



Committee of the Whole Minutes

The Committee of the Whole met at the City of Nekoosa Office

Location: Council Chambers, 951 Market St. Nekoosa, WI 54457

Time: Tuesday, April 21st, 2026, at 5:00 P.M.

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 5:00pm by Mayor Daniel J. Carlson. The roll call was conducted by City Clerk Kallee Ferk.

Roll Call

Aldermen Present: Alan Marcoux, Larry Krubsack, Adam Buehring, Mike Kumm, Anthony Carlson, Dan Downing, Garrett Kuhn, and Brad Hamilton

Also in attendance was Jon Trautman – CLA, Mike Hartje – Fire Chief, Shawn Woods – Police Chief, and Rick Schmidt – Public Works Director, and Darla Allen – Library Director.

Attendance via Zoom: Bobbi Hertzberg, Treasurer and Nicholas Abts – City Attorney

Discussion and possible action on the 2026 and 2027 budgets with Jon Trautman – CLA.

Discussed the city's current estimated budget deficit of approximately \$150,000 for the fiscal year, as well as the potential for the deficit to increase further in the 2027 budget cycle. The discussion included consideration of personnel reductions and benefit reductions as a primary strategy to address and mitigate the projected shortfalls.

Jon Trautman of CliftonLarsonAllen presented an overview of the City's current financial position and preliminary considerations for the upcoming budget. He reported an estimated \$150,000 deficit for the current fiscal year, attributing it to expenditures exceeding available revenues. He explained that the shortfall is presently being covered through applied funds but noted that this approach is not sustainable for ongoing operations and encouraged the city that they should look at other options to resolve deficits.

Trautman indicated that, after reductions to general operations, limited options remain to address the deficit, and that personnel-related costs need to be evaluated. He referenced comparative data, including information from the 2024 Form C report required by the Wisconsin Department of Revenue, to provide context on the City's expenditures relative to similar municipalities. He noted that public safety costs on a per capita basis have remained consistently higher than peer benchmarks based on the parameters used in his analysis.

Additionally, Trautman identified rising health insurance costs as a contributing factor to expenditure growth and suggested that adjustments to employee benefit cost-sharing may be considered as part of future budget discussions.

Alderman Anthony Carlson emphasized the importance of long-term revenue growth, including efforts to attract businesses to the City's industrial park, as a means of supporting future expenditure increases associated with inflation. Trautman agreed that such strategies would be beneficial for long-term financial planning but indicated they would not resolve the immediate budget challenges for the current and upcoming fiscal years.

Discussion and possible action on filling the officer position in the police department.

Discussed the option of filling the officer position in the police department.

Police Chief Shawn Woods stated that the DOR data was informative but urged the council to continue considering the 2017–2018 public survey, which indicated that residents placed a high priority on public safety and supported allocating additional tax dollars to that area.

Discussion and possible action on responsibilities of duties during the clerk's maternity leave.

Recommend the document of conditions for the clerk's maternity leave.

City Clerk, Kallee Ferk presented a letter of conditions she was willing to do to work over her maternity leave to keep the position operating on a somewhat consistent basis while she is gone. The following conditions were recommended to go to the council meeting.

- The clerk will continue working remotely during the period that would otherwise be designated as maternity leave.
- The clerk respectfully requests to maintain her full salary, contingent upon the timely completion of all required reports and fiscal responsibilities, in accordance with the Employee Handbook Policy 2-1.
- The work schedule would be flexible, allowing the clerk to log in as availability permits rather than adhering to the standard 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. hours. During this time, the clerk would prioritize emergent and high-priority matters, rather than routine day-to-day tasks.
- The clerk will attend council meetings and other necessary engagements remotely via Zoom.
- The clerk is willing to be present in person for critical functions such as Board of Review and Election Day, as needed.
- For in-person absentee voting during the November election, Bobbi Hertzberg, the Treasurer, is prepared to assist. Alternatively, the clerk can coordinate with the county to manage election-related responsibilities, with compensation of \$2,500 if that option is preferred.
- Additionally, the clerk requests consideration to continue working remotely till the end of the year, as childcare availability is expected to begin at that time and since she will have worked throughout her earned leave.
- The proposed arrangement would remain subject to any medical guidance from the clerk's healthcare provider, and she would adjust or suspend these plans if medically necessary.

Discussion and possible action on employee handbook.

Discussed the employee handbook.

The council discussed having the handbook information presented at another time as the meeting had already gone long.

Adjournment

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting.

Motion by: Brad Hamilton

Seconded by: Larry Krubsack

Motion carried unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 6:29pm