



**REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OF THE
CITY OF NEOGA
HELD IN THE CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS, MUNICIPAL BUILDING
533 CHESTNUT AVENUE, NEOGA, IL
JANUARY 13, 2025**

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Mayor Helm. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Those present were Commissioners Williams, Schabbing, and Mayor Helm. Commissioner Edwards was absent, and Commissioner Letizia arrived at 7:13pm. Others present were City Clerk Brenda Evans, City Treasurer Diana Foor, Superintendent Shawn Durbin, News Editor Billie Chambers, Pam Thompson, Sara Stepp, Jack Harris, Bob Meek, Ryan Lengacher, Tom Webb, Richard Hostetler, and Andrew Finfrock.

MINUTES

After reviewing the regular session minutes from December 23, 2024, Commissioner Schabbing made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Williams. Ayes, Commissioner Schabbing, Williams, and Mayor Helm. Nays, none. Motion carried. 3-0.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Bob Meek expressed his desire to have the council review the building codes and the square footage for residential housing. Meek said that he believes the new housing trend is for smaller homes which do not require a large lot. Mr. Meek explained that he has two (2) lots located at 7th and Wilson Avenue which has only one home located on it. Meek said he would like to know if he could separate the lots to allow one or two small homes on the property. After a brief discussion, Mayor Helm said that they will bring this subject to the Zoning Board to review.

PUBLIC AFFAIRS, MAYOR HELM

ORDINANCE #1103-01-2025

An Ordinance Amending Chapter 6 of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Neoga, Illinois (Alcohol Beverages)

After reviewing the ordinance, Commissioner Williams asked if the Kelly Bar would be grandfathered in? Evans said she didn't have that answer. Commissioner Williams said that he would like to have all the council members present to take a vote. Commissioner Schabbing made a motion to accept the ordinance as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Letizia. Ayes, Commissioner Schabbing and Letizia. Nays, Commissioner Williams and Mayor Helm. Motion did not pass and was asked to be brought back to the council.

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FIRST NEIGHBOR BANK SOLAR VARIANCE

Ryan Langacher, a representative from Wellspring Solar, reviewed the proposed solar project for First Neighbor Bank's request for a solar variance. Langacher explained that the bank is requesting roof mount solar panels that will be tipped at a 20-degree angle which will provide 40% energy offset. The bank is also requesting ground solar panels as well that will be located east of the bank parking lot according to Langacher. These panels will begin 2 ½ feet above ground and will be 11 feet high tipped at a 35-degree angle. These panels will be tipped toward the east (facing the residence). These panels will provide another 30% energy offset. According to Mr. Langacher, the bank will be placing solar panels at their other facilities as well. Pam Thompson, the owner of the property located east of the bank parking lot, said that she is not in favor of the ground solar panels. Local residents Sara Stepp and Jack Harris agreed. City Clerk Evans informed the council that they will be receiving a letter of recommendation from the Zoning Board at the next meeting. Evans said at the public hearing regarding this variance, the zoning board voted to recommend roof mounted solar panels, but the ground solar panels were a tie vote. It was the consensus of the council to wait for the recommendations and revisit the variance request when a full council is available.

ORDINANCE #1103-01-2025

An Ordinance Amending Chapter 6 of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Neoga, Illinois

City Administrator/Clerk Evans explained the TIF application from The Kelly Bar & Grille owners Blair Banning and Cameron Wingler. Evans said that the applicants were requesting \$427,545 to replace the roofs on four (4) buildings, new doors, new windows, and other exterior renovations. According to the application, the owners will be adding \$150,000 of their money for non-qualifying items like electric, plumbing, equipment, and remodeling. After a lengthy discussion, Commissioner Williams felt 50% should be given to the applicants. Commissioner Letizia and Schabbing agreed. It was the consensus of the council to have a contract written for \$215,772.50.

SPECIAL EVENT LIQUOR LICENSE FOR NEOGA BOOSTERS

City Administrator/Clerk Evans informed the Council that she has received a special event liquor license application from the Neoga Booster Club for a "Music Bingo" fundraiser. The fundraiser will be held at the Catholic Church Assumption Hall. After a brief discussion, Commissioner Letizia made a motion to grant the special event liquor license when the paperwork was completed. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Schabbing. Ayes, Commissioner Letizia, Williams, Schabbing and Mayor Helm. Nays, none. motion carried. 4-0.

BUILDING CODES AND ENFORCEMENT

City Administrator/Clerk Evans informed the Council that effective January 1st, the state statutes changed regarding building codes. Currently the city enforces the building codes, which means the city's building inspector, Jeff Morrison, inspects the properties. With the new state statutes, Morrison will be signing off of items that he is not qualified to inspect. With that said, the city can still be compliant with the new state statutes by not enforcing the state codes. This would require the developer/property owner to comply with the state codes. After a brief discussion, Commissioner Letizia made a motion for Neoga to be a non-enforcing community. The motion was seconded by

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Commissioner Williams, Ayes, Commissioner Letizia, Williams, Schabbing, and Mayor Helm. Nays, none. motion carried. 4-0.

FINANCE, COMMISSIONER SCHABGING

TREASURERS REPORT

After reviewing the treasurer's report, Mayor Helm ordered that the treasurer's report be filed in the City Clerk's records.

PUBLIC PROPERTY, COMMISSIONER LETIZIA

RENEWAL OF NEOGA BUCKS LEASE AND NEOGA DAYS COMMITTEE LEASE

City Administrator/Clerk Evans reminded the Council that the Neoga Bucks lease is coming up for renewal. Evans also said that in the past the Neoga Days Committee has asked about leasing a room at the Community Center; however, they did not produce the insurance as required. After a brief discussion, Commissioner Letizia made a motion to renew the Neoga Bucks lease. Commissioner Williams seconded the motion. Ayes, Commissioner Letizia, Williams, Schabbing, and Mayor Helm. Nays, none. Motion carried. 4-0.

GAS AND ELECTRIC METERS AT NCC

The Council discussed installing a submeter for the electric and gas usage at the Neoga Community Center (NCC). Mayor Helm said that he thought the only gas that is used would be for the stove and oven in the kitchen area, so accounting for that usage would be easy. The electricity, which is used by everyone in the building, would be harder to keep separate. Commissioner Williams made a motion to install an electric submeter to determine what the usage is in the kitchen area. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Letizia. Ayes, Commissioner Williams, Schabbing, Letizia, and Mayor Helm. Nays, none. Motion carried. 4-0.

IDOT INVOICE #126456

After reviewing the invoice for the ITEP sidewalk project, Commissioner Letizia made the motion to pay the invoice in the amount of \$82,920.35. Commissioner Williams seconded the motion. Ayes, Commissioner Letizia, Williams, Schabbing, and Mayor Helm. Nays, none. Motion carried. 4-0.

Commissioner Letizia asked Superintendent Durbin how the department plows the snow, because he has received a few complaints. Durbin said that all three employees plowed on Sunday and came in again early on Monday. He also informed the council that the sand spreader broke, and they are getting parts to repair it; however, they have been putting salt down on the high traffic roads.

STREETS AND ALLEYS, COMMISSIONER EDWARDS

No report was given.

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HEALTH AND SAFETY, COMMISSIONER WILLIAMS

No report was given.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Commissioner Schabbing made a motion to move into executive session for Personnel Section 2 (c)(1) – Employee hiring, firing, compensation, discipline and performance, as well as Sale or Lease of Real Estate – Section 2 (c)(6) – limited to actual setting of price for sale or lease of public property at 8:34 p.m. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Williams. Ayes, Commissioner Schabbing, Letizia, Williams, and Mayor Helm. Nays, none. Motion carried. 4-0.

RECONVENED AND ROLL CALL

The meeting was reconvened at 9:29 p.m. on a motion from Commissioner Williams. Commissioner Schabbing seconded the motion. Those present for roll call were Commissioners Williams, Schabbing, Letizia, and Mayor Helm.

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Williams made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:37 p.m. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Schabbing. Ayes, Commissioner Williams, Schabbing, Letizia, and Mayor Helm. Nays, none. Motion carried. 4-0.

Brenda Evans, City Clerk