

Minutes of the Maxwell City Council
Regular Session
Wednesday October 8, 2025

These minutes are as recorded by the city clerk and are subject to city council approval at the next regular council meeting.

Maxwell City Council held a meeting on the above date pursuant to the rules of the council, notice posted at city hall, city website, post office, Maxwell State Bank, and Facebook. Mayor Higgins called the meeting to order at 6:15 pm. Roll Call was answered by Gast, Philpott, Miller, Westendorf and Jans. City staff present city clerk Wendy Crabtree and Snyder engineer Wes Farrand. Also present Story County Deputy Paige Barnett and Brenda Dryer senior vice president of Ames Regional Economic Alliance. A total of 34 members of the public attended: 23 in person and 11 by phone.

Gast moved and Westendorf seconded that agenda items 14 and 19 to be moved to after 5 and asked that the three items under consent agenda be voted on separately. RCV: Ayes: Gast, Philpott, Westendorf, Miller, Jans. Nays: None. Motion carried. A motion was made by Gast and seconded by Westendorf to make corrections to the minutes from September 10 meeting. RCV: Ayes: Philpott, Westendorf, Miller, Jans. Nays: None. Abstain: Gast. Motion carried. Gast moved and Miller seconded approval of claims presented from September 11 to October 8. RCV: Ayes: Gast, Philpott, Westendorf, Miller, Jans. Nays: None. Motion carried. Gast moved approval of the September Treasurer's Report. RCV: Ayes: Gast, Philpott, Westendorf, Miller, Jans. Nays: None. Motion carried.

Open forum: none.

Council discussed the progression of speed limit signs on Highway S27 within city limits. Current signage reduces speeds entering town from 45 mph to 35 mph to 25 mph and increases speeds exiting town from 35 mph to 55 mph. Council decided to retain the existing signage. No action was taken.

Sheriff's Report: Deputy Barnett asked the council if they had any issues and Mayor Higgins mentioned recent vandalism at the Legion Park, Dollar General and the fire station ice chest. Deputy Barnett stated that deputies have been conducting nighttime patrols in town.

Council discussed the potential addition of the North Street connection road project to the November council agenda for consideration and vote. Mayor Higgins explained that, per advisement of the city attorney, unanimous council approval is required to place the item on the agenda for possible action. Mayor Higgins stated that the council had already approved the final plat, and in order to ensure the process remains appropriate and procedurally sound, he required a unanimous vote to place the item on a future agenda for possible action. Higgins noted that any further changes to the plats would halt the TIF process, and the city has already incurred attorney fees for this project and has \$11,000

outstanding bill for attorney fees from the prior project. Discussion included reference to the 2009 Comprehensive Plan for Maxwell. Shaun Yoder, dirt mover for the project, reported that he met onsite with councilmembers Philpott, Miller, and Jans in separate instances. At no time were more than two council members present, and the meetings were informal and not initiated by the city. Residents voiced concerns about project costs, water and drainage, parking, and traffic impacts. Mayor Higgins cautioned that delays could jeopardize the feasibility of the project with the developer. Mayor advised Yoder if there are opportunities for improvements for water flow are welcome, but all needs to go through the city engineer and city council before anything can proceed. A public hearing was not scheduled due to scheduling conflicts with the council. Gast moved and Westendorf seconded to add the North Street connection road project to the November council agenda for consideration and vote. RCV: Ayes: Philpott, Jans, Miller. Nays: Westendorf, Gast. Motion fails and will not be on the November meeting agenda.

Council discussed current dog ordinances and licensing fees. It was noted that only 12 dogs are currently registered with city hall, and that some residents may be unaware of the registration process and the ordinance requiring dogs to be leashed. A reminder of these policies will be included in the fall newsletter prepared by the clerks. Philpott moved, and Miller seconded, to allocate \$150 toward the purchase of four aluminum dog ordinance signs: one at the end of the trail, two in the city park, and one outside the veterinary office. Rich Wehrman agreed to cover any remaining costs beyond the \$150 allocation. Sign examples were provided to the clerk and will be ordered and posted at the designated locations. RCV: Ayes: Gast, Philpott, Westendorf, Miller, Jans. Nays: None. Motion carried. Council discussed potential updates to licensing fees, which would require a formal resolution. Gast will draft a resolution for consideration at the next council meeting. Wehrman presented a trifold flyer containing dog ordinance and registration information, proposing it be included in the welcome wagon materials and made available at city hall. The clerk will update the fee chart at the bottom of the flyer prior to distribution. Council discussed recent vandalism at Legion Park, including three break-ins within one week that resulted in damage to the facility's door. Gast moved, and Westendorf seconded, to approve Meusburger Construction's bid of \$2,688.78 for installation of a new steel door. RCV: Ayes: Gast, Philpott, Westendorf, Miller, Jans. Nays: None. Motion carried. No sealed bids were received for the drainage channel project. Farrand will contact contractors to gauge interest. The Clerk will reach out to JKT Construction and Marshall's Excavating & Trucking and provide their contact information to Farrand. No action was taken.

Council discussed the possibility of engaging the Mid-Iowa Planning Alliance (MIPA) for a comprehensive plan proposal for Maxwell. Councilmember Miller will contact Susan Bradbury at Iowa State University to request a proposal. A vote on the matter was tabled until the November meeting.

Gast moved, and Westendorf seconded, to approve the removal of a dead and dangerous tree at 116 Metcalf, with permission granted for the residents of 108 Metcalf to retain as

much of the wood as they wish. The Clerk will contact Wildish Tree Care to coordinate tree removal and stump grinding. RCV: Ayes: Gast, Philpott, Westendorf, Miller, Jans. Nays: None. Motion carried.

Gast moved, and Jans seconded, approval of Bryce Hubert to the Planning & Zoning Commission and Derek Carter to the Parks and Open Spaces Board. RCV: Ayes: Gast, Philpott, Westendorf, Miller, Jans. Nays: None. Motion carried.

Council reviewed the Planning & Zoning Commission's recommendation regarding the proposed urban renewal plan amendment. P&Z advised that the current comprehensive plan conflicts with the proposed amendment and recommended including an expiration date in the new urban renewal plan. Gast questioned whether changes to the Urban Renewal Plan Amendment, originally adopted by ordinance, would also require an ordinance. Mayor Higgins asked why an expiration date would be necessary. Gast noted that an expiration date was required in 2009 when the CIP was completed. Gast further questioned whether future updates to the plan's language would require a resolution or ordinance. The Clerk will consult the bond attorney for clarification. Gast moved, and Westendorf seconded, to defer the matter to the November council meeting. RCV: Ayes: Gast, Philpott, Westendorf, Miller, Jans. Nays: None. Motion carried.

Council discussed parking restrictions at the north end and dead end of 7th Street. Gast proposed exploring the installation of a hammerhead turnaround either in addition to or instead of implementing no-parking measures. Discussions about inadequate snow removal, noting that plows are unable to clear both directions due to limited turnaround space. Gast requested Snyder & Associates to develop a design for a hammerhead turnaround. Council also discussed the possibility of adding gravel at the end of the street to accommodate the turnaround. Gast moved to have Snyder research the turnaround design. The clerk will review the city's parking ordinance to determine if 7th Street is currently addressed. Jans moved, and Miller seconded, to table the item until the next council meeting. RCV: Ayes: Gast, Philpott, Westendorf, Miller, Jans. Nays: None. Motion carried.

Brenda Dryer, Senior Vice President of the Ames Regional Economic Alliance, presented a proposal to submit a variance request to the Iowa Economic Development Authority to adjust Maxwell's low-to-moderate income (LMI) percentage used in tax increment financing (TIF) calculations. The current LMI percentage of 50.07% is believed to inaccurately reflect Maxwell's demographics and may hinder development efforts. Dryer noted that while she has not previously submitted a variance request in her 30+ years of experience, she believes Maxwell has a compelling case. Data from the American Community Survey indicates Maxwell's LMI percentage is 20% higher than Ames, while its poverty rate is approximately three-fifths that of Ames. The proposed development includes a projected build-out of five units per year. Dryer recommended the clerk remove the \$200,000 North Street connection from the application. JAMC will verify whether the development includes 15 or 16 lots for the clerk to update, and the map will be updated to

exclude the North Street connection. Council discussed potential uses for set-aside funds. Gast moved, and Miller seconded, to authorize Mayor Higgins to sign the request to adjust LMI relief percentages. RCV: Ayes: Gast, Philpott, Westendorf, Miller, Jans. Nays: None. Motion carried.

Council discussed term appointments for the Planning & Zoning Commission and Board of Adjustment. The open seat will carry a term from 2026 to 2031. Upon expiration, the next appointment date will be 2031. Gast moved, and Philpott seconded, to approve the term appointments as presented. RCV: Ayes: Gast, Philpott, Westendorf, Miller, Jans. Nays: None. Motion carried.

Council discussed upcoming security and IT assessments. A security company will conduct a site survey on October 13 for city hall and the library, including a review of the city's internet and IT systems. Westendorf noted that city hall and the library will be addressed first, with other city buildings to follow. Some upgrades may depend on the current internet infrastructure, and cellular internet was discussed as a potential solution for facilities lacking connectivity. Phase one of the project includes installation of access badges and security cameras at city hall and the library. Gast moved, and Jans seconded, to table the item until quotes are received. RCV: Ayes: Gast, Philpott, Westendorf, Miller, Jans. Nays: None. Motion carried.

Department Head Reports received from fire, EMS, library, public works, city clerk and engineer. Engineer Report: Baldwin Street project – Farrand is seeking authorization and direction from the Iowa DOT to proceed with the audit, regardless of whether Reilly provides signatures on the final change order. Storm Outlet Project: No contractor quotes were received. Snyder & Associates will follow up with contractors to determine the reasons for lack of interest.

Gast completed his review of the first set of codification chapters and the clerk will distribute the comments to the rest of the council. There was a question as to whether Simmering Cory has received all passed ordinances. Due to the codification schedule overlapping with budget season, Gast suggested moving the second set (Chapters 40–57) to the November agenda. Council discussed fire hydrant maintenance. Public Works reported six hydrants are difficult to open and 15 are leaking. Gast and Miller will inform Tionna Pooler (Independent Public Advisors) during an upcoming Zoom call that a hydrant replacement project is planned for FY27. Philpott inquired about council pay and the possibility of an increase. Discussion followed regarding the city's lack of direct control over its Facebook page and website. Westendorf noted a white Ford Escape is parked on the public right-of-way at 405 5th Street. Miller asked whether the derelict shed project is complete and if the city can now cancel the self-storage unit contract. Council also discussed implementing a packet submission deadline. Mayor Higgins proposed a Friday cutoff, with late submissions not accepted for the current meeting. Jans raised concerns about a honeycomb drain and tripping hazard at the school football field and asked whether the city covers curb and gutter costs for sidewalk replacements or if a 50/50 cost

share applies. Mayor Higgins is exploring an employee assistance program through Acentra Health for all city employees, including firefighters and EMS. He also noted upcoming changes at Ames Resource Recovery and advised council to consider whether to seek a new dump site or put the trash contract out for bid. The Clerk will contact Pratt Sanitation for more information. Mayor Higgins received inquiries about livestreaming council meetings. City hall's current equipment is outdated. Mayor will explore options for a wider-view camera. Regarding water outlets near the Army Post, Story County Conservation offered to assist with grubbing, but a floodplain permit will be required. Gast recommended waiting until the ground freezes before proceeding. Philpott moved and Westendorf seconded to adjourn. RCV: Ayes: Gast, Philpott, Westendorf, Miller, Jans. Nays: None. Motion carried. 10:34 pm. The next city council meeting will be a special meeting and public hearing on October 15 at 6:00 in city hall.