

**CITY OF NEENAH
MINUTES OF THE
SPECIAL FINANCE AND PERSONNEL COMMITTEE MEETING
Wednesday, September 17, 2025 at 5:30 p.m.
Hauser Room, Neenah City Administration Building
211 Walnut Street, Neenah, Wisconsin**

1. Call to Order.

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 PM by Chairman Steiner.

Present: Chairman Steiner, Vice-Chair Erickson, Council President Borchardt, Aldermen Ellis and Bruno, Director of Finance Rasmussen, and City Clerk Nagel.

Also present: Mayor Lang, Director Kaiser, City Attorney Rashid, Police Chief Olson, Police Assistant Chief Bernice, Aldermen Lendrum and Pollnow, and Citizens Umer Sheikh, Patricia Sheikh, Neenah News Reporter Gengler, and Saucy Kitchen Business Owner Jennifer Kornowske.

Absent/Excused: None.

2. Public Appearances.

- a. Jennifer Kornowske, Business Owner of Saucy Kitchen at 105 W. Winneconne Avenue. Ms. Kornowske told the Committee that taking land for a turn lane from the parking lot would significantly impact her business. She has been at this location for less than a year and is not against the turn lane, but is against the plan. Her parking lot is narrow to begin with, and the turn lane would narrow it even more making it more difficult to maneuver vehicles on the property. With the sidewalk so close to the parking lot, it is not a safe pedestrian environment. Ms. Kornowske's proposal is to construct a new parking lot on the north side of property, move the front door to the back of the building to be assessable from the new parking lot, and build a wall inside the newly constructed front door so customers can't walk into her storage area. In Ms. Kornowske's opinion, the \$70,000 is not enough for the property owner to make the necessary improvements to allow her to continue to do business at this location safely.

The offer contains nothing for Ms. Kornowske, who feels she will lose sales during the construction of the turn lane. She stated that she needs city support to continue to do business as she is already suffering from the current Commercial Street construction. The construction of the turn lane may cause her to shut down for a period of time.

She requested that the above considerations to be included in an amended proposal. Ms. Kornowske also shared photos of her proposal to the committee.

3. [Approval of Minutes from September 8, 2025 Regular Meeting.](#) (minutes can be found on the City's website)
MSC Erickson/Ellis to approve as written, all voting aye.
4. Make recommendation on Authorization for Jurisdictional Offer for 105 W. Winneconne Avenue, for the Commercial Street Right Turn Lane at Winneconne Avenue. (Kaiser) (Attachments forthcoming)

Director Kaiser gave a PowerPoint presentation to the Committee. The PowerPoint presentation is attached to the minutes.

MSC Ellis/Borchardt to recommend Council authorize a Jurisdictional Offer for 105 W. Winneconne Avenue, for the Commercial Street Right Turn Lane at Winneconne Avenue. No vote was taken.

Discussion:

Aldermen Ellis and Pollnow met with Ms. Kornowske several months ago to tour the site and discuss potential impacts on the business. What is being requested by the tenant of the city should be redirected to the landlord. It is the landlord's responsibility to meet tenant needs for rental. The city can only go so far and can only deal with the property owner.

Director Kaiser told the committee that negotiations took place between the landlord's representative and the city. How the landlord decides to use the proceeds of the sale is up to the landlord. This ultimately becomes a landlord/tenant issue.

Alderman Erickson did not like the fact that this acquisition was on a Special Finance and Personnel Committee Meeting. She did not feel there was ample time to look into the issue.

Director Kaiser advised the decision to call a special meeting was timing: postponing the item would essentially remove the ability to construct the turn lane this year. The two-week time loss for a regular meeting along with the time it takes to close the transaction would shut the door on construction this year. If the right-turn lane is not constructed this year, striping needs to be changed, making it compatible with the new Commercial Street traffic flow. The new striping would take 95% of vehicle movement at this intersection and put it into one lane with a left turn only lane. Traffic flow prior to the Commercial Street reconstruction project was the inside left lane was a thru or left turn, and the outside right lane was a thru or right turn lane with a merge into one lane at the gas station. The merging into one lane had safety issues as well. The right turn only lane actually helps with capacity at the intersection. As discussed with committee several years ago, this is the first interim step to improve capacity at the intersection without a huge expense. Having the right turn only lane allows for further capacity analysis of this intersection to determine if there is adequate flow with this improvement or whether a different solution is necessary.

Director Kaiser advised there is verbal acceptance of the offer but nothing in writing. A written formal offer was mailed to the property owner for signature today. There was discussion on the difference between a voluntary vs. involuntary offer. Attorney Rashid advised that had the verbal acceptance been known at the time of the agenda, different language would have been used. If the offer is not signed, the offer could come back to committee as a jurisdictional offer, the only concern is construction timing. Director Kaiser advised he needs to check with the consultant as to what the acceptance deadline is for this transaction.

Motion to amend the original motion: Motion by Borchardt/Ellis to recommend Council authorize a voluntary offer to purchase land from 105 W. Winneconne Avenue for the Commercial Street Right Turn Lane at Winneconne Avenue not to exceed \$70,000. Motion carried in a voice vote, 5-0

5. Adjournment.

Motion to adjourn by Ellis, seconded by Borchardt to adjourn. Motion carried in a voice vote, 5-0. Meeting adjourned at 6:03 PM.

Respectfully submitted,



Charlotte Nagel
City Clerk