

**CITY OF STEVENS POINT
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**

**Community Room
933 Michigan Avenue, Stevens Point, WI**

**January 21, 2025
7:00 PM**

OR

Zoom Teleconferencing

1. Roll Call.

Present:

Ald. Christianson, Guthrie, Keymer, Broderick, Birr, Steinmetz, Kneebone, Shuda, Lang, Buse, Morrow.

Others Present:

Mayor Wiza, Clerk Yenter, Chief Kussow, Director Kivela, H/R Manager Frasch, Chief Moody, Executive Assistant Dowling, Tax Specialist Susan Pagel, C/T Ladick, Director Kremer, Director Lemke, Attorney Beveridge, Director Beduhn, Planner/Economic Development Specialist Klesmith.

2. Salute to the Flag and Mayor's opening remarks.

3. Persons who wish to address the Mayor and Council on specific agenda items other than a "Public Hearing" must register their request at this time. Those who wish to address the Common Council during a "Public Hearing" are not required to identify themselves until the "Public Hearing" is declared open by the Mayor.

4. Persons who wish to address the Mayor and Council for up to three (3) minutes regarding a non-agenda item.

Ald. Kneebone spoke about the veterans benefit that they had attended, reminded veterans that are eligible for the National Honor Flight to sign up, as well as discussed that Portage County has a Director of Veterans Services, John Olson, that can be a resource to those in need of additional support.

Andrea Olson, 410 Franklin Street, spoke about their concern about the transparency about the future of the City of Stevens Point office buildings as well as discussed options between renting, purchasing, or building.

Neil Prendergast, 1924 Plover Street, spoke about the importance of the Hoover and Industrial Park intersection for bicyclist and pedestrians and asked the Common Council to be aware of the project and safety concerns.

Consideration and Possible Action on the Following:

5. Consent Agenda:

- a. Minutes of the Common Council meeting of December 16, 2024 and Special Common Council meeting of January 13, 2025.**
 - b. Actions of the Police and Fire Commission meeting of January 7, 2025:**
- 3. Approval of Minutes.**

4. Confirmation of Bills.
 5. Discussion, with possible action, to approve Probationary Lieutenant Justin Klein to permanent status effective February 1, 2025.
 7. Discussion, with possible action, to approve Probationary Firefighter/ Paramedic Connor Rowe, Emma Hynes, and Megan Meyer to the position of Firefighter/Paramedic with the completion of their probation effective January 8, 2025.
 9. Enter into closed session pursuant to Wis. Stats 19.85(1)(c) (considering employment, promotion, compensation, or performance evaluation data of any public employee over which the governmental body has jurisdiction or exercises responsibility) for consideration of the following: extension of the probationary period for FD employee.
- c. Actions of the Park Commission meeting of January 8, 2025:
2. Approval of November 6, 2024 meeting minutes.
 3. Approval of awarding the 2025 Tree Care Operations quote for the Stevens Point Forestry Department to Zblewski Brothers.
 4. Forestry Division Report presented by Superintendent Todd Ernster.
 5. Director's Report.
- d. Minutes and Actions of the Plan Commission meeting of January 6, 2025:
2. Report of the December 2, 2024 meeting of the City Plan Commission.
 6. Discussion on a housing survey.
 7. Director's Report.
- e. Actions of the Board of Water and Sewerage Commissioners meeting of January 13, 2025:
2. Approval of minutes.
 3. Approval of department claims.
 4. Engagement letter with Baker Tilly.
 5. Commission compensation.
 8. Use of tower space on Bliss Avenue Tower for local amateur radio.
- f. Actions of the Airport Commission meeting of January 13, 2025:
2. Approval of minutes.
 3. Approval of department claims.
 4. Engagement letter with Baker Tilly.
- g. Actions of the Transportation Commission of January 13, 2025:
2. Approval of December 9, 2024 minutes.
 3. Approval of December 2024 Financial/Claims Report.
 4. Approval of services and terms relating to the Transportation Department as set forth in the Baker Tilly Engagement Letter.
 5. Approval to allocate up to \$71,241 per bus for variances, delivery, and spare/tooling costs as part of the purchase of three buses.
- h. Minutes of the Personnel Committee meeting of January 13, 2025.
- i. Minutes and Actions of the Board of Public Works meeting of January 13, 2025.
- j. Minutes and Actions of the Public Policy and General Government meeting of January 13, 2025:
2. Request to Hold Event/Street Closing.
- k. Minutes and Actions of the Finance Committee meeting of January 13, 2025:
3. Approval of agreement with Northside Yard for the leasing of parking spaces in

municipal parking lot 8.

5. Approval of Claims Paid.

I. Statutory Monthly Financial Report by Comptroller/Treasurer.

m. Mayoral Appointments.

-Board of Water and Sewerage Commissioners: Paul Adamski, reappointed for a five-year term, expiring September 30, 2029.

-Zoning Board of Appeals (Alt 1): Jeff Schuler, filling a vacant seat for a three-year term, expiring April 30, 2027.

-Error Correction - Sustainability Commission: Gregory Knight, for a two-year term, expiring December 31, 2026.

-Business Park Business Improvement District Board: Community Development Director, Jarod Kivela, for a one-year term, expiring December 31, 2025.

Ald. Christianson moved, Ald. Morrow seconded, to approve the consent agenda.

Ald. Broderick asked for clarification on item 5m related to the error correction for Sustainability Commission and how Mr. Knight was selected for a 2-year term.

Mayor Wiza responded that of the mayoral appointments he knew Mr. Knight the least and that he and Mr. Knight had a discussion prior to the correction.

Call for the vote: Ayes: Christianson, Guthrie, Keymer, Broderick, Birr, Steinmetz, Kneebone, Shuda, Lang, Buse, Morrow.
Nays: None. Motion carried.

6. Ordinance Amendment - A request from the City of Stevens Point to amend Chapter 23, Zoning Ordinance, of the Revised Municipal Code of the City of Stevens Point. Said request amends Section 23.04(2) for the purposes of amending the definition of 'Household Entity' and 'Household Entity Plus'.

Andrea Olson, 410 Franklin Street, spoke against the ordinance due to increase in rent and requested that the Common Council stipulate a number of occupants to determine a property a rooming house.

Mayor Wiza stated, for the record, that due to Ms. Olson's claims regarding over occupancy, violations, and discriminatory rental practices he and the Director of Community Development have done a review and there has not been any evidence substantiating such claims. Mayor Wiza urged citizens with questions, concerns, or violations to be in contact with the Community Development Department.

Director Kivela confirmed that after review, the claims have been unsubstantiated.

Deb Knippel, 611 Soo Marie Avenue, on behalf of herself and Frame Memorial Presbyterian Church spoke in favor of the request as a step for citizens to attain more affordable housing.

Ald. Christianson spoke of the change as incremental and requested Common Council members to pay attention to the impact.

Ald. Keymer spoke to potential code violation issues in the future and advocated for potential funding or staffing to further assist.

Ald. Shuda spoke against the ordinance amendment due to previous experience within another municipality

Ald. Lang moved, Ald. Kneebone seconded, to approve the ordinance.

Call for the vote: Ayes: Morrow, Buse, Lang, Kneebone, Steinmetz, Broderick, Keymer, Guthrie, Christianson.

Nays: Shuda, Birr. Motion carried.

7. Ordinance Amendment - A request from the City of Stevens Point to amend Chapter 23, Zoning Ordinance, of the Revised Municipal Code of the City of Stevens Point. Said request amends Section 23.02(1)(e)(4) pertaining to minimum lot area requirements for single-family and two-family dwellings in the "R-3" Single- and Two-Family Residence District.

Andrea Olson, 410 Franklin Street, spoke in favor of the reduction of lot sizes; however, would like to see further action be taken.

Ald. Lang questioned if there are additional recommendations from the Housing Taskforce or within other plans.

Ald. Morrow spoke in favor of taking smaller steps should there be any additional recommendations.

Ald. Shuda moved, Ald. Christianson seconded, to approve the ordinance.

Call for the vote: Ayes: Christianson, Guthrie, Keymer, Broderick, Birr, Steinmetz, Kneebone, Shuda, Lang, Buse, Morrow.

Nays: None. Motion carried.

8. Ordinance Amendment - Section 13.09: Water Service Limits.

Director Lemke gave a brief history of water service limits and explained the differences between Hull, Whiting and Park Ridge. He spoke to the complications of listing by addresses for Park Ridge within the ordinance, infrastructure perspective, and utilities cost. Director Lemke requested to bring recommendations before Plan Commission for further discussion and clarified that for Park Ridge to add their water mains there is no cost to the City of Stevens Point or utility rate payers.

Liz McDonald, 1760 Strongs Avenue, spoke against a vote at the Common Council and requested further discussion take place. Ms. McDonald advocated for no water service without annexation and requested Council members to review what the staff recommendations are as well as what negotiated conditions would be to extend service to any address within Park Ridge.

John Gardner, 2101 Birchwood Avenue, spoke against a vote on the ordinance, advocated for no sewer or water without annexation, as well as requested further discussion at Plan Commission prior to a vote.

Chief Moody spoke about the City of Stevens Point Fire Protections Contract with Park Ridge. Chief Moody clarified that the agreement ends at the end of March 2025, all parties are currently working on an additional five year contract, and that the Emergency Medical Services contract is on the same

five year cycle.

Attorney Beveridge clarified that state statutes regarding annexation are different between township and village properties. If Park Ridge were to disincorporate it would become a part of the Town of Hull, as well as create further complications in regards to continuous borders.

Steve Menzel, Village of Park Ridge President spoke about the history of the project, grants, and that conditions for water service are still in discussions.

Chief Moody clarified that hydrant standards are statutorily defined.

Ald. Guthrie spoke to their need to see a comprehensive development plan prior to voting yes on the ordinance.

Ald. Morrow also spoke about the need to bring this before Plan Commission prior to a vote.

Ald. Christianson moved, Ald. Steinmetz seconded, to send to Plan Commission at the next available meeting or when it is ready.

Call for the vote: Ayes: Morrow, Buse, Lang, Shuda, Kneebone, Steinmetz, Birr, Broderick, Keymer, Guthrie, Christianson.
Nays: None. Motion carried.

9. Ordinance Amendment - Section 15.02: Aldermanic District Boundaries.

Clerk Yenter gave a brief overview of annexations and the need for the ordinance amendment.

Ald. Keymer asked for clarification on which districts were impacted.

Clerk Yenter clarified they were districts seven and eleven.

Ald. Keymer moved, Ald. Broderick seconded, to approve the ordinance.

Call for the vote: Ayes: Christianson, Guthrie, Keymer, Broderick, Birr, Steinmetz, Kneebone, Shuda, Lang, Buse, Morrow.
Nays: None. Motion carried.

10. Ordinance Amendment - To approve the ordinance amendments in Chapter 9 (Traffic and Vehicles), Subsections 9.05 (Parking), 9.06 (Signs and Turning Limitations), and 9.12 (Bicycles and Motor Bicycles).

Ald. Christianson moved, Ald. Birr seconded, to approve the ordinance.

Call for the vote: Ayes: Morrow, Buse, Lang, Shuda, Kneebone, Steinmetz, Birr, Broderick, Keymer, Guthrie, Christianson.
Nays: None. Motion carried.

11. Ordinance Amendment- To approve the ordinance amendment to section 4.18 of the revised municipal code related to the referendum requirement for transportation projects.

Craig Tesch, 1100 Frontenac Avenue, spoke against the ordinance amendment amount of twenty million and cited the three stages of the Business 51 project not being eligible for a vote. Mr. Tesch requested that the amount be changed to somewhere between five and ten million.

Andrea Olson, 410 Franklin Street, spoke in favor of the ordinance amendment.

Mayor Wiza clarified that the change is occurring because it has been found that the dollar amount was overly restrictive and that should the Council remove the ordinance another binding referendum through direct legislation would be possible.

Ald. Christianson moved, Ald. Keymer seconded, to approve with the change of the dollar amount from twenty million to fifteen million of the proposed changes.

Ald. Guthrie requested comment from Director Beduhn for clarification on when referendum would be necessary at the fifteen million dollar threshold and how that would impact projects.

Director Beduhn clarified that at this moment the fifteen million dollar mark would not impact any projects within the next few years including Business 51.

Ald. Morrow spoke to the cost of inflation and that the fifteen dollar threshold could impact future projects.

Craig Tesh, 1100 Frontenac Avenue, spoke to the Business 51 project and the need for electors to have a vote on a referendum.

Call for the vote: Ayes: Christianson, Guthrie, Keymer, Birr, Steinmetz, Kneebone, Buse.
Nays: Broderick, Shuda, Lang, Morrow. Motion carried.

Ald. Christianson moved, Ald. Steinmetz seconded, to approve the original proposal as amended.

Call for the vote: Ayes: Morrow, Buse, Lang, Kneebone, Steinmetz, Birr, Broderick, Keymer, Guthrie, Christianson.
Nays: Shuda. Motion carried.

12. Resolution- Relative to Authorizing Submittal of Great Lakes Environmental Justice Thriving Communities Grantmaking Program Application.

Ald. Birr moved, Ald. Lang seconded, to approve the authorization.

Call for the vote: Ayes: Christianson, Guthrie, Keymer, Broderick, Birr, Steinmetz, Kneebone, Shuda, Lang, Buse, Morrow.
Nays: None. Motion carried.

13. Enter into closed session pursuant to Wisconsin Statutes 19.85(1)(e) and 19.85 (1) (g) for deliberating or negotiating the purchasing of public properties, investing of public funds, or conducting other specified business, whenever competitive or bargaining reasons require a closed session, AND for Conferring with legal counsel for the governmental body who is rendering oral or written advice concerning strategy to be adopted by the body with respect to litigation in which it is or is likely to become involved, relating to the following:

A. Deliberation of potential sites and next steps for the relocation of City Hall.

B. Property negotiations for the purpose of relocating City Hall.

Liz McDonald, 1760 Strongs Avenue, spoke about frequent questions from citizens regarding the Chase Bank building being located within park property and advocated for City Hall to be developed within that location.

Ald. Christianson moved, Ald. Morrow seconded, to enter into closed session at 8:45 p.m.

Call for the vote: Ayes: Morrow, Buse, Lang, Shuda, Kneebone, Steinmetz, Birr, Broderick, Keymer, Guthrie, Christianson.

Nays: None. Motion carried.

14. Adjournment.

Adjourned at 9:50 p.m.

January 21, 2025

Memo To: Common Council Members

Re: Support for Item 6 on Tonight's Common Council Meeting Agenda

From: Jenny Burton, 5718 Sandpiper Drive, Stevens Point, WI 54482

Thank you for creating the Housing Task Force in 2021. As I understand it, this task force met for a couple years to explore how the City of Stevens Point and community partners can address the shortage of affordable housing in Stevens Point. Today's agenda item 6 addresses this.

I support the Plan Commission's proposal to redefine the number of unrelated people living in a dwelling. I watched the Plan Commission meeting and the members thoughtfully considered all the options of dwelling density. They came to a unanimous vote to put forward this proposal as a step to helping make housing more affordable.

The City has done a variety of things to boost affordable housing in recent years. Here is a partial list:

- Grants and loans to repair a fixer-upper home
- CAP Services provides financial aid to landlords who rent to low income residents to make repairs up to \$20,000.
- The City has created incentives for developers to create housing for low income residents.

Thank you to the Common Council for being vigilant about looking for creative ways to help those who have housing needs.

I urge the Common Council to vote in support of Item 6. And I ask you to continue implementing the suggestions made by the Housing Task Force, such as redefining the Housing Code. Furthermore, I challenge the Redevelopment Authority and the Plan Commission to prioritize housing needs of low-income residents. In my opinion, affordable housing is the number one problem facing the City of Stevens Point. I will continue to advocate for those who lack affordable housing.

Sincerely,

Jenny Burton