



**COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MINUTES
January 21, 2026 * Park View**

Immediately following the Admin & Personnel Committee (approx. 3:30pm)

13600 Juneau Boulevard, Elm Grove, WI 53122

1. Roll Call

President Koleski called the meeting to order at 3.40 PM

Present: President Koleski (zoom), Trustee Stuckert (zoom), Trustee Schindler (zoom), Trustee Hillmann (zoom), Trustee Castile, Trustee Olson (zoom)

Excused: Trustee Sayas

Also Present: Village Manager Harrigan, Asst. Village Manager Sowl, Village Clerk Turner, Finance Director Lahey, Attorney de la Mora, and Attorney Kolberg

2. Approval of Agenda

Motion by Trustee Castile, seconded by Trustee Hillmann, to approve the agenda as presented.

Aye (5): President Koleski, Trustee Schindler, Trustee Hillmann, Trustee Castile, and Trustee Olson

3. Review and discussion of the Water Main Extension Policy.

Village Manager Harrigan recapped the Water Main Extension Policy item that was first taken up in June 2025. The Committee is to continue the discussion and give direction to staff. Asst Village Manager Sowl drafted the policy with some voids that need additional clarification. Goal of today's Committee of the Whole is:

1. Review draft policy
2. Update on staff discussions with Wauwatosa water
3. Discuss special assessments for connection to the water system.

Introduced Mount Pleasant as a similar community with water supplied by Racine. Once finalized, it is recommended that the policy go to Public Works Committee for review.

Village Manager Harrigan recapped the minutes from December 16, 2025 Wauwatosa water utility meeting. TID #3 is paying for the expansion of the water main engineering design for phase 2 from Caroline Heights to the tracks. The development agreement for Caroline Heights contemplates that the village will not expend any more than \$1,000,000 for the expansion of this water main. Need to study what it will take in order for the water main to be directionally bored underneath the rail tracks. Some preliminary information was provided to the water utility so that they could run a feasibility analysis. The

conclusion was, at this time, it wouldn't be appropriate to design the extension underneath the tracks because of existing spatial limitations on the west side of the tracks, meaning permanent easements would need to be acquired. There are some restrictions related to the bore pit dimensions that would need to be set up on both sides of the track. Plan to incorporate the limitations into the phase 2 engineering plan for future expansion.

Existing water service agreement with Wauwatosa only contemplates service up to Caroline Heights and needs to be amended to the new service area. The Public Service Commission will need to review and approve this expansion.

The village did state to Wauwatosa the desire to expand water throughout the village. A service level feasibility analysis study will need to be completed by Wauwatosa to understand water pressure throughout and their financial obligations.

Phase 2 was able to be completed as the feasibility study was completed when Caroline Heights was developed.

The current water expansion draft policy states 70% of the residents within a specific service area would just have to petition the village in order to initiate the feasibility study take place in order to begin the process of expanding the water main.

President Koleski stated the need to understand what project costs are passed to residents that want the water as special assessments.

Trustee Schindler clarified was the design phase 2 recommending completion up to or underneath the railroad tracks. **Village Manager Harrigan** stated TIF #3 project plan identifies that the water will be expended underneath the tracks, but the Village is limited by the amount of funding that the TIF will be able to allocate towards the expansion.

The Committee discussed the technicalities and potential restrictions of boring under the railway tracks and if the whole downtown can be completed in the same phase. Consensus was that the engineering design will need to address issues and determine cost.

Trustee Castile asked what is the rough cost. **Village Manager Harrigan** expected this to exceed the \$1,000,000 cap and the village would have to cover the additional funding.

President Koleski asked if this could be recovered from the TID in the future after Caroline Heights is paid off.

Village Manager Harrigan stated there would need to be an amended project plan to extend the funds. Merit to keeping the TID open for the downtown expansion project. **Trustee Castile** asked can only use TID revenue be used in the TID district.

Village Manager Harrigan confirmed revenue can be used within ½ mile of the district but has to apply to or impact to the said district. The village would fund the project then pay itself back from TID 2 after the obligations are paid.

President Koleski noted the next step is to get the engineering design process for the \$1,000,000 commitment through Wauwatosa.

Village Manager Harrigan recapped the Committee of the Whole minutes from June 2025 with the 5 questions posed to the Board.

1. Are property owners required to connect to municipal water at such time it becomes available, such as a mandatory connection?
2. Will connection be paid by a special charge or by a special assessment?
3. Instalment plans for payment or payment in full upon start of construction.
4. What is the threshold percentage of interested residents which would trigger investigative or conceptual review for future expansion.
5. What is the methodology for assessment or charge? There are principally 2 methods of assessment either by unit or front linear footage assessment.

Special assessment affords the water connection to be added to the tax bill at 10% per year or due in full at sale of property. Also including a 1% administration fee. Special assessment you have more than one year to pay off.

Attorney de la Mora noted there is a difference in special assessment and special charge. Special assessment does not have to be paid off in the same year. The feasibility study cost may not be a special assessment or charge to pass through as it would not derive a benefit to the resident if the study is not supportive of proceeding. Potentially able to pass through the cost after the fact when you have the ability to move forward.

President Koleski stated the 1% administration fee may need to be updated to reflect the study costs.

Discussion continued regarding ability for residents to fund the study portion and design and engineering phases. **President Koleski** noted that the village is not the first municipality to engage in this process

and need to look at examples to formulate an effective strategy.

Trustee Castile asked if a rough estimate can be shared with owners to assist them with making the decision to get to the 70% threshold to approve the water expansion study.

President Koleski stated until there is a bid the village is not in a position to provide that information. After the first phase, then can provide an idea of per a square foot but each segment may be different. **Trustee Castile** suggested a fee to home owners who petition for the preliminary study that would be refundable within the construction phase as an option to cover investigative costs.

Village Manager Harrigan noted item #3 is contemplation of installment plans. Intention is for home owners to pay over time.

Village Manager Harrigan noted the threshold of residents to trigger the area for expansion was 70% in a defined area. What is the minimum area to drive the initiation of expansion studies?

President Koleski stated the 70% threshold is to move the project forward but assuming that if it moves forward everyone will be special assessed as they all will receive water.

Village Manager Harrigan and **Attorney de la Mora** noted the if preliminary fees are unable to be captured by the 30% that did not sign off if that is the fee mechanism employed to cover preliminary costs.

President Koleski said the village will have to front the cost and then add to the final special assessment fees for all properties in the defined area.

Trustee Schindler stated discussion was based on resident-initiated water main. If the village decided to loop back to Wauwatosa then it would not need to go through the 70% threshold.

Village Manager Harrigan noted the policy needs to carve out the expectations from the village-initiated procedure and how costs of preliminary studies will be built into the special assessment.

Village Manager Harrigan reviewed methodology of assessment. Unit or front footage was discussed. Draft policy has the calculation of front footage. **Trustee Schindler** suggested a base amount plus front linear footage.

President Koleski asked if there is a minimum and maximum cost.

Trustee Schindler said a more equitable plan is to have a base cost of 30% and 70% by front footage.

President Koleski preferred the acknowledgement that there are fixed costs that need to be shared.

Attorney de la Mora suggested consulting with the engineers to come up with the charges as they will ultimately have to defend the charge.

Trustee Castile noted the draft policy stated the pipe would stay at an 8" set charge. How does the village cover the additional size pipe charges?

President Koleski there is not equitability out there currently and will continue to have inconsistencies with costs. Build in overhead or special charges to recover the incremental costs.

Village Manager Harrigan noted the draft policy largely replicates Brookfield's policy.

Trustee Hillmann agreed with base charge in addition to footage to avoid large inequities.

President Koleski confirmed 30% for base charge and 70% on linear footage charge is the revised consensus from the board.

Village Manager Harrigan noted double frontage or corner lots may create an inequity.

Trustee Castile would be interested in any legal challenges with any communities on their water main connection policies in the last 5 years. **President Koleski** asked if this is something the League would have an opinion on.

Trustee Schindler asked where the minimum and maximum numbers came up from.

Asst Village Manager Sowl stated the minimum frontage is from residential zoning district minimum. Maximum number was a question to the board.

President Koleski stated the maximum seems a little arbitrary and needs data to support.

Trustee Hillmann asked is it possible a smaller lot would be over charged on the 30/70 calculation and then would be subsidizing the larger lots.

Village Manager Harrigan said the policy can define with an either/or option for the anomalies.

President Koleski asked for the policy to illustrate with numbers to find the issues.

Trustee Schindler asked if the water main is not accessible on one side does the village subsidize the other half of the cost.

President Koleski stated an option would be if within ½ mile of the TID is it then subsidized.

Village Manager Harrigan said it would have to meet the rationale of how does it benefit the TID.

Trustee Hillmann asked how are other governmental buildings accounted for. **Attorney de la Mora** stated governmental entities do not get an exemption of special assessments.

Mike Gayle, Marion Heights was present to speak.

Noted the policy does not address the installment payments. Read the policy as paying within 3 months

of the construction starting and need to address the revision of the 70% threshold. There are 111 homes in the Marion Heights system that are currently assessed to support their water system. Ideally the conversion to Wauwatosa water would be for the whole system so Marion Heights home owners are not sharing the full cost of both systems during a transition.

President Koleski noted this is an important design criteria that needs to be captured with Marion Heights to convert all in a short period of time for economic reasons.

Village Manager Harrigan stated the policy may need to reflect community well systems in a similar manner.

Trustee Schindler requested consideration for Public Works staff constraints and asked what if the costs exceed \$2,500,000.

4. Other Business

No discussion or action on items not on the agenda.

Trustee Schindler asked if the questions posed to the attorney's will be reviewed beforehand so Trustees do not duplicate questions.

5. Adjourn

Motion by Trustee Castile, seconded by Trustee Olson, to adjourn at 4.57PM

Aye (5): President Koleski, Trustee Schindler, Trustee Hillmann, Trustee Castile, and Trustee Olson

Minutes Respectfully submitted by: Crystal Turner, Village Clerk

Minutes approved on: January 27, 2026