

**City of Baldwin City
Minutes
Tuesday, December 16, 2025
Regular Council Meeting**

A. Call to Order

The Baldwin City Council was called to Regular Session at 7:00 p.m. at the Baldwin City Community Center, 712 Chapel Street, with Mayor Casey Simoneau presiding.

Present were Council Members: Jay King, Susan Pitts, Cory Venable, Scott Lauridsen and Julie Constantinescu.

Also, attending: Russ Harding-Interim City Administrator; Amara Packard-City Clerk, Shiloh Afonja-Deputy City Clerk and Mike Patrick-Police Chief.

B. Approval of Agenda

Cory Venable moved and Jay King seconded to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried with a vote of 5 yes and 0 no.

C. Consent Agenda

Cory Venable moved and Susan Pitts seconded to approve the consent agenda as presented. Motion carried with a vote of 5 yes and 0 no.

1. Special Meeting Minutes 12.01.2025
2. Special Meeting Minutes 12.02.2025
3. Minutes - 12.02.25
2. Scheduled Claims List

D. Public Comment

E. Special Reports or Presentations

F. Old Business

G. New Business

1. Year to Date Financials

Matt Lawn with Baker Tilly went over the year to date financials, how they compared to this time last year, and reviewed each utility.

Scott Lauridsen recommended adding reserve fund balance to this presentation.

2. Communication Policy

The communication committee met a handful of times and Susan Pitts compiled all the information and consolidated it into a matrix on how to disseminate the information. Susan thanked everyone that was on the committee and said Rachel Moore was instrumental in helping Susan put the information together.

Susan Pitts moved and Jay King seconded to approve the communications policy. Motion passes 5-0.

3. Resolution 2025-24 - Crosswalk Bid

Jason Hoskinson from BG Consultants reviewed the bids that were received for the crosswalk project. There were eight bids submitted, with Kings Construction from Oskaloosa having the lowest bid price of \$235,000.00. This is an 85/15, so after completion of the project, 85% will be reimbursed back to the city.

Jerry Smith-1308 High Street-asked if there will be traffic control. Jason said there will be pedestrian activated buttons with rapid flashing beacons.

Julie Constantinescu moved and Susan Pitts seconded to approve the bid from King Construction for the crosswalk on 56HWY. Motion passes 5-0.

Julie Constantinescu moved and Susan Pitts seconded to accept resolution number 2025-24 for the crosswalk on 56HWY. Motion passes 5-0.

4. Black Jack Board Appointment

Susan Pitts recused herself.

The committee interviewed seven applicants and the committee recommended the following three to the council: Roger Boyd, Marta Jardon and Susan Pitts.

Tina Rakes-Baldwin City-asked who owned Black Jack and if this appointment should wait to be appointed until the new year with the new councilmember and mayor.

Julie Constantinescu said there were quite a few good candidates and the three nominations are good choices.

Cory Venable moved and Julie Constantinescu seconded to approve the Black Jack board appointments as presented. Motion passes 4-0.

Susan Pitts rejoined the meeting.

5. Library Board Appointment

The committee interviewed two applicants for the library board opening. The committee recommended Cassie Bailey.

Cory Venable moved and Julie Constantinescu seconded to approve Cassie Bailey as the library board appointment. Motion passes 5-0.

6. Outifi Agreement

This company was discussed in multiple committees, and was part of the communications committees plan. Outifi sends out text message alerts from the city to the citizens regarding outages, emergencies, road closings, upgrades to utilities or whatever might be happening in the community that needs to be communicated. This is an opt in program.

Marta Jardon-1677 N. 400 Rd.-Said this sounds like a great idea and thanked the council.

Julie Constantinescu agrees with Marta that it is a great idea.

Susan Pitts said this was discussed in the communications committee and is desperately needed.

Jay King said it is one more step towards transparency.

Susan Pitts moved and Julie Constantinescu seconded to approve the Outify agreement. Motion passes 5-0.

7. Resolution 2025-25 - Building Permit Fees

Staff thought that when the NRP was extended a few years ago, that the half price building permits were extended as well. After looking back, there was not anything approved to show the half price building permits were extended.

Tina Rakes-Baldwin City-was employed when the half price permits started. There were only a couple of building permits coming in a year. Over the years, it started to include more of the fees that were to bring in revenue for other departments. Now that the city has 3 new subdivisions ready to be built, she doesn't feel there is any reason to continue this program.

Gerald Cullumber-wanted to echo what Tina Rakes just said. He also feels that this should be tabled until he is sworn in as mayor. He believes that this decision should be left up to him and the new council member that will be sworn in next month, as to what they want to do as far as extending it, not extending it, changing the resolution, or do whatever they see fit.

Jerry Smith-1308 High Street-asked how much money has been lost from 2008 to now from halving the building permits.

This past year, the city had 22 new residential structure building permits.

Stu Young-Codes Administrator- said that there are about 113 building lots available right now. Stu asked the council to think about how we can save the builders without the taxpayer picking it up.

Scott Lauridsen stated that the city has a lot of lots and it is in the city's best interest to get those built up as quickly as possible.

This resolution is lined up to end with the NRP, March 1st of 2027.

Cory Venable said that he heard some good points, and asked if they would have had 22 new constructions in 2025 without that incentive, and how to measure that.

Scott Lauridsen moved and Cory Venable seconded to approve Resolution 2025-25 as presented. Motion passes 4-1. Julie Constantinescu-yes, Scott Lauridsen-yes, Cory Venable-yes, Susan Pitts-yes, and Jay King-no.

8. MPO Appointment

Julie Constantinescu needs to step down from the MPO position, so the council needs to appoint someone new. After some discussion, it was moved to the next meeting so the new council member will be present for the decision. The MPO is a county wide organization that looks at walking and biking trails.

H. Committee Reports

1. Budget and Finance - Scott Lauridsen/Cory Venable

Next meeting 12/19/2025 at 9:30am, second floor of City Hall

2. Community Development - Cory Venable/Susan Pitts

Next meeting will be 12/22/2025 at 4:00pm, second floor of City Hall

3. Public Safety - Susan Pitts/Jay King

Next meeting will be TBD at 4:00pm, second floor of City Hall

4. Public Works and Utilities - Julie Constantinescu/Jay King

- First snow clean up went well, getting extra sand stored up
- Installing culverts at new properties at Washington and 56HWY
- Christmas parade went well
- All park bathrooms are winterized
- Doing a walk thru with Jackson Pool tomorrow to discuss further needs to be done to finalize that project
- Repaired two water leaks in the last month both in vicinity of 8th and Elm St
- Installed 4 new water services
- Working on a First Aid agreement with a new company
- Maintenance Tech position is open
- Fencing is about to be installed

Next meeting 1/08/2025 at 9:00am, Public Works Conference Room

5. Strategic Planning-Scott Lauridsen/Julie Constantinescu

Next meeting TBD at 10:00am, second floor of City Hall

6. Lake Advisory Committee-Julie Constantinescu/Jay King

- Spillway
- Trail improvements
- Disc golf course

Next meeting TBD at 6:00pm, Community Center

7. Communications Advisory Board-Susan Pitts/Scott Lauridsen.

- Susan hopes that the council will continue to review the policy at least annually and revise as needed

I. City Administrator and Staff Comments

J. Council & Mayor Comments

Mayor Simoneau announced the winners of the Christmas light decorating contest:

1st - 316 Blaze

2nd - 1016 Kathy's Ct and 118 Wesley St.

3rd - 1105 Dearborn St.

K. Executive Session

Scott Lauridsen moved and Susan Pitts seconded to enter into executive session for the purposes of

discussing non-elected personnel with the city attorney, council and mayor for 13 minutes, until 8:10pm.

The Mayor called the regular meeting back to order at 8:10pm.

Julie Constantinescu moved and Cory Venable seconded to approve the contract with Russ Harding to be our new City Administrator. Motion passes 5-0.

L. Adjourn

Julie Constantinescu moved and Jay King seconded to adjourn the regular meeting. Motion passes 5-0. Time: 8:11 p.m.

Attest:

Amara M. Packard

City Clerk