

April 6, 2026

COUNCIL WORK SESSION
Harold E. Getty Council Chambers
4:00 p.m.

Pre-Meeting Items

Roll Call.

Members present: Mayor Dave Boesen in the Chair. Roll Call: Mr. Schmitt, Mr. Morrow, Mr. Salamanca, Ms. Creighton-Smith, Ms. Berry, Mr. Martin and Mr. Simon.

Agenda, as proposed or amended.

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

Approval of Minutes of the March 16, 2026, Council Work Session as proposed or amended.

Simon/Martin
that the minutes of the March 16, 2026 Council Work Session, be approved. Voice vote-Ayes: Seven. Motion carried.

Work Session Items

Discussion of the FY2027 budget.

Bridgett Wood presented the FY2027 budget that will be published in the paper on April 7, and the FY27 levy rate that the mayor would like us to certify. She explained that because it is being published in the paper, we can only make decreases.

Mayor Boesen commented that his goal is to keep the levy rate at 21.79. He shared that we will begin working on next year's budget right after this budget to allow more time to find new areas of saving. He asked the council members to reach out to Bridgett with any questions they still had.

Discussion of adding a park to Walnut Neighborhood.

Todd Derifield, Leisure Services Director, introduced Ali Parrish, Executive Director, Habitat for Humanity.

Ali Parrish gave a presentation on a proposed new park in the Walnut Neighborhood. She explained that the Immanuel Lutheran Church & School had a playground park right behind where CVS and the grocery store are now. When the church sold the property to CVS in 2012, the neighborhood lost their park. Following surveys taken in 2022, action teams were formed in the winter of 2023. Habitat acquired five vacant properties and has identified the area to be a fit for the new park. The proposed timeline for groundbreaking would be spring 2026, construction

in the summer of 2026 and ribbon cutting in early fall 2026. She shared that they have currently secured \$167,253.00 with \$140,000 pending. Habitat for Humanity will donate the property to the city as part of the project and, upon acceptance, the city will maintain the park ongoing.

Estee Valtchev, Neighborhood Association, 527 E. Park Avenue, shared that through the process they have received feedback from the neighbors and it was important that the neighborhood be walkable to accommodate wheelchairs.

Mr. Salanca questioned the cost of maintenance once the park is complete.

Paul Huting, Leisure Services Director, commented that it would be minimal as they already perform maintenance that area.

Mr. Salamanca asked what the gap was in funding.

Ali Parrish, estimated perhaps \$50,000.00.

Mayor Boesen asked if there was a website where citizens could donate.

Ali Parrish shared that donations can be made through the Waterloo Community Foundation exclusively for this project, Walnut Neighborhood Park & Place Designated Fund.

Council members shared their comments and support for the project.

Discussion of adding a drone for firefighting services.

Brock Weliver, Fire Marshal, shared with the council members a copy of a community stakeholder survey. He explained that the Waterloo Fire Rescue will hold a town hall meeting on April 23, 2026, at the Waterloo Center for the Arts from 5:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. to capture key information concerning community experience, city services, public confidence and satisfaction in Waterloo Fire Rescue and gather perceived hazardous risks. The survey will be available at the town hall meeting and online for the next two weeks. He further shared that the department is working toward obtaining Community for Public Safety Excellence Accreditation and this will align with our community risk assessment module, and he asked for council's support in getting this out to the public and promoting our town hall meeting.

Lieutenant Mike Zimmerly, provided an overview of how adding a drone could enhance public safety and asked permission to pursue external grant funding to create a mission-ready drone program.

Mr. Morrow asked if there would be a drone response team or have a drone on each truck and what the payload for the drone would be.

Mike Zimmerly stated that the current plan is to have one drone for the department, with multiple certified operators on each shift and described the drone options and maximum payload.

The mayor and council members continued to discuss the possibility of a drone with Chief Beck and Lieutenant Zimmerly.

ADJOURNMENT

Creighton-Smith/Simon
that the council adjourn at 5:12 p.m. Voice vote-Ayes: Seven. Motion carried.

Kelley Felchle
City Clerk