



OFFICIAL MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING

MEETING: Economic Development Committee
DATE/TIME: Tuesday, January 6, 2026 at 5:30 PM
LOCATION: Wausau City Hall – Council Chambers
407 Grant Street, Wausau WI, 54403

MEMBERS:
Carol Lukens (C) Chad Henke (VC)
Tom Neal Vicki Tierney
Terry Kilian

Members Present: Carol Lukens, Chad Henke, Tom Neal, Terry Kilian, Vicki Tierney
Members Not Present:
Members Excused:
Present 5, Not Present 0, Excused 0

Noting the presence of a quorum, the Chairperson called the meeting to order at 05:39 PM.

1 Public comment on agenda items and reading of the City of Wausau Public Comment Statement.

Resident Tom Kilian provided public comment regarding agenda item 4a.

2 Consideration of the minutes of the preceding meeting(s).

December 2, 2025 Regular Economic Development Committee Minutes

Motion: Neal, **Second:** Henke, **Action:** Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes, **Vote:** Passed 5-0

3 Discussion and possible action.

a. North 2nd Street Request for Interest (RFI)

Fifrick reported that no responses were received by the December 19th deadline. A larger sign has been placed on the parcel to increase visibility. Fifrick recommended issuing a Request for Information (RFI) with an open deadline and reviewing proposals on a rolling basis, noting that interest is typically lower this time of year.

Committee discussion included whether an open-ended RFI would create obligations related to land banking or CDBG requirements. Staff clarified that while CDBG land banking has restrictions, issuing an RFI demonstrates ongoing efforts and that it is premature to be concerned about CDBG timelines. Fifrick further noted there is currently no required timeline for the use of these CDBG funds.

Motion: Neal, **Second:** Tierney, **Action:** Authorize release of an RFI with an open deadline, **Vote:** Passed 5-0

b. Development agreement with 11 Scott St, LLC for the redevelopment of Waterside Place at 11 Scott Street

Fifrick explained that the parking agreement may delay fully executing the development agreement due to infrastructure review requirements. If approved by the Economic Development Committee, the Development Agreement would be held until the parking agreement is finalized, then both the Development Agreement and Parking Agreement would be forwarded to Council simultaneously for approval.

Motion: Neal, **Second:** Henke, **Vote:** Passed 3–2, **Dissent:** Kilian, Tierney

Neal stated that anticipated parking agreement revenue and building improvements would increase property value. He emphasized that the project addresses missing middle housing needs and expressed strong support for the agreement.

- c. Memorandum of understanding regarding City of Wausau's construction loan agreement with Sunbelt Refugees LLC and limited waiver of right of first refusal (130 N 1st Street, Wausau)

Stratz reported that Sunbelt Refugees previously utilized the Commercial Rehabilitation Loan Program, which includes a Right of First Refusal (ROFR). Under the loan agreement, if the property is sold to a nonprofit organization, the City retains the ROFR to repurchase the property for redevelopment purposes to support the tax base. The current purchase offer is from a for-profit entity.

The purchaser's lender expressed concern that the ROFR could interfere with the lender's ability to foreclose on the property, if necessary, and requested a limited exemption to the ROFR applicable only to the lender in the event of foreclosure. Stratz confirmed the City would retain the ROFR in all other circumstances.

Motion: Neal, **Second:** Kilian, **Action:** Approve a limited Right of First Refusal related to the sale of the Sunbelt Refugees property, **Vote:** Passed 5–0

4 Discussion.

- a. 1300 Cleveland Ave public participation meeting update

Fifrick reviewed upcoming public engagement efforts, including mailing flyers to property owners and residents within 500 feet of the parcel as well as door hangers on those properties, and posted on the city's website and Facebook channel.

Kilian requested to have public access at the meeting for those who were unable to attend due to a schedule conflict; it would allow the general public and those really interested in the meeting to see what the feeling was of the participants. She also suggested that, after staff provided the options for non-industrial use, and the participants gave their verbal opinions about what they'd like to see there, she thought it would be very positive and useful to have a written form given to participants at the end of the meeting asking them, yes or no, if they are a resident of the southwest side neighborhood so that if a lot of people should come that aren't the committee and staff would be able to decipher whether they were residents of the neighborhood. She also requested that the form include a space for participants to write their options and also ensure the marketing material includes the various languages with the possibility of adding Lao, as well. This form would allow for the committee and staff to see very specifically what the residents had to say.

Fifrick noted that a sign-in sheet would collect participant names, addresses, and email addresses to provide future updates to those who attended, but a form could be provided to participants that included Kilian's requests.

Lukens asked whether the Future Land Use designation for industrial purposes would be removed from any engagement efforts. Fifrick explained the referenced flyer dates back to 2017 and has changed due to updates to the Comprehensive Plan and zoning changes over the past several years. Kilian questioned whether the language was required and suggested its removal if not. Fifrick stated the language is not required and is included for historical context but agreed to review and refine the content to better clarify the intent of the process.

- b. Thomas Street residential infill update

Fifrick reported that the DNR has received a draft report of Phase II environmental testing report and is currently under review and coordination with the contractor, Ramble. He noted that Ramble previously completed the Phase I assessment, and the DNR is awaiting the finalized Phase II report to proceed with testing and any necessary remediation work. Fifrick stated that he anticipates presenting the report to the Committee at its next meeting.

5 Closed Session.

Motion: Neal, **Second:** Henke, **Action:** Move to closed session. **Roll Call Vote:** 5-0

Adjourn to Closed Session pursuant to Wisconsin State Statute § 19.85(1)(e) for deliberating or negotiating the purchasing of public properties, the investing of public funds, or conducting other specified public business, whenever competitive or bargaining reasons require a closed session in regard to the sale of 424 Burns Street, Wausau.

The Economic Development Committee convened into Closed Session.

Reconvene into Open Session, if necessary, to take action on Closed Session items.

The Economic Development Committee did not reconvene into Open Session.

6 Adjournment.

Motion by Neal, **Seconded:** by Tierney, to Adjourn. **Motion carried.**
Meeting adjourned at 06:45 PM.

To view the meeting in its entirety, go to
https://www.youtube.com/live/wxRJMckuWjg?si=iE5HLW_1fT3udVEL

The recording of this meeting may be viewed on
YouTube [@CityofWausauMeetings](#)



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