

CITY OF ATLANTIC COUNCIL MEETING
January 8, 2025
5:30 PM

Atlantic City Council met in regular session in the Council Chambers at City Hall with Mayor Garrett presiding. Council members present were Emily Kennedy (Ward 1), Jim Behrens (Ward 2), Mike McDermott (Ward 3), Dana Halder (Ward 5), Gerald Brink (At-Large), and Elaine Otte (At-Large). Absent: Shawn Sarsfield (Ward 4).
Also present: City Administrator John Lund, City Engineer Dave Sturm.

Motion by McDermott; second by Halder to approve agenda as amended. All ayes. Motion carried.

Council recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Motion by Brink; second by Behrens to approve consent agenda as follows:

Minutes of the December 18, 2024, City Council Meeting.

Minutes of the December 18, 2024, City Council Work Session.

Class C Retail Alcohol License with Outdoor Service:

Plaza Azteca

Nishna Hills Golf Club.

Retail Cigarette/Tobacco/Nicotine/Vapor Permit – Atlantic Liquor.

Tax Abatement Application – 3205 Chestnut Street

Bills: \$414,409.61.

All ayes. Motion carried.

Public Forum. There were no speakers.

Motion by Kennedy, second by Halder to Approve First Whitney Bank & Trust as the City's Official Bank for the City Checking Account for 2025. All ayes. Motion carried.

Motion by Otte, second by McDermott to Approve the Atlantic News Telegraph as the City's Official Newspaper for Legal Publications in 2025. All ayes. Motion carried.

Motion by Brink, second by Behrens to Reappoint Shirley Jensen to the Parks & Recreation Commission. All ayes. Motion carried.

Motion by McDermott, second by Kennedy to Reappoint Ali Pieken to the Parks & Recreation Commission. All ayes. Motion carried.

Motion by Kennedy, second by Otte to Reappoint Mary Strong to the Parks & Recreation Commission. All ayes. Motion carried.

Motion by Otte, second by Brink to approve **Resolution #01-25 "Approving Additional Compensation for the Atlantic Police Chief."** Motion unanimously passed by roll call vote.

Motion by McDermott, second by Otte to approve **Resolution #02-25 "Approving Campground Phone Compensation."** Motion unanimously passed by roll call vote. This was originally the responsibility of the Streets Department, but they were unwilling to continue. The compensation is \$40/day, 7 days/week during the months when the campground host is not on-site. Amanda McEntaffer, who carries the phone, will contact other departments in case of emergency. The Personnel & Finance Committee will revisit this decision after this season.

Motion by Brink, second by Behrens to approve **Resolution #03-25 "Establishing Signatories to City Checks and Payables."** With the appointment of a new City Clerk, the signatories on the City's account must be updated. The signatories will be as follows:

- Mayor Grace N. Garrett
- City Clerk Laura McLean
- City Administrator John R. Lund
- Deputy City Clerk Richard J. Tupper
- City Coordinator Amanda McEntaffer

Motion unanimously passed by roll call vote.

Public Hearing for a Proposed Ordinance Vacating the Street Located Between 3009 Palm Street and 3101 Palm Street in the City of Atlantic, Iowa. The hearing opened at 5:43 pm. There were no speakers, and no public comments had been received. Motion by Kennedy, second by McDermott to close the hearing at 5:43 pm. All ayes. Motion passed.

Motion by McDermott, second by Otte to approve the **First Reading of Ordinance No. 1048 "Vacating the Street Located Between 3009 Palm Street and 3101 Palm Street in the City of Atlantic, Iowa."** Motion unanimously passed by roll call vote.

Administrator's Report: Lund updated the Council on FY26 Budget preparations. The City will see \$57,000 in new money from property taxes next year. The health insurance renewal rate is 7.8%, and our loss ratios have been trending down each year. Lund is considering a minimum bond of \$2.5M for work downtown, on West 22nd Street, and to cover the new ambulance.

Mayor's Report: Happy 2025.

City Council Reports:

- Otte: No one came to the Comprehensive Planning Open House on December 18. The Committee needs to try harder to get community feedback.
- Kennedy: No meetings. Worked on the street degradation at Commerce St. AMU is already working on adding lighting to that area. She has some ideas for town clean up and will bring them to the Beautification Committee meeting.
- Behrens: Attended Fire Department Committee and sat in on Public Safety.
- McDermott: Attended Public Safety Committee. Has been researching various citizen questions and complaints. Mentioned that there are signs going up at Schildberg notifying that people are using the paths at their own risk.
- Halder: Attended Cass County Landfill Committee; Community Protection Committee on leveraging technology for public safety. Questioned why the flag near Walmart is no longer flying. The Mayor offered to look into it.
- Brink: Attended Landfill Committee. Beautification Committee will meet on January 29 at 4:00 pm prior to the Council Workshop.

Motion by Behrens, second by McDermott to Enter Exempt Session Pursuant to Iowa Code Section 20.17(3) Providing for the Strategy Meetings of Public Employers for Collective Bargaining. All ayes. Motion passed. Motion by Halder, second by Kennedy to come out of exempt session at 6:23 pm. All ayes. Motion passed.

Other business: Council asked Lund about property insurance rates because everyone is seeing big increases. Lund said he would send the City's numbers and that he anticipates raising the insurance levy.

Council discussed recent house fires and whether the City needs to change to a different type of pager to contact volunteers more quickly and reliably. Chief Cappel is looking for grants to help pay for this.

Council asked about the code on clean-up after a house burns down.

The next City Council meeting will be held on Wednesday, January 22nd, 2025.

Motion by Behrens, second by Brink to adjourn at 6:45 pm. All ayes. Motion carried.


Grace N. Garrett, Mayor

ATTEST: 
Laura McLean, City Clerk