



**Regular City Council Minutes
Tuesday, August 12, 2025**

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Comprising a quorum of the City Council, the meeting was called to order at 5:00 pm with the following members present: Mayor George Deiss, Council Members Duke Harrison, Mark Lunde, Wade Miller, and Mac Nelson.

NAME THE BABY BUFFALO CONTEST

Nicole Stracek from the Pioneer Journal asked the City Council to name the baby. A list of contestants and their suggested baby names were provide with a majority of the council choosing "Bumper" as the newest baby buffalo name. Stracek and Chamber Director Tina will contact the winner.

CONSENT CALENDAR

Motion approving the consent calendar items.

- A. Claims Register Summary
- B. Monthly Financial Reports
- C. City Council Meeting Minutes:
 - a. July 8, 2025, Regular Meeting
 - b. July 15, 2025, Special Meeting
- D. Action 25-46: Pig & Wing Challenge, Request to Close Aldrich Ave
- E. Action 25-47: Oktoberfest, Request to Close Aldrich Ave
- F. Action 25-48: Temporary On-Sale Liquor License for Wadena Elks Lodge
- G. Action 25-49: Massage License
- H. Action 25-50: Tattoo License
- I. Action 25-51: Taxicab License
- J. Action 25-52: Property/Casualty Liability Coverage Form for Monetary Limits
- K. Action 25-58: Temporary On-Sale Liquor License for Wadena County Ag Society

Moved by:	Miller	Seconded by:	Nelson
Roll call vote:	Deiss, Harrison, Lunde, Miller, Nelson		

NEW BUSINESS

Abdo, 2024 City Audit Presentation

Luke Fischer with Abdo provided a summary and overview of the 2024 audit. Overall, the general fund is financially stable with a 73.4% reserve balance. Policy requires 50%.

The water, sewer, electric, and liquor funds all continue to remain stable. However, administrator Schroeder noted that the liquor fund net profit continues to decrease significantly for the past two years. The wellness center shows a significant deficit for 2024. Each fund will be reviewed with the administrator and department head.

Overall, there were no difficulties with the audit, receiving a clean audit report, and no disagreements from management.

Jim Merickel: Electrical rates charged on power brought into lots.

Jim Merickel is interested in building another set of duplexes. His concern is the rising cost of the transformers currently priced at \$7,000-\$8,000. Utility Director Dave Evans provided the city's policy, charging contractors for commercial duplex transformers has been part of the policy for multiple years. Merickel argues that rising costs make the project difficult to build and asks the city to reduce the cost of the transformer.

Due to the fact that a policy is in place, Administrator Schroeder recommended an ad-hoc committee of two council members, Utility Director Dave Evans, and herself get together to discuss the policy and consider any other options. The item will be placed on September's regular meeting agenda providing the committee has a recommendation.

Action 25-53: Motion approving West Central Telephone Association (WCTA) installation of a community camera at Sunnybrook Zoo, contingent on the city having limited maintenance rights when necessary.

Travis Floyd of WCTA presented the idea to the city. The camera will stream live on YouTube and located on the southern side of the zoo facing the deer and buffalo.

The only cost requested of the City is to provide power from an existing source. The cost is minimal, only powering one year-round camera and fiber unit. Public Works Director Kovar states there is power nearby.

WCTA will provide the encoding servers, camera, mic, pole, and fiber connectivity, maintaining equipment and connectivity at no cost.

Streaming will be live on a YouTube feed managed by WCTA. The City of Wadena logo will be provided for use on YouTube. The city will also be granted access to the YouTube link to publish on the city's web pages or social media platforms if interested.

Moved by:	Lunde	Seconded by:	Miller
Vote in Favor:	Deiss, Harrison, Lunde, Miller, Nelson		

Action 25-54: Motion authorizing to look into a Local Sales Tax and move forward with Moore Engineering Services Agreement of \$19,500 and University of MN taxable sales analysis of \$3,000 for public safety, fire and police, building and renovation project.

The local sales tax will be for public safety such as a new fire hall as well as renovation of the current police and fire hall to accommodate police department needs and emergency operations center (EOC).

A location is yet to be determined.

Funds to support the upfront engineering and sales analysis costs will be paid with the 2023 one-time public safety dollars. Both Chief Yglesias and Chief Plautz agreed with the use of these funds towards this effort.

Moved by:	Miller	Seconded by:	Nelson
Vote in Favor:	Deiss, Harrison, Lunde, Miller, Nelson		

Action 25-55: Motion approving temporary On-Sale liquor licenses for Wadena County Ag Society, 221 Harry Rich Drive, July 27, 2025, August 1-2, 2025, and August 16, 2025.

Moved by:	Miller	Seconded by:	Harrison
Vote in Favor:	Deiss, Harrison, Lunde, Miller, Nelson		

Action 25-56: Motion approving the option to change the use of the SW warming house building for a childcare center and entering into a lease agreement contingent on the Congregational Church deemed as not an option.

A local childcare provider scheduled to receive \$10,000 of the \$195,000 DEED childcare grant is unable to complete the residential sewer improvements required to bring their home to childcare standards, potentially forcing the provider to close at the end of September unless an alternative or affordable option is identified and available.

One option is a space in the former Congregational Church. However, the state fire Marshall is reviewing the need of a fire suppression system. If required, the option is too expensive and not feasible.

Another option is to convert the SW warming house to a childcare building. A fire suppression system is not required since it is considered residential.

Discussions have been held with Public Works Director Dan Kovar. The SW warming house is underutilized, and an attendant has not been hired for the past three years.

DEED has authorized the use of the \$10,000 towards either of these options.

Council members were ok with the change in city building contingent on no costs to the city along with an ad placed in the newspaper for equal opportunity rights to all interested providers.

Moved by:	Lunde	Seconded by:	Harrison
Vote in Favor:	Deiss, Harrison, Lunde, Miller, Nelson		

Action 25-57: Motion to purchase a 2025 GMC 1500 from North Country GM for \$42,744.80 from the sewer fund and sell the 2003 F250.

Moved by:	Miller	Seconded by:	Lunde
Vote in Favor:	Deiss, Harrison, Lunde, Miller, Nelson		

MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC AT 6:30PM

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Public Works Department – Dan Kovar Have been busy with the construction project and regular city business. Nothing else to report.

Utilities Department - Superintendent David Evans Five water line breaks have been identified and repaired, two were mains with the other three private services.

Wadena Development Authority and Planning & Zoning – Dean Uselman

- Childcare project is complete with the groundbreaking completed August 6th. Was a great turnout with 2 providers ready to start providing.
- Working with a couple contacts looking into student housing.
- Still interested in finding and purchasing industrial park property.

Police Department – Naomi Plautz

- Provided a drone use presentation prior to the regular meeting showing the council and attendees the advantages of the drone footage during law enforcement needs. Also explaining the down tracks where it's flown.
- Received 29 applications for the deer archery season. Higher than normal with hunters appreciative of the opportunity.
- We Fest weekend went well with only a couple hiccups related to the signal light timing.
- A semi driver with sodium cyanide drove through the closed portion of Hwy 10 and got stuck. Mathiowetz Construction and Wadena Fire Dept assisted with getting the semi out. Fortunately, no cyanide spilled, which could have been disastrous.
- Updated that the number of crashes has not increased or decreased since the start of the highway projects.

- SWAT has been called out twice in the past two weeks.

Fire Department – Cody Yglesias Not Present.

Wadena Liquor Store – Tim Booth

- Reported the store has been experiencing a decline in sales, believed to be from the construction.

Maslowski Wellness and Research Center – Lisa Anderson Nothing to report.

Whitetail Run Golf Course – Kevin Ross Not Present.

City Administrator – Kim Schroeder Nothing to report.

COUNCIL REPORTS

Duke Harrison:

- Questioned the high skating rink utilities expense line item in the general fund. Public Works Director Kovar explained history has been to charge water used for jetting to this account. Administrator Schroeder will discuss with the finance director to change the line item to reflect the expense from skating rink to jetting.
- Questioned the railroads quiet whistle zone and why trains still sound. Administrator Schroeder explained the signs should be removed. The process to

Mark Lunde: Nothing to report or add.

Mac Nelson: Nothing to report or add.

Wade Miller: With higher than usual traffic on Greenwood Ave, suggested to place the portable speed sign on the road to reduce speeds on the long stretch. Chief Plautz commented that it could, but that the batteries are expensive and would need to be changed often. No action was taken.

Mayor George Deiss: Updated the council that Roach's development was invoiced multiple transformers in the new project development. Roach's have also paid for past development expenses with no dispute to the city. Additionally, that the materials from the first Roach development were purchased in Little Falls, where Roach's are from. They now purchase materials from Merickel Lumber. Deiss encouraged the council to remember that Merickel Lumber is gaining business from an outside contractor and that the contractor is not coming to the city to ask for reduced transformer pricing.

Action Motion: Motion to adjourn at 6:18pm.

Moved by:	Lunde	Seconded by:	Miller
Vote in favor:	Deiss, Harrison, Lunde, Miller, Nelson		

George Deiss, Mayor

Attest: _____
Kim Schroeder, City Administrator