



# Wauwatosa, WI

## Civic Celebration Commission

### Meeting Minutes - Final

7725 W. North Avenue  
Wauwatosa, WI 53213

---

Thursday, July 24, 2025

7:00 PM

Committee Room #1

---

#### Regular Meeting

#### CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Brunow called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M.

#### ROLL CALL

**Present 10**      Member, Chair Robert Brunow  
Member Mike Anich  
Member Edward Bearden  
Member Sara Leonhardt  
Member Dan Lofy  
Member Pat Premetz  
Member Jamie Swisher  
Member Wendy Venske  
Member Matt Wicker  
Member Joseph Makhlof II

**Excused 2**      Member Brit Swisher  
Aldersperson Liaison Mike Morgan

#### APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. Approval of minutes of the May 22, 2025, regular meeting [25-1083](#)  
**RESULT:** APPROVED  
**MOVER:** Robert Brunow  
**SECONDER:** Dan Lofy  
**Aye:** 10      Brunow, Anich, Bearden, Leonhardt, Lofy, Premetz, Swisher, Venske, Wicker, and Makhlof II  
**Excused:** 1      Swisher, and Morgan
2. Approval of minutes of the June 16, 2025, special meeting [25-1084](#)  
**RESULT:** APPROVED  
**MOVER:** Robert Brunow  
**SECONDER:** Dan Lofy  
**Aye:** 10      Brunow, Anich, Bearden, Leonhardt, Lofy, Premetz, Swisher, Venske, Wicker, and Makhlof II  
**Excused:** 1      Swisher, and Morgan

3. Approval of minutes of the June 26, 2025, regular meeting [25-1251](#)

**RESULT:** APPROVED

**MOVER:** Robert Brunow

**SECONDER:** Dan Lofy

**Aye:** 10 Brunow, Anich, Bearden, Leonhardt, Lofy, Premetz, Swisher, Venske, Wicker, and Makhlouf II

**Excused:** 1 Swisher, and Morgan

### **ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

1. Nomination and Election of Officers [25-1229](#)

*Chairman - Wendy Venske nominated Robert Brunow. Dan Lofy seconded. Nomination passed.*

*Secretary - Pat Premetz nominated Joseph Makhlouf. Matt Wicker seconded. Nomination passed.*

*Treasurer - Wendy Venske nominated Sara Leonhardt. Dan Lofy seconded. Nomination passed.*

### **DIRECTORS REPORTS**

1. 2025 Drone Show review [25-1230](#)

*Report by Commission Chairperson Robert Brunow.*

*States that he received over 40 emails and other complaints of people hating the drone show for one reason or another, including, people could not read the messages on the drones, drones were too far away, show was too short, etc. Some people liked it but the vast majority did not. States he would normally receive about 5 emails so this was much higher. Also received phone calls.*

*Member Dan Lofy reports that comments he received were mixed, some people liked the drones but a lot did not. Reasons included that with fireworks you could be a distance away but with drones you could not. People sitting outside the bowl area did not even realize that there was music associated with it. Viewing drones depended on a particular angle.*

*A discussion regarding the future use a drone show vs fireworks took place. Member Michael Anich indicated his opinion that it was not our decision that it was predetermined by the City Administrator and Mayor. Suggestion to invite the Mayor and City Administrator to attend the next meeting to take part in the discussion. Suggestion to put out a survey and get residents opinions on the subject.*

*Discussion that if we moved forward with a drone show for next year that we would have to improve it and make it longer, as 15 minutes was way too short, especially with the Country's 250th Birthday celebration coming up next year. Note that to extend the show would take more money and concerns over fundraising were brought up.*

2. 2025 Parade review [25-1231](#)

*Report by Parade Chairperson Edward ( Alexander ) Bearden.*

*Thought that overall the parade went very. Best thing was the new staging, as it was easy. Was a bit of an issue at the beginning since roads being all one way but beyond that staging went very smooth, this can be resolved by better communication. Had 87 units in the parade, more than in the past, but the parade lasted only about 1 ½ hours because with the staging things kept moving and there were no big gaps in the parade.*

*Comments by Lieutenant Brad Beckmann indicated that there were no real issues as far as the Police Department was concerned, just the traffic issue at the very beginning and comments about scary caricatures in the parade, besides that nothing. No calls for any medical/ injury related issues.*

*Public comments indicated that the band from MN was awesome.*

*Issues related to next year include; possibly replacement of the old sandwich boards. the person / company that handles assembly and storage of the floats might be retiring with no replacement known, and continued discussion about requiring a donation from business participating in the parade.*

3. 2025 Afternoon program review [25-1232](#)
- Report by Member Pat Premetz.  
Everything went smoothly.  
Total of 19 dogs and their families showed up. Entertainers were busy up to 3:00 p.m.  
Muellner building staff were very accommodating, opened the entire Tosa Room and bathrooms. Dog parade was good, made even better by the donations from Bark & Scratch and Bentley's who indicated they are willing to do the same next year if we have it again.  
Thinking about next year, need more volunteers to help, as it is not a one man show anymore.*
4. 2025 Services for Independence Day Celebration review [25-1233](#)
- Report by Member Wendy Venske.  
Portable toilets need to be moved further East and spread out more.  
Used 16 of the 20 radios ordered.*
5. Discussion on fundraising ideas for 2026 [25-1234](#)
- Report by Commission Chairperson Robert Brunow.  
Had a conversation with the City Administrator with the question being asked how much money was raised so far to date for the drone program. It was implied that we are running this as a business type situation and if we want to have something we have to fundraise to support it and cannot rely on the City of Wauwatosa to back us up anymore. We fundraised about 13 thousand of the 30 thousand needed for the drone show, meaning the City is on the hook for the rest which we were told has to stop.  
Discussion occurred regarding statements and other fundraising options. Chairperson Brunow stated that we need to have a more aggressive fundraising approach. Indicated he talked to a fundraising organization and will be meeting in the next few weeks to see what suggestions they might have. Other members indicated that we are an organizing commission, not a fundraising commission and that responsibility should not fall all on us, that the City should be involved. Bringing Mayor and City Administrator to next meeting to be involved in discussion  
Report by members Michael Anich and Matt Wicker regarding the previously discussed possibility of forming a non-profit " Friends of ... " to assist in fundraising efforts. Note that it would cost \$2500 - \$5000 to start a non-profit. They are going to try and meet with people that started the Fiends of Firefly Grove Park to see what they did and discuss options. Item to be placed on next month's meeting agenda for further discussion.*
6. 2025 Financial report [25-1235](#)
- Report by Member Sara Leonhardt  
Fundraising had budget item of \$25,000; raised \$13,235  
Printing / copying budget of \$500.00 ; Spent \$ 491.37  
Postage budget of \$60.00; spent \$ 89.97  
Other expenses, no budget set; Spent \$ 216.45 (cover cost of breakfast)  
Overall General Services \$49,440 budget, Spent \$56,170 leaving a deficit of -18,741.42*
7. Public comments in person or via email [25-1236](#)
- 2025 Independence activities
  - 2026 Independence thoughts
- Covered under other previous discussion points above.*

8. Getting the conversation started for 2026

[25-1237](#)

- Memorial Day
- TOSA parade
- Afternoon program
- Evening program
- Getting new members and volunteers for events
- Theme ideas for the 2026 parade

*Item tabled until next meeting.*

**ADJOURNMENT**

*Meeting adjourned at 8:20 P.M.*