MINUTES
Regular Meeting
October 26th, 2026

A regular council meeting of the City of Wheaton, MN was held in the Wheaton Community Library with the following members present: Mayor Lundquist, Councilmember Rikimoto, Councilmember Hansen, Councilmember Wohlenhaus, Councilmember Churchill

Absent: None

Also present: Administrator Ayres, Deputy Clerk Olson, City Attorney Franzese, PW Director Dean Lampe, PW Rob Hoernemann Darin Fellbaum, Jim Smoger, Jerrel Olson, Justin Rikimoto, Sunday Lampe, Tim Everding, Lynn Siegel

Mayor Lundquist called the meeting to order at 4:00 pm.

Consent Agenda

Upon motion from Mr. Rikimoto, seconded by Ms. Churchill, motion carried unanimously to approve the agenda, the minutes of 10/13/2026, Library Board minutes of 9/21/2026, and the claims of 10/26/2026.

Public Comment

No public comment made.

Darin Fellbaum/Moore Engineering – Project Updates

Darin brought Pay Application 1 from Ti-Zack for the work on the Active Transportation Project for the amount of $149,141.74.

Upon motion from Ms. Churchill, seconded by Mr. Rikimoto, motion carried unanimously to approve Pay Application 1 for Ti-Zack.

For the Phase 1 Watermain project, Darin brought up the option of hosting an open house in December for members of the community who have questions about the project. Additionally, he recommended the city look into bonding due to not meeting the fundable range for the Public Facilities Authority.

Sunday Lampe – Tax Abatement

Administrator Ayres provided the information regarding the abatement request in addition to the rough estimates based on the 2026 tax rates and a spreadsheet for possible abatement considerations. The council discussed the figures provided and will look to get a resolution possible finalized for consideration in a later meeting.

Snow Removal Bids

The sealed bid for snow removal was opened, and the bid was from Whaley's Excavating Inc. The equipment rates for the bid were read aloud during the meeting.

Upon motion from Mr. Rikimoto, seconded by Mr. Wohlenhaus, motion carried unanimously to accept the bid from Whaley's Excavating for snow removal.

2027 Liquor License Applications

The city received two liquor license applications for 2027 from the American Legion and Tri-County Coop.

Upon motion from Mr. Rikimoto, seconded by Ms. Churchill, motion carried unanimously to approve the liquor licenses.

Resolution 2026-35 Accepting Donations

The City was provided with a donation from the Gopher Theater for $1000.00 to the Gopher Theater Fund.

Upon motion from Ms. Hansen, seconded by Ms. Churchill, motion carried unanimously to accept the donations from the Gopher Theater.

Ordinance 005-10 Errors and Omissions

Ordinance 005-10 Errors and Omissions was reviewed by the council. The ordinance would allow for minor alterations to the ordinance book in relation to mislabeled, omitted, or misspelled formatting that does not change the intended meaning of an ordinance.

Upon motion from Ms. Churchill, seconded by Ms. Hansen, motion carried unanimously to approve Ordinance 005-10 Errors and Omissions.

Lynn Siegel – Demo Site and Emergency Management

Lynn Siegel, the Emergency Management Director and Solid Waste Administrator for Traverse County, attended to provide additional context for the weighing of the decision to close Wheaton's Demo Site. A rule change, which is likely to be made on the recommendation of the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, would require water monitoring and lining of the current site to remain active. The costs associated with becoming compliant would cost the city immensely. To avoid these added costs, the city can work toward closure before the rule change's likely approval date in the Fall of 2027.

The council discussed dates of closure and not accepting any additional waste, so surveying can be done before the closure procedure starts. The council's suggested date for no longer accepting waste was November 16th.

Lynn was also in attendance to make the city aware of a program available for tree branches that are taken down during storms. As the city maintains the boulevard, it was suggested that if any residents were to move branches into the boulevard and the city was to clear them, emergency funds could be sought to cover 75% of the cost of clearing the branches from the streets. This would include employee working hours, machine hours, and any additional costs associated with the removal of the branches.

City Attorney Franzese – Legal Update

City Attorney Franzese provided updates on some of the work he has undertaken for the city. He listed the following tasks that he has been working on: Letters for vehicles and junk in yards, communicated about the vehicles at the sewer plant, drafted the previously passed ordinance, working on insurance claims for Conroy Building damage, working on an NSF for a bounced check.

Tim Everding's Shed letter got mentioned and after discussion about its placement and the need for it to move due to the city not vacating the alley, it was decided that Tim had until June 1st of 2027 to have it moved.

Additional conversation was had on the following topics:

Fire Hydrants and Water Access at the Fairgrounds

The concern regarding unmetered water usage at the fairgrounds was brought up and discussion was had about the next steps. Those being to visit the Fair Board about the current situation.

Apartment Inspections – Pineview

Concerns regarding the condition of some of the Pineview apartments were raised and along with the possibility of an inspection again.

Building Inspection

It was inquired whether the building inspector had been called about the water leak at 102 1st Avenue N. Administrator Ayres mentioned that Mike Jacobson had been contacted and provided the details for the inspection

Land Use Permit Applications

Carol Nelson applied for a land use permit to install a shed next to a chicken coop on her land at 403 1st Avenue N. After reviewing the setbacks for commercial land, which her land is on, it was determined that additional measurements may be necessary due to it being undetermined whether the land qualifies as developed or not under the ordinance. Developed land requires a 15ft setback whereas undeveloped requires a 30ft setback. The permit application was tabled until a determination can be made.

Administrator/Public Works Update

PW Director Lampe provided the following update from public works: Buttweiler's had finished the final part of repairs for the Star Bank building the city owns. The airport roof will need to be delayed until next year.

Quotes have been obtained for getting wiring done in the public works garage to provide proper lighting to the space. It was determined to have it on the agenda for the next council meeting to approve one of the quotes.

Public Works has the materials but have not finished the updates to the bathrooms at the softball field.

Crosswalks will be painted for the elementary school and along 5th Avenue N.

Johnson Jet-Line is currently helping clear sewer lines.

Administrator Ayres provided the following updates for the council: The city is looking at a new website for 2027 and had three quotes from website providers. Municipal Impact would cost the city $3,411.20 for a year and the set up of the webpage with import for the old one and a $812.00 upkeep for future years. However, the site couldn't promise that all imported documents would be ADA compliant. This is one of the criteria for city websites to become compliant under the Americans with Disabilities Act Title II Web and Mobile Application Accessibility Rule. The second provider was Town Web, Ayres stated that he did not get a demo from them but noted the price quote that was received earlier this year. The cost per year for this provider was quoted at $3,060.00 with addons that could have cost the city more per year. The final provider, recommended by Ayres, was Munibit. The cost estimate for this provider was $1,712.00 for the first year of the service due to a provided three months free and a $2,283.00 cost for upkeep going forward. Ayres stated that he was impressed with the functionality of the site being that a payment service provider is integrated and would allow for payments beyond utility bills online. Additionally, there were added features of filing permits and other forms online and booking of the Falk Park Lodge online as well. ADA compliance for all documents was assured with the added screen capture feature for all documents on the site.

Upon motion from Ms. Hansen, seconded by Ms. Churchill, motion carried unanimously to approve the recommended quote for Munibit as a web service provider.

Ayres provided a spreadsheet to account for an updated utility rate adjustment for water and sewer rates. The former hadn't been updated since 2024 and the latter since 2022. The suggested rate increases would be at a more incremental percentage amount at 5% for water and 2.5% for sewer. This would be less than the previous increases which amounted to one cent raises per cubic foot in the past. Additionally, he recommended looking into a storm sewer base rate charge to generate a revenue source for repairing the storm sewers with the recommendation being 50 cents. The council recommended looking into the hangar lease rates and other fee charges for when they were last updated.

Ayres mentioned the Lake Region Arts Council was visiting the previous week and they have a possible grant opportunity for the city's duck landmark to be repaired and another for Duck Days.

Upon motion from Mr. Rikimoto, seconded by Ms. Churchill, motion carried unanimously to approve the seeking of the grant for the duck.

Upon motion from Ms. Churchill, seconded by Ms. Hansen, motion carried unanimously to approve the seeking of the grant for Duck Days.

Ayres reported that he had been in contact with Matthew Hormann over a proposed metal collection site hosted by the city. Concerns regarding the upkeep of the site were mentioned including that the demo site had previously hosted a collection site but it was removed due to unqualified items being dumped there. The council recommended looking somewhere else to host the site.

Ayres brought up a proposed Ordinance Committee which would have a rotating membership based upon what ordinance was being reviewed. Proposed make up was the City Administrator, City Attorney, the County Sheriff, the Public Works Director, and two council members. It was suggested to include the committee in the 2027 Organization Resolution.

Ayres requested additional discussion on the outcome for the city's Star Bank building since the building had been repaired. The council recommended looking into advertising to either lease or sell the building and to work on determining what the rate of the lease would be or the selling price would be.

Currently the city has advertised for an open ice rink manager position and has received interest from one applicant so far.

The City Council and EDA have scheduled and work session with CEDA at 4:00pm in the library to discuss priorities for community development.

Mayor's Minute and Council Purview

Adjourned at 6:13 pm

ATTEST:

Ashton Ayres, City Administrator

Steven Lundquist, Mayor