

CITY OF SOUTH BELOIT
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING
August 4, 2025

CALL TO ORDER: 5:00 pm, Council Chambers, City Hall by Mayor Fitzgerald

ROLL CALL: Present & answering to roll call were Commissioners Adleman, Hedrington, Morse, Prentice, and Mayor Fitzgerald
City Attorney Laura Goding was present
City Administrator Sonya Hoppes was present
City Clerk Tracy Patrick recorded the minutes
Department Heads in attendance:
Wastewater Superintendent Jeff Reininger
Police Chief Adam Truman
Deputy Fire Chief Brian Snyder
Street Superintendent Steve Haas
Community Development Director Shawna Henthorn

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Led by Mayor Fitzgerald and recited by all members present.

INVOCATION: City Clerk, Tracy Patrick delivered the invocation.

APPROVE AGENDA: Commissioner Morse made a motion to approve the agenda second by Commissioner Prentice. Voice vote carried the motion.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Deanne Mueth read a letter regarding concerns relating to staffing, cost, and reliance for the South Beloit Fire Department, and said she believes the city needs its own fully staffed Fire Department.
Mike Lamphere asked questions regarding the insurance coverage from the Fire Department contract, a complaint he filed regarding the Police Department and commented on the Cordial Court Mobil Home Park's jurisdiction for police services.
Ilah Tinder voiced concern regarding a call at Fair Oaks Nursing home on July 27th. Ms. Tinder said she is concerned for the Fire Department equipment, and for citizens. Ms. Tinder would like to see Committee of the Whole meetings be held again.
Josh Loyd spoke about the Fire Department regarding staffing, and said he believes the department needs better management.
Mayor Fitzgerald spoke about Council being bullied on social media instead of expected constructive criticism. Mayor Fitzgerald said Council lives here too and are affected by the decisions made. Mayor Fitzgerald provided information regarding the previous staffing deficiencies and the current staffing by qualified personnel at the Fire Department. Mayor Fitzgerald continued his comments during the Mayor's Report.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

1. Commissioner Adleman made a motion to approve the minutes from the Regular Council Meeting held on July 21, 2025. Commissioner Prentice second the motion. Voice vote carried the motion.

REPORT OF OFFICERS:

1. Finance:

Commissioner Adleman made a motion to approve the claims paid from July 19 – August 1, 2025 in the amount of \$308,781.73. Commissioner Morse second the motion. Roll call vote showed 5 ayes.

2. Attorney Report:

3. Reports:

City Administrator Report and Staff Report
Accounts and Finance-Commissioner Ryan Adleman
Health & Public Safety-Commissioner Ken Morse
Streets & Public Improvement-Commissioner Brian Hedrington
Public Properties-Commissioner Courtney Prentice
Mayor-Tom Fitzgerald

Mayor Fitzgerald continued his comments stating that he was elected to the Council for 3 terms and has no intentions of stepping down or quitting. Mayor Fitzgerald spoke about the city being in the best shape ever financially and developmentally. Operating a city consists of other departments, a \$9,000,00.00 budget and making very tough decisions that will affect 7,800 residents, not just a few hundred friends. Mayor Fitzgerald also spoke about the number of frivolous Freedom of Information Requests (FOIA's) that are submitted that end up being a significant expense to the city.

Commissioner Prentice made a motion to move item a under New Business to immediately after Report of Officers. Commissioner Adleman second the motion. Voice vote carried the motion.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Discussion and/or Motion Items:

- a. City Clerk, Tracy Patrick swore in Ezekiel Kaiser as full-time Police Officer

CORRESPONDENCE:

1. Representatives, Ray Kay and Don Markowski were present from the Illinois Fire Chief's Association to present the Fire Study Report. Mr. Markowski presented and reviewed the report to Council. Mr. Markowski presented key findings, noting that staffing shortages are a nationwide issue due to increased education and certification requirements. The study recommended a six-station model involving three stations from the City of Beloit, 2 Stations from the Town of Beloit, and the South Beloit Station, which would improve response times and ISO ratings. Mr. Markowski spoke about policies and procedures, even with contracted staffing, and consider consolidating fire frequencies for better communication.

NEW BUSINESS

CONTINUED:

1. Discussion and/or Motion Items:

- b. Commissioner Adleman made a motion to reconsider Ordinance 2848 Amending Chapter 18, Businesses, by adding Article XII, Residential Rental Property Regulation. Mayor Fitzgerald second the motion. Roll call vote showed 3 ayes and 2 nays by Commissioners Hedrington and Prentice.
- c. Commissioner Adleman made a motion to layover Ordinance 2848 Amending Chapter 18, Businesses, by adding Article XII, Residential Rental Property Regulation to the first Regular Council Meeting in October. Commissioner Morse

second the motion. Roll call vote showed 4 ayes and 1 nay by Commissioner Prentice.

- d. From the Planning and Zoning Commission meeting held on July 16, 2025 a positive recommendation was given regarding Ordinance 2859 Amending various sections of Chapter 118, Zoning, regarding Section 2 Definitions to amend the term Guesthouses and Section 16 to amend off street parking and loading. Commissioner Morse made a motion to approve Ordinance 2859 Amending various sections of Chapter 118, Zoning, regarding Section 2 Definitions to amend the term Guesthouses and Section 16 to amend off street parking and loading. Commissioner Adleman second the motion. Roll call vote showed 5 ayes.
- e. Commissioner Morse made a motion to approve Ordinance 2860 Abating property taxes on approximately 18.335 acres of real property generally located at the northeast corner of Illinois Route 75 and Oakfield Parkway. Commissioner Adleman second the motion. Administrator Hoppes explained that the Development Agreement approve abatements but those were not recorded with Winnebago County. The taxes were not abated in error. Roll call vote showed 5 ayes.
- f. Commissioner Morse made a motion to approve Resolution 6631 Approving a Professional Services Agreement proposal from Fehr Graham regarding the Middle Road drainage improvements not to exceed \$22,490.00. Commissioner Prentice second the motion. Administrator Hoppes said the property was impacted by poor stormwater issues from poor workmanship from 20 years ago. The infrastructure is the city's issue to repair. Roll call vote showed 5 ayes.
- g. Commissioner Adleman made a motion to approve an offer to purchase 910 Ingersoll Place in the amount of \$500.00. Commissioner Morse second the motion. Roll call vote showed 5 ayes.
- h. Administrator Hoppes asked Council how they would like to have the ordinance drafted for the sewer rate increase and explained the city would have to have a rate increase in order to apply for any Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA) grants. Council determined to bring back numbers that would include a 5-year, 7-year, and 10-year timeline with and without a Class A sludge option.
- i. Council discussed consideration to implement the 1% Grocery Tax. Mayor Fitzgerald said the tax is already currently in place through the state of Illinois. Council would only be voting to keep the tax in place. Administrator Hoppes said maintaining the tax would generate at least \$150,000 annually. Consensus was to move forward with the ordinance to keep the 1% Grocery Tax in place.

Legal questions were asked by Commissioner Prentice regarding the reconsideration of the Rental Registry Ordinance. Administrator Hoppes said staff thought the ordinance was gaining support with the requested items being removed. Attorney Goding explained reconsidering the ordinance is a method Council can use to keep the existing ordinance, which allows for amendments without the need to rewrite the ordinance in its entirety. Staff will bring back the ordinance with more information.

ADJOURN:

At 6:24 pm on a motion by Commissioner Adleman second by Commissioner Prentice. Voice vote carried the motion.

Mayor

City Clerk

Approved: