



UNOFFICIAL MINUTES OF THE NEWTON CITY COUNCIL
108 N. VAN BUREN St.
NEWTON, IL 62448
February 3, 2026

- **City Insurance Committee Meeting on Tuesday, February 3, 2026 at 5:30 PM.**

1. CALL TO ORDER: Joshua J. Kuhl, Mayor
Mayor Joshua Kuhl called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.
2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE led by Mayor Joshual Kuhl
Pledge of allegiance to the flag was led by Mayor Joshua Kuhl
3. ROLL CALL: Maggie McDonald, City Clerk
Physically present: Gayle Glumac, Kaleb Wright, RJ Lindemann, Eric Blake and Mike Swick
Also present: Attorney William Heap, Treasurer Melissa Brooks and City Clerk Maggie McDonald
Absent: Alderman Larry Brooks
4. ADOPT OR AMEND AGENDA: **AMEND: Add Personnel to Executive Session**
Motion was made by Mike Swick, seconded by Gayle Glumac, to adopt the amended agenda, adding Personnel to Executive Session.
Ayes: Glumac, Wright, Lindemann, Swick
Nays: None
5. APPROVAL OF REGULAR MINUTES of January 20, 2026.
Motion was made by Kaleb Wright, seconded by RJ Lindemann, to approve the minutes of the January 20, 2026 meeting of the Newton City Council.
Ayes: Wright, Lindemann, Swick, Glumac
Nays: None
6. PUBLIC COMMENTS: **NONE**

Alderman Eric Blake arrives at 6:03 PM.

7. COMMITTEE REPORTS OR COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVE REPORTS:

- **Personnel Committee Meeting on Wednesday, January 21, 2026 at 6:00 PM.**

Personnel Committee Meeting Minutes January 21, 2026 6:00 PM – 7:14 PM

Present: Joshua Kuhl, Gayle Glumac, Kaleb Wright, Larry Brooks, RJ Lindemann, Melissa Brooks, Mike Swick and Maggie McDonald

Meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM.

- The committee moved to go out of open session and into closed session to discuss personnel. Kaleb Wright makes the motion, Gayle Glumac seconds.
- RJ Lindemann made the motion to go out of executive session and back into open session, Kaleb Wright seconds.

Meeting adjourned at 7:14 PM

Submitted by: **Mike Swick - Chairman**

- **Personnel Committee Meeting on Tuesday, January 27, 2026 at 7:00 PM.**



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108 N. VAN BUREN St.
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Personnel Committee Meeting Minutes January 27, 2026 7:04 PM – 9:27 PM

Present: Joshua Kuhl, Gayle Glumac, Kaleb Wright, Larry Brooks, RJ Lindemann, Eric Blake, Mike Swick, Melissa Brooks, Maggie McDonald, Brent Benefiel, Joshua Ochs, Tyler Weber, Harley Gray, Adam Painter, Matt Tarr, Amy Tarr, Scott Rubsam and Mike Schackmann

Meeting was called to order at 7:04 PM.

- The council met with the city Department Heads to discuss future plans, provisions and goals. There has been prior discussions about the city transitioning to a public works setting and doing away with specific departments. As for now, looking in, that doesn't seem like the best fit for the city. With that said, more responsibility will be pushed back on the Department Heads and council as a whole. This will help improve communication and create a shared understanding of each department's operations, priorities and challenges. The council will also be implementing quarterly meetings with the Department Heads.
- We will be looking in to a current software the city utilizes, InfraMap, to help record daily tasks, work orders and city assets that are used on the daily.
- The Department Heads all gave updates to the council on things that are happening in their departments, what they are seeing down the road and personal goals.

Meeting adjourned at 9:27 PM

Submitted by: **Mike Swick - Chairman**

- City Insurance Committee Meeting on Tuesday, February 3, 2026 at 5:30 PM.

City Insurance Committee Meeting Minutes February 3, 2026 5:30 PM – 5:55 PM

Present: RJ Lindemann, Joshua Kuhl, Gayle Glumac, Matt Tarr, Maggie McDonald, Mike Swick, Amy Tarr, Melissa Brooks, Brenda Phillips, Tyler Weber, Kaleb Wright, John Stone and Jim Riddle

- Cobra/IMRF continuation rates were discussed. It was recommended that the council approve the rates.
- The Symetra Stop Loss Contract was discussed. It was recommended that the council approve the contract.

Adjourned at 5:55 PM

Submitted by: **RJ Lindemann - Chairman**

8. OLD BUSINESS:

- A. Consider and act on authorizing the Estimate to the Electric Department from Smithenry Trenching to remove sidewalk and lamp post base, with replacement, on corner of N. Jackson St. and Rt. 33 in the amount of \$6,973. (This will be reimbursed by insurance.)

Motion was made by Gayle Glumac, seconded by RJ Lindemann, to authorize the Estimate to the Electric Department from Smithenry Trenching to remove sidewalk and lamp post base, with replacement, on corner of N. Jackson St. and Rt. 33 in the amount of \$6,973. (This will be reimbursed by insurance.)

Ayes: Lindemann, Blake, Swick, Glumac, Wright

Nays: None

- B. Consider and act on authorizing the quote to the Electric Department from Lighting Associates for purchase of a new street light in the amount of \$16,505. (This will be reimbursed by insurance.)



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NEWTON, IL 62448
February 3, 2026**

Motion was made by Gayle Glumac, seconded by Kaleb Wright, to authorize the quote to the Electric Department from Lighting Associates for purchase of a new street light in the amount of \$16,505. (This will be reimbursed by insurance.)

Ayes: Blake, Swick, Glumac, Wright, Lindemann

Nays: None

- C. Consider and act on authorizing the purchase of a 2023 Dodge Durango for the Police Department in the amount of \$35,000.

Motion was made by Kaleb Wright, seconded by Mike Swick, to authorize the purchase of a 2023 Dodge Durango for the Police Department in the amount of \$35,000.

Ayes: Swick, Glumac, Wright, Lindemann

Nays: Blake

9. NEW BUSINESS:

- A. Consider and act on authorizing Cobra/IMRF's continuation of rates effective March 1, 2026 to February 28, 2027.

Motion was made by RJ Lindemann, seconded by Kaleb Wright, to authorize the Cobra/IMRF's continuation of rates effective March 1, 2026 to February 28, 2027.

Ayes: Glumac, Wright, Lindemann, Blake, Swick

Nays: None

- B. Consider and act on authorizing the Invoice from JB Esker and Sons, Inc. for work completed at the pickleball courts in Peterson Park.

Motion was made by Gayle Glumac, seconded by Kaleb Wright, to authorize the #1 and final Invoice in the amount of \$124,015.00 from JB Esker and Sons, Inc. for work completed at the pickleball courts in Peterson Park.

Ayes: Wright, Lindemann, Blake, Swick, Glumac

Nays: None

- C. Discuss gutter issues at City Hall.

The city has received 3 quotes to fix the leaking gutters at City Hall. Alderman Glumac had also reached out and talked with another company about repairs. After discussion, it was consensus of the council to fix half of the gutters on the West side of City Hall in the amount of \$900.

- D. Consider and act on authorizing the Estimate from Crawford Guttering to fix the guttering issues at City Hall.



UNOFFICIAL MINUTES OF THE NEWTON CITY COUNCIL
108 N. VAN BUREN St.
NEWTON, IL 62448
February 3, 2026

Motion was made by Mike Swick, seconded by Kaleb Wright, to authorize the Estimate from Craford Guttering in the amount of \$900 to fix the guttering issues at City Hall.

Ayes: Lindemann, Blake, Swick, Glumac, Wright

Nays: None

- E. Consider and act on authorizing three city employees to attend the Illinois Rural Water Association's 44th Annual Technical Conference on February 17 – 19, 2026 in Effingham, Illinois. Total cost is \$570.00 plus milage expense.

Motion was made by RJ Lindemann, seconded by Kaleb Wright, to authorize three city employees to attend the Illinois Rural Water Association's 44th Annual Technical Conference on February 17 – 19, 2026 in Effingham, Illinois. Total cost is \$570.00 plus milage expense.

Ayes: Blake, Swick, Glumac, Wright, Lindemann

Nays: None

10. STATEMENTS BY:

Glumac: Thank you to all the city departments that worked long hours getting our roads cleaned after the snow. Big thank you to Mayor Kuhl and Gary Lindemann for shoveling sidewalks by the grade school for the little kids. Thank you to our Jasper County Chamber of Commerce for another great banquet. Lots of fun.

Wright: Thank you everyone for their work clearing the snow.

Lindemann: “**On May 6th, 2025**, Mayor Kuhl asked the council to approve \$40,000 of public funds to be directed to Jared Wagner through the demolition reimbursement program. This payment would be applied to 3 separate properties, which is explicitly forbidden by Newton's law.

The council found Jared's "estimates" for these demolitions to be too high, and said they would only approve up to \$29,000. Jared provided new "estimates" on the spot, and the council approved the reimbursements at the mayor's request.

On January 6th, 2026, Jared Wagner provided evidence of his "costs" for the demolition projects (which were illegally approved). The only evidence provided was a cashier's check made out by Jared Wagner to be paid to the order of Jared Wagner's construction company.

On January 20th, 2026, the city council - at both Josh Kuhl's and Jared Wagner's heated insistence - approved to pay Jared Wagner \$29,000 without requiring that he provide proper evidence that he incurred most of the claimed expenses

On January 27th, 2026, Seven days after Josh Kuhl, the mayor of our town, was **instrumental** in directing taxpayer money to Jared Wagner, it was announced that Josh Kuhl would be joining Jared Wagner Construction as a roofing specialist.

I know I've been very combative these past months about this issue. I do apologise for that. That said, I believe that had I not argued against this, the original applications and the unitemized receipts would have been approved without any questions asked. These questions need to be asked. More importantly, it's our job



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to demand answers to them. We're supposed to be public servants who work for the public good. We all have friends and family who could benefit from taxpayer dollars in some way. We're supposed to be objective, and we're **always** supposed to recuse ourselves when there is a conflict of interest. At this, I think it is clear that the mayor failed. Real transparency in government is essential if we are to build trust with our voters. We did not provide that."

Voiced opposition to the Capital Development Fund.

Blake: No comments.

Swick: Thanked the departments for their hard work cleaning snow. Thanked the Jasper County Chamber for another wonderful evening at their banquet.

City Attorney: No comments.

City Treasurer: No comments.

City Clerk: No comments.

Mayor: Read a letter from one of our new officers, Billy Reese, that was hired back in October of 2025. Billy expressed his sincere appreciation to the city for allowing him the opportunity serve the City of Newton and our community as a part-time police officer. He mentions what an honor it is to serve under our leadership and to work alongside the members of the Newton Police Department.

Thanked all the city departments for a job well done cleaning our roads after the snow. Big thank you to Gary Lindemann for his help shoveling sidewalks by the Elementary School. The city will discuss looking into equipment to clean sidewalks by the school, as the safety of our children is always top priority.

Shout out to the Jasper County Chamber of Commerce for another successful turnout and fun evening. Congratulations to all the Chamber Winners from the banquet.

11. NEXT REGULAR MEETING: February 17, 2026 at 6:00 PM

SCHEDULED COMMITTEE MEETINGS:

- Zoning Board of Appeals Meeting on Tuesday, February 10, 2026 at 6:00 PM at the Jasper County Courthouse. (4 Zoning Permit Requests will be heard and discussed that evening)

12. EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Motion was made by Kaleb Wright, seconded by Mike Swick, to go out of open session and into closed session to discuss sale of real estate and personnel pursuant to the exceptions section of the Open Meetings Act pertaining to those areas of discussion.

Ayes: Swick, Glumac, Wright, Lindemann, Blake

Nays: None

Open session suspended at 6:36 PM.



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Motion was made by Mike Swick, seconded by Gayle Gluma, to go out of closed session and back into open session.

Ayes: Blake, Swick, Glumac, Wright, Lindemann

Nays: None

Open session resumed at 7:12 PM.

Mayor Kuhl announced that during closed session the council discussed sale of real estate and personnel.

13. ADJOURNMENT:

Motion was made by Gayle Glumac, seconded by Mike Swick, to adjourn the meeting.

Ayes: Glumac, Wright, Lindemann, Blake, Swick

Nays: None

Meeting adjourned at 7:13 PM.

Submitted by:
Maggie McDonald
City Clerk