

Watseka City Council Meeting

June 27, 2023, 6:30pm

The City Council meeting was called to order by Mayor John Allhands at 6:30pm. Present were Aldermen Barragree, Marcier, Cahoe, Miller, Anderson, Muench & Alderwomen DeLahr. Absent was Alderwoman Rohlf.

A Motion was made by Barragree, seconded by Cahoe to Approve the City Council Regular Meeting Minutes of May 23rd, 2023. Motion passed 7-0.

Public Comment-None

Public Hearing on an Ordinance Providing for a Budget and Appropriation for General Corporate and Other Purposes for the Fiscal Year Beginning May 1,2023, and Ending April 30,2024, for the City of Watseka. Public Hearing was closed with no comments.

Ordinances, Resolutions, Agreements & Proclamations

- **Ordinance #2682**-Providing for a Budget and Appropriation for general Corporate and Other Purposes for The Fiscal Year Beginning May 1, 2023, and Ending April 30, 2024, for the City of Watseka, Iroquois County, Illinois.
- **Ordinance #2683**-Amending Title 9, Public ways, and Property, by Adding Chapter 10, railroad Occurrences, Of the Watseka City Code.
- **Ordinance #2684**-Amending Title 3, Finances and Taxation, Chapter 4, City Taxes, Article E, Alcohol Tax, Section 3-4E-3, of the Watseka City Code.
- **Ordinance #2685**-Amending Title 8, Motor Vehicles and Traffic, Chapter 9, Golf Carts, of the City of Watseka.
- **Resolution #2023-4** Approving and Intergovernmental Agreement Between the City of Watseka and Village of Sheldon, Iroquois County, Illinois Pertaining to Administrative Adjudication of Ordinance Violations.
- Appointment of Doug Geiger to Hospital Board term expires 6/30/2026.
- Committee Assignments

Consent Agenda

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- Committee Assignments

A Motion was made by Marcier, seconded by Barragree to Set the Consent Agenda removing #2684 and Doug Geiger. Motion passed 7-0.

A Motion was made by Marcier, seconded by Barragree to Accept the Consent Agenda removing #2684 and Doug Geiger. Motion passed 7-0.

- A Motion was made by Marcier, seconded by Cahoe Ordinance #2684 Amending Title 3, Finances and Taxation, Chapter 4, City Taxes, Article E, Alcohol Tax, Section 3-4E-3, of the Watseka City Code. This was open for discussion; Alderman Anderson just wanted an open vote to see who voted what. Alderwoman DeLahr asked why we are doing this, Mayor explained to help with the Police Pension and Downtown projects keeping the façade grants going. Alderman Miller stated we just did the alcohol tax last year now is not the time to double, this is a tax of choice. Alderwoman DeLahr stated if this was 100% for the police, she may understand this a little better but playing with it to use it. The city is using funds for other things, we are throwing money away, this is money that could be used elsewhere. We are working on private property, removing trees, we should not be doing this. Mayor stated they are trying to improve the vacant lots to bring in more business. Alderwoman DeLahr said when she goes and gets her hair done all she hears is complaints, the city is raising taxes again, no reduction in water rates if we keep taxing these people to death, we will not have any people here due to over taxing. She is all about growth the city needs to stop taking off the backs of the community, bars will suffer, and they are businesses, she also heard Berkot's maybe leaving, Mayor sated Berkot's is not due to alcohol tax. Alderwoman DeLahr feels the council should look internally as to what can be saved. Motion passed 4-3 with the mayor voting yes. Alderwoman DeLahr, Aldermen Anderson & Miller voting no.
- A Motion was made by Cahoe, second by Barragree Appointment of Doug Geiger to Hospital Board term expires 6/30/2026. Alderman Anderson wanted to know what this is, he is not familiar with this. The mayor stated that the hospital presents candidates to the city, the mayor appoints 3 people with Doug being one of them. Motion passed 6-1 with Alderman Anderson abstaining.

- **Finance, Legal and Audit**

A Motion was made by Marcier, seconded by Barragree to pay claims in the amount \$541,083.67. Motion passed 7-0.

A Motion was made by Marcier, seconded by Cahoe to Accept and Place on file the May Treasurer Report. Motion passed 7-0.

A Motion was made by Marcier, seconded by Barragree Mike Costello to fix the wall at 128 W Walnut St for a cost not to exceed \$35,000 paid out of promotions. Alderwoman DeLahr says we are giving them free rain not to exceed this is private property, the building owner is taking no ownership, with the façade grant at least they must put money down. La Potosina fixed their wall are they going to turn a bill into the city. Why are we jetting out lines on private property we don't go on private property, what makes this ok this isn't right. We need to investigate something cheaper, things done differently, need to be hidden by a fence or something. How the city is spending the taxpayers is all she hears complaints about of course these private properties are going to let the city pay to fix them up and then if they sell, they are getting more money not the city. Alderwoman DeLahr says she does not care what they think this is wrong. Motion passed 5-2 with Alderwoman DeLahr and Alderman Anderson voting no.

A Motion was made by Marcier, seconded by Barragree \$4,000 Carlile Group Structural Engineer at 100 W Walnut St. Motion passed 7-0.

A Motion was made by Barragree, second by Anderson Renew Hazard Mitigation Renewal Plan city portion of \$11,250. Motion passed 7-0.

- **Public Works/Water Wastewater**

MFT/RBI-Lots of discussion was had. Keith from Robinson shared those bids opened yesterday, and the project will cost \$1.562,528.32. RBI do expire this is for the 5 streets that have been discussed. IPC only bid the projects. Consensus was to reject it with no objections.

A Motion was made by Anderson, seconded by DeLahr Voltas Power Response Program. Loren the Public Works director shared this is an emergency response plan if you sign up the city is paid annually \$14,000 whether your services are used or not you get paid. He thought this was great revenue to pay for the generators they already got. The \$14,000 will go back to Public Works. Motion passed 7-0.

A Motion was made by Cahoe, seconded by Anderson North St & Kay St Water Main Replacement Project IPC Bid #373,588.30 pay from Water & sewer Fund. Motion passed 7-0. Road Discussion 8th St STU project Bid \$537, 824.11 was discussed up above.

A Motion was made by Cahoe, seconded by Miller Watseka Girls Softball Pool Party-City Sponsor. Motion passed 7-0.

- **Public Safety**-None
- **Code Enforcement**-None
- **Liquor Committee**-None
- **Personnel Committee**-None

- **Miscellaneous Business**

A Motion was made by Anderson, seconded by Marcier Nita Dubble appointment of Police & Fire Commission term expires 3/31/2026. Motion passed 7-0.

A Motion was made by Cahoe, seconded by Barragree Transfer \$100,000 into Revolving Loan fund yearly at the end of the fiscal year. Motion passed 7-0.

Loren Public Works director explained why they were cleaning up by the railroad, there is lots of vegetation, so it does not flow properly, they did this for better flow. The drainage ditch has been cleaned out, the south side of the railroad tracks has brush, leaves, dirt the culverts were full, the culverts do not help if the ditch is not clean. Yes, they did go on private property to get to some of the areas. He did have approval from T&D the Dittrich's to go on that property it was a gesture of good faith they cleaned up some trash that T&D did not do. Getting water to flow through is important it is dry season, and he shared several other projects that public Works have been doing.

The mayor asked if anyone had any ideas for downtown incentives to throw them in the hat. Alderman Anderson reached out to his hometown for a few ideas. The mayor has shown the Charms building and the old Travel Discoveries building. There is some interest in the old KFC building and Uarco, this could create multiple jobs. Alderman Anderson asked about the building that the outside was redone on the corner of 4th and Walnut St. mayor shared that he is a contractor and when he gets more funds he plans to come and do work on the inside. Keith with Robinson gave an update on the water main, nothing yet. North St. & Kay will be closed at the crossing, there is a large pit so this will be for safety. The new main will be south of the center line. Hydrant will be on the north side of north street not on the south and nothing will be removed. No news on the new well. Alderman Miller asked about Core and Main, Loren said they got the pipes, and this project will start after the holiday. Alderman Miller also asked about a service charge for those who pay their water bills with a credit card, some discussion was had Alderman Miller will talk to Kurt Albers at the county to see how they do it.

Fire Chief Baier gave an update on the burn ban, he passed a handout out to the council.

Alderwoman DeLahr asked about the revolving loan to help get businesses in, she did not know all the rules. She was also approached by a person in the community about the city purchasing Lakeview Apartments. She asked if the city was going to buy, Mayor told her no the city is not buying them. Mayor stated there is a man on social media that no one knows that seems to be posting inaccurate information. Alderwoman DeLahr then brought up the recording of the meetings she would like this to go to vote again accepting the bid from Ruder. She feels these meetings can be on the city website and Facebook page. Discussion was had about things being posted on social media causing issues. City Attorney Cankair stated that you cannot act on this since it is not on the agenda, governed by the open meeting Act you have to give the public notice this can be added next month.

A Motion was made by Cahoe, seconded by Barragree to Adjourn at 7:32ppm. Motion passed 7-0.

Amanda Hibbs, City Clerk