



City of La Crosse, Wisconsin

City Hall
400 La Crosse Street
La Crosse, WI 54601

Meeting Minutes Common Council

Tuesday, April 21, 2015

4:00 PM

Council Chambers

Adjourned and Organizational Meeting

4:00 p.m. Adjourned April Council Meeting

Mayor Kabat called the adjourned meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

Roll Call

Present: 16 - Tim Kabat, Andrea Richmond, Dempsey Miller, Jai Johnson, Katherine Svitavsky, James Cherf, Robert Seaquist, Richard Becker, Peg Jerome, Audrey Kader, Sara Sullivan, Francis J. Formanek, Paul Medinger, Douglas Happel, Marilyn Wigdahl, Richard Swantz

Excused: 2 - Ryan Cornett, David Krump

- 1 [13-0067](#) Resolution amending membership of the Housing Rehabilitation Review Board.
2015-04-041
This Resolution was RETIRED due to inactivity.

- 2 [13-0171](#) Resolution approving the use of Room Tax Funds to help offset the cost of the Oktoberfest Maple Leaf Parade.
2015-04-042
This Resolution was RETIRED due to inactivity.

- 3 [13-0226](#) CHARTER ORDINANCE to amend Section 2.18 of the Municipal Code of Ordinance of the City of La Crosse to reduce the membership of the Municipal Transit Utility Board.
2015-04-043
This Ordinance was RETIRED due to inactivity.

- 4 [13-0446](#) Preliminary Plat of The Harbor Subdivision to the City of La Crosse, Wisconsin.
- A motion was made by Kader, seconded by Wigdahl, that this Plat/Certified Survey Map be REMOVED FROM THE TABLE. The motion carried.**
- 2015-04-044
- A motion was made by Kader, seconded by Wigdahl, that this Plat/Certified Survey Map be DENIED. The motion carried.**
- 5 Referral of all items in the hands of the standing committees to the appropriate new committees.

Notices and Discussions

CM Becker paid tribute to Peg Jerome and their history.

CM Swantz recognized the efforts and work of Jerome, Sullivan and Wigdahl who are leaving Council today and encouraged them to join in the celebration immediately following the meeting.

CM Jerome thanked Rich Becker for the kind tribute and expressed how thankful and honored she is for her time served.

CM Miller thanked the exiting women for their leadership.

CM Seaquist thanked the exiting ladies and expressed how they made the City a better place.

CM Cherf thanked the outgoing council members and thanked the incoming and ongoing council members. He also recognized how AARP recognized the Washburn Neighborhood and hopes to continue the legacy with the next council.

CM Sullivan expressed how the day is bittersweet; she prepared and provided all a handout as a wish to go forward.

Adjourn Sine Die

A motion was made by Richmond, seconded by Happel, to adjourn sine die. The motion carried.

4:20 p.m. Swearing In Ceremony

City Clerk Teri Lehrke administered the Oath of Office individually to newly elected Council Members Padesky, Becker, Kader, Formanek, Ostrem, Medinger, Happel, Gaul and Swantz.

4:30 p.m. New Council Convenes (Organizational Meeting)

The new Council took their seats and Mayor Kabat called the organizational meeting to order at approximately 4:30 p.m.

Roll Call

Present: 17 - Tim Kabat, Andrea Richmond, Dempsey Miller, Ryan Cornett, Jai Johnson, Katherine Svitavsky, James Cherf, Robert Seaquist, Richard Becker, Gary Padesky, Audrey Kader, Francis J. Formanek, Phillip A. Ostrem, Paul Medinger, Douglas Happel, Martin Gaul, Richard Swantz

Excused: 1 - David Krump

Pledge of Allegiance

Invocation

Sister Helen Elsbernd offered an invocation.

1 Election of Council President

Douglas Happel nominated Richard Swantz for Council President, second by Francis Formanek. Andrea Richmond moved to close nominations and cast a unanimous ballot for Richard Swantz, second by Richard Becker. The motion carried unanimously on voice vote. Richard Swantz will serve as Council President for two years.

2 Election of two Council Members to Board of Public Works

Francis Formanek nominated Bob Seaquist, second by James Cherf. Douglas Happel nominated Richard Swantz, second by Gary Padesky. Motion by James Cherf to cast a unanimous ballot, second by Richard Becker. The motion carried unanimously by voice vote. Bob Seaquist and Richard Swantz were elected to serve on the Board of Public Works for two years.

3 Mayor's Address

Mayoral Address April 21, 2015

Thank you ladies and gentlemen and good afternoon.

I want to congratulate the candidates and elected officials here today for their commitment to making La Crosse a better place. It is no small act to take out nomination papers, commit to a local campaign, put yourself out there to the residents and ultimately be judged at the ballot box.

The act of running for elected office takes courage and I commend and congratulate all of the candidates past and present. I also congratulate and recognize the council member's family and friends here in attendance. A candidate for office needs a tremendous support system and you helped to provide that to the council members here in this chamber today.

I would also like to acknowledge and thank our three out-going council members: Peg Jerome in District 10, Sara Sullivan in District 12 and Marilyn Wigdahl in District 16. Thank you, ladies, for your service to La Crosse. You have represented your constituents and the city with tremendous grace, and at times grit, dignity and common sense.

Please help me congratulate our three new council members: Gary Padesky in District 9, Phil Ostrem in District 13, and Martin Gaul in District 16 as well as Richard Becker, Audrey Kader, Fran Formanek, Paul Medinger, Doug Happel and Richard Swantz for prevailing in their re-election bids.

We have a great dynamic of experienced council members and new members. I hope that our veteran council members will guide and mentor these new members and that our new members will be open to their help and advice.

We have just finished a very productive two years here in the city of La Crosse and look forward to the next two years to keep that momentum going. I believe we can feel good about the progress we are making and yet know in our hearts and minds that we still have much to do.

We must continue our push at neighborhood revitalization, community policing, increased code enforcement, refurbished city parks, infrastructure investments, new transit service, keeping our branch libraries open, award-winning housing programs and redevelopment projects. The services we provide are the foundation for the high quality of life we all enjoy. We should not take those services for granted.

We will continue our advances at automation and process improvements in city operations, a revamped web site and improved communication with our residents and visitors, employee recognition and appreciation and sharing staff resources between the departments to maintain and enhance our services in a way our taxpayers can afford. We have the best and most dedicated employees anywhere and we need to work with them and help push them to raise the bar of high performance even higher.

The next two years will be challenging and how we address poverty – especially for our youngest residents aged birth to three, our housing stock and infrastructure needs, the future of transportation here in the city and the relationships with our neighbors will set the stage for years to come. I know we can do it.

Just as important as addressing these issues will be in how we work together. Our goal should be to always act with honesty, respect, transparency and humility.

Our most important responsibility as an elected official is to be a good steward of our precious resources. Tomorrow is Earth Day and I would be remiss if I didn't mention former Wisconsin Governor and Senator Gaylord Nelson. This quote applies – especially today – whether you consider our fast-paced lives and technology, our transportation system, neighborhoods or how we interact with each other. I think he is calling for us to get back to basics.

"There is a great need for the introduction of new values in our society, where bigger is not necessarily better, where slower can be faster, and where less can be more." – Gaylord Nelson

Next to our natural resources and beauty, the people of La Crosse are our greatest treasure and by working with them and for them – we can meet any of the challenges we face.

Thank you.

Mayor Tim Kabat

Notices and Discussions

Public Works Director Dale Hexom introduced Mike LaFleur the new City of La Crosse Street Superintendent who took over in early April 2015.

Council Member Gary Padesky complimented those responsible for hiring Mike LaFleur and congratulated him.

New Items for Referral

The remainder of the items are referred to the May 2015 meetings.

[15-0430](#)

Preliminary Plat of Willow Heights to the Town of Shelby, Wisconsin.

[15-0387](#)

AN ORDINANCE to amend Section 2-551 to 2-553 and create Section 2-554 of the Code of Ordinances of the City of La Crosse regarding the Neighborhood Revitalization Commission.

Adjournment

Motion by Richmond, second by Cornett, to adjourn at 4:44 p.m. The motion carried.