

**CITY OF OWOSSO  
REGULAR MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL  
MINUTES SYNOPSIS  
MONDAY, JUNE 16, 2025**

**PRESENT:** Mayor Robert J. Teich, Jr., Mayor Pro-Tem Jerome C. Haber, Councilmembers Janae L. Fear, Carl C. Ludington, Emily S. Olson, Rachel M. Osmer, and Christopher D. Owens.

**ABSENT:** None.

**PROCLAMATIONS/SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS**

Monthly Utility Billing Presentation. City Manager Henne delivered information regarding the logistics of returning to monthly utility billing. Council moved to table the item until after the water shut-off elimination discussion.

**PUBLIC HEARINGS**

Ordinance Amendment – Fighting on School Property. Public Safety Chief Lenkart, City Attorney Gould, Schools Superintendent Brooks, and Probate Court Administrator Edwards detailed the proposed ordinance, saying it would add another tool that could be used to steer kids away from trouble and help them learn positive coping strategies. A public hearing was conducted to receive citizen comment regarding the proposed addition of Secs. 19-150 through 19-152 to Chapter 19, Offenses, Article VIII, *Offenses on School Grounds*, of the Code of Ordinances to prohibit fighting on school property. The following people commented in regard to the proposed ordinance amendment: Marlene Webster, Tom Manke, Robert Hooper, Carl Stevens, Vicky Stewart, and Aaron Keeling. The Council asked for a recommendation from the School Board prior to taking any action on the proposed ordinance. They also asked for further information on the school fights that warranted a police report last year.

Ordinance Amendment – Unpaid Parking Violations. Public Safety Chief Lenkart briefly detailed what led him to suggest the proposed ordinance amendment. A public hearing was conducted to receive citizen comment regarding the proposed addition of Sec. 33-54, Removal of Vehicle for Unpaid Parking Violations, to Chapter 33, Traffic and Motor Vehicles, Article III, *Parking, stopping and standing*, Division 2, *Parking violations bureau*, of the Code of Ordinances to allow the City to tow the vehicle of repeat offenders with unpaid tickets. The following people commented in regard to the proposed ordinance amendment: Jim Woodworth, Leo Deason, and Kori Shook. Comments were received prior to the meeting from: Vanessa Bower, Adam Bronson, Ryan Calhoun, Leo Deason, Jeremy Francis, Amanda Garno, Stephanie Griffin, Lisa Hitchcock, Casey Lambert, Micah Nash, April Riley, Kori Shook, Rhiannon Shook, Brandi Skinner and Jim Woodworth. Council took no action to approve the proposed ordinance amendment and suggested waiting to gather data from the new ticketing system to see if the proposed ordinance amendment is warranted.

The Council adjourned the meeting for a brief break from 8:32 p.m. until 8:42 p.m.

**CITIZEN COMMENTS**

Marlene Webster said she works with people in generational poverty every day and 40% of the people in our community live below the cost of living, meaning they simply don't make enough to pay for the necessities. She offered her services to give a Poverty 101 workshop for Councilmembers and staff members if there is interest.

Patrice Martin relayed several statistics highlighting the fact that a majority of jobs in Owosso pay less than a living wage. She said people will be hurt by the increase in water rates. She asked that Council consider what other communities are doing to send the message that we know this is hard, but we're here to help.

Jim Woodworth said he thought the City was sending a bad message by purchasing new software to collect more of the fines issued for parking violations when people are seeing price increases wherever they look.

Ashley Shortz spoke about the damage and mess that contractors left when taking down trees on City property adjacent to hers, saying her driveway is broken, her yard is damaged, and a fence

along the property line has been knocked down. She asked that someone come take a look at the damage that was done.

Kori Shook recommended the Poverty 101 training. She went on to say that she would like to see a task force evaluate the proposed \$1,500 deposit that could be instituted on affidavit water accounts, she would like to see the DDA conduct a new parking survey, and the RLF program should not contain a claw-back provision for grant recipients that sell their property within 5 years of the grant.

Leo Deason said he feels the online water portal needs to be reinstituted and that people should not be looked down upon for being poor. He said he wants to see Owosso thrive, noting that he has invested everything he has back into the community. Lastly, he suggested that parking ordinance violators should be allowed to “pay” their ticket by showing they spent the amount of the fine at a local business.

### **COUNCIL COMMENTS**

Councilmember Olson said she would like to set up a time for the Poverty 101 class.

Councilmember Osmer said she agreed. She went on to note that there will be an electronic waste collection at the High School this Saturday from 9:00am to 1:00pm.

### **CONSENT AGENDA**

The Consent Agenda was approved as follows:

Set Public Hearing – CDBG Grant Acceptance. Set a public hearing for Monday, July 7, 2025 at 6:30 p.m. to receive citizen comment regarding the proposal to accept CDBG grant funding for the infrastructure of the Washington Park Housing Development.

Boards and Commissions Appointments. Approved the following Mayoral Boards and Commissions appointments:

<b>Name</b>	<b>Board/Commission</b>	<b>Term Expires</b>
Nathan Henne*	Building Authority	06-30-2028
Jason Harris*	Building Board of Appeals	06-30-2027
Sam McLaren*	Building Board of Appeals	06-30-2027
Sean Harrington	Historic District Commission filling unexpired term of L. Gallinger	06-30-2028
Kevin Maginity*	Parks & Recreation Commission	06-30-2027
Ellen Rodman*	Parks & Recreation Commission	06-30-2027
Linda Robertson*	Planning Commission	06-30-2028
Stephen Schlaack*	Planning Commission	06-30-2028
Robert J. Teich, Jr.*	Zoning Board of Appeals	06-30-2028

\* Indicates reappointment

Traffic Control Order – Rustic Revival Craft Fair & Market. Approved the request from Christy Klenk for the closure of the west portion of the movie theater parking lot (Lot #10) on Saturday, August 23, 2025 from 7:00am – 5:00pm for the Rustic Revival Craft Fair & Market and approved Traffic Control Order No. 1535 formalizing the action, contingent upon the receipt of proof of insurance.

Change Order - MI-HOPE Grant Project. Approved Change Order No. 6 to the contract with Merkel & Kenney, Inc. for the MI-HOPE Grant Project, adding \$3,873.00 for additional work and materials required for 4 of the remaining homes to be completed and further approved payment to the contractor up to the adjusted contract amount of \$357,999.00 upon satisfactory completion of the work or portion thereof.

Change Order – WTP Filters Improvements Project. Approved Change Order No. 2 to the contract with Sorensen Gross Company for the WTP Filters Improvements Project, adding \$32,759.00 for the installation of 4 additional valves on Filter #4, and further approved payment to the contractor up to the adjusted contract amount of \$1,909,848.00 upon satisfactory completion of the work or portion thereof and contingent on EGLE approval.

Contract Renewal - General Engineering Services. Approved the required annual renewal of the General Engineering Services contracts with Eng., Inc., Fleis & Vandenbrink, Inc., Orchard, Hiltz & McCliment, Inc., and Spicer Group, Inc. to provide engineering services through June 30, 2026.

Contract Approval – City Hall Improvements Project. Approved contract with Great Lakes Bay Construction, Inc., for the City Hall Improvements Project in the amount of \$601,059.00 and authorized payment to the contractor upon satisfactory completion of the work or portion thereof.

Contract Authorization – Public Safety Building Project Owner's Representative. Waived competitive bidding requirements, authorized a contract with Veridus Michigan, LLC dba Veridus Advisors for the provision of owner's representative services for the Public Safety Building Project in an amount not to exceed \$75,000, plus allowance of \$8,000 for reimbursable expenses, and further authorized payment to the vendor upon satisfactory completion of the work or portion thereof.

Purchase Authorization - MMRMA Insurance. Waived competitive bidding requirements, authorized the purchase of general liability, property and auto insurance policies from the Michigan Municipal Risk Management Authority (MMRMA) for the coverage period from July 1, 2025 to July 1, 2026 in the amount of \$321,014.00, and further authorized payment up to the total premium amount for the coverage period.

Bid Award - Sand & Gravel, Selection #1. Accepted the low bid of S.A. Smith Paving & Trucking, Inc. dba Smith Sand & Gravel for Class II Sand in the amount of \$6.00 per ton and authorized payment in accordance with unit prices estimated at \$18,000.00 for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2026.

Bid Award - Sand & Gravel, Selection #2. Accepted the low bid of Jackson Trucking, LLC for 22A Gravel in the amount of \$13.35 per ton, \$55.25 per ton for Field Stone Riprap, and \$21.85 per ton for 6A Gravel and authorized payment in accordance with unit prices estimated at \$20,967.50 for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2026.

Bid Award - Sand & Gravel, Selection #3. Accepted the low bid of SP Powells Sand and Soil, LLC for 21AA limestone in the amount of \$27.00 per ton, \$30.75 per ton for 6AA Limestone, and \$32.00 per ton for H1 Limestone Chip, and authorized payment in accordance with the unit prices estimated at \$20,967.50 for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2026.

Bid Award – Traffic & Construction Barricades. Accepted the low bid of All in Safety Corp. for traffic and construction barricades in the amount of \$14,877.58 and authorized payment to the vendor upon satisfactory receipt of the items.

Bid Award – Curwood Castle Air Conditioning. Accepted the low bid of Victory World Wide LLC dba Victory Heating and Cooling for the installation of air conditioning units at Curwood Castle in the amount of \$13,458.72 and approved payment to the contractor upon satisfactory installation of said units.

Warrant No. 657. Authorized Warrant No. 657 as follows:

Vendor	Description	Fund	Amount
Gould Law PC	Services May 13 – June 9 2025	Varies	\$11,590.28

### **ITEMS OF BUSINESS**

Contract Approvals – Ludington Electric, Inc. Council moved to allow Councilmember Ludington to abstain from voting on this item. Council reiterated acknowledgement of the pecuniary interest of Councilmember Ludington in the contract(s) in question and approved \$120.00 in contracts with Ludington Electric, Inc. for the period of April 2025.

Demolition Authorization – 117 W. Exchange Street. Repealed Resolution No. 74-2025 and approved the HDC's revised recommendation regarding the façade at 117 W. Exchange Street and further authorized demolition and full site clearance at the location.

Downtown Revolving Loan & Grant Program Revisions. Approved revisions to the Downtown Revolving Loan & Grant Program making changes to the loan and grant processing fees and striking grant claw-back provisions.

City Budget Amendment. Adopted the 12-month budget amendments to the 2024-2025 Budget.

Elimination of Water Shut-Offs. Council considered implementation of the elimination of water shut-offs and the placing of outstanding water bills on the taxes. Staff recommended against taking action without a Charter amendment as it could lead to cash flow issues and potential audit concerns as well. The Council moved to direct staff to prepare a Charter amendment question for the August 2026 ballot to allow the City to place overdue water charges on tax bills twice per year. Councilmember Olson insisted the Council needs to take action to help people with their water bills now, not later.

Monthly Utility Billing - Revisited. The Council took up the item previously tabled. There was discussion regarding providing immediate relief by implementing monthly billing and whether paperless billing would bring down the cost of billing. The Council agreed to postpone the item until the July 21, 2025 meeting. They also directed staff to bring back information on conversion rates when moving from paper to electronic billing.

Closed Session. Approved holding closed session at the conclusion of the second session of Council Comments for the purpose of consulting with an attorney regarding trial or settlement strategy in connection with specific pending litigation.

### **CITIZEN COMMENTS**

Patrice Martin said that going to monthly billing is a no-brainer when talking about water rate hikes. She went on to say that the City needs to demonstrate that it cares for each household in the community and cited examples of the ways other communities care for their citizens.

Kori Shook said she is concerned that landlords may find their house payment going up if water bills are added to their taxes.

Leo Deason said he would like to see how much the City is spending on shut-offs each quarter. Jael Harrington noted that quarterly billing may actually provide people with a little more leeway to roll with the financial punches, saying that it's really quite difficult to catch up if you fall behind on a monthly payment system. She suggested that if Council maintains quarterly billing maybe they could send out monthly reminders to water customers via email. Lastly, she thanked everyone for their hard work on the issues discussed this evening.

### **COUNCIL COMMENTS**

None.

**The Council adjourned to closed session at 10:34 p.m.**

**The Council returned from closed session at 10:53 p.m.**

Council approved the minutes of the closed session held May 19, 2025 as presented.

### **COMMUNICATIONS**

Tanya S. Buckelew, Planning & Building Director. May 2025 Building Department Report.

Tanya S. Buckelew, Planning & Building Director. May 2025 Code Violations Report.

Tanya S. Buckelew, Planning & Building Director. May 2025 Inspections Report.

Tanya S. Buckelew, Planning & Building Director. May 2025 Certificates Issued Report.

Kevin D. Lenkart, Public Safety Director. May 2025 Police Report.

Kevin D. Lenkart, Public Safety Director. May 2025 Fire Report.

Downtown Development Authority/Main Street. Minutes of May 7, 2025.

Parks & Recreation Commission. Minutes of May 28, 2025.

Downtown Development Authority/Main Street. Minutes of June 4, 2025.

Owosso Historical Commission. Minutes of June 9, 2025.

### **NEXT MEETING**

Monday, July 7, 2025

### **BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS OPENINGS**

Building Board of Appeals – Alternate - term expires June 30, 2026

Building Board of Appeals – Alternate - term expires June 30, 2027

DDA/OMS Board x 2 – terms expire June 30, 2028

Zoning Board of Appeals – Alternate – term expires June 30, 2027

Zoning Board of Appeals – Alternate – term expires June 30, 2028

### **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 10:54 p.m.

Robert J. Teich, Jr., Mayor

Amy K. Kirkland, City Clerk

Note: Complete printed copies of the minutes and any ordinances contained therein are available to the public at the Office of the City Clerk and the Shiawassee District Library – Owosso Branch during regular business hours or on the Internet at [www.ci.owosso.mi.us](http://www.ci.owosso.mi.us).