Minutes
City Council - Regular Session Meeting
Monday, October 13, 2025 - 6:00 PM

The City Council convened in regular session in the Government Center Boardroom at 6:00 PM. Mayor Brady called the meeting to order and led the Pledge of Allegiance, ending with a moment of silent prayer/reflection.

Roll Call

Present: Council Member Jenna Kearns
Council Member Sheila Montney
Council Member John Danenberger
Council Member Michael Straza
Council Member Cody Hendricks
Council Member Mollie Ward
Council Member Kent Lee
Council Member Abby Scott, Remote 6:02 PM

Mayor Dan Brady

Absent: Council Member Micheal Mosley

Council Member Straza made a motion, seconded by Council Member Ward, to allow Council Member Scott to attend the meeting remotely due to a family emergency.

Mayor Brady directed the Clerk to call roll:

Ayes: Kearns, Montney, Danenberger, Straza, Hendricks, Ward, Lee

Motion Carried.

Council Member Scott joined the meeting at 6:02 PM.

Recognition/Appointments

The following Item was presented:

Item 5.A. Presentation of Bloomington Police Officer Commission Certificates to Officers Tucker Hoe, Jacob Dean, and Tony Berkhousen Upon Completion of Their Probationary Period, as requested by the Police Department.

Police Chief Jamal Simington introduced Officers Tucker Hoe, Jacob Dean, and Tony Berkhousen. He then presented each with their Police Officer Commission Certificates.

The following Item was presented:

Item 5.B. Proclamation Recognizing October 24th as World Polio Day, as requested by the Administration Department.

Lindsey Meister, Sunrise Rotary President, accepted the Proclamation. She shared about the organization and its impact on the community.

Public Comment

Mayor Brady read a public comment statement of procedure. Michael Hintz emailed public comment. Douglas Manley spoke in-person.

Consent Agenda

Council Member Hendricks made a motion, seconded by Council Member Straza, to approve the Consent Agenda as presented.

Item 7.A. Consideration and Action to Approve the Minutes of the September 8, 2025, Regular City Council Meeting, as requested by the City Clerk Department. (Recommended Motion: The proposed Minutes be approved.)

Item 7.B. Consideration and Action on Approving Bills and Payroll in the Amount of $15,501,480.26, as requested by the Finance Department. (Recommended Motion: The proposed Bills and Payroll be approved.)

Item 7.C. Consideration and Action on a Resolution Approving the Purchase of One New 2025 Ford F750 Truck with a Service Body, from Morrow Brothers Ford, in an Amount of $164,178, as requested by the Public Works Department. (Recommended Motion: The proposed Resolution be approved.)

RESOLUTION NO. 2025 - 170

A RESOLUTION APPROVING THE PURCHASE OF ONE NEW 2025 FORD F750 TRUCK WITH A SERVICE BODY, FROM MORROW BROTHERS FORD, IN AN AMOUNT OF $164,178

Item 7.D. Consideration and Action on a Resolution Approving an Agreement with Farnsworth Group, Inc., for Engineering Services for Construction Phase Services for Water Mains Along the US-51 Project that the State of Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) will be Reconstructing in the Fall of 2025, in an Amount Not to Exceed $940,700, as requested by the Water Department. (Recommended Motion: The proposed Resolution be approved.)

RESOLUTION NO. 2025 - 171

A RESOLUTION APPROVING AN AGREEMENT WITH FARNSWORTH GROUP, INC., FOR ENGINEERING SERVICES FOR CONSTRUCTION PHASE SERVICES FOR WATER MAINS ALONG THE US-51 PROJECT THAT THE STATE OF ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION (IDOT) WILL BE RECONSTRUCTING IN THE FALL OF 2025, IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED $940,700

Item 7.E. Consideration and Action on a Resolution Approving an Agreement with Stark Excavating, Inc., for the Construction of the Watermain Along the Illinois Department of Transportation US 51 Rehabilitation and Watermain Replacement Project (BID #2025- 09), in an Amount Not to Exceed $15,565,550, as requested by the Water Department. (Recommended Motion: The proposed Resolution be approved.)

RESOLUTION NO. 2025 - 172

A RESOLUTION APPROVING AN AGREEMENT WITH STARK EXCAVATING, INC., FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE WATERMAIN ALONG THE ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION US 51 REHABILITATION AND WATERMAIN REPLACEMENT PROJECT (BID #2025- 09), IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED $15,565,550

Item 7.F. Consideration and Action on (1) a Resolution Approving an Intergovernmental Agreement with the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT), for Illinois Route 9

Improvements, in an Estimated Amount of $479,550; and (2) a State Motor Fuel Tax (MFT) Funding Resolution for Illinois Route 9 Improvements, in the Amount of $599,438, as requested by the Engineering Department. (Recommended Motion: The proposed Resolutions be approved.)

RESOLUTION NO. 2025 - 173

A RESOLUTION APPROVING AN INTERGOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENT WITH THE ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION (IDOT), FOR ILLINOIS ROUTE 9 IMPROVEMENTS, IN AN ESTIMATED AMOUNT OF $479,550

RESOLUTION NO. 2025 - 174

A STATE MOTOR FUEL TAX (MFT) FUNDING RESOLUTION FOR ILLINOIS ROUTE 9 IMPROVEMENTS, IN THE AMOUNT OF $599,438

Item 7.G. Consideration and Action on a Resolution Approving the John M. Scott Health Care Trust Fiscal Year 2025 Annual Trust Report, as requested by the Community Impact & Enhancement Department. (Recommended Motion: The proposed Annual Trust Report be approved.)

RESOLUTION NO. 2025 - 175

A RESOLUTION APPROVING THE JOHN M. SCOTT HEALTH CARE TRUST FISCAL YEAR 2025 ANNUAL TRUST REPORT

Item 7.H. Consideration and Action on (1) an Ordinance Approving a Redevelopment Agreement By and Between the City of Bloomington, McLean County, Illinois, and Susan T. Temple and Mike Temple for the Repair and Improvement of the Property Commonly Known as 316-318 W. Washington Street and (2) an Ordinance Amending the Budget Ordinance for the Fiscal Year Ending April 30, 2026, in the Amount of $54,873 for the Downtown TIF Fund, to Utilize Reserves, as requested by the Administration Department. (Recommended Motion: The proposed Ordinance be approved.)

ORDINANCE NO. 2025 - 075

AN ORDINANCE APPROVING A REDEVELOPMENT AGREEMENT BY AND BETWEEN THE CITY OF BLOOMINGTON, MCLEAN COUNTY, ILLINOIS, AND SUSAN T. TEMPLE AND MIKE TEMPLE FOR THE REPAIR AND IMPROVEMENT OF THE PROPERTY COMMONLY KNOWN AS 316-318 W. WASHINGTON STREET (PIN: 24-04-336-001)

ORDINANCE NO. 2025 - 076

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE BUDGET ORDINANCE FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDING APRIL 30, 2026, IN THE AMOUNT OF $54,873 FOR THE DOWNTOWN TIF FUND, TO UTILIZE RESERVES

Item 7.I. Consideration and Action on an Ordinance Declaring an Emergency Related to Homelessness within the Community and Authorizing the City Manager to Issue Executive Orders to Increase Indoor Shelter Capacity, as requested by the Administration Department. (Recommended Motion: The proposed Ordinance be approved.)

ORDINANCE NO. 2025 - 077

AN ORDINANCE DECLARING AN EMERGENCY RELATED TO HOMELESSNESS WITHIN THE COMMUNITY AND AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO ISSUE EXECUTIVE

ORDERS TO INCREASE INDOOR SHELTER CAPACITY

Item 7.J. Consideration and Action on an Application by Kobe Ramen Pho & Poke, LLC, located at 1505 N. Veteran's Parkway, Suites A & B, Requesting Approval of the Creation of a Class RBS (Restaurant, Beer & Wine Only, and Sunday Sales) Liquor License, as requested by the City Clerk Department. (Recommended Motion: The proposed Application be approved.)

Mayor Brady directed the Clerk to call roll:

Ayes: Kearns, Montney, Danenberger, Straza, Hendricks, Ward, Lee, Scott

Motion Carried.

Regular Agenda

The following Item was presented:

Item 8.A. Consideration and Action on an Ordinance Amending the Bloomington City Code Chapter 39 to Dedicate Revenue from the Municipal Grocery Tax to Infrastructure Projects, as requested by the Mayor Department.

Mayor Brady introduced the Item, which proposed amending the City Code to dedicate municipal grocery tax revenue specifically to infrastructure projects. He explained that the measure was intended to provide a stable and recurring funding source, approximately $3 million, to support the City's most pressing infrastructure (roads, sidewalks, sewers, water, and capital projects), and thereby addressing a top priority identified by residents.

Council Member Straza made a motion, seconded by Council Member Montney, to approve the Item as presented.

Council Member Straza expressed strong support for the proposed Ordinance. He highlighted the ongoing community demand for infrastructure improvements and believed that passing the Ordinance would demonstrate Council's continued commitment to addressing them.

Council Member Montney addressed Council's approach to infrastructure funding, emphasizing the urgent need for more effective planning and accountability. She highlighted concerns about deferred maintenance, establishing clear repair benchmarks, and the importance of comprehensive documentation to better guide future investments in infrastructure.

Council Member Hendricks reflected on the rationale being shared and emphasized the decision as being difficult. He expressed concern about the current debate causing confusion and potentially diverging from the original purpose. He questioned whether current allocations were already being addressed through existing budgeting processes and asked for additional clarity into Council's intentions for infrastructure funding.

Mayor Brady and Council Member Ward debated the Ordinance. Mayor Brady explained that the Ordinance was designed to ensure the funds would be specifically allocated to infrastructure with oversight safeguards in place to protect taxpayer interests. Council Member Ward voiced opposition, highlighting concerns that the grocery tax disproportionately affected the most vulnerable residents and argued that broadening its use across many types of infrastructure could lessen its positive impact for those most in need.

Council Member Montney recommended narrowing the scope to specific infrastructure projects of streets, sidewalks, and storm inlets.

Council Member Straza declined to amend the motion.

Mayor Brady directed the Clerk to call roll:

Ayes: Montney, Danenberger, Straza, Lee, Brady

Nayes: Kearns, Hendricks, Ward, Scott

Motion Carried.

ORDINANCE NO. 2025 - 078

ORDINANCE AMENDING THE BLOOMINGTON CITY CODE CHAPTER 39 TO DEDICATE REVENUE FROM THE MUNICIPAL GROCERY TAX TO INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS

The following Item was presented:

Item 8.B. Consideration and Action to Approve the Collective Bargaining Agreement for IAFF Local 49, as requested by the Human Resources Department.

City Manager Jeff Jurgens introduced the Item and then asked Fire Chief Cory Matheny and Local 49 President, Eric Hall, to present.

Chief Matheny presented the highlights of the newly negotiated collective bargaining agreement between the City and the Firefighters' Union. He emphasized the adoption of a new 24/72 shift schedule designed to improve firefighter health, safety, and wellbeing by reducing fatigue and aligning work hours with best practices. Chief Matheny explained that the change was accomplished through internal realignment rather than staff increases, and outlined anticipated benefits including improved recruitment, retention, efficiency, and long-term cost savings. The new schedule was presented as an investment in both firefighter wellness and emergency response quality.

Mr. Hall expressed appreciation for the collaboration of all involved. He highlighted the adoption of the 24/72 shift schedule as modern and progressive and commended the City and Council for prioritizing firefighter health, safety, and operational effectiveness. He emphasized how the new schedule would reduce fatigue, improve focus, and enhance service responsiveness, thereby directly benefiting both firefighters and the community.

Council Member Hendricks made a motion, seconded by Council Member Ward, to approve the Item as presented.

Mayor Brady directed the Clerk to call roll:

Ayes: Kearns, Montney, Danenberger, Straza, Hendricks, Ward, Lee, Scott

Motion Carried.

The following Item was presented:

Item 8.C. Consideration and Action on an Ordinance Approving an Economic Incentive Agreement By and Between the City of Bloomington and JOB Realty, LLC, for the Property Commonly Known as 1602 General Electric Road (PIN: 14-26-451-005), as requested by the Development Services Department.

City Manager Jurgens introduced the Item and asked Kelly Pfeifer, Development Services Director, to present.

Director Pfeifer presented the proposed economic incentive agreement between the City and Job Related, LLC, for redevelopment of the Honda dealership. She outlined the project's significant investment of over $6.5 million to renovate and modernize the existing facility. Director Pfeifer noted the incentive agreement being a business retention tool and then explained how the agreement would provide a partial sales tax rebate based on increased sales, capped over seven years. She emphasized the intent of the incentive was to retain the successful dealership within Bloomington, support local economic development, and ensure tax revenue generation.

Council Member Ward opposed providing financial incentives to profitable private businesses when some City residents still lacked assistance for severe problems, such as flooded homes. She emphasized concerns about City priorities and fairness, especially in light of recent discussions of budget deficit and placing grocery taxes on vulnerable residents.

Council Member Ward made a motion to reject the Item as presented.

The motion died due to lack of a second.

Council Member Montney raised the issue of maintaining consistency in economic incentive policies between Bloomington and the neighboring Town of Normal. She emphasized the importance of avoiding a competitive "bidding war" for business retention or attraction between the two communities and requested that Council discuss and consider a standardized approach to incentives in the future.

Council Member Straza expressed support for the Item, emphasizing the dealership's longstanding commitment to Bloomington and its positive economic contributions to the community. He underscored the importance of supporting local businesses to ensure they remain in the City and indicated that such incentives could encourage further investment.

Council Member Straza made a motion, seconded by Council Member Hendricks, to approve the Item as presented.

Mayor Brady directed the Clerk to call roll:

Ayes: Montney, Danenberger, Straza, Hendricks, Lee, Scott

Nayes: Kearns, Ward

Motion Carried.

ORDINANCE NO. 2025 – 079

AN ORDINANCE APPROVING AN ECONOMIC INCENTIVE AGREEMENT BY AND BETWEEN THE CITY OF BLOOMINGTON AND JOB REALTY, LLC, FOR THE PROPERTY COMMONLY KNOWN AS 1602 GENERAL ELECTRIC ROAD (PIN: 14-26-451-005)

The following Item was presented:

<u>Item 8.D. Consideration and Action on an Ordinance Amending Fees Applicable to Chapter 2 (Administration) of the City Code Regarding the Schedule of Fees for Public Records, as requested by the City Clerk Department.</u>

City Clerk Leslie Yocum presented an analysis of the City's Freedom of Information Act ("FOIA") operations. She reported that in the last three months, staff had completed 1,186 FOIA requests with an average staff cost of $85.17 per request. She stated that year-to-date, the City had processed 3,031 FOIA requests, averaging $63.70 per request, and incurring approximately $180,000 in total staff costs. City Clerk Yocum projected that by year-end, the City would handle a minimum of 3,400 requests and spend roughly $240,000 on FOIA processing. She highlighted that 25-30% of FOIA requests were commercial requests that typically requested body-worn camera footage by entities seeking to resell or profit from using City data. She stated that requests had increased 40% from 2023-2024 and, as a result, staff proposed updating the City's fee structure: The proposal included updates for charging for electronic data and instituting fees for commercial requests requiring more than eight hours of staff time. She outlined plans to streamline the FOIA process through improved training, technology, and a more user-friendly transparency portal, aiming to reduce staff workload and enhance public access to information.

Council Member Ward asked for clarification on the percentage of commercial requests and the incurred costs. City Clerk Yocum confirmed the 25-30% increase in commercial requests but noted the system did not currently track costs specifically attributed to them.

Council Member Lee asked for additional information on commercial requesters. City Clerk Yocum responded that tracking the origin of FOIA requests was difficult as addresses were not required under the FOIA statute, but that a significant amount of commercial requests came from out-of-town entities, and emphasized that the proposed fee changes were not intended generate revenue, but instead to discourage large, timely commercial requests.

Council Member Montney confirmed with City Clerk Yocum that the FOIA statute limited the fee amounts a municipality could charge for records. They then discussed various internal continuous improvement updates that were being implemented to reduce staff time such as deflections that provide links to online information avoiding the need to submit a FOIA request.

Council Member Ward made a motion, seconded by Council Member Danenberger, to approve the Item as presented with Option 2 which focused on increasing fees for commercial requesters.

Mayor Brady directed the Clerk to call roll:

Ayes: Kearns, Montney, Danenberger, Straza, Hendricks, Ward, Lee, Scott

Motion Carried.

City Manager's Discussion

City Manager Jeff Jurgens provided a brief report on City operations highlighting the ongoing success of the bulk pickup program, improvements to the color-coded maps for public clarity, and steady progress on the City's sidewalk repair initiative. He also noted positive community feedback and ongoing efforts to address service requests efficiently.

Council Member's Discussion

Council Member Lee thanked City staff, specifically Jim Karch, Engineering Department Director, and Kelly Pfiefer, Development Services Department Director, for attending a local Homeowners Association (HOA) meeting in Ward 8. He highlighted residents' appreciation for staff's time and efforts to foster positive community relations.

Council Member Danenberger recognized and thanked students from Illinois Wesleyan University's Center for Engaged Learning for participating in a recent park cleanup event in Ward 4. He praised the students' active community involvement, their interest in local government, and noted their engagement and thoughtful questions about the neighborhood.

Council Member Hendricks thanked the Ecology Action Center for organizing a hazardous waste cleanup event and emphasized the importance of such initiatives. He expressed hope for expanded hazardous waste facilities through future collaboration among the City, Town of Normal, and McLean County.

Mayor's Discussion

Mayor Brady shared updates on recent business openings and partnerships in the community, described his participation in local and university events, and congratulated various organizations. He also expressed appreciation for City staff contributions and highlighted various ongoing negotiations and achievements within the City.

Executive Session

No Executive Session was held.

Adjournment

Council Member Straza made a motion, seconded by Council Member Montney, to adjourn the meeting.

Mayor Brady directed the Clerk to call roll:

Ayes: Kearns, Montney, Danenberger, Straza, Hendricks, Ward, Lee, Scott

Motion Carried (viva voce).

The meeting adjourned at 7:13 PM.

CITY OF BLOOMINGTON	ATTEST
Dan Brady, Mayor	Amanda Stutsman, Deputy City Clerk