

February 16, 2026

COUNCIL WORK SESSION
Harold E. Getty Council Chambers
4:20 p.m.

Pre-Meeting Items

Roll Call.

Members present: Mayor Dave Boesen in the Chair. Roll Call: Mr. Schmitt, Ms. Berry, Mr. Salamanca, Mr. Martin and Mr. Simon. Ms. Creighton-Smith arrived at 4:22 p.m.

Agenda, as proposed or amended.

Simon/Salamanca
that the agenda as proposed be approved. Voice vote-Ayes: Six. Motion carried.

Approval of Minutes of the January 20, 2026, Council Work Session as proposed or amended.

Simon/Salamanca
that the minutes of the January 20, 2026, Council Work Session, be approved. Voice vote-Ayes: Six. Motion carried.

Work Session Items

Presentation from Americans for Independent Living.

Christine Rolf, Executive Director, Americans for Independent Living, 4020 University, introduced their organization and shared what services they provide to veterans and emphasized the need for more housing.

Tim Combs, Founder, Americans for Independent Living, provided an overview of his organization's history and future plans for assisting veterans. He shared their plans to create a workshop in the Markerspace building that would benefit both the veterans and the community. He commented that AFIL has partnered with the Exchange Club on the upcoming America250 event and said 1776 flags will be placed downtown, at Veterans Memorial Hall, across the bridge in the direction of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial and on the parking ramp. He invited everyone to a complimentary breakfast at the Waterloo Convention Center on April 29th from 7:30 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. where there will be a presentation on all that AFIL is doing and plans to do within the community.

Ms. Berry shared that she served on the Veterans Affairs Committee at the Iowa House of Representatives. She asked if he knew the number of veterans in the Waterloo area.

Tim Combs shared that the VA estimates there are approximately 7,000 to 8,000 veterans in the system, but that the number could be higher as some veterans do not register for assistance.

Ms. Berry asked how many homeless veterans seek their services.

Tim Combs stated that in the winter they see about 20 to 30 in the winter.

Ms. Berry questioned if he had any suggestions for someone who may have a family member that is a homeless veteran.

Tim Combs shared the first step would be to contact the Veterans Affairs staff. Once they have been verified through Veterans Affairs, then AFIL can help connect them to resources to get them off the street.

Mr. Simon questioned if the houses they have are single-family homes or apartments.

Tim Combs explained that they have two homes that have been rehabilitated that serve as housing for the veterans.

Mr. Simon asked if 657A homes would benefit his program.

Tim Combs confirmed and shared that he is currently looking at one. He explained that donated homes are best, so every dollar goes into fixing the homes up and keeping the cost of rent down.

Mr. Simon questioned if there is a group that they utilize to help encourage homeless veterans to utilize their services.

Tim Combs said that they partner with Pathways for any mental health resources that are needed and Iowa Workforce to help get them employed and off the street.

Mr. Schmitt requested an overview of collaboration with Veterans Affairs and if they serve veterans outside of Black Hawk County.

Tim Combs provided an overview and said that they have helped veterans in Bremer, Buchanan, and Linn Counties. They are looking to expand to the 7 counties around Black Hawk County this year.

Discussion of the FYE2027 budget.

Bridgett Wood, Finance Director, provided an overview of public feedback on the FY2027 budget via the budget simulator software on the city website.

Mr. Salamanca questioned the level of detail that the council would receive when reviewing the budget.

Bridgett Wood commented that she will present the information however the council prefers.

Mr. Simon questioned if there is a way to limit responses to Waterloo residents.

Mr. Schmitt questioned what is included in core city services vs. constraints facing the city.

Bridgett Wood, shared what are considered core city services, stating they are the main services required by state law.

Mr. Schmitt asked what would not be considered a core service.

Bridgett Wood explained that the cultural and recreation programs are considered quality of life items and not core services. She further explained that the financial constraints would be the budget deficit.

Mr. Schmitt asked what the budget deficit is a result of.

Bridgett Wood commented that it is a result of personnel increases, based on the fact that most are contractual agreements.

Mr. Simon questioned if we know the amount of difference in the blue bar totals from the red bars.

Bridgett Wood shared that it is approximately a one million dollar difference.

Mayor Boesen thanked Bridgett Wood and her staff for their work on the budget.

ADJOURNMENT

Simon/Creighton-Smith

that the council adjourn at 4:58 p.m. Voice vote-Ayes: Six. Motion carried.

Kelley Felchle
City Clerk