

**Waverly City Council
Special Session**

Wednesday, December 17, 2025
5:00 PM Central

**Waverly City Offices
Council Chambers**
502 Atlantic Ave.
Waverly, MN 55390

Ben Duske: Present
Connie Holmes: Present
Scott Jacobson: Present
Jim Kittock: Present
Jacob Koch: Present
Present: 5.

1. Call to Order

The Waverly City Council Meeting was called to order at 5:02 p.m. by Mayor Holmes.

2. Roll Call

Council Members Present: Mayor Connie Holmes, Jim Kittock, Scott Jacobson, Jacob Koch, and Ben Duske.

Staff Present: City Administrator/Clerk Carrie Krienke, Maintenance Supervisor Jason Karels, Accountant Cierra Nagovsky and Senior Maintenance Nick Kizer.

Others Present: City Attorney Rhonda Pagel

3. Agenda Approval

Motion was m/s/p, Duske/Kittock, to approve agenda as presented. All present voted in favor.

4. Maintenance Issues

4.A. Legion Park Bathroom Update

Maintenance Supervisor Jason Karels reported that the Legion Park bathroom project is on track to be completed this year. He noted that due to water being shut off for the season, the final plumbing and building permits cannot be completed until spring when water is turned back on. This delay was discussed with contractor RAM Construction, who was concerned about council's reaction. Jason explained the building looks very nice and is nearly complete, with only final trinkets and cleaning remaining. Final grading and sod work will be done in spring, and the facility is expected to open in the spring.

Jason also reported that the Village Hall electrical work is waiting for parts for the main control panel expected next week, with work scheduled to begin after the holidays.

5. City Attorney Updates

5.A. Closed Meeting – Requested for meeting to be open

City Attorney Rhonda Pagel informed the council that a closed session was scheduled for preliminary consideration of allegations against an individual subject to the Council's authority. By law the session must be closed unless the individual who is the subject of the meeting requests that it be open. Nick Kizer was present and requested that the meeting be open. Per his request the session remained open. Pagel informed the Council that there was an allegation regarding Nick Kizer concerning potential tampering or misreading of Nick's water meter and possible misappropriation of city water. She spoke with the League of Minnesota Cities to obtain some guidance and it was recommended that the City hire an outside investigator to investigate the allegation. She reported that she spoke with an attorney in Buffalo, Bill Everett, who has done many employment investigations. He informed her that his hourly rate is \$240.00 per hour, the estimated cost for an investigation was \$12,000-\$18,000, and the typical timeframe for the investigation would be approximately 60-90 days. She emphasized that these were estimates only. Everett also requested that the Council appoint a liaison who could provide informal direction to Everett and she informed the Council that this could be Krienke, herself, or both of them. She strongly advised the Council to proceed with an investigation as it is the best way to make sure the City is complying with its duty to its employee and to the public. Kizer expressed frustration regarding not having received details of the allegation. Pagel informed him that if the Council hires an investigator she believed the investigator should direct the process including the information provided.

Motion was m/s/p, Jacobson/Holmes, to approve hiring Everett Law to conduct an outside investigation regarding the allegation regarding Nick Kizer concerning potential tampering or misreading of Nick's water meter and possible misappropriation of city water and authorize the Mayor and City Administrator to enter into an engagement agreement. All present voted in favor.

Motion was m/s/p, Jacobson/Duske, to appoint City Attorney Rhonda Pagel as liaison with Everett Law for the investigation. All present voted in favor.

Pagel emphasized that even though Kizer requested that the meeting be open, the data is still private data. Pagel instructed the council members that they are prohibited from discussing the matter outside of council meetings with Pagel present.

6. Resolution 25-29 Adopting 2026 Fire Protection Service Assessment

City Administrator Carrie Krienke explained that Wright County requires this resolution to formalize the fire protection assessment of \$190 per parcel for properties with market value over \$5,000.

Motion was m/s/p, Kittock/Jacobson, to adopt Resolution 25-29 adopting 2026 Fire Protection Service Assessment. Passed 4/0 with Ben Duske abstaining.

7. Administrative Items

7.A. Assessment rate increases for 2026

City Administrator Carrie Krienke presented information on special assessment rates, currently at 6% with a \$40 administrative fee for any delinquent utility billing. She provided examples from other cities, many of which charge 10% and have higher administrative fees around \$100.

The council discussed the substantial staff time involved in managing delinquent accounts. Tanya, a staff member, reportedly sends out approximately 300 late notices per month, which represents about 30% of the city's utility connections. Significant time is spent contacting residents, printing notices, and processing shutoffs and reconnections.

After considerable discussion weighing the merits of different approaches, the council agreed to:

- Increase the assessment fee from 6% to 10%
- Increase the administrative fee from \$40 to \$100
- Add a new \$45 fee for door hanger notices prior to shutoffs
- Continue the practice of shutting off water for non-payment

7.B. Pay Scale

City Administrator Carrie Krienke presented a structured pay scale system to create more consistency in how employees are compensated. The scale would be based on points that employees can earn through training, certifications, and improved performance. Each step would represent a 2.5% increase.

The council discussed how this would result in a fairer compensation system that is more transparent, providing employees with clear pathways for advancement and compensation increases. The new system would replace the previous approach of giving across-the-board 5% increases to all staff regardless of performance or skills development.

Motion was m/s/p, Jacobson/Kittock, to approve pay scale criteria that City Administrator Carrie Krienke will implement in her administrative role and Krienke is authorized to grant pay increases at her discretion without further Council approval.

7.C. Draft Utility Water & Sewer Rate Increase

Accountant Cierra Nagovsky presented a utility rate comparison and explained that she and Carrie had met with Montrose to discuss their rates. The council reviewed the proposed increases, which included raising the water base rate by \$1.50 and adding a technology surcharge of \$2.50. Sewer rates would remain unchanged until more information is available about the Annandale, Maple Lake, Howard Lake, Waverly and Montrose project.

The Mayor drafted letter to residents explaining the rate changes, which would be effective January 1, 2026. Members were asked to provide any comments or suggestions to Carrie before the end of the year so letters could be sent out promptly.

7.D. Ordinance Update for Unhitched Trailers Tabled from 12/09/2025

The council revisited the ordinance regarding unhitched trailers that had been tabled from the December 9th meeting. The language had been revised to remove the 5,000-pound restriction and to clarify the permit process, requiring residents to come to city hall to obtain an official permit.

7.D.1. Resolution 25-30

Motion was m/s/p, Jacobson/Duske, to approve Resolution 25-30 amending ordinance for Municipal Property Parking Restrictions. Motion Passed. Roll call vote 5/0.

7.E. PMFL Approval

The council reviewed the Paid Family Medical Leave (PMFL) policy which needs to be effective January 1, 2026, to comply with Minnesota law.

7.E.1. Resolution 25-31

Motion was m/s/p, Jacobson/Koch to approve Resolution 25-31 adopting the PMFL Policy. The Motion passed. Roll call vote 5/0.

7.F. Personnel Policy Updates

Carrie presented several personnel policy updates for consideration, including:

- Notification requirements for absences - proposing staff notify the city at least one hour before their scheduled start time
- How paid time off affects overtime calculations
- Compensation time (comp time) caps - proposing reducing the maximum from 200 hours to 80 hours
- Documentation requirements for medical absences

After extensive discussion, the council agreed on several policy changes:

- Requiring employees to notify the city at least one hour before start time for absences
- Defining overtime as hours worked beyond normal shifts for each day
- Reducing comp time maximum to 80 hours with annual payout of unused time
- Requiring doctor's notes after three consecutive sick days
- Paying out comp time at the end of the year at the rate earned

These changes would be drafted into formal policy updates for future council approval.

7.G. Wright County Grant - Clean up Day

Carrie informed the council that Wright County is now offering an annual \$1,500 grant for cleanup days instead of quarterly recycling funds.

Motion was m/s/p, Jacobson/Duske, to accept the Wright County Grant. All present voted in favor.

8. Draft 2026 Fee Schedule

The council discussed nonprofit organization use of the Village Hall. Currently, nonprofits are allowed one free rental per year, but some organizations have been using it much more frequently. The council discussed various approaches to balance supporting community organizations while ensuring fair access and cost recovery.

The council decided to ask city staff to reach out to community organizations (Boosters, Lions, Legion, Royalty) to get their event calendars for the coming year and then develop a more structured approach to free and reduced-cost rentals for community-facing events.

They also discussed modifying the fee schedule language regarding nonprofit rentals to require organizations to contact the city for approval rather than having a blanket "one free rental" policy.

9. Other Business

City Administrator Carrie Krienke provided an update on the liquor store manager position, reporting that the recently hired manager had been terminated after four weeks due to performance issues. She is working on developing a pre-screening questionnaire to better evaluate candidates' qualifications and knowledge before interviews, with the goal of reposting the position in January.

10. Adjournment

Motion was m/s/p, Duske/Jacobson, to adjourn meeting at 7:00 p.m. All present voted in favor.



Mayor Connie Holmes



City Administrator/Clerk Carrie Krienke