



TENTATIVE AGENDA  
OTTUMWA CITY COUNCIL

SPECIAL WORK SESSION NO. 2  
Council Chambers, City Hall

January 13, 2026  
5:30 O'Clock P.M.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ROLL CALL: Council Member Reid, Galloway, Hoffman, Duprey, Caviness and Mayor Foote.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

1. City Boards and Commissions – discussion and assignment of Elected Officials.
2. Ottumwa Public Safety Advisory Committee.
  - a) Ordinance No. 3234-2024 adopted December 17, 2024 that discontinued said Committee.
  - b) Revisit Committee Purpose, Definition, Structure and Duties.
3. Ottumwa City Council Invocation Policy – Draft for review and discussion.

*All items on this agenda are subject to discussion and/or action.*

ADJOURN

**\*\*\* It is the goal of the City of Ottumwa that all City Council public meetings are accessible to people with disabilities. If you need assistance in participating in City Council meetings due to a disability as defined under the ADA, please call the City Clerk's Office at (641) 683-0621 at least one (1) business day prior to the scheduled meeting to request an accommodation. \*\*\***



[ CITY OF ]

OTTUMWA

## FAX COVER SHEET

City of Ottumwa

DATE: 1/9/2026 TIME: 9:30 AM NO. OF PAGES 2  
(Including Cover Sheet)

TO: News Media CO: \_\_\_\_\_

FAX NO: \_\_\_\_\_

FROM: Christina Reinhard

FAX NO: 641-683-0613 PHONE NO: 641-683-0620

MEMO: Tentative Agenda for the Special City Council Work Session #02 to be held on  
01/13/2026 at 5:30 P.M.

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FAX MULTI TX REPORT  
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JOB NO. 1022  
DEPT. ID 4717  
PGS. 2

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TRANSACTION OK 916606271885  
916416823269  
ERROR 916416847834  
916416828482

KTVO  
Ottumwa Waterworks  
Ottumwa Courier  
Tom FM

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TX REPORT  
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JOB NO. 1022  
DEPT. ID 4717  
ST. TIME 01/09 09:32  
SHEETS 2  
FILE NAME

TX INCOMPLETE -----  
TRANSACTION OK 916606271885  
916416823269  
ERROR 916416847834  
916416828482

KTVO  
Ottumwa Waterworks  
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FROM: Christina Reinhard

FAX NO: 641-683-0613 PHONE NO: 641-683-0620

MEMO: Tentative Agenda for the Special City Council Work Session #02 to be held on  
01/13/2026 at 5:30 P.M.

| <b>City of Ottumwa Boards and Commissions</b>                      |                                |       |           |                                |  |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------|-----------|--------------------------------|--|
| <b>* Denotes Chair</b>                                             |                                |       |           |                                |  |
| <b>Airport Advisory Board</b>                                      |                                |       |           |                                |  |
| Fourth Tuesday of each Month; 1:30 PM at Airport Terminal Bldg     |                                |       |           |                                |  |
| Members: 5 (Term: 4 Years)                                         | <b>Max 3 Consecutive Terms</b> |       |           |                                |  |
|                                                                    | Exp                            | Terms |           |                                |  |
| Roberts, Dan 641.777.7302                                          | 10/1/2029                      | 2     | 2022-2029 | danr@norrisasphalt.com         |  |
| *Palen, Newell 641.777.7019                                        | 10/1/2026                      | 1     | 2023-2026 | Npalen@aol.com                 |  |
| Hull, Tom 641.799.1056                                             | 10/1/2028                      | 2     | 2018-2024 | tom@rosenmansinc.com           |  |
| Reyman, Anthony 641.680.0610                                       | 10/1/2028                      | 1     | 2025-     | areyman3@gmail.com             |  |
| Hernandez, Hector 641.750.8239                                     | 10/1/2029                      |       | 2025-     | hector.hernandez@area15rpc.com |  |
| Council Representation:                                            | Galloway                       |       |           |                                |  |
| City Staff Representation:                                         | JD Wheaton                     |       |           |                                |  |
| <b>Board of Library Trustees</b>                                   |                                |       |           |                                |  |
| Second Monday each Month; 5:00 PM at 102 W. Fourth                 |                                |       |           |                                |  |
| Members: 5 (Term: 6 Years)                                         |                                |       |           |                                |  |
|                                                                    | Exp                            | Terms |           |                                |  |
| *Kramer, Joyce 641.682.4165                                        | 7/1/2029                       | 3     | 2011-2029 | joyce.kramer01@gmail.com       |  |
| Lemberger, LeAnn 641.455.1763                                      | 7/1/2030                       | 2     | 2021-2030 | leighmichaels@hotmail.com      |  |
| Stewart, Tom 641.680.8824                                          | 7/1/2031                       | 1     | 2031-     | stewart4@mchsi.com             |  |
| Rohach, Jo 641.682.4815                                            | 7/1/2027                       | 2     | 2015-2027 | jorohach@gmail.com             |  |
| Mitchell, Ryan                                                     | 7/1/2027                       | 1     | 2023-2027 | ryan@southiowalaw.com          |  |
| Council Representation:                                            | Hoffman                        |       |           |                                |  |
| City Staff Representation:                                         | Sonja Ferrell                  |       |           |                                |  |
| <b>Cemetery Trustees</b>                                           |                                |       |           |                                |  |
| First Wednesday each Month; 9:00 AM at City Hall                   |                                |       |           |                                |  |
| Members: 5 (Term: 4 Years)                                         | <b>Max 3 Consecutive Terms</b> |       |           |                                |  |
|                                                                    | Exp                            | Terms |           |                                |  |
| Frimml, Terri 641.682.6232                                         | 7/1/2029                       | 3     | 2011-2025 | tfrimml.73@gmail.com           |  |
| Hansen, William 641.682.3180                                       | 7/1/2027                       | 2     | 2019-2027 | wvhansen@iowatelecom.net       |  |
| Carlson, James 641.455.8993                                        | 7/1/2028                       | 1     | 2023-2028 | jmerc195364@yahoo.com          |  |
| *Hunolt, John 641.682.2604                                         | 7/1/2030                       | 3     | 2011-2030 | j.hunolt@mchsi.com             |  |
| Jane Cardenzana 641.777.6805                                       | 7/1/2029                       | 1     | 2024-2029 | nanajane0511@gmail.com         |  |
| Council Representation:                                            | Reid                           |       |           |                                |  |
| City Staff Representation:                                         | Gene Rathje                    |       |           |                                |  |
| <b>Civil Service Commission</b>                                    |                                |       |           |                                |  |
| As called by Chair; 4th Wednesday each Month; 3:00 PM at City hall |                                |       |           |                                |  |
| Members: 3(Term: 4 Years)                                          | <b>Max 3 Consecutive Terms</b> |       |           | Residents of City              |  |
|                                                                    | Exp                            | Terms |           |                                |  |
| Youngman, Ann 641.680.2379                                         | 4/5/2028                       | 3     | 2016-2028 | annyoungman@mediacombb.net     |  |
| Gardner, Amy 641.814.2400                                          | 4/5/2029                       | 2     | 2021-2029 | al.gardner511@gmail.com        |  |
| *Wilson, Xavier (Ed) 641.980.6066                                  | 4/1/2026                       | 3     | 2014-2026 | ed@bufferoverrun.com           |  |
| Council Representation:                                            | Galloway                       |       |           |                                |  |
| City Staff Representation:                                         | Katy King                      |       |           |                                |  |

|                                                   |                                |       |            |                                                                                          |                           |
|---------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------|------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| <b>Historic Preservation Commission</b>           |                                |       |            |                                                                                          |                           |
| Fourth Wednesday each Month; 7:00 PM at City Hall |                                |       |            |                                                                                          |                           |
| Members: 5(Term: 4 Years)                         | <b>Max 3 Consecutive Terms</b> |       |            | Residents of City                                                                        |                           |
|                                                   | Exp                            | Terms |            |                                                                                          |                           |
| Swanson, Robert 641.244.2299                      | 1/1/2029                       | 2     | 2021-2025  | <a href="mailto:bodhranplayer55@gmail.com">bodhranplayer55@gmail.com</a>                 |                           |
|                                                   |                                |       | 2024-2025; |                                                                                          |                           |
| *Case, Brenda 641.777.7607                        | 1/1/2029                       | 3     | 2015-2019  | <a href="mailto:case.brenda7@gmail.com">case.brenda7@gmail.com</a>                       |                           |
| Bagby, Kate 505.417.8317                          | 1/1/2026                       | 1     | 2024-2026  | <a href="mailto:kate@katebagby.com">kate@katebagby.com</a>                               |                           |
|                                                   |                                |       |            |                                                                                          |                           |
| Benge, Lorna 641.777.1128                         | 1/1/2026                       | 1     | 2024-2026  | <a href="mailto:lornabenge4@gmail.com">lornabenge4@gmail.com</a>                         | Does not want reappointed |
| Dexter, Shelbi 641.226.1699                       | 1/1/2029                       | 1     | 2025       | <a href="mailto:shelbi.dexter@gmail.com">shelbi.dexter@gmail.com</a>                     |                           |
| Council Representation:                           | Duprey                         |       |            |                                                                                          |                           |
| City Staff Representation:                        | Amal Eltahir/Jake Rusch        |       |            |                                                                                          |                           |
| Need to appoint in January 2026                   |                                |       |            |                                                                                          |                           |
|                                                   |                                |       |            |                                                                                          |                           |
| <b>Human Rights Commission</b>                    |                                |       |            |                                                                                          |                           |
| Second Monday each Month; 5:30 PM at City Hall    |                                |       |            |                                                                                          |                           |
| Members: 9(Term: 4 Years)                         | <b>Max 3 Consecutive Terms</b> |       |            | Residents of City                                                                        |                           |
|                                                   | Exp                            | Terms |            |                                                                                          |                           |
| Davis, Gaylon 217.440.9842                        | 7/1/2026                       | 2     | 2022-2026  | <a href="mailto:gaylondavis.001@gmail.com">gaylondavis.001@gmail.com</a>                 |                           |
| Wilson, Nathan 641.295.0392                       | 7/1/2026                       | 2     | 2022-2026  | <a href="mailto:nathanwilson@hotmail.com">nathanwilson@hotmail.com</a>                   |                           |
| Pope, Jacquelyn 641.455.1229                      | 7/1/2028                       | 2     | 2022-2024  | <a href="mailto:jacquelynpope7@gmail.com">jacquelynpope7@gmail.com</a>                   |                           |
| Reiter, Dr. Peter 641.777.1732                    | 7/1/2028                       | 2     | 2022-2024  | <a href="mailto:reiterpeter634@gmail.com">reiterpeter634@gmail.com</a>                   |                           |
| Fenner, John 262.977.0520                         | 7/1/2029                       | 2     | 2022-2029  | <a href="mailto:fenner09158@gmail.com">fenner09158@gmail.com</a>                         |                           |
| Johnson, Connie 641.777.3754                      | 7/1/2029                       | 2     | 2022-2025  | <a href="mailto:connie.johnson5052@gmail.com">connie.johnson5052@gmail.com</a>           |                           |
| *Chestnut, Carson 641.226.1552                    | 7/1/2028                       | 1     | 2024-2028  | <a href="mailto:chestnutcarson@gmail.com">chestnutcarson@gmail.com</a>                   |                           |
| Offenburger, Tate 641.203.3416                    | 7/1/2029                       | 1     | 2025-      | <a href="mailto:offenburgert1@gmail.com">offenburgert1@gmail.com</a>                     |                           |
| Ocegueda, Paulina 641.980.2864                    | 7/1/2026                       | 1     | 2025-      | <a href="mailto:paulinaocegueda21@gmail.com">paulinaocegueda21@gmail.com</a>             |                           |
| Council Representation:                           | Reid                           |       |            |                                                                                          |                           |
| City Staff Representation                         | City Admin/Mayor               |       |            |                                                                                          |                           |
|                                                   |                                |       |            |                                                                                          |                           |
| <b>Inspection Board of Review</b>                 |                                |       |            |                                                                                          |                           |
| Meetings as called by Chair                       |                                |       |            |                                                                                          |                           |
| Members: 5 (Term: 4 Years)                        | <b>Max 3 Consecutive Terms</b> |       |            |                                                                                          |                           |
|                                                   | Exp                            | Terms |            |                                                                                          |                           |
| *Reiter, Mary Ann 515.683.1993                    | 1/18/2026                      | 3     | 2011-2026  | <a href="mailto:pjrmareiter@aol.com">pjrmareiter@aol.com</a>                             | Resigned 1/18/26          |
| Person, Dale 641.777.0124                         | 1/18/2027                      | 3     | 2011-2027  | <a href="mailto:hphac@lisco.com">hphac@lisco.com</a>                                     |                           |
| Merringer, Mark 641.682.3709                      | 1/18/2028                      | 3     | 2013-2028  | <a href="mailto:merringerelectric@live.com">merringerelectric@live.com</a>               |                           |
| Maher, Tom 515.683.3635                           | 1/18/2029                      | 2     | 2020-2029  | <a href="mailto:maherplumbingandheating@yahoo.com">maherplumbingandheating@yahoo.com</a> |                           |
| Hernandez, Hector 641.750.8239                    | 1/18/2028                      |       | 2025-      | <a href="mailto:hector.hernandez@area15rpc.com">hector.hernandez@area15rpc.com</a>       |                           |
| Need to appoint in January 2026                   |                                |       |            |                                                                                          |                           |
| Council Representation:                           | Caviness                       |       |            |                                                                                          |                           |
| City Staff Representation:                        | Amal Eltahir                   |       |            |                                                                                          |                           |
|                                                   |                                |       |            |                                                                                          |                           |
|                                                   |                                |       |            |                                                                                          |                           |
|                                                   |                                |       |            |                                                                                          |                           |
|                                                   |                                |       |            |                                                                                          |                           |

|                                                           |                                |              |           |                                                                                      |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------|-----------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Ottumwa Housing Authority</b>                          |                                |              |           |                                                                                      |
| Meetings Last Monday of Each Month; 1:00 PM at OHA Office |                                |              |           |                                                                                      |
| Members: 5(Term: 2 Years)                                 |                                |              |           |                                                                                      |
|                                                           | Exp                            | Terms        |           |                                                                                      |
| Youngman, Ann 641.680.2379                                | 11/11/2026                     | 3            | 2021-2024 | <a href="mailto:annyoungman@mediacombb.net">annyoungman@mediacombb.net</a>           |
| Hopkins, Cindy Kurtz 641.777.6897                         | 11/11/2026                     | 2            | 2023-2024 | <a href="mailto:Chopkins@firstresources.us">Chopkins@firstresources.us</a>           |
| Sammons, Mike 641.682.8369                                | 11/22/2026                     | 3            | 2020-2024 | no email                                                                             |
| *Walker, Leisa 641.680.1656                               | 11/22/2027                     | 4            | 2020-2027 | <a href="mailto:klsawalker@aol.com">klsawalker@aol.com</a>                           |
| Hatfield, Tracy 641.455.4965                              | 11/22/2027                     | 1            | 2025      | <a href="mailto:basswmn@gmail.com">basswmn@gmail.com</a>                             |
| Council Representation:                                   |                                | Hoffman      |           |                                                                                      |
| City Staff Representation:                                |                                |              |           |                                                                                      |
| <b>Ottumwa Public Safety Advisory Committee</b>           |                                |              |           |                                                                                      |
| <b>Parks Advisory Board</b>                               |                                |              |           |                                                                                      |
| Meetings Second Tuesday Each Month; 4:30 PM City Hall     |                                |              |           |                                                                                      |
| Members: 5(Term: 4 Years)                                 | <b>Max 3 Consecutive Terms</b> |              |           |                                                                                      |
|                                                           | Exp                            | Terms        |           |                                                                                      |
| *Konrad, Wesley 641.799.9336                              | 9/29/2027                      | 3            | 2017-2027 | <a href="mailto:wkonrad412@gmail.com">wkonrad412@gmail.com</a>                       |
| Reynolds, Jennifer 641.799.6146                           | 9/29/2027                      | 1            | 2022-2027 | <a href="mailto:j-reynolds85@hotmail.com">j-reynolds85@hotmail.com</a>               |
| Hellige, Kim 641.682.8626                                 | 4/19/2028                      | 3            | 2013-2028 | Kim Hellige <mkonbrook@gmail.com>                                                    |
| Allen, Landon 785.741.0041                                | 8/16/2028                      | 2            | 2022-2028 | <a href="mailto:landon.allen@ottumwaschools.com">landon.allen@ottumwaschools.com</a> |
| Cecil, David 641.799.4934                                 | 11/1/2028                      | 3            | 2016-2028 | <a href="mailto:dcecil@hotmail.com">dcecil@hotmail.com</a>                           |
| Council Representation:                                   |                                | Duprey       |           |                                                                                      |
| City Staff Representation:                                |                                | Gene Rathje  |           |                                                                                      |
| <b>Planning &amp; Zoning Commission</b>                   |                                |              |           |                                                                                      |
| Meetings First Monday Each Month; 6:00 PM City Hall       |                                |              |           |                                                                                      |
| Members: 5(Term: 4 Years)                                 | <b>Max 3 Consecutive Terms</b> |              |           |                                                                                      |
|                                                           | Exp                            | Terms        |           |                                                                                      |
| McFarland, Rick 641.455.1629                              | 4/1/2026                       | 2            | 2020-2026 | <a href="mailto:rmcfar@hotmail.com">rmcfar@hotmail.com</a>                           |
| Manson, Chuck 641.684.4961                                | 4/1/2027                       | 3            | 2012-2027 | <a href="mailto:rockmanson73@gmail.com">rockmanson73@gmail.com</a>                   |
| Hutton, Debra 641.682.6531                                | 4/1/2027                       | 3            | 2015-2027 | <a href="mailto:debrahutton@hotmail.com">debrahutton@hotmail.com</a>                 |
| Bossou, David 641.980.8062                                | 4/1/2026                       | 1            | 2021-2026 | <a href="mailto:kdbossou99@gmail.com">kdbossou99@gmail.com</a>                       |
| *Noreuil, Ashley 760.415.5384                             | 4/1/2028                       | 1            | 2021-2024 | <a href="mailto:noreuil8@hotmail.com">noreuil8@hotmail.com</a>                       |
| Council Representation:                                   |                                | Reid         |           |                                                                                      |
| City Staff Representation:                                |                                | Amal Eltahir |           |                                                                                      |
| <b>Waterworks Board of Trustees</b> Caviness              |                                |              |           |                                                                                      |
| Meetings Third Tuesday Each Month; 4:00 PM                |                                |              |           |                                                                                      |
| Members: 5 (Term: 6 Years)                                | Residents of City              |              |           |                                                                                      |
|                                                           | Exp                            | Terms        |           |                                                                                      |
| Kelley, Buddy 641.777.9059                                | 7/22/2028                      | 1            | 2023-2028 | <a href="mailto:bkelly32084@gmail.com">bkelly32084@gmail.com</a>                     |
| Wilson, Xavier (Ed) 641.980.6066                          | 7/22/2030                      | 3            | 2014-2030 | <a href="mailto:ed@bufferoverrun.com">ed@bufferoverrun.com</a>                       |
| Barnes, Bradley 641.799.4357                              | 7/22/2031                      | 1            | 2025-     | <a href="mailto:bradley.barnes@cpa.com">bradley.barnes@cpa.com</a>                   |
| Stewart, Mary 641.680.3260                                | 7/22/2027                      | 1            | 2024-2027 | <a href="mailto:mary.stewart.court@gmail.com">mary.stewart.court@gmail.com</a>       |
| Propp, Steven 641.684.7312                                | 7/22/2026                      | 1            | 2024-2026 | <a href="mailto:stevep@pcsia.net">stevep@pcsia.net</a>                               |
| Council Representation:                                   |                                | Caviness     |           |                                                                                      |
| City Staff Representation:                                |                                |              |           |                                                                                      |

|                                                          |              |       |           |                                                                            |  |  |  |
|----------------------------------------------------------|--------------|-------|-----------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|--|--|
| <b>Zoning Board of Adjustment</b>                        |              |       |           |                                                                            |  |  |  |
| Meetings Second Wednesday Each Month; 11:00 AM City Hall |              |       |           |                                                                            |  |  |  |
| Members: 5(Term: 5 Years)                                |              |       |           |                                                                            |  |  |  |
|                                                          | Exp          | Terms |           |                                                                            |  |  |  |
| *Mitchell, Ryan 641.799.0209                             | 12/12/2030   | 2     | 2020-2030 | <a href="mailto:ryan@southiowalaw.com">ryan@southiowalaw.com</a>           |  |  |  |
| Perry, Stephanie 641.799.8828                            | 12/12/2026   | 1     | 2022-2026 | <a href="mailto:sperry@schwartzins.com">sperry@schwartzins.com</a>         |  |  |  |
| Ohlinger, John 847.772.0475                              | 12/12/2029   | 3     | 2018-2024 | <a href="mailto:ohlingerj@hotmail.com">ohlingerj@hotmail.com</a>           |  |  |  |
| McConnell, Kayla 641.799.3191                            | 12/12/2027   | 1     | 2024-2027 | <a href="mailto:kayla@remaxpride.com">kayla@remaxpride.com</a>             |  |  |  |
| Hamann, Jeffrey 641.680.5277                             | 12/12/2029   | 1     | 2024-     | <a href="mailto:JeffreyDHamann@hotmail.com">JeffreyDHamann@hotmail.com</a> |  |  |  |
| Council Representation:                                  | Hoffman      |       |           |                                                                            |  |  |  |
| City Staff Representation:                               | Amal Eltahir |       |           |                                                                            |  |  |  |

**ORDINANCE NO. 3234-2024**

**AN ORDINANCE DISCONTINUING THE PUBLIC SAFETY  
ADVISORY COMMITTEE OF THE CITY OF OTTUMWA, AND  
REPEALING CHAPTER 2, ARTICLE VI, DIVISION 5 OF THE  
CODE OF ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF OTTUMWA, IOWA**

WHEREAS, the City of Ottumwa has established a Public Safety Advisory Committee in Chapter 2, Article VI, Division 5 of the municipal code; and

WHEREAS, the Ottumwa City Council adopted a resolution on October 15, 2024, providing notice of its intent to discontinue the Public Safety Advisory Committee; and

WHEREAS, notice was published as provided in section 362.3 of the Iowa Code and a public hearing was held on November 5, 2024, on the proposal; and

WHEREAS, more than thirty days have elapsed since the time of the public hearing, and pursuant to Iowa Code section 392.7, the Public Safety Advisory Committee may now be discontinued.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF OTTUMWA, IOWA, THAT:**

**SECTION ONE.** The Public Safety Advisory Committee is hereby discontinued.

**SECTION TWO.** The Municipal Code of the City of Ottumwa, Iowa is hereby amended by repealing the entirety of Chapter 2, Article VI, Division 5.

**SECTION THREE.** Severability. If any section, subsection, sentence, clause, phrase or portion of this Ordinance be held invalid or unconstitutional by any court of competent jurisdiction, such portion shall be deemed a separate, distinct and independent provision, and such holding shall not affect the validity of the remaining portion hereof.

**SECTION FOUR.** Repealer. All ordinances or parts of ordinances in conflict with the provisions of this Ordinance are hereby repealed.

**SECTION FIVE.** Effective. This Ordinance shall be in full force and effect, from and after its passage, adoption, and approval and publication as required by law.

**SECTION SIX.** When this ordinance is in effect, it shall automatically supplement, amend, and become a part of the said Code of Ordinance (Municipal Code) of the City of Ottumwa, Iowa.

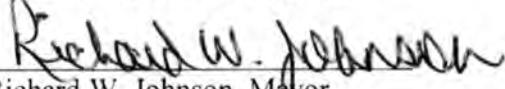
Passed on its first consideration on the 17 day of December 2024.

Passed on its second consideration on the \_\_ day of ~WAIVED~ 2024.

Passed on its third consideration on the \_\_\_ day of ~WAIVED~ 2024.

Approved this 17 day of December 2024.

CITY OF OTTUMWA, IOWA

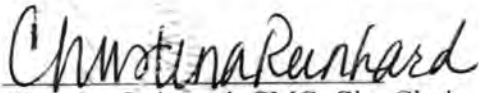
  
Richard W. Johnson, Mayor

\_\_\_ No action taken by Mayor  
\_\_\_ Vetoed this \_\_\_ day of \_\_\_, 2024.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Richard W. Johnson, Mayor

\_\_\_ Repassed and adopted over the veto this \_\_\_ day of \_\_\_, 2024.  
\_\_\_ Veto affirmed this \_\_\_ day of \_\_\_, 2024 by failure of vote taken to repass.  
\_\_\_ Veto affirmed no timely vote taken to repass over veto.

ATTEST:

  
Christina Reinhard, CMC, City Clerk

## ***DIVISION 5. PUBLIC SAFETY ADVISORY COMMITTEE***

### **Sec. 2-506. Purpose.**

The purpose of this chapter is to establish a public safety committee working as an advisor and communication board to the Ottumwa Fire Department, Ottumwa Police Department and Traffic Engineer. The committee is to be made with the appointment of local private business owners, community leaders and Ottumwa residents. The committee is to be available to the public and hold public meetings to achieve the outlined powers and duties in serving the community of Ottumwa.

(Ord. No. ????, § ????)

### **Sec. 2-556. Definitions.**

When used in this chapter, unless the context otherwise requires:

*Committee* means the Public Safety Advisor Committee created by this chapter.

*Person* means one or more individuals, partnerships, associations, corporations, legal representatives, trustees, receivers, and the State of Iowa and all political subdivisions and agencies thereof.

(Ord. No. ????, § ????)

### **Sec. 2-552. Commission appointed.**

- a) The Committee shall consist of five (5) members appointed by the mayor with approval of the city council, for terms of four years. Terms shall be staggered so that no more than two members' terms expire in any one year. Three (3) members are to be residents of the City of Ottumwa; Two (2) members are to be residents of Wapello County.
- b) A committee member shall not serve more than two consecutive terms, unless there are no qualified applicants to fill the seat. In this case, a commission member may serve three consecutive terms.
- c) In the event that a vacancy occurs in the membership of the committee by death, resignation or otherwise prior to the normal expiration of the appointee's term, the mayor, with the approval of the city council, shall appoint a person to serve out the remainder of the unexpired term. A vacancy in said committee shall not be filled until such time as the number of members of said commission drops below five.
- d) Any member or all members of the committee may be removed from office at any time by the mayor with the approval of the city council. The committee shall annually elect one of its members to be chairperson.

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- e) The members of the committee shall serve without salary, wages or other compensation provided that they may receive reimbursement for actual and necessary expenses incurred as allowed by the city council pursuant to such procedures and policies for the reimbursement of expenses as shall be established by the city from time to time.
  - f) A liaison member of a minimum of one representative from the City Council will be appointed to the committee.
  - g) The committee is to meet with the Police Chief, Fire Chief and Head of the Public Works Department in coordination with each meeting to ensure regular communication, coordination and direction with each department and the City of Ottumwa.

(Ord. No. 3199, § 1, 6-7-2022; Ord. No. 3230, § 6, 6-18-2024; Ord. No. 3247, § 1, 7-15-2025)

### **Sec. 2-553. Powers and duties**

The committee powers and duties include:

- 1) Meet once a month on a consistent date established by the committee and any additional meetings as called for by the committee chairperson.
- 2) An agenda for each meeting is to be made available a minimum of 24 hours prior to each meeting.
- 3) A quorum shall be established when a minimum of 4 voting members is present at an established meeting.
- 4) Listening to community members and determining direction and vision for each of the public safety aspects of the City of Ottumwa.
- 5) Provide research, study and reports on various aspects regarding public safety as directed by the mayor and/or City Administrator.
- 6) The committee is to recommend to the mayor and city council policies and programs with the objective of implementing committee goals concerning the wellbeing, growth, facilities and coordination of the Fire, Police and Streets departments in the community.
- 7) Collaborating with organization and individuals in our community to provide a comprehensive vision for the Public Safety of Ottumwa citizens.
- 8) To work in conjunction with the Mayor, City Council, Administrator and Financial Officer to reduce, eliminate, document and report to the City Council and community, any and all necessary revisions to each department for future growth and sustainable workforce.
- 9) Provide assistance and input for any future hiring of Fire Chief, Police Chief and Traffic Engineer.

(Ord. No. 3199, § 1, 6-7-2022)

### **Sec. 2-554. Non-voting youth seat.**

- a) The committee shall include an opportunity for a non-voting youth member who is between the ages of 14 to 18 and who resides in the city.
- b) The youth member shall be appointed by the mayor and shall serve a term of one year.

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- c) The youth member shall be selected from a pool of applicants who have demonstrated an interest in civic government and finances, and who have completed an application.
  - d) The youth member shall have the right to attend all meetings of the committee and to participate in all discussions but may not vote on any matter before the commission.
  - e) The purpose of the non-voting youth seat is to provide a voice for youth in the work of committee, include the next generation of ideas into the committee decisions and to promote greater understanding and engagement between the committee and the youth community.

(Ord. No. 3217, § 1, 9-5-2023)

## City of Ottumwa Invocation Policy

The Pledge of Allegiance has been an established part of the City of Ottumwa Council meetings. The Pledge of Allegiance is also an established opening to legislative sessions of local, state and federal government and has been throughout the history of the United States. Federal legislative sessions open with prayer and have done so since the first Congress under the Constitution. A large majority of States, including the State of Iowa, follow this same example. At official city council meetings, an invocation will be given as an opening part of the meeting after the meeting is called to order and prior to the Pledge of Allegiance, which precedes the roll call.

This policy is not intended, and shall not be implemented or construed in any way to affiliate the City Council with, nor express the Council's endorsement or preference for any faith or religious denominations. Rather, this policy is intended to acknowledge and express the City Council's respect for the diversity of both organized and unorganized religious denominations, as well as other faiths, belief systems, or the lack thereof, represented and practiced among the citizens of the City of Ottumwa.

To ensure that invitational speakers are selected without preference to any specific religion, belief, faith, or ideology, from amongst a diverse pool of Ottumwa citizens, volunteers shall be selected according to the following procedure:

1. The invocation shall be voluntarily delivered, without compensation, by any person who is a resident of Ottumwa and on the list of volunteers, which shall be maintained by the Mayor. The Mayor shall include any resident on the list upon submission of written request including the person's local address and contact information, including e-mail.
2. Within thirty (30) days of the adoption of this policy, and on or about July 1 of each calendar year thereafter, the Mayor shall e-mail one invitation addressed to potential volunteer groups for delivery of the invocation and will also enable submitting a request to volunteer to provide the invocation on the City's website. The invitation shall state the following:
  - a. The City Council makes it a policy to invite residents of the City of Ottumwa to voluntarily offer an invocation or prayer not to exceed two minutes in length before the beginning of its meetings.
  - b. If you are willing to assist the City Council in this regard, please send a reply at your earliest convenience to the Mayor. Volunteer invitational speakers are scheduled on a first-come, first-serve basis. The dates of the City Council's regularly scheduled meetings for the upcoming fiscal year are listed on the following, attached page. If you have a preference among the dates, please state that request in your written reply.
  - c. This opportunity is voluntary, and you are free to offer the invocation according to the dictates of your own conscience. The City requests that the content of the invocation align with a tone suitable for conducting the business of the City.

- d. To maintain a spirit of respect and ecumenism, the City Council requests only that the opportunity not be exploited as an effort to proselytize, i.e., convert others to the particular faith of the speaker, nor to disparage any faith or belief different than that of the speaker.
3. Respondents to the invitation shall be scheduled by the Mayor on a first come, first-serve basis. The Mayor shall schedule and notify the volunteer, by email, of the date and time the speaker should be prepared to offer the invocation or prayer. The notice shall remind the speaker of the duty not to proselytize nor disparage others' religions, faiths, beliefs, or lack thereof, and of the two-minute time limitation.
4. No invitational speaker shall be scheduled to offer an invocation at consecutive meetings, or at more than three Council Meetings in any calendar year.

If the person scheduled to provide the invocation is unable to attend as scheduled, it is the option of the Mayor to forgo the invocation or to have the Council observe a moment of silence.

Invocations shall comply with the following:

1. The deliverer shall not disparage or vilify any other religions or beliefs.
2. The deliverer is not to proselytize or attempt to recruit or persuade others to join their faith, church or other religious organization.
3. No member of the City Council, City employee, or any other person in attendance at a meeting shall be required to participate in any invocation that is offered.
4. Neither the City Council, Mayor, City Clerk, nor City staff shall engage in any prior inquiry, review of, restriction, or involvement in, the content of any prayer or invocation to be offered.
5. The deliverer is to approach the podium used for public address when prompted by the Mayor that the meeting is in session and the invocation will be given. The deliverer is to face the Mayor, Administrator, Clerk and Council when delivering their invocation.
6. It is requested that the invocation be concise and not exceed two minutes in length.
7. Any invitational speaker who violates this policy shall be subject to disqualification from offering future invocations.

## Chris Reinhard

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**From:** Cara Galloway  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 13, 2026 3:13 PM  
**To:** Chris Reinhard; Ben Foote; Philip Rath  
**Subject:** Comments regarding Invocation  
**Attachments:** Policy updated.docx

Mayor, Administrator Rath and Clerk Reinhard,

As you know I will not be there tonight but wanted to give my thoughts in regards to the Invocation policy that was sent out yesterday. Could my comments and revised version of the policy be distributed to the rest of the council tonight?

I want to be clear and direct about my position on the inclusion of invocations at City Council meetings, and the reasons I believe this policy presents significant concerns for the City.

First, government-hosted prayer is inherently coercive. Even when participation is described as “voluntary,” the invocation occurs at an official government meeting, led from the government podium, and in the presence of elected officials who hold authority over those in attendance. Residents come to Council meetings to petition their government, address grievances, educate themselves on the cities business, etc . Requiring them to be visibly present during a religious exercise tied to government authority places them in a position of soft coercion. Accessing one’s government should not require sitting through prayer.

Second, neutrality in theory does not mean neutrality in practice. While an “open to everyone” policy may appear fair on paper, the real-world outcome is predictable. Organized Christian churches will overwhelmingly dominate participation, while minority faiths and nonreligious residents will appear rarely, if at all. Over time, the pattern itself becomes the message. Even without intent, the City communicates that this is a Christian space and others are merely guests.

Third, the policy invites controversy the City cannot realistically control. If invocations are permitted, the City must allow all belief systems on equal footing. That necessarily includes Satanic organizations, anti-theistic speakers, mock or unconventional religions, and unpopular or misunderstood faiths. Once that occurs, public backlash is inevitable. Officials will face pressure to intervene, and any intervention creates immediate risk of viewpoint discrimination. The City is placed in a no-win position: allow the speech and face outrage, or restrict it and face litigation.

Fourth, proselytizing bans are unenforceable without bias. What constitutes proselytizing varies dramatically by belief system. Language that feels normal or even expected to one faith can feel exclusionary or advocative to another. An atheist reflection is often accused of “attacking religion” simply by existing. Enforcement becomes subjective, complaint-driven, and politically pressured, which is the very definition of selective enforcement.

Fifth, while due process provisions can reduce harm, they do not resolve the core issue. Someone must still judge religious speech. City officials become arbiters of theology, and the City remains in the position of regulating prayer. That ongoing entanglement itself undermines the principle of separation of church and state.

Sixth, invocations are not necessary to conduct government business. Prayer is not required to pass ordinances, hear public comment, or govern effectively. The City already has neutral alternatives available, including a moment of silence, an opening statement of civic values, or simply beginning the meeting. When a practice is unnecessary and carries legal and community risk, the burden should be on justifying its continuation.

Finally, there is also a financial cost to consider. Invocation policies are frequently challenged, and even when a city prevails, defending them requires staff time, legal fees, and administrative resources paid by taxpayers. When neutral alternatives (moment of silence) exist that avoid this risk entirely, it is reasonable to question whether public funds should be exposed for a practice that is not necessary to conduct City business.

For these reasons, I am opposed to the inclusion of invocations at City Council meetings.

However, recognizing that the Council may still choose to move forward with an invocation policy, I am providing a revised version of the policy for review.

My goal is not to oppose religion or pray, but to protect neutral government, minority rights, and the City from preventable future conflict.

Respectfully,

Cara

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## **City of Ottumwa Invocation Policy (Updated with Revisions Noted)**

### **PURPOSE**

[REVISED]

The City of Ottumwa City Council permits an invocation at the opening of official City Council meetings to solemnize the proceedings and to reflect the diversity of religious beliefs, philosophical viewpoints, and nonbeliefs represented among the residents of the City of Ottumwa.

This policy shall not be implemented or construed to affiliate the City Council with, endorse, favor, or disfavor any particular religion, religious denomination, belief system, or lack thereof.

### **INVOCATION PLACEMENT**

An invocation may be offered after the meeting is called to order prior to the Pledge of Allegiance.

Participation in any invocation is strictly voluntary. No Council member, staff member, or attendee shall be required to participate.

### **ELIGIBILITY TO DELIVER AN INVOCATION**

[REVISED]

The invocation shall be voluntarily delivered, without compensation, by any resident of the City of Ottumwa, regardless of religious affiliation, non-affiliation, organizational status, tax status, or the existence of a house of worship.

No requirement exists that a volunteer be affiliated with an organized religion or religious institution.

### **VOLUNTEER LIST AND TIMESTAMPING**

[ADDED]

1. All requests to volunteer shall be submitted in writing and automatically date- and time-stamped upon receipt.
2. The Mayor shall maintain a publicly accessible Invocation Volunteer List.
3. Scheduling priority shall be based strictly on the timestamp of submission.

## **SELECTION AND SCHEDULING**

[REVISED]

1. Volunteers shall be scheduled in chronological order based on timestamp.
2. No volunteer may deliver an invocation at consecutive meetings or more than three meetings per calendar year.
3. If a scheduled speaker cancels, the Mayor may either:
  - a. Contact the next eligible volunteer, or
  - b. Direct the Council to observe a moment of silence.

## **CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS**

[REVISED]

1. Within thirty (30) days of adoption of this policy and at least annually thereafter, the City shall issue a public call for volunteers through:
  - The City website
  - City social media accounts
  - Local media outlets
  - Direct outreach to known faith and belief communities
2. The call shall clearly state that eligibility is open to all residents regardless of belief or nonbelief.
3. Language-access assistance shall be provided when reasonably requested.

## **CONTENT STANDARDS FOR INVOCATIONS**

[REVISED]

Invocations may be religious, spiritual, philosophical, or secular in nature and must be delivered in a respectful and solemn manner.

Invocations shall not:

- Disparage or vilify other religions, beliefs, or nonbeliefs
- Be used to recruit, convert, or solicit adherence to a belief system

No prior review or approval of invocation content shall occur.

**ENFORCEMENT AND DUE PROCESS –I believe we need a due process if we follow #7 on the original document. This process is not perfect, just a starting point**

[ADDED]

1. Any alleged violation to the policy shall be communicated to the speaker in writing.
2. The speaker shall be provided an opportunity to submit a written response and request a hearing.
3. Any decision to disqualify a speaker from future invocations shall be made by.....
4. Appeal rights shall be provided in accordance with applicable City procedures.

**GENERAL PROVISIONS**

No member of the City Council, City employee, or attendee shall be required to participate in any invocation.

Invocations are not public comment periods.

Invocations shall not exceed two minutes in length.