



City Council Meeting Minutes
Monday, August 4, 2025 at 6:30 p.m.
Five Points Banquet Room - 360 N. Wilmor Road, Washington, Illinois

Call to Order Mayor Lilija Stevens called the regular meeting to order at 6:30 p.m., with a quorum present.

Roll Call *Present:* Alderpersons Ernst, Johnson, Martin, Moss, Sluder, Smith
Absent: Alderpersons Blundy, McIntyre

Also Present Interim City Administrator/City Engineer Dennis Carr, Finance Director Joanie Baxter, Planning and Development Director Jon Oliphant, City, Public Works Director Brian Rittenhouse, Police Chief Jeff Stevens, City Clerk Valeri Brod, City Treasurer Carol Crocker, and City Attorney Mark Walton

Pledge of Allegiance Mayor Stevens led the Pledge of Allegiance. Alderperson Smith entered at 6:31 p.m.

Audience Comments None provided.

Deletions/Additions City Administrator/City Engineer Carr reported that information from IDOT regarding the Candlewood Bridge Repair Project (Item 10-B) had not yet been received and recommended postponing the vote on the bid award. Council proceeded with discussion of the item.

Mayor Stevens announced that the Bicentennial Committee will host a Skycentennial drone show on Friday, August 15, at 9:00 p.m.

Consent Agenda Mayor Stevens presented the Consent Agenda for approval of the following items:
A. Approve July 21, 2025 Regular City Council Meeting Minutes
Alderperson Smith motioned to approve the consent agenda; Alderperson Moss seconded.
6 Ayes: Ernst, Johnson, Martin, Moss, Sluder, Smith
0 Nays:
Motion carried by roll call vote.

Mayoral Communication Mayor Stevens shared that this will fill vacancies on the EDC with the appointments of Corey Allen, Kevin Beale, Mike Herzog, Drew Hillman, and Gregg Soltow to the Economic Development Commission.
Alderperson Moss motioned to approve; Alderperson Smith seconded.
Alderperson Martin expressed excitement about the commission and noted that the tentative first meeting date is August 12, with the location to be determined. Mayor Stevens clarified that Alderperson Martin serves as the Council liaison to the EDC.
6 Ayes: Ernst, Johnson, Martin, Moss, Sluder, Smith
0 Nays:
Motion carried by roll call vote.

Mayor Stevens shared that this will fill vacancies on the PZC with the appointments of Matt Collins and Thomas Brecklin to the Planning & Zoning Commission
Alderperson Ernst motioned to approve; Alderperson Smith seconded.
6 Ayes: Ernst, Johnson, Martin, Moss, Sluder, Smith
0 Nays:
Motion carried by roll call vote.

August Let's Talk Washington The event will be held on Wednesday, August 13th, at 8:00 a.m. in the Washington Historical Society building, located at 128 Washington Square. Mayor Stevens noted that this week marks the beginning of the bicentennial week-long celebration and thanked the Historical Society for providing the location.

Mayor Stevens announced that the Bicentennial Parade will be held on Saturday, August 16th. The City will have current and past elected officials ride on the fire department's ladder truck. The parade theme is "Then and Now," and she hopes all current and former officials will participate. She also shared that she has been working on the 9/11 Remembrance event.

City Administrator Communication Council Report City Administrator/City Engineer Carr opened the floor for questions, none were provided. Regarding the railroad bridge painting, he reported that the muralist experienced delays and will now be working during the daytime this week. A revised timeline will be provided when available.

Approve Bid Award - Candlewood Bridge Repair Project City Administrator/City Engineer Carr explained that only one bid was received for the project. He contacted other potential bidders, who indicated the work was primarily masonry. The sole bid, submitted by Ottobaum, exceeded the engineer's estimate of \$356,188.25, coming in at \$597,965. Ottobaum explained that a crane would be required in the creek to move individual fallen blocks. The City's MFT balance could cover the bid amount. Carr is confirming with IDOT whether the existing resolution can be amended or if a new one is needed; therefore, staff is not yet recommending award. Alderperson Moss commented that the bidding process could change and expressed support for revisions that might make the project easier to bid.

Approve Increased Purchase Authorization - City Administrator Executive Recruitment Finance Director Baxter noted that, following prior discussion and concerns regarding tasks, staff consulted Arndt Municipal Support. Arndt typically handles items relating to the job offer. Due to increased time spent on social media and news article searches, the revised total is \$20,000.

Alderperson Johnson motioned to approve; Alderperson Smith seconded.

Alderperson Moss noted he had not previously supported the item but appreciated staff's efforts to improve the process. The City Attorney advised that, due to low council attendance, the mayor could vote to break a lack of majority. Moss stated he would vote in favor if needed, and the attorney noted this would make the record clearer.

6 Ayes: Ernst, Johnson, Martin, Moss, Sluder, Smith

0 Nays:

Motion carried by roll call vote.

Approve Communications Specialist Employment City Administrator/City Engineer Carr noted that this is normally the City Administrator handles personnel hiring and firing but the attorney feels that Council backing would be beneficial.

Alderperson Martin motioned to approve; Alderperson Ernst seconded.

6 Ayes: Ernst, Johnson, Martin, Moss, Sluder, Smith

0 Nays:

Motion carried by roll call vote.

First Reading Ord: City Administrator/Engineer City Administrator/City Engineer Carr presented the following ordinance for consideration: **Synopsis:** Adoption of this ordinance would approve a TIF redevelopment agreement with Washington Square Condominium North Unit Owners Association for the redevelopment of 101 Washington Square. **Title:** 101 Washington Square TIF Redevelopment Agreement

First Reading Ord: City Administrator/Engineer City Administrator/City Engineer Carr presented the following ordinance for consideration: **Synopsis:** Adoption of this ordinance would approve an agreement with Frank and Lucienne Bray for planned building and property improvements at 1503 Washington Road. **Title:** Washington Commercial Building and Property Improvement Grant Program Agreement with Frank and Lucienne Bray

First Reading Ord: City Administrator/Engineer City Administrator/City Engineer Carr presented the following ordinance for consideration: **Synopsis:** Adoption of this ordinance would approve an agreement

Commercial Improvement Grant Agreement with Cherry Tree Plaza, LLC with Cherry Tree Plaza, LLC, for planned building and property improvements at 1 Cherry Tree Shopping Center. **Title:** Washington Commercial Building and Property Improvement Grant Program Agreement with Cherry Tree Plaza, LLC

Second Reading Ord: City Administrator/Engineer City Administrator/City Engineer Carr presented the following ordinance for consideration: **Synopsis:** The following ordinance would approve and authorize the execution of a second amendment to a ground lease agreement and memorandum of lease agreement between the City of Washington and Cellco Partnership d/b/a Verizon Wireless. **Title:** Former Blumenshine Property Cell Tower Lease Extension Second Amended Agreement
3590 (25-25) Former Blumenshine Property Cell Tower Lease Extension Second Amended Agreement
6 Ayes: Ernst, Johnson, Martin, Moss, Sluder, Smith
0 Nays:
Motion carried by roll call vote.

Second Reading Ord: City Administrator/Engineer City Administrator/City Engineer Carr presented the following ordinance for consideration: **Synopsis:** Adoption of this ordinance would strike Chapter 14, Article II, Section 14-36 titled "Demolition or repair; lien" from the Municipal Code). **Title:** Section 14-36 Code Amendment
3591 (26-25) Section 14-36 Code Amendment
Alderson Smith motioned to approve; Alderson Sluder seconded.
6 Ayes: Ernst, Johnson, Martin, Moss, Sluder, Smith
0 Nays:
Motion carried by roll call vote.

Second Reading Ord: City Administrator/Engineer City Administrator/City Engineer Carr presented the following ordinance for consideration: **Synopsis:** Adoption of this ordinance would approve an agreement with Precious Hospitality, LLC, an Illinois limited liability company, for planned building and property improvements at 1101 N. Cummings Lane. **Title:** Washington Commercial Building and Property Improvement Grant Program Agreement with Precious Hospitality, LLC
3592 (27-25) Commercial Improvement Grant Agreement with Precious Hospitality, LLC
Alderson Smith motioned to approve; Alderson Ernst seconded.
Alderson Johnson referenced previous comments council member comments and input from residents. She shared that her comments do not focus on an individual or business. She shared that she is generally opposed to using taxpayer funds for private businesses but recognizes potential community benefits when supporting small businesses. She noted such support may help businesses with narrow profit margins remain open, hire staff, improve accessibility, and expand services. She added that ROI is not always measurable in dollars and looks forward to further discussion on the program.
6 Ayes: Ernst, Johnson, Martin, Moss, Sluder, Smith
0 Nays:
Motion carried by roll call vote.

Second Reading Ord: City Administrator/Engineer City Administrator/City Engineer Carr presented the following ordinance for consideration: **Synopsis:** Adoption of this ordinance would approve an agreement with Kristi LaHood Cape doing business as Countryside Banquet & Catering, for planned building and property improvements at 659 School Street. **Title:** Washington Commercial Building and Property Improvement Grant Program Agreement with Kristi LaHood Cape Doing Business as Countryside Banquet & Catering
3593 (28-25) Commercial Improvement Grant Agreement with Kristi LaHood Cape dba Countryside Banquet & Catering
Alderson Ernst motioned to approve; Alderson Sluder seconded.
Alderson Moss agreed with the need to improve the program noting that details may be addressed. He looks forward to further discussion and recognizes that these businesses have complied to the current application process.
6 Ayes: Ernst, Johnson, Martin, Moss, Sluder, Smith
0 Nays:
Motion carried by roll call vote.

Alderson Comments Alderson Martin added that next Tuesday, August 12th will be first EDC meeting. The meeting will be held to discuss core objectives. He will then report back to Council.

Adjournment At 6:57 p.m. *Alderson Smith moved to adjourn; Alderson Sluder seconded.*
Motion carried by voice vote.

Valeri L. Brod, City Clerk

DRAFT