

City of Decatur
Board of Public Works & Safety Minutes
September 2, 2025

The City of Decatur Board of Public Works and Safety Members met on September 2, 2025 at 6:00 P.M. at City Hall in Council Chambers, 172 N. Second Street, Decatur. Members present were Tyler Fullenkamp, Craig Coshow, and Mayor Dan Rickord. Also present were Clerk-Treasurer Eran Hackman and City Attorney Anne Razo.

The Clerk-Treasurer had emailed the minutes from the August 19, 2025 meeting. Coshow made a motion to adopt the minutes of August 19, 2025 as emailed. Seconded by Fullenkamp, the motion was adopted.

The first item on the agenda was an update regarding the funding amounts for the Water Utility Improvement Project. Appearing before the Board were Jennifer Wilson from Crowe, LLP and Ben Adams from Commonwealth Engineering, LLC. Adams noted that following his appearance before the Board a month ago, he received an email from the State Revolving Fund (SRF) asking if Decatur would be interested in increasing the size of the project due to more money being available. Adams shared the original project covered 14 areas in the City. With early funding amounts of \$12.5 million, 9 of the 14 areas could be completed. To do all 14 areas would cost \$21 million. However, it was shared Decatur is in a great position to get a deal for funding through the SRF. Mayor Rickord pointed out that 94 cities had requested SRF funds and Decatur is one of 10 selected for funding. Wilson shared SRF is offering Decatur a \$5.5 million grant which would be a forgivable bond (no pay back). Another \$2.5 million would be a zero-interest loan. Another \$10 million would come as a loan, and she shared the current SRF interest rate is currently 2.88% which is half of the current market rate. The remaining \$3 million would be another loan with a 35-year payback period.

Wilson shared the original approved rate increase that goes into effect January 1, 2026 is \$4.40. Due to the proposed \$21 million project, the estimated increase is an additional \$6.60 for a total of \$11.00.

Mayor Rickord noted the water lines being included in this project include lines that are at least 50 years old, and he shared the main breaks often occur in the cold of winter. Mayor Rickord also shared that about 50 main breaks occurred in fewer than two months when water pressure changed due to work being done on one of the City's three water towers. Mayor Rickord noted the replacement project is at least 10 years overdue. Following the information regarding the new funding figures and the outline of funding, Coshow made a motion to recommend to the Council the acceptance of the new higher amount of funding and the need to increase the water rates. Seconded by Fullenkamp, the motion was adopted.

Erin Heyerly, Utilities Auditor, appeared before the Board seeking permission to write off the 5-year delinquent utility accounts totaling \$8,263.45. Coshow made a motion to write off the \$8,263.45 of delinquent utility accounts. Seconded by Fullenkamp, the motion was adopted.

Police Chief Kevin Gerber appeared before the Board noting the resignation of Officer Eric Mitchell, who is joining the Indiana State Police. It was shared that Officer Mitchell's last day will be September 12, 2025. Fullenkamp made a motion to make a matter of record the letter of resignation from Officer Eric Mitchell. Seconded by Coshow, the motion was adopted.

Police Chief Kevin Gerber then sought permission to hire Conrad Dyer who has served several years as a Confinement Officer in the Adams County Jail and who has passed all the requirements for becoming a new police officer. Dyer had also been one of the top choices during the last hiring application process. Fullenkamp made a motion to allow Chief Gerber to proceed with the hiring of Conrad Dyer as the new Police Officer. Seconded by Coshow, the motion was adopted.

Curt Witte, Building and Zoning Superintendent, appeared before the Board regarding a Code Enforcement issue for 1024 Adams Street. The property is owned by REL Real Estate in Atlanta, Georgia. Witte shared his department has been working with this issue since May 2025 and things have only gotten worse. Witte shared he would recommend the hiring of a contractor to clean up the area as he feels that is the only solution to getting it cleaned. Coshow made a motion to allow Superintendent Witte permission to hire a contractor to clean up 1024 Adams Street and to invoice the property owner. Seconded by Fullenkamp, the motion was adopted.

Next on the agenda was Fire Chief Jeff Sheets noting Preston Bemis as his recommendation to serve as the next full-time fire fighter. Coshow made a motion to make the Certificate of Appointment for Preston Bemis as a Firefighter a matter of record. Seconded by Fullenkamp, the motion was adopted.

Coshow then made a motion to make a matter of record the Conditional Employment Contract (Fire Department) for Preston Bemis. Seconded by Fullenkamp, the motion was adopted.

Mayor Rickord shared the Decatur Plan Commission had met earlier today and approved the Final Plat Plan for the Northfield at Cross Creek. Fullenkamp made a motion to approve the action of the Decatur Plan Commission for the Final Plat Plan Review of the Northfield at Cross Creek. Seconded by Mayor Rickord, the motion passed with Coshow abstaining.

Thus, with there being no other business on the agenda, Coshow made a motion to adjourn. Seconded by Fullenkamp, the motion was adopted.

Adjournment was at 6:52 P.M.