

# CITY OF GILLETT COMMON COUNCIL

Council Chambers – Municipal Building  
150 N McKenzie Ave – Gillett, WI 54124

**THURSDAY, OCTOBER 5, 2023 AT 6:00 PM**  
**MINUTES**

1. Mayor McCarthy called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

## **Roll Call**

**Present:** Mayor Josh McCarthy, Clerk Treasurer Chelsea Anderson, Alderpersons Irene Drake, Nanette Mohr, Jerry Luther, and Jon Gildemeister, Librarian Shannon Stoner, Police Chief Breitenbach, Public Works Foreman Nate Anderson, Utility Operator Ron Anderson, Attorney Alex Sickel, Ayres Engineer Craig Schuh, Chamber of Commerce Chris Byars, public Kevin Smith, David Deland, Dennis Heise, Bill Smith, Deanna Smith, Leola Schneider, and Leone Christensen.

Fire Chief Kurt Hicks is excused.

2. **Clerk informs the Council that the Open Meeting Law has been complied with**
3. **Public Input:** David Deland asked Alderperson Luther if he found a concrete company to complete the work the City needs, because he had a few we could call. Utility Operator Ron Anderson stated he had some contacts and all of them are behind on their concrete jobs but will get to our needs.

Dennis Heise stated he made a verbal open records request on August 16<sup>th</sup>, 2023 in open session, for all correspondence and the name of the developer the mayor had been speaking with regarding the Riemer Land the City is looking into to purchase. He stated that to date, he has received no response. Now he is asking again, for all information including correspondence that any council person had made concerning the purchase of the Riemer property, including the dates and times of all phone calls, texts, and discussion from council persons, clerk, and corporate council, written documents to include land appraisals, environmental surveys, prior land assessors plots, construction estimates for utilities, water, sewer and roadway, conversations with Dick Jewel, and minutes of meetings where the purchase was discussed. He stated responses to open record requests are to be given as soon as practical and without delay, quoting Wisconsin Executive Order 189, he then pointed out the City Attorney. Mr. Heise continued and said it requires a response within 10 working days. Attorney Sickel stated there is not a specific time frame under the statute but Dennis was correct, that it had to be as soon as practical. Dennis asked for written response why he was denied the open records request at the August 16, 2023 meeting. Attorney Sickel stated there was not a denial, but asked that the open records request could be in writing, because his request is expansive. Attorney Sickel reiterated that Mr. Heise is entitled to the information but for the City to properly respond, he asked that his entire request be written. Heise stated the minutes are being right here, and in State of Wisconsin, he only needs to be ask verbally. He then asked if he did not write the request, if he would be denied. Attorney said he is not being denied, but in order to fully respond to the request and the many items, a list in writing would be gratefully helpful to get the process to go faster. Attorney stated there will be a lot of effort from the staff to prepare the request, and would not doubt there could be a cost for the preparation of the open record request. Reasonable time can be charged to the requestor. Mr. Heise said again, he is doing it verbally.

Mr. Heise went on to another issue saying “Another disturbing thing he has been hearing in town from citizens and actual tax payers that reside in the city, but are not in attendance of the meeting tonight, because they are under the assumption the city will be retaliate against them. Mr. Heise said shame on this City, Mayor McCarthy asked Mr. Heise if he could explain and he said he did not have to explain and has no clue who those people are but is hearing that from other citizens. He said again citizens are telling him that they will not come to a meeting because they will be retaliated against. Mr. Heise said he is not pointing fingers, but shame on you, whoever is responsible. Asked the council if this is the path they want to take. Alderperson Drake asked him what he suggested the City do. He said no one

wants to come to the meetings. The council and mayor have not heard anything about this issue, and do not understand why the citizens or business owners would feel this way. Mayor McCarthy told the public that anyone could call him or set up a meeting to clear this issue. Mr. Heise said these complaints came up because he has been going around talking with citizens to tell them what is going on in the meetings and that we have too many closed sessions meetings. Mayor stated again that they can call him if they are concerned or fearful in any way.

Leola Schneider stated she wants the environmental study done on the Riemer property, that landfill next to the Riemer Property was there before there were rules on dumping, and who knows what is in there. She also asked how the City would have money to purchase the land, said the roads need to be redone not spend money on land. Luther commented he wanted to thank Dennis Heise for his comments on the Riemer property and things he asked the City to look for. Answering Leola on streets: the city reconstructs one street/road a year and that is what we can borrow and afford with grants. The City has documents that we agreed to do new curb and gutter 2 years ago on Second Street by Martel Concrete, but they have yet to do the work. Martel said he would be here the middle of October to put in curb and gutter. Leola asked if there would be fill brought in, which there will be to meet the landscape and curb. Leola wanted to know if the washed out ground would be filled in. Utility Operator Ron Anderson said most of the curb will be where the wash out was.

Bill Smith asked why we want to enter into a real estate agreement to sell to someone else. Why can't the developer buy the land and keep the city out. Mayor stated the city wants to purchase the property to control the development. Mayor stated the City is land locked, this property came up and we are looking to buy. The City is looking for housing, not commercial industrial etc. if we do not buy it, the land will be put in managed forestland. Wausaukee and Lena have purchased land and sold to a developer for the same reason The City of Gillett would. The municipality purchases the property and sells the portions we want developed for housing. City can apply for grants for infrastructure, and depressed areas are more likely to receive grants, Luther said. Tax Incremental Fund money also can help in projects. Bill Smith wants to see more industry and feels housing is not needed at this stage. Pastor Chris Byars and Chamber of Commerce President stated that there is a need for housing, he knows of many personally looking here is Gillett. It is true industry will drive the community in a good direction and help the tax base but industry is not looking for the small lots we have available to them.

The public asked again what the council is going to do about the purchase of the Reimer Property, the council said we would need an environmental study done and we need more information on the Reimer property before any decisions will be made.

4. Discussion & possible action on minutes for September 7, 2023

**MOTION: Drake/Mohr**

*Motion to approve minutes from September 7, 2023*

**Voice Vote:** All Voting Aye - **MOTION CARRIED**

5. **CDA Report:** Alderperson Mohr – no report.

6. **Library Report:** Librarian Shannon Stoner reported- Library Director Report September 2023

1. Programming

- a. Sew-cial Club: Oct. 19 from 12-2 pm
- b. Fireside Fables: Mondays 12-1 pm
- c. Wednesdays 1-2:30 pm: Community Board Games and Pathfinder TTRPG
- d. Monday, Sept. 25 5-5:30 pm: Reader's Advisory

- e. Thursday, Sept. 28<sup>th</sup>: GED/Job assistance with Oconto County
- f. Friday, September 29<sup>th</sup>: 11 am-12 pm: Getting Crafty(K-2)  
2-3 pm: Getting Entertaining (Gr. 5-6) 3:30-4:30: Jackbox Games (Teens)
- g. Wednesday, October 11<sup>th</sup>: Solar Eclipse Party
- h. Monday, October 23<sup>rd</sup>: DIY Soap Class Registration Deadline for November
- i. Friday, October 27<sup>th</sup>: Read to a Therapy Dog from 4-5 pm
- j. Tuesday, October 31<sup>st</sup>: Giving out candy during Trick or Treating

2. New Newsletter released!

3. Presented before new teachers about resources available at GPL

4. I'm looking to do a technology series in the Spring/Summer 2024 with Bug Tussel.

5. Looking into getting a Homework Help program for Thursdays after school. If any retired teachers wish to volunteer, that would be great.

6. I wrote a letter of support to enter a partnership with the Children's Museum of Green Bay. This is free for the library. The Children's Museum did receive funding for our partnership! This gives us a lot of benefits for our patrons!

i. This funding will support:

ii. 1. Museum admission passes for check-out

iii. 2. Museum admission passes as awards/incentives for your reading programs or challenges

iv. 3. Outreach programs (at the library)

v. 4. Traveling mini exhibits (at the library)

vi. I will be reaching out within the next few weeks to share more information about museum pass procedures and to begin scheduling outreach programs and developing a rotation plan for the traveling exhibits.

7. September is Library Card Signup Month, so we are doing a Gillett Public Library Passport to Library Services. Come get your passport and explore the services we offer. Have a librarian initial your passport and get entered to win a prize at the end of the month.

8. Wisconsin Science Festival was a huge hit last year and we plan to participate in it again. I will release more information when it becomes available.

9. I will be going to Library Director Boot Camp on October 3-4 in Marshfield.

10. Volunteer Policy....we need one. I have a draft included in your packet. Most libraries have such a policy to regulate what rules volunteers must abide by.

7. **Tourism & Marketing Commission/Gillett Area Chamber of Commerce:** President Chris Byars stated the Homecoming and Harvest Festival went well, a very good success. The Chamber is requesting that they get the park rental fee back because they had rain and used the fair building. Barricades were needed for the event but it was not in the special event packet, suggested to add barricades form to event packet. President Byars stated he loves this community and is trying very hard to bring in tourists to see our wonderful City. Setting up for the Harvest Festival, an issue arose when two volunteers went to pick up barricades; the treatment they thought they received was not up to standards. Stated we need to make sure when events pay fees and all the hard work going into planning events and so forth, that the workers of the city be professional, understanding, and helpful. For the requests that were made Public Works Foreman stated that was an extra charge, and seemingly not willing to help out. Public Works Foreman was abiding by the City fee schedule. Byars said, as a

community we have a lot of potential, we want to bring in activity and events, which is part of the chambers job. He then asked how the City could partner in the Chambers budget. Looking forward to hear our thoughts on what we can do to help the chamber.

**8. Financial Report: Clerk Treasurer**

- a. Updated Monthly Check Register Provided-

**MOTION: Mohr/Gildemeister**

*Motion to approve September 2023 Check Register.*

**Roll Call Vote: All Voting Aye - MOTION CARRIED**

**9. Police Department Report: Police Chief Breitenbach**

- a. Discussion on Training, Public Relations, and Incident Summary Report -Chief Breitenbach provided the incident report: Training and Public Relations-

From the Chief's Desk;

Gillett Police Department / 132 incidents / September 2023

On September 19<sup>th</sup> I attended the quarterly meeting of the Oconto County Crisis Committee Team. Topics discussed included the increase in the number of homeless in the area, the sharp rise in drug endangered children cases, and the strain on resources in reference to the Oconto County Human Services department including Crisis and CPS. As of the date of the meeting, Oconto County Human Services has responded to nearly 3000 cases being handled by a staff of 5.

Also on September 19<sup>th</sup>, I hosted a class from Gillett High School for a field trip tour of the police department. The class has been studying government and the justice system. The class was interested in learning more about the workings of our local law enforcement agency.

All of the Gillett High School Homecoming week events went well. The only incident related to Gillett High School students occurred at a residence in Shawano County. I assisted the Shawano County Sheriff's Office with their investigation and the suspects were dealt with.

I have been conducting background investigations on three potential part-time officers. All three are familiar with the area and are current officers with other departments.

Officer Buettner will be returning to full duty on October 9<sup>th</sup>. Officer Buettner will be working day shift opposite of me and Officer Hoeft will be returning to night shift on Officer Buettner's rotation. I will continue to shift my hours as I have been all summer to try to address some of the issues that have been occurring during the evening/night hours. I believe the unpredictability of the varying work hours has helped address some of the criminal activities that had been occurring during those non-covered hours due to staff shortages. Officer Harrison has begun her maternity leave and is expecting their first child sometime early next month. Welcome back Officer Buettner and God Bless Officer Harrison and her husband!

A few reminders for the rest of the month. On October 28<sup>th</sup> the Gillett Police Department will be hosting the Fall 2023 National Drug Takeback Day event. This special event will be held from 10am-2pm. The 2023 City of Gillett Halloween Trick or Treat event will be held on Halloween, October 31, from 4pm-6pm.

**10. Fire Department Report: Chief Hicks Report**

- a. Discussion on Training, Public Relations, and Incident Summary Report- 3 Fire Calls  
September 14, 2023 Seneca False Alarm, September 28, 2023 Auto Aid, September 30, 2023 Seneca False Alarm.

**11. Health, Protection and License Committee Report:**

- a. Discussion and Possible Action on appointing both vacancies for Alderperson Ward 1

**MOTION: Drake/Mohr**

*Motion to approve the application of Ashley VanStraten to fill the term of Alderperson Ward 1 until April.*

**AMENDED MOTION: Drake/Mohr**

*Motion to approve the application of Ashley VanStraten to fill the term of Alderperson Ward 1 until April 2025.*

**Roll Call Vote:** All Voting Aye - **MOTION CARRIED**

- b. Discussion and Possible Action on Wheel Tax Ordinance Amendment

**MOTION: Mohr/Gildemeister**

*Motion to approve Wheel Tax Ordinance amendment to add monies to be used for transportation related purposes including but not limited to design and engineering costs.*

**Roll Call Vote:** All Voting Aye - **MOTION CARRIED**

- c. Discussion and Possible Action on an Operating License for Ashlie Patzer

**MOTION: Drake/Luther**

*Motion to approve the Operator License for Ashlie Patzer.*

**Voice Vote:** All Voting Aye - **MOTION CARRIED**

- 12. Board of Public Works Committee Report:** Utility Operator Ron Anderson stated the bridge is in on Washington Street. Water is flowing under bridge, and the concrete needs to cure. Subgrade on the west side of the road is done. Other end is also working on the sub grade up to the bridge. Crew will do storm water pond next. Situation came up on when storm catches and valve were moved near Robinhood. Have to move storm catch to adjust for valve replacement. Utility did not want valves in the middle of road. Will take to a Public Works meeting to discuss cost. Public Works stated they cut the road out in places that needed patches and Oconto County Highway Department came and patched the roads, there were 11. New garage door installed in the shop. Started leaf pick up. Steel came in for storage shed from wind damage, will be put on as soon as possible. Last chipping date is Monday. Department Heads asked about progression on the park equipment funds, grants, or design. They said they found a matching grant for the park equipment up to \$400,000 and they applied for it. Deland asked if Orchard Circle had plans for park equipment, we have no plans for equipment in that area. Heise asked Utility Operator about Martel Concrete coming in to do concrete in October; he feels the end of October is the latest concrete can be poured, he worked in the trade for many years. Engineer Craig Shuch Ayres Associates said the structure being installed for the Washington Street Project was impressive. Pictures will be shared with the city of the progress and finished road. Curb will be done next week on Washington.

- 13. Utility Committee Report:** Alderperson Drake- Utility Operator Ron Anderson stated they will be flushing hydrants next week. The new ferric tank was put in, it is a 1,000 gallon located at the Wastewater Treatment Plant. Working on road patching where main breaks were. Need to start planning for Highway 22 reconstruction project. Need to have our infrastructure done by 2025 so the Highway Department can do their work in 2026. Our water lines have been in the ground since 1926 under Highway 22/North McKenzie Avenue. Utility Department was able to loop two more water line dead ends while doing the Washington Project.

14. **Finance and Personnel Committee Report:** Alderperson Mohr- The Robinhood Low Income Survey from the CDBG (Community Development Block Grant) is good for 5 years to apply for the grant. Will postpone Robinhood Lane construction until the City is under less debt.
- a. Discussion and Possible Action on MSA Engineering invoices  
**MOTION: Drake/Mohr**  
*Motion to approve the payoff of the invoice from MSA from wheel tax savings account.*  
**Roll Call Vote:** All Voting Aye - **MOTION CARRIED**
- b. Discussion and Possible Action 10 hour holiday hours for Public Works and Utility  
**MOTION: Drake/Mohr**  
*Motion to approve 10-hour holiday pay for Public Works and Utility to match their work hours.*  
**Roll Call Vote:** All Voting Aye - **MOTION CARRIED**
15. **Park and Cemetery Committee Report:** Public Works Foreman Nate Anderson stated we cut down 3 troublesome trees in the cemetery that were tipping stones or rotting. Bear tree service did the cutting and ground the stumps. Schneider Monument will reset the stone that was tipping.
16. **Planning Committee Report:**
- a. Discussion and Possible Action on R&R Assessing Contract  
**MOTION: Luther/Mohr**  
*Motion to approve the R&R Assessing contract.*  
**Voice Vote:** All Voting Aye - **MOTION CARRIED**
- b. Discussion and Possible Action on Spirits of Gillett Certified Survey Map  
**MOTION: Luther/Mohr**  
*Motion to approve the Certified Survey Map for Spirits of Gillett.*  
**Roll call vote:** All Voting Aye - **MOTION CARRIED**
- c. Discussion and Possible Action on New Garage Build at 204 W Fourth St  
**MOTION: Drake/Luther**  
*Motion to approve contingent upon upholding the ordinances for accessory buildings, and driveways for Doug and Janet Maier new garage build, driveway variance and adding a driveway at 204 W Fourth Street.*  
**Voice Vote:** All Voting Aye - **MOTION CARRIED**  
**MOTION: Drake/Mohr**  
*Motion to approve contingent upon upholding the ordinances for building a deck.*  
**Voice Vote:** All Voting Aye - **MOTION CARRIED**
17. **Clerk Treasurer's Report:** Clerk Treasurer stated we sent out letters to notify all past dues customers that the amount will be placed on the tax roll if not paid by November 1.
18. **Attorneys Report:** Hinkfuss, Sickel, Petitjean, & Weiting Attorneys at Law- Mr. Sickel stated we need to create a new court to add the Town of Brazeau and have every member sign.
19. **Mayor's Report:** Mayor McCarthy – No Report
20. **Adjourn at 7:50 PM**  
**MOTION: Drake/Mohr**  
*Motion to adjourn.*  
**Voice Vote:** All Voting Aye - **MOTION CARRIED**

Respectfully Submitted, Clerk Treasurer Chelsea Anderson