City of Windsor Heights Regular Business Meeting Minutes
Monday, February 2, 2026 - 6:00 PM
WINDSOR HEIGHTS COUNCIL CHAMBERS - 1133 66th ST

1. **Call to Order/Roll Call/Pledge of Allegiance**

   Mayor Mike Jones called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM. Members present: Susan Skeries, Joseph Jones, Lauren Campbell, Threase Harms, Fletcher Barry. Staff present: City Administrator Adam Plagge City Clerk Adam Strait, Finance Director Rachelle Swisher, Public Works Director Andy Larson, City Engineer Justin Ernst, Police Chief Pete Roth, City Attorney Erin Clanton, Fire Chief Jim Mease

2. **Approval of the Agenda**

   Motion by Threase Harms to APPROVE. Seconded by Susan Skeries. Motion passed 5-0.

3. **Presentation:**

   A. Walnut Creek Watershed

   Cassie Druhl and Robert Austin, representatives from Polk County Public Works and the Central Iowa Watershed Management Authorities, presented an update on the Walnut Creek Watershed Management Authority and its newly adopted five-year implementation plan completed in 2025. The plan outlines collaborative, watershed-wide efforts to reduce flooding, improve water quality, restore floodplains, and increase public awareness, based on input from participating communities, including Windsor Heights. Five goals were highlighted: holding water on the landscape, floodplain restoration, improving surface water quality (including addressing elevated E. coli levels), regional collaboration and outreach, and ongoing monitoring and reporting. Windsor Heights' proportional targets include approximately 0.5 acre-feet of added water storage and 3.5 acres of floodplain improvements per year. Ongoing projects such as native prairie restoration, bioswale improvements, and streambank stabilization were discussed, along with continued E. coli monitoring in partnership with Drake University. No public health advisories are currently recommended. The presenters emphasized the importance of regional cooperation and continued council updates and public outreach.

4. **Public Forum:** This is time set aside for comments from the public on topics of City business other than those listed on the agenda. No action may be taken. Please come to the podium, state your name and address for the record and keep your comments to no more than 5 minutes.

   No public comment given.

5. **Consent Agenda:** Any item on the Consent Agenda may be removed for separate consideration.

   Motion by Threase Harms to APPROVE. Seconded by Susan Skeries. Motion passed 5-0.

   A. Approve Minutes of the Regular Council Meeting on January 20, 2026

   B. Approve Financial Reports

   C. Approve Liquor License - Casey's #4372 - 6961 University Ave

   D. 73rd Street Phase 1 STP-U-8477(615)—70-77 Pay Request 18

6. **Action Items:**

A. Consideration of FY26 ERP Purchase of Public Works Truck #6

Andy Larson presented the item. Public Works Truck No. 6, a heavy-duty dump and plow truck that has reached the upper end of its useful life at approximately 12 years. Larson reported that due to ongoing supply chain issues, the estimated lead time for delivery is approximately two years, making early authorization necessary. He proposed purchase through Ascendance Truck Centers (under the Sourcewell cooperative contract) would mirror the specifications of recently acquired Truck No. 5 to maintain consistency, ease of maintenance, and operational efficiency. The total estimated cost for the cab, chassis, and equipment upfit is approximately $156,916, with a $45,000 trade-in value for the existing truck, reflecting an overall cost increase consistent with industry trends. Staff noted that over the past five years, approximately $66,476 has been spent on repairs to Truck No. 6, and replacement is more cost-effective long term. The Public Works Committee recommended proceeding with the purchase. The Council approved the purchase, noting included warranties and the addition of vehicle tracking and safety technology to support operations and liability management.

B. Discuss FY27 Budget

Council held the FY27 budget kickoff discussion, marking the start of the public-facing budget process, with Adam Plagge and Rachelle Swisher presenting. Staff noted FY27 is more challenging due to legislative pressures, declining interest income, and tighter alignment of staffing costs with actual expenses. Swisher reviewed recent budgeting changes aimed at tightening inflated estimates to better match actuals, acknowledging this may require more frequent budget amendments and enhanced reporting to show budget-versus-actual performance. The proposed budget includes a $0.15 increase to the total tax levy rate (proposed at $14.36 per $1,000 taxable valuation) to reduce the spenddown of the special revenue levy fund balance, alongside approximately $170,000 in revenue increases and/or expenditure reductions. Property valuations increased 2.7% (about $59,740 additional general fund capacity), while interest earnings are projected to decrease about $62,000; staff discussed the ongoing impacts of exemptions and local option sales tax (LOST) estimates. Budgeted operating expenses are $8.4 million (excluding capital, Equipment Replacement Plan (ERP), and debt service), but staff noted that removing major pass-through items reflects an underlying decrease. Major Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) items include multiple street projects and storm sewer work funded largely with cash on hand; ERP timing updates included shifting ambulance expenditures and planning for dump truck payments. Council discussion emphasized long-term constraints, infrastructure funding challenges, potential revenue tools (fee adjustments, special assessments), and the distinction between healthy TIF revenues and restrictions on their use outside urban renewal areas. Staff also previewed upcoming decision points on debt timing and bonding around FY28–FY29. Councilor Harms provided a brief legislative update on state budget and property tax proposals, with more information to be shared as bills advance.

C. Discuss City Council Goals

Council discussed the annual review of City Council goals/objectives and invited member feedback on potential updates for 2026. Adam Plagge noted the item was presented to identify any changes, research needs, or clarifications before returning a revised version for approval in late February or early March and posting to the City website. Councilor Skeries raised the importance of succession planning and cross-training, and staff confirmed it is included in the current goals and described ongoing efforts such as process documentation, step-by-step guides for key functions, and cross-training (including payroll coverage when the finance director is out). Councilor Harms noted the forthcoming comprehensive plan will help guide priorities and focus areas. Council members were asked to provide any written feedback by the next council meeting for inclusion in a redlined update.

7. **Reports:**

A. Mayor, Council Reports and Committee Updates, and Administration Reports

- Councilor Theresa Harms reported on several recent community and legislative engagements. She noted that although she was unable to attend the Bridges ceremony in October, she attended the rescheduled ceremony in January and described it as a very positive experience, with the largest attendance the organization has seen to date and standing-room-only participation. She also had the Metro Waste legislative reception and commented that Windsor Heights had strong representation at the event. Finally, she noted that she would be attending MAC at the Statehouse the following morning.

- Councilor Lauren Campbell reported that she met with Casey at Bolton & Menk to work on drafting the City's presentation for the upcoming Iowa Parks and Recreation Association conference scheduled for March. She also noted upcoming events, including the Reimagine DART reception on Wednesday and the Bravo Gala on Saturday.

- Councilor Fletcher Barry reported that on January 27 he attended the Metro Public Works Committee meeting, which included a deeper discussion of the Equipment Replacement Plan (ERP). He also attended the Urbandale Food Pantry Board meeting, noting that while the pantry is based in Urbandale, it serves residents across the metro and is a resource available to Windsor Heights residents. On January 28, he attended an elected officials reception with fellow council members, providing an opportunity to connect with regional partners and local officials. He also attended the SP Salon ribbon cutting as part of a Chamber event, noting it was positive to welcome a new business to the community. Additionally, he attended the Chamber's "Talk with Officials" event to hear from state-level elected officials. Looking ahead, he shared that he would be participating in orientation for the ICON Water Trails project and concluded by congratulating the Mayor on his announcement to run for the Iowa House of Representatives.

- Councilor Joseph Jones did not share a report.

- Councilor Susan Skeries reported on several recent meetings and community engagements. She attended the Chamber's AM Exchange, a Polk County Emergency Management annual-style briefing reviewing current activities and priorities, and a Public Works meeting. She also participated in the Metro Waste legislative event, noting strong representation from Windsor Heights that was positively recognized by attendees. Additional engagements included attending the Catch Des Moines quarterly meeting and the Greater Des Moines Partnership legislative event, where she connected with newly elected and regional officials. She reported attending a construction event at the new Children's Museum, speaking at the SP Salon ribbon cutting on behalf of the City, and highlighted upcoming responsibilities on the Metro Waste audit committee and executive board. She also noted ongoing work on the City's special events budget, sponsor coordination, event participation planning, and the completion of resident selections for the Movies in the Park series, which will be announced later in the month.

- City Administrator Adam Plagge reported that a staff report was included in the packet outlining the City's intent not to renew the Polk County Animal Control Agreement when it expires at the end of the current fiscal year. He noted that no formal council action is required at this time and that staff plans to transition to a self-managed

approach. He also highlighted the inclusion of Public Art Committee meeting minutes and shared that a maintenance agreement for the proposed mural is expected to be presented at the next council meeting. Draft language has been agreed upon by staff and key stakeholders, which would allow the City to proceed with issuing a request for qualifications for the mural project in the near future.

B. Non-renewal of the Polk County Animal Control Agreement

Council discussed the staff report outlining the City's intent not to renew the Polk County Animal Control Agreement and sought clarification on how animal control services would be handled going forward. Questions focused on procedures when it is not feasible for the Animal Rescue League (ARL) to respond or transport animals, including whether the City would have adequate equipment and protocols in place prior to the contract's expiration. Adam Plagge explained that ARL operates 24/7 and that, in most cases, City staff or police would transport animals directly to ARL. In limited situations where staff are temporarily unavailable, the City plans to acquire a small kennel for short-term holding until transport can occur. Police will continue responding to loose animal calls in a manner similar to current practice, using officer discretion and transporting animals when feasible. Police Chief Pete Roth noted the relatively low annual call volume, rising contract costs, and budget considerations as reasons for non-renewal, emphasizing that residents also share responsibility for animal control and that alternative service options exist. Council expressed support for the approach, with the understanding that clear procedures will be established and communicated before the agreement ends.

C. Police Department 2025 Q4 Report

D. Communications and Public Art Committee Meeting Minutes from January 15, 2026

8. **Adjourn**

Motion by Susan Skeries to adjourn at 7:04 PM. Seconded by Threase Harms. Motion passed 5-0.