

City of Rockford, Minnesota Council Workshop Minutes

5:00 p.m., Tuesday, January 14, 2025

Deputy Mayor Michal Werman called the City Council Workshop to Order at 5:00 p.m. Council members Wyatt Gutzke and Heather Michalik were in attendance. Council members absent: Melissa Vogel.

City Administrator Anna Carlson, Assistant City Administrator/City Clerk Debbie Buoy, Fire Chief David Angell, Assistant Fire Chief David Reed and Renee Hafften were also in attendance.

Council and staff discussed the 2025 Annual Appointments. Each year the City Council appoints its members to various Boards and Commissions that serve the City of Rockford. Notable items included the appointment of a new deputy Mayor and filling retired Mayor Hafften's appointments.

The Council chose to have the City Council Orientation scheduled for a future meeting when Council member Vogel and a future appointed Council member would be able to attend.

Discuss appointment process for Council Member term ending December 31, 2026: Council Member Werman was elected to serve as Mayor beginning January 2025. With this advancement, his previous term as a City Council Member is now vacant with a term expiring December 31, 2026. Council discussed using the same process as previously used of advertising the open seat, ask candidates to submit an application and then attend a Council Workshop for an interview.

The City was contacted by a non-profit organization requesting the City of Rockford to act as the conduit issuer for bonds for a 501(C)(3) organization. Council had a few questions and chose to discuss this in more detail with Financial Consultant Shannon Sweeney at the meeting. This item will be added to the agenda as item 5H Conduit Bond Discussion.

No formal action was taken, as matters were set on the agenda for discussion purposes only.

City of Rockford, Minnesota Council Meeting Minutes

6:00 p.m., Tuesday, January 14, 2025

Deputy Mayor Michael Werman called the City Council Meeting to Order at approximately 6:00 p.m. Council members Wyatt Gutzke and Heather Michalik were in attendance. Council members absent: Melissa Vogel.

City Administrator Anna Carlson, Assistant City Administrator/City Clerk Debbie Buoy, Fire Chief David Angell, Assistant Fire Chief David Reed, Deputy Larson (left at 6:10 pm), Kellie and Sydney Werman (left at 6:18 pm), Attorney Michael Couri (left at 6:50 pm), Alex Randall, Financial Consultant Shannon Sweeney and Marvin Werman (left at 7:16 pm) were also in attendance.

Oath of Office

Assistant City Administrator/City Clerk Debbie Buoy administered the Oath of Office to Mayor Michael Werman and re-elected Council Member Heather Michalik

The council added item 5H Conduit Bond Discussion to New Business on the Agenda.

A motion was made by Michalik and seconded by Gutzke to approve the Consent Agenda Items 3A through 3G as listed and set on the Agenda for the Council Meeting:

- A. Approve Minutes of December 10, 2024, City Council Meeting and City Council Workshop
- B. Approve Payment of Claims
- C. Approve 2025 Local Board of Appeal and Equalization, Resolution No. 25-01
- D. Approve 2025 Garbage Hauler Licenses
- E. Approve 2025 Stantec Letter of Engagement, Engineering Services
- F. Approve Broker Certifications, 2025
- G. Approve 2025 Rockford Fire Relief Association Gambling Permits – Resolution No. 25-02
- H. Conduit Bond Discussion

Motion Carried: Voting in favor Werman, Gutzke, and Michalik.

Wright County Sheriff's Update

Deputy Larson gave an update on call counts for the past two weeks. He stated that he is watching Main St and Bridge St to be sure that people are stopping at the stop signs, and he is also watching the Linden St and Maple St intersection.

8000 HWY 55 Update and Discussion – Attorney Michael Couri

City Attorney Michael Couri updated the Council on a court case regarding a property that has been operating Outdoor Sales without a conditional use permit along with other violations. The court granted a permanent injunction which means he must not live on the property, must cease to operate the outdoor sales, and must clean up the property as well as all other items listed by the court. The court gave him 60 days and he has not complied. The next step is for the City to do the clean up through a hired contractor and with assistance from the Sheriff's Department. Attorney Couri estimated that this could cost 50-60 thousand dollars. The cost would be assessed to the property but leaves the City waiting for that payback for an estimated five to eight years.

A motion was made by Gutzke and seconded Michalik to direct staff to solicit quotes for the removal of all the items on the property at 8000 State Highway 55 that violate the court order.

Motion Carried: Voting in favor: Werman, Gutzke and Michalik.

Approve 2025 Annual Appointments / Department Liaisons, Resolution No. 25-03

Council and staff discussed the 2025 Annual Appointments and Department Liaisons. Each year the City Council appoints its members to various Boards and Commissions that serve the City of Rockford. Notable items included the appointment of a new deputy Mayor and filling retired Mayor Hafften's appointments.

A motion was made by Michalik and seconded by Gutzke to approve Resolution No. 25-03, Approving the 2025 Annual Appointments and Department Liaisons.

Motion Carried: Voting in favor: Werman, Gutzke and Michalik.

Amending the Zoning Ordinance for Regulation of Cannabis Businesses - Ordinance No. 2025-01 & Resolution No. 25-04

Planning and Zoning met on December 19, 2024, and approved Ordinance No. 2025-01 regulating cannabis businesses. The City of Rockford is required to allow one cannabis retail business based on

population unless the County already meets the overall requirement. There are setbacks from schools, daycares etc. established by the State.

A motion was made by Werman and seconded by Michalik to approve Ordinance No. 2025-01 Amending the Zoning Ordinance for Regulation of Cannabis Businesses and Resolution No. 25-04 providing consent for Hennepin County to register and inspect cannabis businesses.

Motion Carried: Voting in favor: Werman, Gutzke and Michalik.

A brief discussion regarding the Joint Powers Agreement with Wright County and an explanation that this agreement allows for the enforcement and regulation of cannabis businesses to be performed by Wright County was completed.

A motion was made by Werman and seconded by Gutzke to approve the joint powers agreement with Wright County for the enforcement and regulation of cannabis.

Motion Carried: Voting in favor: Werman, Gutzke and Michalik.

City Administrator Carlson stated that we need a motion regarding the summary Ordinance for publication.

A motion was made by Gutzke and seconded Michalik to approve the Summary Ordinance 2025-02 for publication.

Motion Carried: Voting in favor: Werman, Gutzke and Michalik.

Attorney Couri recommended approving an Ordinance to limit the number of cannabis retail businesses. His recommendation was to limit the number of businesses allowed to one based on the size of the community.

A motion was made by Michalik and seconded by Gutzke to amend Ordinance 2025-01 section 2C, 2 by adding verbiage: The city limits cannabis retail business registrations to one private entity and one city owned retail outlet.

Motion Carried: Voting in favor: Werman, Gutzke and Michalik.

Discuss Appointment Process for Council Member Term ending December 31, 2026

City Council members discussed using the same process as in the past to fill the vacant council seat with a term ending December 31, 2026. The City advertised an open Council seat, applicants complete the form and attend an interview at a Council workshop with Council making a decision at a regular meeting.

A motion was made by Michalik and seconded by Gutzke for staff to advertise for the open Council seat. Applications should be submitted with a deadline ending January 24th at Noon for those interested to apply for the vacant Council seat and interviews will be held at a workshop on Tuesday, January 28th.

Motion Carried: Voting in favor: Werman, Gutzke and Michalik.

Approve Repair to Kubota for Fire Department

Fire Chief Angell presented to Council a quote from Lano Equipment for the repair of the Rockford Fire Department's Kubota ATV in the amount of \$7,701.15 noting that unforeseen costs may be needed but will not exceed \$5,000.00. The funding will come from the Repairs and Maintenance Equipment line item of the budget.

A motion was made by Michalik and seconded by Gutzke to approve the initial repairs to the Kubota ATV by Lano Equipment in the amount of \$7,701.15 and to authorize the fire department to allow additional repairs, if necessary, not to exceed an additional \$5,000.00.

Motion Carried: Voting in favor: Werman, Gutzke and Michalik.

Approve Repair to Tanker 11 for Fire Department

Tanker 11 provides water supply in areas without hydrants. Currently the pump on Tanker 11 needs repair. The Fire Department has received an estimate from MacQueen in the amount of \$5,890.00. These funds will come from the Repairs and Maintenance Equipment line item of the budget.

A motion was made by Gutzke and seconded by Michalik to approve allocation of \$5,890.00 from the R&M Equipment budget line item for the repair of the pump on Tanker 11 and to authorize MacQueen to proceed with the repair as outlined in the estimate.

Motion Carried: Voting in favor: Werman, Gutzke and Michalik.

Approve Delano Area Youth Hockey Association Use of Riverside Park Rink

Delano Area Youth Hockey Association would like to use the hockey rink located at Riverside Park every Tuesday and Thursday from 6-7:30 pm through March 20th, as weather permits. Staff will monitor the level of use and if there are any concerns that arise from the additional use. The rink is still open to all other users during this time.

A motion was made by Michalik and seconded by Gutzke to approve Delamo Area youth Hockey Association use of Riverside Park Hockey Rink on Tuesday's and Thursday's from 6:00 pm -7:30 pm starting tomorrow January 15th through March 20th and to be open to any monitoring and comments heard from staff.

Motion Carried: Voting in favor: Werman, Gutzke and Michalik.

Conduit Bond Discussion

The City was contacted by a non-profit organization requesting the City of Rockford to act as the conduit issuer for bonds for a 501(C)(3) organization. They were seeking an issuance of approximately 3 million dollars. Financial Advisor Sweeney stated, to be absolutely clear the City has no repayment responsibility. If there is a default on the bond it does not affect the City. Cities serve in this role typically for a fee and to help a non-profit service. Acting as a conduit allows the non-profit to use credit that the City is not using this year.

A motion was made by Michalik and seconded by Gutzke to approve the conduit bond request from Taft Stettinius & Hollister, LLP to act as a conduit issuer for the tax-exempt obligation bonds for a 501c3 organization in 2025 to help finance a project that is going to be used for charitable purposes up to 3 million dollars.

Motion Carried: Voting in favor: Werman, Gutzke and Michalik.

2025A General Obligation Capital Notes – Aerial Truck Financing Resolution No. 25-05

The City Council has previously initiated a competitive sale of bonds to fund costs associated with the purchase of an aerial fire truck. Financial Advisor Sweeney stated that as of this morning we received four bids for the purchase of the 1,820,000.00 in bonds. The closing on the sale of the bonds will be on February 4th, 2025, and that is when funds will be available for the purchase of the aerial truck.

A motion was made by Gutzke and seconded by Michalik to approve the 2025A General Obligation Capital Notes – Aerial Truck Financing Resolution No. 25-05.

Motion Carried: Voting in favor: Werman, Gutzke and Michalik.

Staff Reports

City Administrator Carlson thanked Financial Advisor Shannon Sweeney for teaching staff a lot this year and stated that he is really appreciated. She also thanked staff and Public Works for working so hard to get things moved and fixed up in City Hall during the new flooring installation. Monday the 20th is Martin Luther King Day and City Hall will be closed. Fire Chief Angell stated that the Fire Department will be implementing physicals and Megan Lundell is Fire Fighter of the Month. Council Member Michalik stated that Rockford Area Historical Society is looking for members and the Chamber is having their Spring Expo on Saturday March 15th.

Open Forum

No one was present to speak.

Adjournment

A motion was made by Gutzke and seconded by Michalik to adjourn the meeting at approximately 7:30 pm.

Motion Carried: Voting in favor; Werman, Gutke, and Michalik.

Typed this 17th day of January 2025.

Debbie Buoy
Clerk/Assistant City Administrator
City of Rockford Minnesota

All meetings of the Rockford City Council are video recorded and available for viewing on-line at www.cityofrockford.org. Meeting minutes are intended to be a general synopsis of the meetings of the City Council, and more detail regarding discussions and policy considerations is provided by watching the recording of the meeting.

Approved:



Michael Werman
Mayor

Attest:


Debbie Buoy
Assistant City Administrator/City Clerk