

April 20, 2026

AGENDA

A regular meeting of the Wood River City Council was called to order by Mayor Tom Stalcup at 7:00 p.m. on Monday, April 20, 2026. The Clerk called the roll and reported that the following members were:

PRESENT: David Ayres
Bill Dettmers
Jeremy Plank
Scott Tweedy
Tom Stalcup

and that a quorum was present and in attendance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Councilman Ayres moved to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of April 6, 2026, as printed, seconded by Councilman Dettmers, and approved by the following vote:

AYES: Ayres, Dettmers, Plank, Tweedy, Stalcup (5)

NAYS: None (0)

APPROVAL OF BILLS:

Councilman Tweedy moved to approve the bills submitted for payment for the period April 2, 2026, to April 15, 2026, as printed, seconded by Councilman Ayres, and approved by the following vote:

AYES: Ayres, Dettmers, Plank, Tweedy, Stalcup (5)

NAYS: None (0)

APPROVAL OF FINANCIAL STATEMENT ENDING MARCH 31, 2026:

Councilman Plank moved to approve the Financial Statement ending March 31, 2026, as printed, seconded by Councilman Dettmers, and approved by the following vote:

AYES: Ayres, Dettmers, Plank, Tweedy, Stalcup (5)

NAYS: None (0)

CITIZEN/OFFICIAL COMMENTS:

Mayor Stalcup extended congratulations to Gary Conrad of Von Dell Gallery on his 10th anniversary.

City Manager Steve Palen invited Erik Merker from GRP Wegman Company forward to give more information regarding Item Number 9 on the agenda.

Erik Merker provided an overview of the proposed solar project for the City's wastewater treatment plant and water treatment plant. The project is being pursued in part due to the availability of grant funding, including a U.S. Environmental Protection Agency resiliency grant of up to \$2 million, as well as time-sensitive federal tax incentives requiring projects to be "safe-harbored" prior to a July 4, 2026, deadline to allow additional time for the project. The total project cost is proposed at an amount not to exceed \$6 million, with final costs subject to refinement as additional details are determined. Preliminary designs include a 1.3-megawatt system at the wastewater treatment plant and a 314-kilowatt system at the water treatment plant, with estimated annual energy production resulting in approximately \$200,000.00 in utility savings.

Mr. Merker further explained that the project would be structured as a guaranteed energy savings contract, ensuring that projected savings are met. Financial projections indicate annual energy savings of approximately \$165,000.00, along with additional revenue through renewable energy credits issued by the State of Illinois, estimated at \$1.3 million over seven years. Additional incentives include an Ameren inverter rebate of approximately \$491,000.00, potential grant funding assumed at \$1 million for planning purposes, and a federal investment tax credit of up to fifty percent of eligible project costs. Based on these combined incentives and savings, the project is estimated to achieve payback in just over four years and generate approximately \$8 million in net energy savings over a projected 30-year system lifespan.

City Manager Steve Palen clarified the funding structure for the wastewater treatment plant project, stating that approximately thirty percent would be covered by State funding over time, fifty percent by federal sources, and about ten percent through the Ameren rebate. He noted that the City would be responsible for roughly ten percent. However, he also explained that the battery component associated with securing the grant would be an additional cost.

Mr. Merker explained that the wastewater treatment plant design was optimized to rely primarily on solar energy, with only a minimal battery component included. He stated that this approach was intended to meet the grant requirements, which award additional points for incorporating a battery system and for achieving a higher percentage of energy offset. He noted that the design maximizes solar input to approach the facility's annual energy usage, while incorporating one of the smallest commercially available battery systems necessary to satisfy the grant criteria.

Councilman Plank inquired whether the system would require batteries if not for the grant requirements.

Mr. Merker explained that the battery system would provide some limited benefit, noting it could store approximately 300 kilowatt-hours of energy for use during peak demand periods, which could help reduce overall peak usage. However, he stated that if the grant were not a factor, the inclusion of the battery system would be a toss-up and noted that, from a financial perspective, the solar component is significantly more favorable than the battery system.

Councilman Plank asked what the annual energy cost is for the wastewater treatment plant.

It was confirmed that currently the energy costs for the wastewater treatment plant are around \$160,000.00 annually; however, with the upcoming rate increase, it could very well be around \$230,000.00 annually. It was also confirmed that the energy costs for the water treatment plant are around \$60,000.00 annually.

Councilman Tweedy asked Mr. Merker if he could explain how the storage works with the battery system.

Mr. Merker explained that the system includes a 125-kW inverter and a battery capacity of approximately 313 kilowatt-hours. He stated that the solar system is designed to produce about ninety-two percent of the facility's annual energy usage. He noted that because the wastewater treatment plant has relatively consistent energy demand, including nighttime use, the solar system will often overproduce during the day, sending excess energy back to the grid while also charging the batteries. He added that the stored energy would then be used during nighttime or peak periods, allowing the facility to utilize the battery capacity daily.

City Manager Steve Palen stated that one advantage of the system is its ability to reduce peak demand on high-usage days, noting that monthly energy rates are typically based on those peak demand levels, and asked for confirmation.

Mr. Merker agreed and further explained that the utility bill consists of multiple components, including a demand charge based on peak usage during a 15-minute interval and a supply charge based on total kilowatt-hour consumption. He noted that while the battery capacity of approximately 300 kilowatt-hours is relatively modest, it can be used daily to help reduce peak demand and manage overall energy costs, providing incremental savings over time.

Councilman Ayres asked whether the solar panels being used were the latest, highest-efficiency models, noting his understanding that solar panels typically have a 20–25-year lifespan with gradual degradation over time.

Mr. Merker explained that the solar panels carry a 25-year warranty covering performance degradation. He stated that the warranty typically guarantees that panels will continue to produce at least eighty-five percent of their original output over that period, and if performance falls below that threshold, the panels may be eligible for replacement. He noted that while the panels are not expected to fail at the end of the warranty period, they will continue to operate beyond 25 years, with an expected lifespan extending an additional ten to fifteen years. He further explained that degradation is accounted for in project calculations at approximately one-half percent per year, and

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that over time, such as at thirty years, the panels would likely produce around seventy-five to eighty percent of their original output.

Councilman Ayres asked how it would be determined when the solar panels have degraded to the point that they would need to be replaced.

Mr. Merker explained that panel performance is monitored through a system that can be accessed remotely, including via phone-based dashboards, which allow staff to view real-time data on each panel or group of panels. He stated that the system is color-coded and can show the performance of individual panels, depending on the inverter configuration. He noted that if a string of panels is underperforming, it can be identified through the monitoring system, and further diagnostics may be conducted using a thermal drone. He added that thermal imaging can quickly identify malfunctioning panels, citing a previous example where a drone inspection revealed a clearly underperforming panel that required follow-up investigation and repair.

Councilman Ayres asked who would be responsible for replacing a solar panel if an issue or failure were identified.

Mr. Merker explained that there is a one-year labor warranty covering installation and related work. He stated that if an issue occurs after that period, replacement of a faulty panel would typically depend on the manufacturer's warranty coverage, in which case the manufacturer would provide a replacement panel. He further noted that while the panel itself may be covered under warranty, the labor to replace it would generally be the responsibility of the owner, estimating the cost of a service call and labor at approximately \$150.00, as panel replacement typically takes about twenty minutes. He added that such failures are uncommon and indicated that, in his experience with similar systems, panel replacements are very rare.

Councilman Plank asked whether damage caused by a weather-related event would be handled as an insurance claim.

Mr. Merker explained that damage caused by severe weather events, such as hail exceeding the panels' design tolerance, would typically be handled as an insurance claim. He noted that the panels are designed to withstand hail up to approximately golf ball size, but damage from larger hail, such as baseball-sized hail, would likely exceed those design limits.

Mayor Stalcup stated that, based on the number of panels included in the proposal and their planned placement, the selected location appears to be appropriate and would not impact park areas or similar spaces.

City Manager Steve Palen stated that the City has been communicating with BP Amoco regarding the former tank farm site, where old tanks were removed approximately two years ago. He noted that BP Amoco has been very receptive to allowing the City to proceed with the proposed use of the property. He further stated that the City has also been in communication with the levy district regarding property located behind their building for the water treatment plant solar project.

Mayor Stalcup asked how long construction of the project is expected to take.

Mr. Merker explained that the water treatment plant project is expected to move relatively quickly, noting that smaller projects such as the Ameren interconnection typically proceed faster. He stated that the water treatment plant could likely be completed and installed in approximately nine months to a year, assuming no significant delays. He further explained that the wastewater treatment plant would likely take longer due to anticipated delays associated with Ameren approvals and interconnection requirements, particularly given the complexity of reuse considerations. He estimated that the wastewater project would be closer to an 18-month timeline and noted that past projects have experienced interconnection delays ranging from three to four months or longer while awaiting utility review and approval.

Councilman Plank asked whether the matter would need to be brought back for Council reconsideration if the contract or total project cost comes in at less than \$6 million.

City Manager Steve Palen stated that he did not believe the issue would need to be revisited if the total project cost comes in under \$6 million, noting that the \$6 million figure is a not-to-exceed amount. He explained that the estimate was established in part for grant purposes and to ensure

compliance with the project's safe harbor timeline requirements, which allow for completion beyond the end of 2027. He added that if the project comes in under budget, that would simply be favorable to the City.

Mr. Merker added that additional clarification language had been added to the agreement, specifically in the final bullet point. He stated that this language was included to allow for flexibility regarding the contract amount, noting that the provision defines the contract price as a maximum total contract price and indicates that it may be adjusted following further review and finalization.

Councilman Dettmers reported that he had received several phone calls and engaged in discussions regarding the City's aggregation contract and associated electric rates. He expressed concern that the current rates may not be competitive, noting that his inquiry with Ameren suggested similar conclusions. Councilman Dettmers stated that residents have questioned the value of the program, particularly given that the City is obligating everyone in the community to get their supply from Homefield Energy, and he requested further explanation as to the purpose and benefits of maintaining the aggregation agreement.

City Manager Steve Palen explained that the primary advantage of the aggregation contract is rate stability, as it is not subject to the quarterly rate adjustments made by Ameren. He noted that while Ameren's current rate is lower than the aggregation rate, those rates can fluctuate and are set to adjust again in June 2026, with estimates ranging from approximately 13 to 16 cents per kilowatt hour, although the exact increase is uncertain.

Councilman Dettmers responded that he had communicated the current rate to a representative, who indicated that while no guarantees could be made, they would be surprised if the upcoming rate adjustment reached the higher estimates discussed. He noted that the actual rate change remains uncertain and may ultimately differ from those expectations.

City Manager Steve Palen reiterated that the primary benefit of the aggregation program is price stability, as it provides a fixed rate for the duration of the contract rather than being subject to fluctuations from Ameren. He acknowledged that in recent aggregation cycles Ameren's rates have at times been lower; however, in many prior instances the aggregation rate had been more favorable. He explained that participation in the program is optional, and residents may opt out if they choose, but doing so requires remaining out of the program for one year. As a result, individuals who opt out are subject to Ameren's rate changes during that period and cannot re-enter the aggregation program until the opt-out term has expired.

Mr. Merker concurred with the statement made, explaining that many utility customers are either on fixed rates or on Ameren's instantaneous market-based pricing, where they pay fluctuating kilowatt-hour rates. He noted that during a cold snap in January, market prices spiked significantly, with hourly rates reaching approximately sixty to seventy cents per kilowatt-hour for an extended period, resulting in substantially higher utility bills for some customers. He referenced examples, including a wastewater facility that still experienced a bill of approximately \$10,000.00 in a single month despite having solar due to being on a market-rate supply service. He stated that customers have the option to lock in a fixed rate for more predictability or remain on variable pricing, acknowledging that rates can fluctuate up or down depending on market conditions.

OATH OF OFFICE: City Clerk Danielle Sneed administered the oath of office to newly appointed Probationary Police Officer Nickolas Beem.

RESOLUTION NO. 2172: DECLARING THE STRUCTURE(S) LOCATED AT PARCEL ID 19-2-08-22-10-102-025, COMMONLY KNOWN AS 453 PERSHING AVENUE, WOOD RIVER, ILLINOIS 62095, UNSAFE AND A PUBLIC NUISANCE AND AUTHORIZING THE CITY ATTORNEY TO PROCEED WITH LEGAL ACTION:

Councilman Ayres moved to approve a resolution declaring the structure(s) located at Parcel ID 19-2-08-22-10-102-025, commonly known as 453 Pershing Avenue, Wood River, Illinois 62095, unsafe and a public nuisance and authorizing the City Attorney to proceed with legal action, as submitted by the Building and Zoning Administrator, seconded by Councilman Tweedy, and approved by the following vote:

AYES: Ayres, Dettmers, Plank, Tweedy, Stalcup (5)
NAYS: None (0)

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RESOLUTION NO. 2173: DECLARING THE STRUCTURE(S) LOCATED AT PARCEL ID 19-2-08-21-11-204-020, COMMONLY KNOWN AS 150 CONLEY AVENUE, WOOD RIVER, ILLINOIS 62095, UNSAFE AND A PUBLIC NUISANCE AND AUTHORIZING THE CITY ATTORNEY TO PROCEED WITH LEGAL ACTION:

Councilman Dettmers moved to approve a resolution declaring the structure(s) located at Parcel ID 19-2-08-21-11-204-020, commonly known as 150 Conley Avenue, Wood River, Illinois 62095, unsafe and a public nuisance and authorizing the City Attorney to proceed with legal action, as submitted by the Building and Zoning Administrator, seconded by Councilman Ayres

Councilman Ayres asked about the property in question, noting that the statements are being sent to the property owner at that address and that there may be two residential units on the parcel. He referenced that the front structure along the street appears to be in disrepair and questioned whether, if it is not repaired or is demolished and not rebuilt, the parcel would revert to a single-family residential use rather than continuing as a two-unit property on one lot.

Chief Wells explained that the City has been attempting to work with the property owner regarding the condition of the property. He stated that the owner has indicated a lack of resources and did not have insurance on the property at the time of the fire and has indicated an intention to sell the property to someone who may be able to rehabilitate it. Chief Wells noted that there is a second house located on the rear of the lot, but under current code, if the situation remains unresolved for more than 12 months, the property will become nonconforming and there will be limited ability to permit both structures to remain on the same parcel in the future. He further explained that the City's goal is to encourage remediation and potentially preserve the structure if a qualified buyer takes over, but if that does not occur, demolition may be necessary due to nuisance conditions and safety concerns, particularly related to unauthorized entry and public safety risks.

Councilman Ayres asked for clarification on whether the 12-month timeframe begins once the matter is taken to court.

Chief Wells stated that the timeframe is tied to the date of the fire, at which point the property would become nonconforming if the issue is not resolved within that period. He noted that he did not have the exact date of the fire, but it would be 12 months from that date.

Councilman Dettmers asked for clarification on whether the discussion and potential action applied to both residential structures on the property or only the single structure in question.

Chief Wells stated only the structure that caught fire.

Councilman Dettmers expressed confusion about how the City could address one structure without affecting control of the entire property.

City Attorney Kathryn Warren explained that, once the matter proceeds through court action, the City's complaint would specifically identify and describe the portion(s) of the property and structure for which the City is seeking court authorization.

Councilman Dettmers stated that, as he understood it, the City may incur the cost of demolishing the front building, which would ultimately benefit the owner of the rear structure on the property.

City Attorney Kathryn Warren explained that the City would place a lien on the property as a whole.

AYES: Ayres, Dettmers, Plank, Tweedy, Stalcup (5)

NAYS: None (0)

RESOLUTION NO. 2174: AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTION OF AN AGREEMENT FOR PHASE 2 OF A SOLAR PANEL PROJECT RELATED TO A PREVIOUSLY EXECUTED CONTRACT WITH GRP WEGMAN COMPANY:

Councilman Tweedy moved to approve a resolution authorizing the execution of an agreement for Phase 2 of a Solar Panel Project related to a previously executed contract with GRP Wegman Company, seconded by Councilman Plank, and approved by the following vote:

AYES: Ayres, Dettmers, Plank, Tweedy, Stalcup (5)

NAYS: None (0)

RESOLUTION NO. 2175: AUTHORIZING THE CITY ATTORNEY TO FILE THE NECESSARY DOCUMENTS TO INTERVENE IN THE PROCEEDINGS BEFORE THE STATE OF ILLINOIS – PROPERTY TAX APPEAL BOARD BY BRIA OF WOOD RIVER, DESCRIBED AS PARCEL ID’S 19-2-08-22-14-302-011, 19-2-08-22-14-302-024, AND 19-2-08-22-14-302-025 AND LOCATED AT 393 E. EDWARDSVILLE ROAD, WOOD RIVER, ILLINOIS 62095:

Councilman Ayres moved to approve a resolution authorizing the City Attorney to file the necessary documents to intervene in the proceedings before the State of Illinois – Property Tax Appeal Board by Bria of Wood River, described as Parcel ID’s 19-2-08-22-14-302-011, 19-2-08-22-14-302-024, and 19-2-08-22-14-302-025 and located at 393 E. Edwardsville Road, Wood River, Illinois 62095, seconded by Councilman Plank, and approved by the following vote:

AYES: Ayres, Dettmers, Plank, Tweedy, Stalcup (5)
NAYS: None (0)

RESOLUTION NO. 2176: EXECUTING A SPONSORSHIP AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE CITY OF WOOD RIVER AND LASHLY & BAER, P.C. FOR MARKETING IN SUPPORT OF THE WOOD RIVER RECREATION CENTER:

Councilman Tweedy moved to approve a resolution executing a Sponsorship Agreement between the City of Wood River and Lashly & Baer P.C. for marketing in support of the Wood River Recreation Center, as submitted by the Director of Parks and Recreation, seconded by Councilman Dettmers, and approved by the following vote:

AYES: Ayres, Dettmers, Plank, Tweedy, Stalcup (5)
NAYS: None (0)

RESOLUTION NO. 2177: EXECUTING A SPONSORSHIP AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE CITY OF WOOD RIVER AND THE BETHALTO FLOOR STORE, LLC, FOR MARKETING IN SUPPORT OF THE WOOD RIVER RECREATION CENTER:

Councilman Dettmers moved to approve a resolution executing a Sponsorship Agreement between the City of Wood River and The Bethalto Floor Store, LLC, for marketing in support of the Wood River Recreation Center, as submitted by the Director of Parks and Recreation, seconded by Councilman Ayres, and approved by the following vote:

AYES: Ayres, Dettmers, Plank, Tweedy, Stalcup (5)
NAYS: None (0)

RESOLUTION NO. 2178: EXECUTING A SPONSORSHIP AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE CITY OF WOOD RIVER AND NATE BILLINGS FOR MARKETING IN SUPPORT OF THE WOOD RIVER RECREATION CENTER:

Councilman Ayres moved to approve a resolution executing a Sponsorship Agreement between the City of Wood River and Nate Billings for marketing in support of the Wood River Recreation Center, as submitted by the Director of Parks and Recreation, seconded by Councilman Tweedy, and approved by the following vote:

AYES: Ayres, Dettmers, Plank, Tweedy, Stalcup (5)
NAYS: None (0)

MAYOR PRO-TEM:

Councilman Dettmers moved to approve electing Councilman David Ayres as Mayor Pro-Tem for the 2026-2027 Fiscal Year, and due to the lack of a second, the motion died.

Mayor Stalcup moved to approve electing Councilman Scott Tweedy as Mayor Pro-Tem for the 2026-2027 Fiscal Year, seconded by Councilman Plank, and approved by the following vote:

AYES: Ayres, Dettmers, Plank, Tweedy, Stalcup (5)
NAYS: None (0)

APPROVED – PROCLAMATION - NATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER:

Councilman Tweedy moved to approve a Proclamation recognizing the National Day of Prayer on Thursday, May 7, 2026, seconded by Councilman Plank, and approved by the following vote:

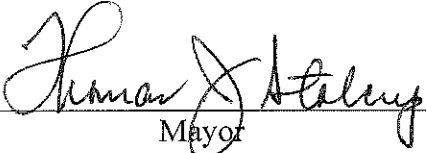
AYES: Ayres, Dettmers, Plank, Tweedy, Stalcup (5)
NAYS: None (0)

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OLD BUSINESS: NONE

NEW BUSINESS: NONE

ADJOURNMENT: There being no further business to come before the Council, the meeting adjourned at 7:38 p.m.



Mayor



City Clerk