

CITY OF DECATUR  
COMMON COUNCIL MINUTES  
MARCH 18, 2025

The City of Decatur Common Council met on Tuesday, March 18, 2025, at 6:20 P.M. at City Hall in Council Chambers, 172 N. Second Street, Decatur. The meeting was called to order by Mayor Rickord who then invited those present to join in the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag.

Roll call was taken to show Matt Dyer, Tyler Fullenkamp, Scott Murray, and Abby Wilder were in attendance while Jenny Bowers-Shultz was absent. Also present were Clerk-Treasurer Kevin Hackman and City Attorney Anne Razo.

The Clerk-Treasurer had emailed the minutes from the March 4, 2025 meeting and Dyer made a motion to adopt the minutes of the March 4, 2025 meeting as emailed. Seconded by Wilder, the motion was adopted.

The first item on the agenda was an update from Rob Parker, Director of Project Connect and Crossroads Community. It was noted the programs of these two projects aid individuals with counseling and help after being released from jail. Mr. Parker noted there are homes in Berne and Decatur with the recent purchase of the location at 519 N. Second Street, Decatur. The new office is at 103 N. Third Street. It was shared the program currently has two people in the home, three in transitional living, and four people who are met in some other way.

Next on the agenda were representatives from SAFE noting April as Child Abuse Prevention Month. Cindy Thieme shared the various events to be held throughout the month to emphasize the need for prevention of child abuse. SAFE stands for Supporting All Families Every day. Joining Thieme were Mary Bertsch and Chris Jarrett as they distributed pinwheels to all in attendance. Mayor Rickord then read a proclamation declaring April as Child Abuse Prevention Month.

Mayor Rickord recognized four members of the Mayor's Youth Council in attendance and each gave her name and grade. In attendance were Brianna Converset, Quinn Buchan, Kinleigh Coffey, and Maya Schlemmer.

Jamie Gephart, Community Coordinator, appeared before the Council with numerous Event Forms for events occurring throughout the City throughout the summer. The events were as follow:

1. A graduation party to be held on Madison Street Plaza on May 1, 2025. Dyer made a motion to approve the May 1, 2025 graduation party on Madison Street Plaza. Seconded by Wilder, the motion was adopted.
  
2. Summer Concerts on Madison Street Plaza beginning on Thursday, June 3, 2025 through September 4, 2025 from 6-9:30 p.m. with various street closings. Fullenkamp

made a motion to accept the request for the Summer Concerts on Madison Street Plaza. Seconded by Murray, the motion was adopted.

3. The third event was for the Sculpture Tour with various events on June 13 and 14, 2025 with various street closings. Dyer made a motion to approve the Sculpture Tour request. Seconded by Murray, the motion was adopted.

4. The fourth request was for Saturday, June 14, for the Conner Brite Wildflower Concert on Madison Street Plaza from 6-10 p.m. with various street closings. Fullenkamp made a motion to approve the Conner Brite Wildflower Concert event. Seconded by Wilder, the motion was adopted.

5. A request for the Downtown Decatur Day Event on June 21, 2025 was the next request with the event needing various street closings. Murray made a motion to approve the Downtown Decatur Day Event. Seconded by Fullenkamp, the motion was adopted.

6. The Decatur Chamber sought permission for its annual fireworks event to be on Thursday, July 3, 2024 from 6-10 p.m. at Riverside in conjunction with the Thursday evening Concert Event. Murray made a motion to approve the Chamber's request to have the fireworks event on Thursday, July 3, 2025. Seconded by Dyer, the motion was adopted.

7. The Decatur Chamber requested permission to hold Germanfest on Madison Street Plaza on Saturday, August 15, 2025 from 5-10 p.m. with various street closings. Dyer made a motion to approve the Germanfest Event. Seconded by Murray, the motion was adopted.

8. The Decatur Chamber sought permission to hold Kekionga Days from Friday, August 22, 2025 to Sunday, August 24, 2025 with Jackson Street being closed on Friday for Education Day. Fullenkamp made a motion to approve the Kekionga Days Event. Seconded by Wilder, the motion was adopted.

9. The ninth event for which an Event Form was presented from the Decatur Chamber was for the Motorsports Show on Thursday, August 22, 2025 for early afternoon and ending as the Thursday Night Concert begins. The event will be along Second Street which will be closed to vehicle traffic. Fullenkamp made a motion to approve the Motor Sports Event. Seconded by Murray, the motion passed.

10. The next Chamber Event presented was the Highland Games to be held at Riverside on Saturday, October 4, 2025. The request included the closing of Jackson Street between Highway 224 and First Street. Dyer made a motion to approve the Highland Games request. Seconded by Murray, the motion was adopted.

11. The next event considered was the Callithumpian Parade to be held on Monday evening, October 26, 2025 with various street closings. Dyer made a motion to approve the Callithumpian Parade Event. Seconded by Murray, the motion was adopted.

12. The final Event Form presented was for Friday, November 21, 2025 for the Annual Tree Lighting Event. Various street closings were noted. Murray made a motion to approve the Annual Tree Lighting Event. Seconded by Dyer, the motion was adopted.

Fullenkamp made a motion to make a matter of record Mayor Rickord's appointment of North Adams School Board Member Dave Hill to the Decatur Redevelopment Commission. Seconded by Murray, the motion was adopted.

Clerk-Treasurer Kevin Hackman shared he had talked with one bank regarding funding for a fire truck and he noted Fire Chief Jeff Sheets had received news this morning about another possible option for purchasing. When details are finalized, it will be brought forth to be shared with the Council.

A time was set aside to discuss a DORA (Designated Outdoors Refreshment Area) in Decatur. City Attorney Anne Razo shared various aspects regarding a DORA as she considered the State Law and various other cities' ordinances. Attorney Razo shared she was looking for some help from Council Members to reach out to various establishments for their input. It was noted a lot of legwork would need to be done prior to the establishment of any ordinance. Wilder volunteered to help and it was shared that Community Coordinator Jamie Gephart would likely be involved.

#### Department Heads:

Assistant Police Chief Chris Brite announced that Patrolman Zack Hess has been named as the new DARE Officer.

#### Council Input:

Mayor Rickord asked people to keep the family of former Berne Mayor Bill McKean in their prayers.

Dyer made a motion to pay the claims against the City. Seconded by Wilder, the motion was adopted.

There being no other business to be brought before the Council, Dyer made a motion to adjourn. Seconded by Wilder, the motion was adopted.

Adjournment was at 7:08 P.M.