

LWV Observer Corps Report February 2023

***Denotes things to watch for in the future.**

Two Rivers City Council Meeting Observer Summary- Sue Matczynski

2-6-2023

Highlights:

- There was no citizen input during the Public Hearing regarding a proposed Conditional Use Permit (CUP) for 1010 34th Street for the operation of a Mini Storage and Business Incubator Service. Council members approved the permit as recommended by the Plan Commission.
- Council members reported contacts from citizens including a concern from fisherman regarding the harbor situation, support for additional restrictions on golf carts, a complaint regarding convenience fees when paying for city services online and a question as to why the city was recruiting for a Director of Tourism.
- PJ Stevens of the American Cancer Society addressed the need for sponsors and volunteers for the Relay for Life event to be held July 28th at Central Park West.
- The City Manager:
 - Noted the recent hiring of former Manitowoc Deputy City Clerk Amanda Baryenbruch as the city's new City Clerk and Travis Christensen as the new Public Works Street Superintendent.
 - Reviewed the events associated with the recent water main break at Seagull Marina.
 - Noted the posting of the city's list of summer events to the Explore Two Rivers website and the publication of the Two Rivers/Manitowoc Visitor Guide.
 - Reviewed the City's decision to remove the old stage at Central Park West (cheaper than re-purposing it) and the construction timetable.
 - Announced Two Rivers Lester Public Library had been selected as one of fifteen libraries in the nation to host a museum-quality traveling exhibit, "World on the Move: 250,000 Years of Human Migration".
 - Noted the City was in contact with the League of Women Voters and the Two Rivers Business Association regarding possible City Council candidate forums.
- The City Council:
 - Approved the appointment of Douglas Brandt to the Environmental Advisory Board.
 - Adopted a resolution establishing a grant program to assist homeowners with tree planting on private properties upon the recommendation of the Environmental Advisory Board.
 - Authorized a three percent wage adjustment for the City Manager as recommended by the Personnel and Finance Committee.

Meeting time: 2 hours

Two Rivers City Council Meeting

2-20-2023

Highlights:

- Council members reported citizen contacts regarding snow plowing and in support of front yard gardens.
- New City Clerk/Human Resources Director Amanda Baryenbruch was introduced and sworn in.
- Three police officers were recognized for their efforts in saving the lives of citizens.
- Bank First presented a \$50,000 check to the Central Park West project.
- The Council adopted a proclamation acknowledging Two Rivers Rotary 100 years of service, 1923-2023.
- A representative from Robert W. Baird presented on a proposed General Obligation Note issue for 2023 Capital projects.
- The City Manager:
 - Announced the City was installing its fourth emergency siren on Picnic Hill, which should be heard by beach goers.
 - Noted City Council candidate forums would be held by the League of Women Voters on March 9th and the Two Rivers Business Bureau on March 14th, both at 7 pm at Council Chambers in City Hall. Both events will be recorded and livestreamed on the City's website and Facebook.
 - There will be a presentation on Storm Water Runoff & Ponds at the Lester Public Library on March 9th at 6 PM.
- The City Council:
 - Adopted amendments to the City's Golf Cart ordinance, requiring seat belts for children under age 8, ID tags on the cart, and two headlights and taillights if the cart is operated after dark.
 - Authorized the City Manager and Clerk to execute a partial release of a utility easement so a property owner at 25th and West River Street could build a garage.
 - Adopted a resolution authorizing the issuance and establishing parameters for the sale of \$1,165,000 General Promissory Notes.
 - Approved a contract with Mammoth Construction for reconstruction of Lincoln Street, 17th Street to 22nd Street.
 - Upon the recommendation of the City Engineer, declined the proposed STP-Urban Funding Agreement for the reconstruction of Emmet Street as design and construction costs will substantially exceed estimates.
 - Authorized a purchase agreement (for \$1) with Two Rivers Public Schools for conveyance of city-owned property adjacent to L.B. Clarke Middle School.

Meeting time: 1 hour, 20 minutes

Two Rivers School District Meeting Observer Summary – Mary Wallace

2-13-2023 (Cathy Cole Reporting for Mary Wallace) Thank you Cathy!

Highlights

The teacher from Koenig and McGee had his 4th grade students present their posters and pamphlets on one mountain range that they were studying. These products were the results of implementation the new program --Wit and Wisdom. Every lesson builds a foundation for the next step. It is a spiral affect. The students were eager to share.

The second guest was Ryan Hansen, Coach for The Raiders Anglers. He has 13 students in this program. It started out slow, because of the weather, tournaments were cancelled. Their first tournament was High Falls Flowage in which they won 2 awards. The next tournament was in the Kettle Moraine area and brought a plaque to be put on display. On February 17-19, they will be part of the Wisconsin Interscholastic Fishing Association at Shawano Lake. There are 40 teams participating.

No public comment from citizens on Agenda items.

No communications.

Approved bills to be paid for Jan. 2023

Approved the Financial Statements for Dec. 2022

Tim, Randy and possibly Nicole, after election, volunteered to be on negotiations committee.

New Business:

Approved retirement of Rob Henseler, English Teacher at TRHS and James Pautz, English/Speech Teacher at TRHS

Approved contract for Kyra Rahmlow, Grade 4, for Magee for 2023-24 school year

Approved contract for Annie Gesteland, Kindergarten Teacher for Magee for 2023/24 school year

Approved 2023 Summer School Classes

Approved co-curricular contract stipends for Girls Wrestling & JV2 Baseball

Accepted donation of \$750 from Dennis & Mary Swetlik to the Tech Ed. Dept., the donation of \$500 from Grace Congregational Church to the Angel Fund, and the donation of many tools and materials from Robert Limon Jr., T-Rivers Properties LLC to the Two Rivers High School Performing Arts Program

Administration Updates

Registration for 4K & Kindergarten will be held Thursday and Friday, Feb. 16th and 17th
Camp Read A lot – Begins, Friday, February 24th to Friday, March 3rd

Referendum Savings Update: TR School district managed to save tax payers \$6.2 million dollars and only need one bond instead of two. It should be paid off in 20 years instead of 21 years. Disappointing listening session, only 11 were there. It was decided to send out a survey with items that could be discussed.

1 hour 22 minutes

Two Rivers School District Meeting

2-27-2023

Highlights:

The Board approved midyear budget revisions. Due to a number of grants that have been received and an increase in open enrollment, their budget is balanced and there is no need to use fund balance funds. The fund balance amounts to over \$500,000.

The Koenig principal reported on the Achievement Gap Reduction grant, a 5-year grant amounting to \$294,000 which Koenig School receives because 70% of its students are eligible for free or reduced lunch. This allows them to keep class size to 18 or less.

LB Clarke is holding monthly Family Outreach Events and has a team working on attendance. They send letters to parents of youth who are missing school and then set up meetings with parents. The principal feels that this has led to some increase in attendance.

10 students and 2 adults from the Czech Republic sister city will be coming in September. The hope is to send TR students there in May, 2024. Students with some Czech background will be picked to go.

Board members are each connected to a school and reported on the events they have attended.

Manitowoc Public School District Meeting Observer Summary- Linda Gratz

2-14-2023

Highlights:

Public Input: The Board room was packed for this meeting. The public input session lasted about 40 minutes. Some people spoke voicing their support for the board in general: others were specific regarding their concerns which focused primarily on Success For All curriculum that the district is going to be using K-8th next school year. The concerns included cost, teacher and community buy-in, the structured curriculum, regrouping of children based on reading levels across grades, less time for music, art, phy ed in the schools, and the fact that this does not match the recommendations put together by the committee charged with finding and implementing a new reading curriculum. Other concerns included: the plans for instruction for children with special

needs and IEPs, the cost of an Assistant Superintendent who is living in Michigan and only in person in the district half-time, and the lack of transparency for the Board.

Enrollment:

The initial enrollment count occurs on the third Friday of each September and then an additional, adjusted count occurs on the second Friday in January. Enrollment counts are critical in determining funding in fall as a part of our revenue limit. The January count offers a chance to check and reconcile changes in the count since September, determine final aid adjustments for DPI audits enrollment practices in districts. Audits were announced on February 1st and the MPDSD was selected for a membership audit this year, so they will be engaging with the auditors to complete the required items. Headcounts, which reflect the number of students served, were 4,670 in January, down 35 students from the 4,705 reported in September of 2022. Last school year, 4,743 was the headcount as of January 2022 and 4,748 in September of 2021. Impacts on the headcount include students not attending school. Each school works to engage with families of students who are not attending school, but for any count date, we are not allowed to count students who did not attend a day before or after the count date.

Open enrollment numbers continue to be a drain on the district's budget and they are looking to see what they can do to improve the number opting into the district compared to the number opting out.

Personnel Report: There were 7 retirements and 5 resignations included in the personnel report. The number of retirements and resignations has been high over the last 2 years which has raised concerns regarding stability in the district staffing.

A referendum update was given to the board and the district will be conducting a number of informational sessions open to the public.

Success For All Update: The Assistant Superintendent gave a presentation on the Success For All whole school reform program and the board voted 6 to 1 to approve moving forward with this program for the 2023-24 school year. Board member Kerry Trask was the only member who voted no because of his concern over moving too fast and not having staff buy in.

A closed session followed the meeting to discuss potential resignation agreements.

Manitowoc Public School District Meeting

2-28-2023

Highlights:

No Public Input at this meeting

The board members were observed entering the boardroom together after meeting for dinner in another room. Technically this is a violation of the open meetings law because it was not properly posted in advance and open to the public.

The official meeting started around 6:00. The consent agenda was passed and the personnel report included 4 retirements and 1 resignation.

The out of state travel requests were approved as presented.

The board discussed the addition of 8 new SFA Coordinator positions for 2023-24. These positions would be teacher level positions and would include a 5% increase in their basic salary and 10 additional days. These positions would help coordinate and assist with the transitioning to the FSA curriculum. When asked about funding for these positions it was stated that they would be cost neutral. It's hard to understand how that can be unless other positions are cut because they have stated that the budget is very tight. We will try to keep track of this and seek clarity on this issue. A conservative estimate of these 8 positions would be in the neighborhood of \$500,000.

The rest of the meeting focused on an in-depth discussion of a new governance structure based on the book "Building A High-Impact Board-Superintendent Partnership by Dave Eadie. This governance model is focused on team building, community engagement, a more active role for board members in governance, and recruiting and training new board members. They will be discussing this further at the next meeting.

All meetings are available for watching at the district web site. Go to MPSD click District, click board of education, click live stream, click live.

Manitowoc County Board Meeting Observer Summary- JoEllen Gramling

2-21-2023

Highlights:

PUBLIC INPUT: Maura Yost expressed her discontent with the County's borrowing habits and continues to advocate for a county-wide half-cent additional sales tax with a sunset clause targeted to a specific purpose.

APPOINTMENTS BY COUNTY EXECUTIVE The Board unanimously approved County Exec Ziegelbauer's appointments of: Atty. Katherine Reynolds to succeed herself on the Ethics Board for a three-year term expiring February 28, 2026; Gary Shavlik succeeding himself for a two-year term on the Local Emergency Planning Committee expiring March 2025; and Benjamin Meinnert and Joseph Jeanty to the Traffic Safety Commission.

APPOINTMENTS BY CHAIRPERSON Chairperson Martell presented his appointments of Supervisors Jim Brey, Jim Baumann, Doug Klein, Leo Naidl, Ryan Phipps, and Ken Sitkiewitz, Circuit Court Judge Robert Dewane, and Citizen Members Kaitlin Piazza and John Delsman to the Ad Hoc Courthouse Restoration Advisory Committee. The Board approved unanimously.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Planning & Park Commission Supv Falkowski presented ordinances amending Zoning Map for Brad and Jennifer Kurtzweil and Muench Irrevocable Family Trust, also an ordinance Repealing and Recreating Manitowoc County Floodplain Zoning. All were approved unanimously.

Expo-Ice Center Board: Supervisor Sitkiewitz reported that plans for the 2023 County Fair, to be held 8/23 through 8/27, are well underway.

Finance Committee: The Board voted to deny the claim of Troy Bierman for a cracked windshield on a county highway with 23 ayes and 1 no. Supervisor Shimulunas voted no.

Highway Committee: Supervisor Behnke gave a brief report mentioning new technologies being used to improve culverts and driveway access. Some airport land is to be leased to MJ Electric. Rumble strips to be replaced at Hwy X and 67. The Shoto Dam project is to start soon.

Personnel Committee: Supervisor Maresh reported that they approved development of a Hwy Dept CDL program.

Public Safety Committee: Supv Falkowski reported that fentanyl deaths have reached crisis, epidemic proportions. Of 25 drug deaths in Manitowoc County, 19 are from fentanyl. Deaths from fentanyl, in the 7 years since it's moved out of hospitals and into the streets, exceed total deaths in all wars from Korea to the present. A resolution is to be presented at the next Board meeting.

Public Works Committee: Supervisor Geroll reported that recycling volume is steady but prices are low. Payment of \$75,603 to Hammond Construction for the Courthouse Branch 4 project was approved. Microwave replacement on the County radio towers has been completed.

Meeting adjourned at 6:02 pm This County Board meeting is available for viewing at:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eZ6nVslO68s>

Manitowoc Common Council Meeting

Observer Summary- Darian Kaderabek (Thank you so much for covering the Common Council meetings). 😊

2-20-2023

Highlights:

(All supporting documents are attached to the agenda that can be found on the city website.)

Public Hearings: Community Development Director Adam Tegen spoke regarding all 3 public hearings - there were no questions/comments from the council or the public.

1. Analysis of Brownfield Cleanup Alternatives in the River Point District for property located in and around 1050 York Street, and the FY22 USEPA Brownfield Cleanup Grant Application. The city applied for this grant - 0.5 million dollars to address contamination.
2. Conditional Use Permit for The Preserves at Lincoln Park Subdivision Planned Unit Development. Requesting a change in zoning.
3. Proposed change in zone from B-3 General Business District to R-7 Central Resident District for property generally located along the west side of S. 9th Street, the south side of Hamilton Street and the north side of Madison Street. The city was approached by property owner requesting change in zoning. Allows 3-family use, staff did not feel appropriate to just pick one house (there are 13) so staff suggesting rezoning entire block.

Public Input:

Laura and Brian Stecker present again for public input, they also spoke at the last meeting. They did meet with the mayor and representatives from the city regarding their request to detach from the city. They stated that nothing new was discussed that they didn't already know. They understand the city's position. Did take time to research on their own including speaking with Manitowoc Public Utilities. Petitioning to get city water would be difficult and very expensive (upwards of \$108K). Brian did look into the 25-year plan - states this is a vision and not a plan that is dependent on property owners and business owners. Because of this, they still desire to be detached from the city.

Consent Agenda: Nothing is removed from the consent agenda and the motion to approve passes unanimously. All items on the consent agenda can be found on the meeting agenda which is available to the public on the city website.

Committee Reports:

1. Committee of the Whole

- Resolution to hire Shawn Alfred as Finance Director/Treasurer for the City of Manitowoc, effective February 27, 2023. Shawn was our last Finance Director. The resolution passes unanimously with no discussion and the vacant position is filled.

-Report of Special Event Committee recommending approval for the following events subject to Council action: Wisconsin Sand Sculpting Festival on 7/11/2023-7/16/2023 (Extension of park

hours to accommodate overnight security); Memorial Day Parade on 5/29/2023. This passes unanimously with no discussion. Supporting documents attached to the agenda.

- Resolution to Censure Alder Steven Czekala for Inappropriate Conduct. A Committee of the Whole meeting occurred before the Common Council meeting to discuss this matter. The censorship passed unanimously at that meeting in addition to Alder Darian Kaderabek making a motion to amend the resolution to include Alder Czekala's removal from the Personnel Committee for the remainder of his term, which ends in 2024. This was seconded by Alder Brett Vanderkin and passed 8-1 with Alder Eric Sitkiwicz voting 'nay' - Mayor Justin Nickels and Alder Czekala abstained from this vote. At the Common Council meeting the resolution to censure and remove Alder Czekala from the Personnel Committee passes unanimously amongst the Alders present with the exception of Alder Czekala who abstained from voting and Alder Chad Beeman who was not present. Attached to the agenda is a letter from the firefighter's union and correspondence from two citizens. The inappropriate conduct was Alder Czekala violating the Code of Conduct and threatening to "beat the hell out of" anyone making the same request. The request was from two firefighters asking for an exception to the 25-mile residency requirement. Both of them live less than 3 miles from the cutoff. Alder Czekala publicly apologizes.

2. Finance Committee

- Ordinance to Adjust Rates for Sewer Service Charges Effective March 1, 2023. The rate is a 5% increase of overall sewer bill. Rate has not increased since 2015 and MPU is anticipating higher costs moving forward. Passes unanimously.
- Resolution Terminating TIF District No. 17 and Authorizing Treasurer to Distribute Excess Increment to Overlying Taxing Districts. Passes unanimously.
- Resolution to Extend Tax Increment Financing District No. 17 to Fund Healthy Neighborhood Initiative. Passes unanimously.
- Resources ("DNR") Wisconsin Assessment Monies ("WAM") Program for a Portion of the River Point District. Passes unanimously.
- Ordinance to Amend Section 20.040 of the Manitowoc Municipal Code regulating Bi-Weekly Pay for Certain Employees. Passes unanimously.
- Resolution Authorizing the Issuance and Establishing Parameters for the Sale of Not to Exceed \$6,130,000 General Obligation Promissory Notes. This is the beginning of the borrowing process for this year. Passes unanimously.
- Resolution Authorizing the Issuance of Not to Exceed \$3,600,000 General Obligation Promissory Notes and Authorizing the Issuance and Establishing Parameters for the Sale of Not to Exceed \$3,600,000 Note Anticipation Notes in Anticipation Thereof. Passes unanimously.
- Scope of Engagement Re: Proposed Issuance of Not to Exceed \$6,130,000 City of Manitowoc (the "City") General Obligation Promissory Notes (the "Securities"). Passes unanimously.
- Report of Industrial Development Corporation relative to the Option and Right of First Refusal for Beamaco Precision Machining & Fabrication, for property located at West Drive and 59th Street (Parcel: 449-004-040). Passes unanimously.

3. Personnel Committee

- Residency accommodation for extension of 6 months added to 12-month timeframe to abide by 25-mile residency requirement for employment with the Fire Department - Tews and Loberger. Both pass unanimously.

4. Public Infrastructure Committee

- Municipal Water Agreement with various property owners - in response to locating contamination in the City of Manitowoc, Town of Manitowoc, and Town of Newton. Passes unanimously.

- Request for support for Bay Lake Technical Assistance Grant for Calumet Ave Corridor Concept Plan & Lakefront Park Beach Access Concept Plan. Passes unanimously. Plan attached to agenda.

- Tree Removal & Sidewalk Replacement at 1901 Marshall Street. Passes unanimously.

- Resolution Authorizing Emergency Repairs to the Eighth Street Lift Bridge. This was added to the agenda last minute after it was assessed by the DOT. Passes unanimously.

- Ordinance to amend Section 8.170 of the MMC to rename Clay Pit Road Park to Manitowoc Chief's Youth Football Park. Passes unanimously.

5. Public Safety Committee

- Ordinance to create section 10.460 of the MMC regulating parking of recreational vehicles (RV's) and truck campers on City streets. This ordinance had been in the works for several months after consistent communication from a district 3 constituent who raised concerns. Passes unanimously.

6. Plan Commission

-Brian & Laura Stecker, Petition for Detachment of Territory from the City of Manitowoc pursuant to § 66.0227 located at 7121 Dutch Road. This was tabled from the January council meeting. Concern from staff and some Alders regarding detaching being that once land is given up it is rarely given back. The Steckers note that they are not getting water or road-related services and that there is not a plan currently in place to do so. This requires a 3/4 vote from the council. With Alder Beeman not present, Alder Sitkiwicz would have been the only Alder voting 'nay'. Alder Vanderkin made a motion to table this until the next meeting so that all Alders could be present, as Alder Beeman could not be present due to an emergency. Alder Vanderkin's motion passes 8-1 and the matter is tabled until the March 20th meeting.

- Ordinance to rezone property from "B-3" General Business District to "R-7" Central Residence District for property generally located along the west of S. 9th Street, the south side of Hamilton Street and the north side of Madison Street. Passes unanimously.

- East Point Land Development/Howe; Review of Subdivision Preliminary Plat for The Preserves at Lincoln Park; Parcel# 817-304-010. Resolution passes unanimously.

Manitowoc County Human Services Board Monthly Meeting Observer Summary- Suzanne Zipperer

2/2023 Canceled due to inclement weather

Highlights: