

**IRON RIVER CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING
Wednesday, August 20, 2025
5:15 PM
Minutes**

Mayor Rodney Dood called the Regular meeting to order at 5:15 p.m. in the Council Chambers of the Iron River City Hall.

Roll Call: Dennis Powell, Anthony Clements and Dood.

Absent: Benjamin Garcia and Ronjo Leonoff

Also, present: City Manager Rachel Andreski, City Clerk Tyana Elenbaas and Interim City Attorney Hannah L. Goodman.

Public in attendance: John LeClair, Patti Leonoff, Martha Burdick, Timmothy Ballinger, Mark Polley, Adam Polley, Mike Hoinowski, Joe Kangas, Deana Cronkright, Mark Brunswick, Pete Judd, Jordan Polzin, Doug Weesner, Jesse Casari, Zach Hautala (ICECA), and John Paramski (WICKWIRE).

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Clements moved with support from Powell to approve the agenda as presented. All in favor; Motion carried. Absent: Benjamin Garcia and Ronjo Leonoff.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Powell moved with support from Clements to approve:

- July 16, 2025, Regular Meeting Minutes, with the correction to the parcel # 054-028-162-00, which will be corrected to #054-025-162-00.
- July 16, 2025, ZBA Public Hearing Meeting Minutes

All were in favor; Motion carried. Absent: Benjamin Garcia and Ronjo Leonoff

PUBLIC COMMENT

Timm Ballinger raised concern regarding the use of pesticides or herbicides at Nelson Field and Bachman Park. He questioned whether State and Federal regulations were followed and stated his belief that violations may have occurred. He inquired about the availability of Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) related to any substances used. He emphasized the importance of transparency and stated that public concerns regarding chemical use in public spaces should be addressed.

Mark Brunswick, a 50-year resident of Iron River residing on Division Street, addressed the City Council regarding the poor condition of the sidewalk near his home. He expressed concern that the sidewalk poses a safety hazard to his family and other pedestrians. Mr. Brunswick recalled a water line break several years ago that was repaired by the city, stating he believes the sidewalk was not properly restored afterward. He emphasized that the situation has continued to deteriorate and reiterated his concerns about the hazard. Mr. Brunswick also asserted that Michigan State Laws supersede local ordinances in matters such as this. He noted that the sidewalks in front of City Hall are in good condition by comparison.

Mark Polley expressed concern about the condition of sidewalks in the city, specifically noting that the sidewalk in front of his property is in poor condition and poses a safety hazard. He criticized the City for what he perceives as a lack of attention and concern regarding sidewalk maintenance.

CONSENT AGENDA

Clements moved with support from Powell to receive and file the Consent Agenda items which included the following:

- DPW Report
- IRPD Report

All were in favor; Motion carried. Absent: Benjamin Garcia and Ronjo Leonoff

REPORTS:

ICECA

- Fast Track Grant – Hautala stated that three business have been awarded the Fast Track Grant and all three are in the DDA district. He noted that round 2 will begin mid-September.
- Events – Hautala added that around 3,000 people attended Alpha's Fourth of July Celebrations. Approximately 5,000 people attended the Rodeo. He added that the Humongous Fungus Fest was also a success. He detailed the 10' x 10' pizza that sold out in about an hour and a half will go towards the Iron County Lock Lunch Program.
- Rural Readiness Grant – Hautala explained to Council that he was not invited to submit a full application. He explained that they will be exploring other options to help fund the mapping project.
- Harvest and Haunt – He noted that this event will be on the last Saturday in September.

Clements moved with support from Powell to accept the ICECA report as presented. All in favor; Motion Carried. Absent: Leonoff and Garcia.

County of Iron

Pete Judd stated that he had nothing to report.

Attorney Report (verbal)

- Global Response – Attorney Goodman reported she has been in contact with Steven Tinti regarding Mr. Shooster, who is seeking a tax write-off and will be hiring an independent appraiser.
- Sidewalk Resolution – She stated that she has begun drafting a resolution aimed at addressing sidewalk issues within the city.
- Easement- Attorney Goodman explained that she has prepared the temporary easements for the sewer project and is currently awaiting their return after being signed.
- Deeds/Zoning – She noted that she has completed two property deeds and has been working with Andreski on matters related to compliance and the Zoning Board.

Powell moved with support from Clements to accept the Attorney's Report as presented. All in favor; Motion Carried. Absent: Benjamin Garcia and Ronjo Leonoff

Manager's Report

- MDNR Conversion (Ice Lake Park) - Andreski reported that the proposal was scheduled to go before the U.P. Board on August 18, 2025, for consideration, but they were unable to hold the meeting due to not having a quorum. The meeting has been rescheduled for

September 4, 2025. Andreski added that she has been in communication with Rae Kaare, CAO of Aspirus, who expressed confidence that the proposal will be approved at that level. If successful, the proposal will then proceed to the main Aspirus Board for final approval.

- Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) Project Plan – Andreski reported that despite encountering significant red tape, progress is being made with the assistance from WICKWIRE. We received the Bond Purchase contract on August 18th there will be a pre-construction meeting on August 27th, and the final closing date on September 5th. Roustala Construction has expressed interest in beginning construction this fall, pending final approvals.
- DDA Parking Lots Project – Andreski stated that there will be a pre-construction meeting on August 27, 2025, at 11 a.m. She added that she will be coming up with a way to notify the business owners and the public regarding the parking lots. She noted that some dumpsters will be relocated while the project is going.
- 2025 Street Improvements Project – Andreski noted that construction began August 27, 2025, and will start on Sturgeon.
- DPW Superintendent Position – Andreski stated that Steve Saunders has been hired to fill the Superintendent position. He is very knowledgeable with water systems and will tentatively obtain his water license in November.
- IRPD Cadet Sponsorship – Andreski stated that Tyler Robbins has been hired as a Patrolmen. He started August 20, 2025. He is young, but eager to learn.
- The Nelson Field Light Committee – Andreski informed the Council that UPPCO has a donation committee, and they asked her to write a proposal outlining our request. She will be requesting 6 poles for the tennis courts and 1 pole for the warning siren.

Garcia moved with support from Clements to accept the Manager's Report as presented. All in favor; Motion Carried. Absent: Benjamin Garcia and Ronjo Leonoff

Windsor Center/ Joint Public Building Report

Clements moved with support from Powell to accept the Windson Center/Joint Public Building Reports as presented. All in favor; Motion Carried. Absent: Leonoff and Garcia.

FINANCIAL REPORTS

City Financial Report – July 2025

Clements moved with support from Powell to accept the City Financial Report for July 2025 as presented.

Roll Call: Ayes – 3: Powell, Clements and Dood. Nays – 0. Absent – 2: Leonoff and Garcia. Motion Carried.

Accounts Payable Report – July 2025

Powell moved with support from Clements to accept the Accounts Payable Report for July 2025 as presented.

Roll Call: Ayes – 3: Powell, Clements and Dood. Nays – 0. Absent – 2: Leonoff and Garcia. Motion Carried.

City Attorney Invoice – July 2025

Clements moved with support from Powell to accept the City Attorney Invoice for July 2025 in the amount of \$1,292.06.

Roll Call: Ayes – 3: Powell, Clements and Dood. Nays – 0. Absent – 2: Leonoff and Garcia. Motion Carried.

OLD BUSINESS

Sidewalk Ordinance – Initiation by Owner

Andreski and Attorney Goodman were unable to meet to work on the policy/resolution.

Dood moved with the support of Clements to table this item until next meeting. All in favor; Motion Carried. Absent: Leonoff and Garcia.

Iron County Trail Club Expansion Proposal

Clements stated that he didn't have any questions regarding the agreement and added that it is straightforward.

Clements moved with support from Powell to sign the License Agreement for the Use of City Property for the Iron County Trail Club Expansion Proposal.

Roll Call: Ayes – 3: Powell, Clements and Dood. Nays – 0. Absent – 2: Leonoff and Garcia. Motion Carried.

NEW BUSINESS

2025 Ice Control Sand Bid

The Department of Public Works (DPW) requested that Spicer assist with the delivery because the City only has the manpower to utilize two single axle trucks, which would increase the amount of time it would take to haul.

Powell moved with the support of Clements to award the ice control sand bid to James Spicer, Inc at \$9.32/ton and assistance with delivery at \$3/ton.

Roll Call: Ayes – 3: Powell, Clements and Dood. Nays – 0. Absent – 2: Leonoff and Garcia. Motion Carried.

MERS Defined Contribution Plan Agreement Amendment

Andreski explained that when the retirement account for the City Manager was set up in 2015, MERS had made an error in the agreement. The agreement stated that 100% of the manager's wage would be the employer's contribution. The agreement is supposed to state 10% of the manager's wage would be the employer's contribution. Andreski assured Council that only 10% had been contributed, but the paperwork would need to be amended.

Clements moved with support from Powell to sign the MERS Defined Contribution Plan Agreement Amendment to rectify the clerical error.

Roll Call: Ayes – 3: Powell, Clements and Dood. Nays – 0. Absent – 2: Leonoff and Garcia. Motion Carried.

Apple Blossom Trail Boardwalk Replacement – Application for Payment No. 1

John Paramski (WICKWIRE) noted that the Apple Blossom Trail Boardwalk Replacement is going well. He stated that this application for payment is for the work completed on the project through July 31, 2025.

Clements moved with support from Powell to approve the Application for Payment No. 1 in the amount of \$231,332.13. Roll Call: Ayes – 3: Powell, Clements and Dood. Nays – 0. Absent – 2: Leonoff and Garcia. Motion Carried.

Offer to Purchase City Property – 055-523-003-00

Andreski noted that she was contacted by the owner of 401 Ruby Street, Tim and Tanya Hunt. They would like to put in an offer to purchase the lot located next to their property. The parcel is

considered buildable and there are no utilities running through it. This property is not listed for sale on the City's website. The assessor assessed the property at \$3,000.

Clements moved with support from Powell to accept the offer to purchase city property – 055-523-003-00 in the amount of \$3,000 plus legal fees and contingent on a survey provided by Tim and Tanya Hunt.

Roll Call: Ayes – 3: Powell, Clements and Dood. Nays – 0. Absent – 2: Leonoff and Garcia. Motion Carried.

Offer to Purchase City Property – 042-740-009-00

Andreski explained that last year Chuck and Melissa Pollock offered to purchase the property and at that time the Council declined. This is considered a non-buildable lot. She noted that the City continues to maintain the property, which included cutting the grass multiple times this and last summer. The assessor has valued the property at \$1,200 and the Pollocks have put in an offer of \$1,000. Andreski added that it has cost us well over \$1,000 to maintain the property. Powell noted that there is no sense in keeping the property, as it is non-buildable.

Clements moved with support from Powell to accept the offer to purchase city property – 042-740-009-00 in the amount of \$1,000 plus legal fees and contingent on a survey provided by the Pollocks.

Roll Call: Ayes – 3: Powell, Clements and Dood. Nays – 0. Absent – 2: Leonoff and Garcia. Motion Carried.

Ayres Associates, Inc – Amendment No. 1 to Agreement

Andreski stated that the City contracts with Ayres to perform our State of Michigan mandated bridge inspections. She met with two representatives from GEI Consultants who were hired by MDOT to perform Quality Assurance and Quality Control and record their findings. The findings need to be addressed based on the US Department of Federal Highway Administration's updated guidelines. If these findings are not addressed, MDOT can withhold State and Federal transportation funds. Ayres has provided an Amendment to the existing contract, and they have until September to address the findings.

Clements moved with support from Powell to accept Amendment No. 1 to Agreement in the amount of \$6,300.

Roll Call: Ayes – 3: Powell, Clements and Dood. Nays – 0. Absent – 2: Leonoff and Garcia. Motion Carried.

Budget Amendment Set No. 4 – Final

Andreski noted that we finished strong financially and the City will have its annual audit in September. Clements moved with support from Powell to accept Budget Amendment Set No. 4 – Final.

Roll Call: Ayes – 3: Powell, Clements and Dood. Nays – 0. Absent – 2: Leonoff and Garcia. Motion Carried.

Reporter Building Renovations for Iron River City Hall – Application for Payment No. 4 and Change Order No. 3

John Paramski (WICKWIRE) noted that the renovations are going well. This payment is for the work completed on the project through August 8, 2025. He added that the Change Order is for the removal and replacement of the concrete sidewalk from the parking lot towards the building. This will create a more cohesive parking area outside the new City Hall. This work will be completed before the parking lot is reconstructed.

Clements moved with support from Powell to approve the Reporter Building Renovations for Iron River City Hall – Application for Payment No. 4 in the amount of \$112,300.00 and accept Change Order No. 3 in the amount of \$3,800.00.

Roll Call: Ayes – 3: Powell, Clements and Dood. Nays – 0. Absent – 2: Leonoff and Garcia. Motion Carried.

Zoning Board of Appeals Appointment

Andreski stated that at the last Planning Commission meeting, Mike Hoinowski volunteered to hold the position. The motion passed unanimously to recommend Hoinowski for the Zoning Board of Appeals. It was noted that there are still 2 more vacancies on the Zoning Board of Appeals.

Dood moved with support from Powell to appoint Michael Hoinowski to the Zoning Board of Appeals. All in favor; Motion Carried. Absent: Leonoff and Garcia.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Jesse Casari (VFW) stated that he is the commander of the VFW Post 3134. He voiced concern about the storm drainage behind the VFW. He noted the storm drain that goes down to the river is not draining water, but now the VFW is sucking out 45 gallons of water from the basement every day. He noted a hump in the back, and he would like to know where the water from the basement is coming from. He requested that someone come and put a camera down the drain to look and see if there is an issue. He noted that they have spent around \$14,000 trying to rectify the water in the basement. He added that they were told there was a work order put in to look at the issue, but he is unsure of when it was put in. He voiced concern about plowing in the wintertime with that hump. He worries that the hump will be ripped out.

Andreski stated that Superintendent Steve Saunders and Foreman Jeff Andreski did go out to the VFW and the City Engineer will be out to look at issue and then they will get a plan together to fix the issue.

Mark Polley again voiced his concerns regarding alleged corruption within the City. He had an article, in which he stated, showing that there is corruption with the City Manager and the Chief. He accused the Council of not doing their jobs and inquired about Craig Richardson and his alleged legal issues.

Adam Polley accused the Council of misleading the public about the renovation costs and expressed strong opposition to the project, stating that it could lead to the financial ruin of the city and is unfair to taxpayers. He added that he was told by a source that the Veteran's would not be allowed to move into the new city hall and that the building would be coming in over budget. He was also told from a source that the current city hall would be torn down and could lead to bankruptcy for the City.

Timm Ballinger stated that he approached Andreski regarding a Facebook post where he felt she was public shaming a resident for blight. He noted that there were 167 comments and when he went to comment, commenting was turned off. He asked why the public forum was closed. He alleged that it is a violation of his Freedom of Speech. He continued that Andreski has denied FOIAs and he asked council to address his concerns.

COUNCIL MEMBER COMMENTS

Powell asked Andreski to explain why the veterans were not relocating into the New City Hall. Andreski noted that the City offered but, they had chosen not to come. They didn't feel that the area

that was available to them was adequate and stated that they would look elsewhere. Also, Mayor Dood attended the Veteran's Meeting too.

Powell asked Andreski to explain why the grass is not being maintained over by the Fire Hall.

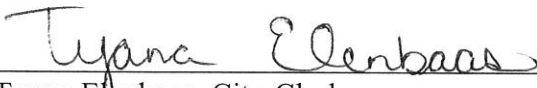
Andreski added that the explosion site has not been maintained because there were some legal issues with the initial contractor who bid the project. Now that the legal has been settled, a new contractor has been hired to clean up the area.

Clements stated that he felt that it is time for the Council to revisit opening the Cemetery. He added that he has heard that all surrounding cemeteries are full. He asked if this issue may be placed on next month's agenda. Andreski stated that it would be just a matter of paperwork and surveying to expand, but she will do some research, and it will be put on the next agenda.

Clements added that there is in fact a meeting room at the new City Hall.

ADJOURNMENT

Dood motioned with support from Powell to adjourn the meeting at 6:09 p.m. All in favor. Motion carried. Absent: Leonoff and Garcia.



Tyana Elenbaas, City Clerk