

Owatonna City Council Minutes

July 15, 2025

On Tuesday, July 15, 2025, at 7:00 p.m., Council President Raney called the regular session of the Owatonna City Council to order in the Chambers of the Charles S. Crandall Center.

Present were Council Members Svenby, Voss, Dotson, Burbank, Boeke, McCann and Raney; Mayor Jessop; City Attorney Walbran; Public Works Director Murphy; Community Development Director Klecker; Finance Director Burns; Park Director Dieckmann; Human Resources Director Thamert; IT Technology Specialist O'Connor; Assistant City Administrator Tuma; City Administrator Busse; and Administrative Coordinator Clawson.

Following roll call, Council President Raney advised four items on the agenda for airport terminal/hangar space have been removed: Airport Commercial Use Terminal/Hangar Space Lease Agreement Renewal - Accelerated Aviation; Airport Commercial Hangar Space Lease - Accelerated Aviation Instruction, LLC, Amendment One to Sublease of Airport Commercial Use Hangar Lease - NavFleet Holdings, LLC, Amendment Two to Sublease of Airport Commercial Use Hangar Lease - Fountain Aviation, LLC. Council Member Svenby made a motion to approve the agenda with these changes, Council Member Dotson seconded the motion, all members voted aye in approval.

Consent Agenda Items

Council President Raney explained council members review the Consent Agenda items prior to the meeting for approval in one motion. Consent Agenda items for this meeting include:

- Minutes – Council Meeting – July 1, 2025

- Human Rights Commission Meeting - June 10, 2025

- Planning Commission Meeting - July 8, 2025

- Building Inspection Monthly Report - June 2025

- Weed/Nuisance Inspection Report - July 9, 2025

- Police Crime Clock and Statics - June 2025

- Event Permit - MN SNAP Clinics - July 27, September 28 and October 12, 2025

- Event Permit - GEM Days - Owatonna Business Partnership - August 8-9, 2025

- Event Permit - Steele County Free Fair - August 12-17, 2025

- Temporary Liquor Permit - Steele County Free Fair - August 10-17, 2025

- Event Permit - Truman/Churchill Block Party - September 6, 2025

- Event Permit - OHRC Meeting on the Field - September 6, 2025

- Exempt Permit - Owatonna Boys Soccer Boosters Raffle - September 30, 2025

- Temporary Liquor Permit - Mineral Springs Brewery - September 12, 2025

- Renew Service Contract - Cartegraph Locator - Leica Geosystems

- Quote received from Leica Geosystems to renew support and updates for geosystem locator used for Cartegraph. This locator was purchased in 2022. This service agreement includes upgrades. This is a two-year agreement at cost of \$120 paid from the Park Maintenance Operating Budget.

Professional Services - Land Surveying and Civil Engineering Agreement - Jones, Haugh & Smith

As a result of homes being constructed too low for the local emergency overflow of stormwater in Condor PI NE, modifications to front, side, and rear yard grades should be incorporated to reduce the potential of stormwater impacting structures. This proposal includes survey and design services to understand what modifications can be made to improve emergency overflow conditions. The design will most likely include temporary and permanent acquisition (easements) to construct the improvements. The City will work with property owners on obtaining easements. The cost is not to exceed \$12,150 without prior approval.

Private Storm Sewer Agreement - 2710 Timber Ridge PI NE

Property owned by David and Karen Legault, agreement will allow Lots 11 & 12 Block 2 of Majestic Oaks Addition to construct private storm sewer and connect to City storm sewer. Due to unique grading and rear yard drainage issues between Timber Ridge PI NE and 26th St NE, the owner has requested to install private on-site storm sewer to alleviate ponding areas. This stormwater agreement requires the owner to maintain the private facilities and continuously keep them in good working order. All maintenance responsibility lies with the property owner, and it is explicitly written that the City is held harmless from any liability resulting from the private facilities and no budget impact to the city.

Council Member Boeke made a motion to approve these Consent Agenda items; Council Member McCann seconded the motion. Council Member Svenby commented he is a Superintendent for the Steele County Free Fair and not able to vote on their Temporary Liquor Permit applications. With no additional comments, members voted approving all items.

Finance Report

Council Member Voss recapped payments made for amounts greater than \$20,000 during this period:

\$ 23,548.49	Central Farm Service - fleet fuel
97,382.08	Hydro-Klean - 2025 CIPPS projects - pay est #3
40,800.00	Owatonna Area Chamber of Commerce
	- 2nd half Main St contract \$25,000.00
	- 2nd half Econ Development services \$15,000.00
	- Chamber bucks - 3rd quarter anniversary award \$800.00
26,500.00	Terracon Consultants Inc - professional services -18th St SE
<u>\$246,590.71</u>	OTHER EXPENDITURES
\$434,821.28	TOTAL EXPENDITURES PRESENTED FOR APPROVAL

Council Member Boeke made a motion to approve payment of all bills presented, Council Member Burbank seconded the motion, all members voted aye in approval.

Second Reading Proposed Ordinance 25-09: Amend City Code Section 93.029, Noise in Public Parks

City Attorney Walbran presented Proposed Ordinance 25-09 for approval. This ordinance will correct a mistake in Ordinance 1669 when adopted on February 18, 2025. City Code Section §93.029 entitled "Noise in Public Parks" was amended to prohibit the use of sound amplification systems such as megaphones, bullhorns, and public address systems. Reference to Subsection (J) was inadvertently referred to Subsection (I). Council approved the first reading of this proposed ordinance during their meeting on July 15, 2025, and there have been no changes since. Council Member Voss made a motion for approval; Council Member Dotson seconded the motion. With a roll call vote, voting aye were Council Members Svenby, Voss, Dotson, Burbank, Boeke, McCann, and Raney; No Nay votes; the motion carried. This will be known as Ordinance 1676 to be effective upon publication.

Resolution 36-25 Conditional Use Permit 20 – Good Day Express Car Wash – 1810 S Cedar Avenue

Community Development Director Klecker requested approval of Resolution 36-25 to approve Conditional Use Permit 20. This is a request received from Craig Britton Widseth, on behalf of Stadheim Properties to construct Good Day Express Car Wash at 1810 Cedar Avenue South. Plans include an internal drive aisle for one-way circulation, with vehicles entering from the north side of the lot and proceeding south and east toward the service check-in area. A public hearing was held on this matter during their meeting on July 8, 2025. The Planning Commission recommends approval with these conditions:

1. Photometrics plan to be submitted and approved prior to the issuance of a building permit.
2. A demolition permit shall be obtained prior to the removal of any existing structures.
3. Compliance with all items in the City Engineer's memo dated July 1, 2025.
4. Existing water and sewer service must be used or disconnected from the main.
5. All signs shall obtain the necessary permits and comply with B-2 zoning regulations. Freestanding signs must not encroach into easements and must maintain a five-foot setback from property lines.

Council Member Boeke made a motion for approval, Council Member Voss seconded the motion, and all members voted aye in approval.

Tree Trimmer Permit – the Davey Tree Expert Company, Rochester

City Administrator Busse presented application received Tonya Austin for a Tree Trimmer Permit for the Davey Tree Expert Company. Their main office is in Kent, OH with location in Rochester, MN. All required items are received, and an approved Background Verification was just completed. Council Member Dotson made a motion for approval, Council Member Burbank seconded the motion, all members voted aye in approval.

Tree Trimmer Permit – Born2Trim, LLC, Princeton MN

City Administrator Busse requested approval of the application received from Jeffrey Born for a Tree Trimmer Permit for Born2Trim, LLC of Princeton MN. All required items are received, and the Background Verification is in process. Council Member Burbank made a motion for approval contingent on an approved background verification, Council Member Voss seconded the motion, all members voted aye in approval.

Service Agreements - Finance Assessment – Abdo

Finance Director Burns requested approval of the Service Agreements with Abdo to complete comprehensive assessments of the city's core finance processes. The Finance team is focusing on improving the efficiency of core processes and requests to partner with Abdo to complete a comprehensive assessment of all core finance processes. The scope of these assessments will include process evaluations and identification of processing challenges and efficiency improvements. The project outcomes will include identification of best practice process improvements, training and documentation of those enhanced processes, expert support for the team, and a finance department structure recommendation. Cost of these agreements for 2025 will be \$49,500. Council Member Voss made a motion for approval, Council Member Dotson seconded the motion, all members voted aye in approval

Proposal - Tuckpointing Project at City Hall - Innovative Masonry

Assistant City Administrator Tuma presented bids received for the tuckpointing and brick repair on the City Hall building. GB-13-007 Capital Improvement Project (CIP) is part of a multi-year effort to address needed repairs and upkeep on the City Hall building; in 2022, the east elevation was tuckpointed; in 2024, the main building's north, west, and south elevations were tuckpointed. The bid received from Innovative Masonry Restoration for the southerly portion of the south and west sides of the building was \$70,000.00. The work to be provided includes replacing cracked and broken brick, infilling mechanical vents, selectively pointing joints, replacing sealant at the perimeter of windows and doors, selectively replacing damaged limestone, and selective masonry cleaning. This project is part of the approved 2025 Capital Improvement Projects. Council Member Boeke made a motion for approval, Council Member Burbank seconded the motion, all members voted aye in approval. Council Member Voss asked what percentage of this CIP Project has been completed; Tuma responded the project will be 85-90% complete.

Proposals and Award Contracts - Wastewater Treatment Facility - Lift Station Panel Installation - Advanced Engineering & Environmental Services, Inc.

Public Works Director Murphy requested council to accept three proposals received from Advanced Engineering & Environmental Services, Inc. and award the contract for installation of the Wastewater Treatment Facility Lift Station Panel to Killmer Electric Company, Inc. The City's lift stations were assessed in 2022 to understand the costs of implementing SCADA

systems throughout our collections system and WWTF. With the WWTF expansion, SCADA integration will allow for more efficient management of our collections system. Lift station panels and components ranged in age, but a majority were at the end of their service life. Most were not cost-effective to simply convert or add components to allow for SCADA integrations. Many showed signs of corrosion as well as not complying with current code. The proposal received from Killmer Electric Company, Inc. includes installing new lift station panels for our Autumn Hills, Cedardale, Frontage Rd, and Heritage lift stations. The contracted cost for the panel installation will be \$75,392.00 to be paid by Sewer Funds. Council Member Svenby made a motion for approval, Council Member McCann seconded the motion, all members voted aye in approval.

Employment Agreement - City Administrator Tuma

Human Resources Director Thamert commented a comprehensive and public selection process was completed for a new City Administrator. During a special meeting on May 23, 2025, the City Council voted unanimously to offer this position to Jenna Tuma. Upon approval of this Employment Agreement, Jenna will assume the role of City Administrator on August 8, 2025. Council Member Voss made a motion for approval, Council Member McCann seconded the motion, all members voted aye in approval.

STAFF REPORT

Assistant City Administrator Tuma thanked the Council for their vote of confidence in naming her as the City's next Administrator. She also thanked current City Administrator Busse for helping her through the transition process over the last several months. A reception for Ms. Busse is planned prior to the next City Council Meeting on August 6th. The reception will begin at 4:30 pm in the Arts Center with a short program at 5:30 p.m. City Administrator Busse commented that Ms. Tuma is doing a great job and confident the Council made a good decision.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Douglas Parr, 560 Oakwood Lane commented he went Saturday to celebrate love at PRIDE in the park. Everyone was having a good time until a small group of non-community members made hate filled statements and zealots in attempt to make this event less joyous. They shouted insults, made us afraid of these bullies as intended. People were intimidated, tears flowing but we held our tongues and held our ground. The outsiders were here to spew hate, there is a state statute that could assess penalty of fine and up to 90 days in jail for their actions.

Nathan Black, 527 E Academy Street commented he is delighted to live in Owatonna and the support their group, Rainbowatonna has received. Upset that the city's response to outside/local protesters at LGBTQ events is inadequate. They believed some progress is being made; however, what happened on Saturday was a failure of response by the police department. During the day, we made multiple calls for assistance against these protestors

and question if the police and city do support us. We understand concerns about enforcing laws while freedom of speech and encourage officers receive specific education and consultation on how to intervene. Also, additional changes requested in the City's Park Permit to offer an exclusive use Park Permit.

Levi Hendricks, 109 Lincoln Avenue commented that during Saturday's event, he witnessed people following others making harassing statements for intimidation. They attempted to drown out others' free speech and block the stage of entertainment while screaming to incite violence. They were wearing cameras demonstrates their premeditation of activity to upset the event. There was a failure of a police presence most of the day, I appreciate our officers, but we need to do better.

John Weisenbuger, 352 E Boadway Street said he has lived in Owatonna for several years and was disappointed during this event. The intimidation and destruction of the protestors was their goal. The police department anticipated they were coming and allowed it to happen. There must be a way to prevent this from happening, there should be a permit to allow use of a public space without fear of being sued.

Sue Bowcock, 346 E Broadway Street commented that protesters were out of hand with photos of an aborted baby causing children to cry. There is a difference between freedom of speech and hate speech. What would happen if a similar protest was made at other events? Would the city tolerate it or is this OK only because this event was held by a group of marginalized people

Alan O'Malley-Laursen, 515 Agnes Street said he was the MC during the event and also one of the entertainment performers. He couldn't count the number of times he was yelled at and often the protestor's shouting was so loud, he couldn't hear himself sing. This was an aggravated harassment against protected class of people. We need to do something about it and prevent future similar instances and allow exclusive use of parks

Kendra Wilson, 816 S Oak Avenue commented she was disturbed by behavior of the protesters showing large explicit signs of dead babies. She urged the city to set designated protest areas during events.

Lucile Larson, 1204 Austin Road commented she saw children crying and mothers targeted, this is unacceptable but no police presence to stop it. Local businesses were impacted and children traumatized. She is afraid the police won't respond if she calls them. The community should be welcoming to anyone. Disturbing the peace, disorderly conduct, and harassment of people should not be tolerated.

Melissa Danielson, 1807 St Paul Road said protesters were screaming at families, telling strangers they would be going to hell. These protesters were not from our town, it was inappropriate. We need police to protect public safety, public spaces should feel welcoming and this did not. She encouraged police to enforce our laws, make sure the community stays safe and family friendly.

Gary Jones, 995 Ridge Road commented that the trees in Mineral Springs Park provide a canopy, so it is dark within minutes after the sun disappears. A homeowner could be killed at Mineral Springs Park during the deer hunt allowed 30 minutes before sunrise and 30

minutes after sunset. A light meter would be a good experiment to show we should move these hunting times by 30 minutes.

Jennifer Hansen, 639 17th Street SE commented the event was disrupted by protesters who positioned themselves in front of the stage. They took the event hostage, they were allowed to invade, harass, interrupt, and interfere with no consequences. OPD was contacted but didn't respond. She urges City Council to consider how to ensure free speech, protect events and provide guidelines for law enforcement.

An Le, 602 12th Avenue SE commented that she should feel safe, but protesters were allowed to invade this event and targeted harassment. If the city believes in the commitment made in proclamation, they to do better.

Brandy Wilker, 1615 Wood Duck Lane NE commented she recently joined the Rainbowatonna Board. She offers face painting at events and has more than 15 years of experience with events around MN but has never seen anything similar to what happened here last Saturday. It was traumatic and children were impacted. We need to put something in place so no harassment at future events.

Paula Jameson, 351 E Rose Street commented she was part of the entertainment lineup. The joy and peace at this event were shattered when men shouted disturbing language as they forced their way through the crowd. Children witnessed far more than they should have, and law enforcement didn't intervene. He asks that the city stand up for the children, to uphold law and protect the peace.

Gregg Emery, 202 17th Place SW commented he works at healthcare facility for youth, and they need to feel accepted. PRIDE Events offer acceptance which begins with awareness. We all have a responsibility to care for them, this should flow through PRIDE. We need to stop aggression not suppression of free speech by working together and prevent harm to our children.

Olivia Alaska, 230 Southview Street said she witnessed violence against the LGBTQ community on Saturday and was waiting for OPD to intervene. This is the same ideology that often leads to deaths.

Melissa Zimmerman, 2525 Stony Creek Drive commented that this is heartbreaking and unacceptable, the city doesn't prioritize the most vulnerable. The East Side Corridor Group has been locked out of meetings and our voices silenced. The city needs to start to listen and protect our children and those most vulnerable.

MAYOR AND COUNCIL COMMENTS:

Council Member Svenby thanked everyone for their comments and encouraged staff and Council to review the City's current ordinances to improve future events.

Council Member Burbank said he would echo Council Member Svenby's comment.

Council Member McCann also wished to restate this comment and then thanked several Owatonna Human Rights Commissioners attending tonight's meeting.

Mayor Jessop commented what happened in Central Park during this event on Saturday should not have happened and apologized to those who attended. He commented

that when he signed the proclamation for 2025 Pride in the Park Proclamation (as he does when signing all proclamations) he believes in this organization's cause. He does not make proclamations for grandstanding or to gain political advantages and wants to remain their ally.

City Administrator Busse commented the city's police department is a group of dedicated men and women making difficult decisions in a split second when on duty. These First Amendment issues are incredibly nuanced. She thanked the police department for shutting down the unauthorized amplification during the event on Saturday. Not minimizing other things that happened during this event but need to recognize the good work of the city's police officers. She then reminded everyone she will be retiring on August 7th with one Council Meeting remaining.

Council President Raney thanked everyone for attending and their comments during tonight's meeting.

At 7:58 p.m., Council Member Boeke made a motion to adjourn, Council Member Burbank seconded the motion and with no objection, the meeting ended.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeanette Clawson, Administrative Coordinator