



City Council Meeting Minutes
Monday, July 7, 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 6:29 p.m., with a quorum present.

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

Also Present Interim City Administrator/City Engineer Dennis Carr, Finance Director Joanie Baxter, Planning and Development Director Jon Oliphant, 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.

Audience Comments Anthony Fryxell shared that he serves as mayor of Hanna City but is originally from Washington and served in the Army. He feels Washington has shaped him. He shared information about a WCHS Football tradition of passing of the bandana. It began in 1981, and he carried it in 1989. It symbolizes pride and the names of the carriers are added each year. August marks the 45th consecutive passing of the bandana and he requests the City recognize the tradition with a proclamation. He noted the bandana will be passed on August 16th and there will be a special event in October to recognize the tradition.

Washington resident, Alissa Vander Naalt, shared that she has a background in public health. She addressed the sewage leak that she and a neighbor observed in a creek behind their homes. She requested the City FOIA the EPA test results and continue water quality testing until the area is confirmed safe. She also noted that a broken City truck may delay cleanup efforts and described the odor near the creek as overwhelming.

Washington resident, Pat Coyle, who lives nearby the overflow area, shared concerns about the longstanding sewage issue near his home and noted that he is a plumbing professional. He noted the area is always wet, green in the winter, and has had a strong odor for years. It is visible from his home four houses away. He believes the issue may date back 20 years and could have originated during dam construction, possibly damaging a manhole. He suggested that roots, debris, or grease may be contributing to the blockage and recommended a camera inspection. He proposed using the fire department or lake water to help dilute the sewage and asked that warning signs be placed until water quality testing is complete. He thanked Mayor Stevens for visiting the site.

Deletions/Additions None provided.

Consent Agenda Mayor Stevens presented the Consent Agenda for approval of the following items:

- A. Approve June 16, 2025 Regular City Council Meeting Minutes
- B. Approve Catherine Phase 2 Pay Request #1
- C. Approve Drainage Priority Project 5 Pay Request #2
- D. Approve Washington Police Evidence Storage Pay Request #3
- E. Approve TIF Pay Request #9 – Tangled Roots, 140 Washington Square

Alderman Johnson motioned to approve the consent agenda; Alderman McIntyre seconded.
5 Ayes: Blundy, Ernst, Johnson, Martin, McIntyre
0 Nays:
Motion carried by roll call vote.

Mayoral Communication Mayor Stevens acknowledged past OMA concerns and stated that, moving forward, she will address them by ensuring that events or meetings involve no more than one alderperson at a time. She shared that the next “Let’s Talk Washington” event will be held at Meyers Tinting on Muller Road. The event will be hosted at various places and times to accommodate different schedules. She hopes everyone can attend.

Boards and Commissions Portal Mayor Stevens shared that the Boards and Commissions Portal is live on the website and six applications have been received. She asked for everyone to spread the word and shared that the portal will always be open as it is an ongoing process.

Five Points Board June Meeting Report Mayor Stevens shared that the Five Points board meets once a month, and each taxing body has one representative on the board. She has named Alderman Blundy as representative.

Alderman Blundy shared that the meetings are not open to public and are held on the last Wednesday of the month at 7:00 a.m. He provided a statement on behalf of Council regarding the George Washington bust. It is attached and made part of these minutes. He also shared the following updates: Five Points membership has been steady at 6,200 members, is operating under budget in key areas, community programming is a strength, they sold 600 tickets to Rob Schneider, they sold 350 tickets for Dave Phelps, they sold 435 for Lee Greenwood, Bad Moon

Rising will be here August 1st, We The Kingdom will be here August 29th, holiday events are planned for later this year, Five Points Fridays will continue through summer months, and they are preparing for a July 18th golf outing and a donor celebration on October 5th and their social media impressions remain strong.

City Administrator Communication Council Report Interim City Administrator/City Engineer Carr shared that he received a text message at 8:15 a.m. this morning regarding the sewage leak. They sent a foreman to investigate and it was relayed to him that a phone call originated on Sunday that went to dispatch who stated that the City will get to it on Monday. The call wasn't received through the emergency number. Upon inspection they found a blockage. The VACON is down so they reached out to Hoerr who used their VACON to break up the clog which went to wastewater treatment plant. The City reached out to the IEPA and is working with them to remediate the issue starting with their recommendation to clean around bridges. They have tested the water in certain locations and found the sewage has dissipated before Jefferson Street. They have discussed the swamp area described earlier and plan on reaching out to the Rodriguez's to get permission to reshape the ditch. Mayor Stevens directed additional comments go to City Administrator/Engineer Carr. Alderperson McIntyre wondered about getting TC3 the ability to direct calls like this correctly. He lives in the area and sympathizes. Interim City Administrator/City Engineer Carr noted the Code Red system was used and anyone can sign up for it on the website.

121 S. Elm St., and 121 Peoria St., Dilapidated Homes Discussion Planning and Zoning Director Oliphant shared that positive news was received regarding 121 Peoria Street after it was attached to the agenda. The property was sold to a new owner who came in to get a permit for the work and an inspection has begun. Staff no longer requests any action to take place against the 121 Peoria Street. 121 S. Elm was brought to staff by the police department. Zoning Coordinator Boyer entered the home and noted life-safety issues in the house. The current owner cannot complete needed updates, and staff recommends either working with our attorney to get mandated repairs or demolishing the property. He further noted the owner resides in a nursing facility and it is not occupied. The building has a bad foundation, catastrophic roof failure, hoarding and animal issues. Staff supports the possible sale of the property but feels it is unlikely to sell due to its condition.
Alderperson McIntyre motioned to approve moving forward with 121 S. Elm Street;
Alderperson Blundy seconded.
5 Ayes: Blundy, Ernst, Johnson, Martin, McIntyre
0 Nays:
Motion carried by roll call vote.

Gillman Vertical Speed Control Chief Stevens shared that after speed measurements, drivers aren't as bad as they can be but there is a long history of speed complaints in this area. Staff is putting in speed humps which help but will not have the full impact of engineering the road for slowing speed. Alderperson Martin understands the need but doesn't support speed bumps. He feels there is better technology. Mayor Stevens noted they are temporary. Chief Stevens explained that they are seasonal to allow for snowplow season. He hopes the bumps will reduce speeds and create a habit that will continue until they are put back out in the spring. Alderperson McIntyre does not favor speed bumps but feels this is a good area to test them. He complimented the efforts of the police, especially near schools. He would rather see speed tables for a long-term solution. He supports this as a temporary test.

Change in Chemical Supplier, Fluoride Update Public Works Director Rittenhouse explained that Alexander Chemical Corporation was awarded the 25-26 bid but they informed staff that they won't accept the empty drums. They then withdrew their bid. Staff reached out to Brenntag Mid-South and Hawkins for quotes and recommends purchasing from Hawkins for \$132.50 per drum. \$10,000.00 was budgeted for the purchase of fluoride this fiscal year.
Alderperson Martin noticed that 16 states have introduced measures to ban fluoride in public systems and wondered if this is required by the state. Public Works Director Rittenhouse confirmed that is a requirement of the state.

First Reading Ord: Square Parking Code Amendment Interim City Administrator/City Engineer Carr presented the following ordinance for consideration: **Synopsis:** Adoption of this ordinance would amend the Restricted Parking Area I and II standards that regulate the allocation and time restrictions for public on- and off-street parking near the Square. **Title:** Square Parking Code Amendment
Planning and Zoning Director Oliphant added that staff included the reduction in parking area regulations on the west side of N. Main, between Jefferson and Peoria should be removed because it is residential and should not have the same hourly restrictions as commercial spaces.

Alderperson Comments Alderperson McIntyre thanked Planning and Zoning Director Oliphant and Mr. Boyer for their help with a call from a citizen. He wants citizens to know that they can use the system on the City's website to share issues or complaints and he hopes citizens will use it. Alderperson Johnson recognized the Public Works department on their response to a recent pavement buckle that she hit on Cruger Road. She noted a very quick response securing and fixing the road.

Adjournment At 7:19 p.m. *Alderperson Martin moved to adjourn; Alderperson Johnson seconded.*
Motion carried by voice vote.


Valeri L. Brod, City Clerk

City of Washington Bicentennial Statement

On behalf of the Washington City Council

As we celebrate the 200th anniversary of Washington, Illinois, the City Council proudly recognizes this historic milestone and the generations of citizens who built the strong, welcoming community we know today. Our city’s bicentennial is not only a reflection of our past—it’s a celebration of the values that continue to guide us forward: service, resilience, and civic pride.

To commemorate this occasion, we are honored to host a bronze bust of our namesake, George Washington, prominently displayed at Five Points Washington. On loan from the City of Peoria, this nationally significant sculpture reinforces the connection between our community’s identity and the ideals of leadership and unity that President Washington embodied.

We are grateful to our partners in Peoria for sharing this symbol of American heritage with us, and we invite all residents and visitors to experience this unique tribute throughout the summer.

Under the leadership of Mayor Lilija Stevens and the current City Council, we remain committed to honoring our history while building a bright future for all who call Washington home.

— *Washington City Council*

Five Points Board Meeting Update From:

Aldersperson John Blundy

Five Points continues to see strong community engagement. Membership remains steady with over 6,300 active members, and retention for full contracts is holding at 78%.

Financially, Five Points is operating under budget in key areas. While there's still a year-to-date net loss, it's improved compared to this time last year.

Community programming remains a major strength. Recent theater events drew solid attendance:

- Rob Schneider ([April 18](#)) – 600 tickets sold (~60% of the 1,002-seat theater)
- David Phelps ([April 19](#)) – 350 tickets sold
- Lee Greenwood ([January 31](#)) – 435 tickets sold

Upcoming performances include Bad Moon Rising ([August 1](#)) and We the Kingdom ([August 29](#)), with holiday events planned later this year.

Five Points Fridays launched in June and will continue in July and August, featuring food trucks, live music, and family activities. Additional June programming included senior events, recitals, and preparations for the [July 18](#) golf outing.

Fundraising efforts are also showing momentum — the number of 5-star sponsors for this year's golf event has doubled compared to last year. A combined Donor Appreciation and Anniversary Celebration is scheduled for [October 5](#).

Lastly, Five Points' outreach remains strong, with over 200,000 monthly social media impressions, steady web traffic, and high engagement across email and streaming platforms.