

July 21, 2025

A regular meeting of the Wood River City Council was called to order by Mayor Tom Stalcup at 7:00 p.m. on Monday, July 21, 2025. The Deputy Clerk called the roll and reported that the following members were:

PRESENT: David Ayres  
Bill Dettmers  
Jeremy Plank  
Tom Stalcup

ABSENT: Scott Tweedy

and that a quorum was present and in attendance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Councilman Ayres moved to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of July 7, 2025, as printed, seconded by Councilman Dettmers, and approved by the following vote:

AYES: Ayres, Dettmers, Plank, Stalcup (4)  
NAYS: None (0)

APPROVAL OF BILLS:

Councilman Plank moved to approve the bills submitted for payment for the period July 3, 2025, to July 16, 2025, as printed, seconded by Councilman Ayres, and approved by the following vote:

AYES: Ayres, Dettmers, Plank, Stalcup (4)  
NAYS: None (0)

APPROVAL OF FINANCIAL STATEMENT:

Councilman Dettmers moved to approve the Financial Statement ending June 30, 2025, as printed, seconded by Councilman Plank, and approved by the following vote:

AYES: Ayres, Dettmers, Plank, Stalcup (4)  
NAYS: None (0)

CITIZEN/OFFICIAL COMMENTS:

Bill Rogers addressed the Council and began by stating he would keep his remarks brief, as the issue he wished to speak on had already been raised at several previous meetings. However, he emphasized that the matter still required attention and action. He referenced a recent article published in *The Telegraph* regarding the property at 876 State Street. According to Mr. Rogers, the building was formerly a church. He alleged that the City showed interest in acquiring the property and attempted to pressure the owners into selling it below market value. When that failed, the City reportedly declared the building in disrepair, seized it, and sold it to a connected individual for just one dollar. That person then resold the property at a profit, but Mr. Rogers noted that the article did not clarify whether the original owners ever received fair market compensation. He credited another speaker, June Gibbs, for previously laying out many of the relevant details. Mr. Rogers expressed concern that this was not an isolated case. He pointed to what he described as a troubling pattern in

how the City has treated churches, particularly those historically tied to the Black community, such as the Church of God in Christ. In one instance, a congregation attempted to reopen a church building and discussed housing the Pastor in a basement apartment. Mr. Rogers claimed the City attempted to control where the Pastor could live. He speculated the Pastor may have been bi-vocational, a situation Mr. Rogers said he personally understood, as his own father had been as well. He further alleged that the congregation was subjected to a de facto prosecution, with the City opposing their efforts to operate a clothes closet and food pantry, services that Rogers argued were greatly needed in the community. He cited another case in which a church was targeted for code violations that the City had reportedly known about for 19 years, predating the current ownership. Instead of addressing the issue constructively, the City allegedly took punitive action. Mr. Rogers stated that, despite official denials in response to FOIA requests, the City has used proxies to enforce these actions, something he claimed to have experienced directly. He argued that these actions amounted to censorship and an unconstitutional attempt to silence churches, citing IRS guidance on the matter. Mr. Rogers also accused the City of attempting to use zoning and code ordinances to drive churches out of town, a tactic that he noted has led to lawsuits in other

municipalities. Before concluding, Mr. Rogers brought up a separate issue and claimed the City had been ordered to return funds taken from his account three years ago but had yet to comply. He stated he had to retain legal counsel due to the City's noncompliance and asked, "Where is my money?" He warned that ongoing retaliation would not help the City's position and urged the Council to resolve the issue seriously and promptly.

Councilman Dettmers stated that with all the recent rain, he received a few calls from residents regarding sewer backups. One resident reported that his drain plug popped out, resulting in sewage entering his basement. Councilman Dettmers invited him to attend tonight's meeting to share his concerns directly, but he was unable to attend. His main question was whether the issue he experienced could be related to the ongoing sewer separation project, or if it was simply due to the heavy rainfall the City has had.

City Manager Steve Palen stated he is not sure exactly where the resident lives, but based on what was described, it does not appear that the sewer separation project contributed to the issue. In fact, that area is not within the scope of the current project, it is part of a different watershed entirely. Unfortunately, a large portion of the City is still on a combined sewer system, and during heavy rain events, these kinds of backups can happen. Sometimes, a drain plug gets dislodged or a backflow preventer becomes clogged or fails and it is an unfortunate situation.

Councilman Dettmers reported being contacted by a resident who noted that the City's Facebook videos were no longer accessible. Councilman Dettmers followed up with the Mayor earlier that morning and stated he was unaware that Facebook had changed its policy regarding video availability on Facebook accounts. Councilman Dettmers inquired whether there was a way to store the videos so they could be retrieved later and asked for clarification on the City's current process for video archiving. Referring to a message received earlier, Councilman Dettmers mentioned that there may be a method or resource available to recover the videos and expressed interest in learning more about how that might be implemented.

City Manager Steve Palen stated that the City is currently exploring options for preserving video recordings of Council Meetings and other content previously available on its Facebook page. He noted that, as of now, most videos dating back to May 2023 can still be accessed through

Riverbender, although there may be one or two missing. The City is evaluating potential solutions for long-term storage, recognizing that Meta's (formerly Facebook's) decision to remove older content was likely due to the significant memory requirements. City Manager Steve Palen added that staff will assess the associated costs and technical feasibility of archiving these videos and will present their findings and recommendations to the City Council.

ORDINANCE NO. 2956: AUTHORIZING THE SALE OF CITY OWNED SURPLUS REAL ESTATE LOCATED AT PARCEL ID 19-2-08-22-17-306-020, COMMONLY KNOWN AS 125 E. JENNINGS, WOOD RIVER, ILLINOIS 62095 TO TGRH CONSTRUCTION, LLC:

Councilman Dettmers moved to approve an ordinance authorizing the sale of City owned surplus real estate located at Parcel ID 19-2-08-22-17-306-020, commonly known as 125 E. Jennings, Wood River, Illinois 62095 to TGRH Construction, LLC and the ordinance was approved by the following vote:

AYES: Ayres, Dettmers, Plank, Stalcup (4)

NAYS: None (0)

RESOLUTION NO. 2130: AUTHORIZING A CONTINUING SERVICES AGREEMENT WITH OATES ASSOCIATES, INC., FOR SUPPORT SERVICES:

Councilman Plank moved to approve a resolution authorizing a continuing services agreement with Oates Associates, Inc., for support services, seconded by Councilman Ayres

Councilman Dettmers asked if this is a normal type of contract that the City would be approving because there are no specific dates.

City Manager Steve Palen clarified that the proposed agreement with Oates Associates is a general services agreement, similar to existing agreements the City holds with firms like Gonzalez and SMS Engineers. For example, the agreement with SMS allows the firm to conduct property surveys without requiring a new contract for each project. These agreements enable the City to engage these firms for various tasks as needed without repetitive approvals. The City is seeking to establish a

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similar agreement with Oates Associates, Inc., because of their increasing involvement with the bike path project. Additionally, the City intends to utilize Oates Associates, Inc., for assistance with grant applications. Any projects or contracts exceeding \$25,000.00 will be brought before the City Council for approval.

Councilman Dettmers asked what the expiration date is for the agreement.

City Manager Steve Palen explained that there is not an expiration date, and the agreement will be continual and there will be yearly increases in the rates.

Councilman Dettmers asked if this is the normal way these agreements are drafted without a termination date.

City Manager Steve Palen stated yes for a general services agreement.

The resolution was approved by the following vote:

AYES: Ayres, Dettmers, Plank, Stalcup (4)

NAYS: None (0)

RESOLUTION NO. 2131: AUTHORIZING AN AGREEMENT WITH CR SYSTEMS, INC., FOR JANITORIAL SERVICES AT CITY HALL AND THE PUBLIC SERVICES BUILDING LOCATED AT 100 ANDERSON:

Councilman Dettmers moved to approve a resolution authorizing an agreement with CR Systems, Inc., for janitorial services at City Hall and the Public Services Building located at 100 Anderson, seconded by Councilman Plank, and approved by the following vote:

AYES: Ayres, Dettmers, Plank, Stalcup (4)

NAYS: None (0)

APPROVED: RECOMMENDATION FROM MAYOR STALCUP TO APPOINT RICHARD STONE OF 303 GREENVIEW TO THE PLAN COMMISSION WITH A TERM TO EXPIRE MAY 2029:

Councilman Ayres moved to approve a recommendation from Mayor Stalcup to appoint Richard Stone of 303 Greenview to the Plan Commission with a term to expire May 2029, seconded by Councilman Plank, and approved by the following vote:

AYES: Ayres, Dettmers, Plank, Stalcup (4)

NAYS: None (0)

APPROVED: RECOMMENDATION FROM MAYOR STALCUP TO RE-APPOINT KAREN WEBER TO THE POLICE PENSION BOARD WITH A TERM TO EXPIRE MAY 2027:

Councilman Plank moved to approve a recommendation from Mayor Stalcup to re-appoint Karen Weber to the Police Pension Board with a term to expire May 2027, seconded by Councilman Ayres, and approved by the following vote:

AYES: Ayres, Dettmers, Plank, Stalcup (4)

NAYS: None (0)

APPROVED: RECOMMENDATION TO ACCEPT THE BID FROM D.E. MARTIN ROOFING CO., INC.:

Councilman Dettmers moved to approve a recommendation to accept the bid from D.E. Martin Roofing Co., Inc., in the amount of \$48,628.00 to replace the roof at the City Garage located at 1 S. 14<sup>th</sup> Street, as submitted by the Director of Public Services, seconded by Councilman Plank, and approved by the following vote:

AYES: Ayres, Dettmers, Plank, Stalcup (4)

NAYS: None (0)

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APPROVED: RECOMMENDATION TO ACCEPT THE BID FROM VISU-SEWER OF MISSOURI, LLC:

Councilman Dettmers moved to approve a recommendation to accept the bid from Visu-Sewer of Missouri, LLC, in the amount of \$235,325.00 to line sewer main pipe along Ferguson Avenue from 4<sup>th</sup> Street to 6<sup>th</sup> Street, as submitted by the Director of Public Services, seconded by Councilman Plank

City Manager Steve Palen explained that the project was originally budgeted at \$150,000.00. After discussions with the Finance Director and Director Velloff, it was determined that the project meets a substantial enough need to move forward. According to Director Weber, there are sufficient funds available in the sewer fund to support it. City Manager Steve Palen also noted that the low bidder will be released from their bid, as it was submitted incorrectly, and explained that is why their bid came in approximately \$100,000.00 lower than the other bids. This clarification was provided to keep the Council and public informed.

The recommendation was approved by the following vote:

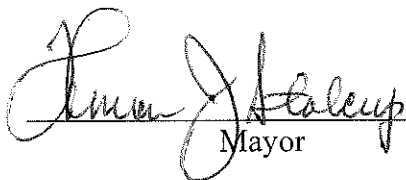
AYES: Ayres, Dettmers, Plank, Stalcup (4)

NAYS: None (0)

OLD BUSINESS: NONE

NEW BUSINESS: NONE

ADJOURNMENT: There being no further business to come before the Council, the meeting adjourned at 7:14 p.m.

  
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Mayor

  
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City Clerk