \$60,000 from Doty Park play equipment CIP funding to the Green Park play equipment fund.

(RollCall-Pro)

MSCRP Steiner/Bruno to approve the transfer of CIP funds from Doty Park Play equipment to Green Park play equipment as recommended by Committee, all voting aye.

Director Kading responded to Alderman Pollnow's questions by stating that raw construction material costs have increased over the past 5-6 years and the city hasn't kept up with the increase on the budget side. The equipment being recommended for the budgeted funds did not add any play value to the park. To produce the current play equipment and planning for the future additional funds are needed.

3. Committee recommends the Council approve the reclassification of Parks & Recreation Office Manager from Grade 7 to Grade 8. **(RollCall-Pro)**
MSCRP Steiner/Bruno to approve the reclassification of the Parks & Recreation Office Manager as recommended by the Committee, all voting aye.
4. Committee recommends Council approve the Capital Project Carry Forwards from 2024 to 2025. **(RollCall-Pro)**
MSCRP Steiner/Bruno to approve the Capital Project Carry Forwards from 2024 to 2025 as recommended by Committee, all voting aye.

Director Rasmussen explained the city's borrowing process. Last year the city began borrowing in September when the final contract costs were known to allow for the city to borrow only the funds that are needed. The city used to borrow at the beginning of the year with projected contract costs instead of actual costs.

5. Committee recommends Council direct staff to prepare the necessary ordinance and to make the necessary arrangements with the Wisconsin Department Transportation – Division of Motor Vehicles to implement a municipal motor vehicle registration fee starting in 2026. **(RollCall-Pro)**
MSCRP Steiner/Borchardt to direct staff to prepare an ordinance and make necessary arrangements with DMV for a wheel tax. Motion carried in a roll call vote 8-1 with Pollnow dissenting.

Director Rasmussen explained the different funding options available for replacing the TARF. Options researched were special assessments to the property owner, debt levy, and wheel tax. Each option had its advantages and disadvantages. However, staff recommended the wheel tax because it is allowed by statute, had a low administrative burden, and is used by many Wisconsin municipalities. Of the three available options, the wheel tax provides a more equitable cost distribution across residents than the special assessment or debt levy option. [See this link for the Replacing TARF fact sheet.](#)

Alderman Steiner further explained that the Committee thought TARF was by far the most equitable and fair distribution of the financial burden. Obviously, this is no longer available, leaving the options Director Rasmussen explained above. The Committee felt they chose the best option available, the most equitable option when compared to the TARF. Unfortunately, the wheel tax does shift costs off businesses, but from a legislative point of view, it is out of our hands.

Alderman Pollnow is an advocate for fair governance including proposed ordinances, code changes, fees, and taxation making this issue concerning to him. The wheel tax excludes commercial and industrial properties from contributing towards street construction costs. This does include senior citizens and the working class who already have tight budgets. Alderman

Pollnow is for the use of the debt levy option which, in his opinion, will spread the costs out equally among residential, commercial, and industrial properties depending on assessed value. He believes this is the fairest way to spend money on street work. Implementing the debt levy option long-term will also save the city from any future litigation. If the wheel tax is implemented, Alderman Pollnow expects a property tax cut in return for the wheel tax.

6. Committee recommends Council approve the updated Grant Policy. **(RollCall-Pro)**
MSCRP Steiner/Bruno to approve the updated Grant Policy as recommended by Committee, all voting aye.
7. Committee recommends Council accept the scheduled Finance Timelines as presented. **(RollCall-Pro)**
MSCRP Steiner/Borchardt to accept the Finance Timelines as presented. Motion carried in a roll call vote 8-1, with Pollnow dissenting.

Alderman Pollnow is concerned with the new schedule as there won't be a spring Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) meeting. The concern is that there won't be two meetings per year on the CIP, only one opportunity for Council review and public participation.

Director Rasmussen responded that the CIP workshops scheduled in August are open to the public. This is in conjunction with the fall borrowing process. The CIP is also incorporated with the budget workshops and included in the budget adoption process focusing on the 2026 borrowing. All CIP meetings and budget workshops are open public meetings.

This process is problematic for Alderman Pollnow because of the time span between the CIP Workshops and the adoption of the budget. It is burdensome on aldermen to remember what took place at the workshops when they occur three months before budget adoption.

Alderman Ellis looked at budget dates from a historical point. The CIP is looking several years into the future, but the city can only budget a year at a time. Due to that fact, the CIP cannot be approved which makes the CIP a fluid document. It is more prudent to take the initiative with the process described by Director Rasmussen because the CIP becomes a more living breathing document that can be articulated down the road from a standpoint of convenience.

- C. [Neenah-Menasha Joint Finance & Personnel Committee Meeting of April 22, 2025:](#)
(Vice Chair Borchardt) (Minutes can be found on the City website)
 1. Committee recommends both the City of Neenah and the City of Menasha authorize the purchase of a used light duty pickup truck for a cost not to exceed \$17,000 with funding to be from FAP money. **(RollCall-Pro)**

MSCRP Borchardt/Weber to authorize the purchase of the truck as recommended by Committee, all voting aye.

Alderman Bruno spoke on the Graduation Ceremony for Fire Fighters Darren Kramer, Cole Henke, and Ben Schwartzbauer and the retirement celebration for Assistant Chief Jim Peglow after 31 years of service.

- X. Reports of special committees and liaisons and various special projects committees
- A. [Regular Plan Commission meeting of April 29, 2025](#): (Council Rep Steiner) (Minutes can be found on the City website)
1. Report on Neenah Housing Study and Needs Assessment Implementation Strategy. **(No Action)**
- Alderman Steiner advised that the Commission is continuing their discussion in relation to the housing study and finding opportunities to make building in Neenah more affordable and easier. Deputy Director Schmidt will be bringing specific recommendations relating to the zoning codes forward to the Plan Commission in the next couple of meetings.
- B. [Board of Public Works meeting of April 22, 2025](#): (Vice Chair Lendrum) (Minutes can be found on the City website)
1. Informational items only, no report.
- C. Library Board
1. [Report from the Library Board Meeting of April 16, 2025](#) – Alderman Erickson
 - a. The Neenah Joint School District Art Show is on display through May 11th. Student artwork from grades K-12 is on display.
 - b. The Sunday Concert Series has started.
 - c. The Cookbook Club is featuring a Mexican Fiesta on Tuesday, May 20th at 6:30 PM. There will be food sampling and recipe sharing.
 - d. Check the website for other available items at the library such as movies, yoga and fitness books, chess, Mahjong, and much more.
- D. Bergstrom Mahler Museum
1. Report from the Bergstrom Mahler Museum – Alderman Bruno
 - a. Through a Window Darkly: the artwork of Jen Blazina is currently running through October 5th.
 - b. The next Board meeting is scheduled for May 28th.
- E. Parks & Recreation Commission
1. [Report from the Park Commission Meeting of April 17, 2025](#) – Alderman Weber
 - a. Ashley Ondresky was elected Commission President and Eric Maggio as elected Commission Vice President for 2025.
 - b. The Parks & Recreation Annual Report was distributed to both the Commission and the Council.
 - c. The Great Lawn at Memorial Park was renamed in honor of Tom Jensen. Mr. Jensen was a teacher, a coach, and an instrumental leader in the school system as well as the city with the Fun Runs.

- d. About forty volunteers planted trees at Carpenter Preserve on Saturday, May 3rd.
- F. Sustainable Neenah Committee
 - 1. [Report from the Sustainable Neenah Committee Meeting of April 23, 2025](#) – Alderman Linski
 - a. No report.
- XI. Presentation of petitions
 - A. Any other petition received by the City Clerk's Office after distribution of the agenda.
 - 1. None.
- XII. Council Directives
 - A. None.
- XIII. Unfinished Business
 - A. None.
- XIV. New Business
 - A. Alderman Lendrum spoke about Doty Island Community Partners worked with the Fox-Wolf Watershed Alliance Clean Up Day held May 3rd. Alderman Bruno, President of the Doty Island Community Partners, advised 95 volunteers collected 900 pounds of waste.
 - B. Alderman Erickson spoke on the collaboration between Future Neenah and Alliance Charter Elementary School Tiny Door Exhibit displayed throughout the city. There are 55 tiny doors created by 4th, 5th, and 6th grade students at Alliance Charter Elementary School. There is a QR code available to locate all the doors.
- XV. Adjournment

Motion by Pollnow/Weber to adjourn. Motion carried in a voice vote 9-0. Meeting adjourned at 7:23 PM.

Respectfully submitted,



Charlotte Nagel, City Clerk

CITY OF NEENAH – COMMON COUNCIL MEETING
WEDNESDAY, MAY 7, 2025
ATTENDANCE SHEET

NAME	ADDRESS
1. Bob Lase	765 OAK
2. Bernice Meyer	116 Armstrong Town of Neenah
3. Cameron Clark	1078 Oxford Ct.
4. Joe Brutsch	2116 Meadowgreen Dr Neenah
5. Chan Kuesling	868 Tumblebrook Rd. Neenah 54956
6. Claire Burr	
7. Mary Koslowski	
8. Donna Johnson	
9. Barbara Bodenhagen	
10. Patti Julius	
11. Marie Geri Webber	
12. Karen Gregerson	
13. Vicki Hanson	
14. John John	421 East Poty Ave
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Neenah

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**CITY OF NEENAH – COMMON COUNCIL MEETING
WEDNESDAY, MAY 7, 2025
ATTENDANCE SHEET**

NAME	ADDRESS
1. <i>Frank Cuthbert</i>	<i>1533 Fallow Drive</i>
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**CITY OF NEENAH – COMMON COUNCIL MEETING
WEDNESDAY, MAY 7, 2025
ATTENDANCE SHEET**

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1. SCOTT RECKEN	1061 GREEN ACRES LANE
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**CITY OF NEENAH – COMMON COUNCIL MEETING
WEDNESDAY, MAY 7, 2025
ATTENDANCE SHEET**

NAME	ADDRESS
1. Mary Koslowski	954 Hwy Dr #2 (U)
2. John Vanter	421 East Park Ave
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