

THE MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERPERSONS
OF THE CITY OF WATERTOWN, WILSON COUNTY, TN

January 22, 2026

The Board of Mayor and Alderpersons of the City of Watertown, Wilson County, Tennessee met on January 22, 2026 at 6:00 P.M. at the Watertown Community Center.

Alderpersons Present: April Pearson, Caleb Barrett, Kyle Stacey, Laura Cromer, Steve Casey, Howell Roberts and Mayor Mike Jennings.

Mayor Jennings called the meeting to order and led with prayer.

Motion made by Laura Cromer and proper second by Howell Roberts to approve December 16th minutes. Motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC BUSINESS-COMMENTS

Katie Smith who lives at 234 West Main Street was present asking if the City will have any warming stations set up since weather conditions are supposed to be bad. Mayor Jennings stated not officially but in the past churches have opened their doors, we can check on and post on the City's Website.

Hannah Petty who lives at 236 Commerce Avenue was present concerning drainage issues of not being able to flush toilet. Roto Rooter was called and inspected sewer line by using camera and found mud and sand indicating probable break or compromised section of sewer line. The clog was found under the neighbor's driveway and was confirmed was connected to the same line. The plumber was able to clear blockage and restore a normal flow. The City was contacted of the issue and a clean out was installed and confirmed the issue was between the two houses. Mrs. Petty stated this was not an issue before the work started on Commerce Avenue and since they didn't have a individual clean out on their property she would like to ask the Council if they would approve reimbursement for the \$700.00 they had to spend to resolve the issue.

Bob Morgan and Cody Blythe were present at meeting and confirmed there are several houses that are tied on the same line, during the sewer rehab work some clean outs were removed.

Motion made by Steve Casey and proper second by Howell Roberts to approve the cost for \$700.00 to Mrs. Petty to cover reimbursement for plumbing bill for sewer issues. Motion carried unanimously.

Brain Conrad with Conrad Construction was present, he stated if it was an issue they have caused they can reimburse the payment.

Mayor Jennings stated we can investigate more details and can make adjustments between Conrad Construction and the City, if we can determine who was responsible for the issue. The City will go ahead and have payment ready next week.

SEWER REPORT

Dale Smith reported the new pump that was installed at the Cornwell Avenue Pump Station is having problems due to wipes. Wascon has taken the pump to their shop for repairs or to figure out a solution.

Dale had sent results from the two State inspections with his report, if any questions let him know.

Mayor Jennings stated Dale's contract ends June 30th and advised Dale to start reviewing and bring back to Council.

POLICE REPORT

Chief Henderlight asked if anyone had any questions or comments on the Police Report, no questions or comments.

FIRE REPORT

Blake Haun stated last year they responded to 530 calls.

Blake stated in regards to a warming shelter, the County EMA will have a place set up at the fairgrounds that will be open over the weekend.

Blake stated David Miller with ISO has contacted him concerning it's time for evaluation to determine ratings, at the present time we have a 5 rating. The rating schedule range is 1-10 with 1 being the best and 10 being non-existent. There's only a few in the State with a 1 rating. To have a 5 rating is a good accomplishment for Watertown. The ratings are what insurance companies use for home and commercial insurance to insure policies.

Mayor asked for Chief Haun, Chief Henderlight, Bob Morgan and Cody Blythe to check on residents if we get the winter storm that is being predicted. Make sure everyone has a safe place if heat goes out or if need food supplies try and help in any way possible to provide assistance.

PARKS AND RECREATION REPORT

Jonathan Smith stated he has not heard from his contact he was supposed to meet concerning lights for the big ballfield, he will try to go in different route for estimates and ideas.

Shannon Speck is still coming to work on Field #3.

The basketball games have been cancelled for the weekend due to the potential weather.

Softball-Baseball Signups have started and drafts will begin the week before Spring Break, six weeks away.

There are 600 kids and 58 teams playing in the basketball league this season. They are using three gyms in Watertown, Tuckers and Southside. There are 30 -32 games being played every Saturday.

Mayor Jennings stated he appreciates all the sponsors and donations that make this happen.

TRAIN MUSUEM REPORT

Chris Ferrari stated their first board meeting will be held next week and will have more updates at next meeting. Pop up museum and train greeters are going to be something that they want to start the process on. Chris has been talking with Tennessee Central and they have requested where the train loads and unloads passengers if they have permission from the City to have some type of white striping on sidewalk area for safety purposes. Also at the end of sidewalk at the loading area if a sign can be installed stating no access past a certain point that is established by them. Chris stated they can take

care of projects if they have permission since is on City's property. Cody Blythe stated they have some paint used for striping that they can take care of.

Motion made by Laura Cromer and proper second by Steve Casey to approve the striping on sidewalk and sign to be installed. Motion carried unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS

Mayor Jennings stated he just received Budget Report ending December 31st today and hasn't looked at in depth but will be having Budget Committee Meeting on February 4th with Steve Casey and Laura Cromer. The General Fund we still will have January and February property taxes to be paid and the Water and Sewer Fund has \$127,000.00 above budget and will be able to pay debt payment in May.

Mayor Jennings stated last meeting \$3,800.00 was authorized to purchase storage building for baseball-softball equipment. Jeff Tunks has reported the building will be \$3,400.00 and would like to use the difference of \$400.00 for gravel to level building. Mayor Jennings had advised to go ahead and take care of and would discuss with Council. Steve Casey stated that with any type of storage building a good foundation is needed.

Laura Cromer stated a Civics Committee Meeting will be held January 27th and will have report next month.

Mayor Jennings stated the next Turntable Meeting will be February 19th, this meeting hopefully should be the last one with the Federal Government and next step will be to start the project designing and bidding.

Mayor Jennings stated no street paving can start until the sewer rehab project is completed.

Mayor Jennings stated he spoke with Steve Jones concerning sewer project being behind on completion date. Mayor Jennings wanted to find out details concerning the delay and how quickly the job can be completed.

Brian Conrad with Conrad Construction was present to discuss sewer project. He stated a 365 day contract is more like a 9 month job before you can even start groundbreaking. The delay or lost time for three months were due to submittals and materials having to be made such as manholes. Brian stated they have had unavoidable delays the last nine months such as weather, waterline relocation and waiting on an easement.

Brian stated Notice to Proceed was signed on May 1, 2024 and the easement that was needed from the Hall Family was not obtained until October 29, 2024. The waterline approval and completion was from October 4, 2024 thru May 9, 2025. All properties on the west side on Commerce Avenue have received a sewer clean out that was not in the contract.

Brain stated that since September 22, 2025 when they sent a time extension letter until present time they have had 32 days of rain and 38 days with below freezing weather and even when the weather is good there is no guarantee there are no issues such as getting materials and parts or if all equipment is working. Also with excess rain that overloads the system this causes days that they were unable to be on the job site.

Brian stated when the job started that Commerce Avenue was the most important to get completed and they have focused on making that happen. Commerce Avenue has been a one lane road and the sewer is being installed in the middle of the street, tying over to the houses on the creek side. The services start out as two feet deep and changes to twelve feet deep to flow downhill. Brian stated he is looking at one more month of work on Commerce Avenue, they still need to install 100 feet on main line and two services going to the last two homes and those services are over 100 to 120 feet each. Their main goal is to get the work completed on Commerce Avenue. They want to get Commerce completed so they can get some asphalt down and in spring be ready to overlay the whole road.

Mayor Jennings asked will there be a delay in the spring when they need to get back in the creek since normally we have a lot of rainfall during the spring? Brian stated as long as the rainfall is not every day and they have an opportunity where they have decent weather, the rain should not delay the work in the creek area.

Mayor Jennings stated before the next meeting a meeting will be held to discuss the status of project and how much progress has been made.

Steve Casey asked how many creek crossings are still left? Brian stated there are two more, one behind the city shop and the other is in the field by the post office.

Mayor Jennings asked will there will be any problems with completing the project with the remaining funds?

Brian stated they will finish the project well under budget, even with the issues they have already had which has cost them time and money the charges in the contract will not increase.

NEW BUSINESS

Mayor Jennings stated we have Board of Zoning Appeals and Planning Commission. The Board of Zoning is a three member board and the Planning Commission is a five member board. John Jewell serves on both boards and is medically unable to attend meetings at this time. We need to appoint an alternate member for the Board of Zonings and Drew Heering has volunteered to serve as an alternate member when a member is unable to attend meeting. They have a scheduled meeting set for February 2nd.

Mayor Jennings nominated Drew Heering to serve as alternate member on the Board of Zoning Appeals.

Motion made by Laura Cromer and proper second by Kyle Stacy to confirm Drew Heering to serve as the alternate member on the Board of Zoning Appeals. Motion carried unanimously.

The next Council Meeting will be February 19th at 6:00 P.M.

Zack Ankney stated he had a question from someone watching meeting, asking if something could be done about the holes in the road and their yard with all the traffic cutting from Elm and Commerce Avenue causing issues.

Cody Blythe stated they have been placing cones and barriers in their yard but when Conrad needed to move their equipment in that area the barriers were taken down.

Mayor Jennings asked if the cones can be put back up and patch the holes as much as we can at this time without having any hot mix. Cody will take care of patching the potholes.

COUNCIL MEMBERS

April Pearson stated since we now have the QR Code for Ever Bridge if we could get some posters for business windows so residents can get signed up. Heather Butler has prepared an article for the paper to include QR Code.

Caleb Barrett- No Comments

Kyle Stacy asked Chief Henderlight if he needed to move forward on getting the emergency button fixed on the outside of police department building. Chief stated he is still waiting to get an answer from AT & T, he should know more information over the next few weeks.

Laura Cromer wanted to thank Bob Morgan and Cody Blythe for all they do for the City especially fixing water leaks in the cold weather.

Steve Casey has had several people ask what the long term options are or use for the Old City Building? Steve asked would they have an option of storing the old fire truck that is not in use in the old WEMA bay area, the bay area could be utilized as a museum on train days for historical items. Steve stated that Round Lick Church has been using the bay area for oil changes to serve the community and not sure if they are still using.

Mayor Jennings stated this sounds like a good idea that we need to find out if and when Round Lick is using the bay area and discuss more at the next meeting.

Steve asked if any progress has been made on removing the trash from the upstairs of the Old City Hall Building. Cody Blythe stated some trash has been removed but a dumpster is needed since they have nowhere to take the trash. They used dump truck before but now they have no place to dump since burn pile is closed. Cody will get some quotes on a dumpster and bring back to next meeting.

Howell Roberts- No Comments

Motion made by Howell Roberts and proper second by Kyle Stacy to adjourn meeting. Motion carried unanimously.



Michael R. Jennings, Mayor



April Lamberson, City Recorder

