

**CITY OF BRAIDWOOD AGENDA
CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS
141 W. MAIN STREET
BRAIDWOOD, IL 60408
Regular Meeting, Tuesday, September 9, 2025 at 7:00pm**

- I. Call to Order**
- II. Pledge of Allegiance**
- III. Roll Call by City Clerk**
 - Elizabeth Dixon**
 - James Mikel, Jr.**
 - Warren Wietting**
 - Todd Lyons**
 - Dale Walsh**

IV. Public Comment: : State your full name and spell your last name.

Sec. 2-34. - Public comment. (a) At the beginning of each city council meeting, before action is taken on any item, except for approval of the minutes, there shall be a portion allowed for public comment. Public comment is allowed on any subject matter pertaining to city business and is not restricted to matters on the agenda. (b) No prior registration shall be required for any person giving public comment, but before speaking, the person shall state his name and address. There shall be a three-minute time limit to the public comment of each person, but the mayor may waive such time limit. (Ord. No. 98-16, § 3, 4-28-98; Ord. No. 99-13, § 1, 4-27-99)

V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- A. Approve Minutes of the Tuesday, August 26, 2025 Regular Meeting**

VI. REPORTS BY CITY OFFICIALS

- A. Mayor**
 - 1. Mayor to appoint Sarah Weaver as Braidwood City Clerk
 - 2. Request motion to approve the Mayor's Appointment of Sarah Weaver as Braidwood City Clerk
 - 3. Swearing in of Sarah Weaver as Braidwood City Clerk
 - 4. Request motion to approve Resolution 25-14 to approve benefits to be provided to Braidwood City Clerk Sarah Weaver
 - 5. Request a motion to approve Resolution 25-15 OSLAD Grant Program Resolution of Authorization
- B. City Management Consultant**
 - 1. Request a motion to approve Ordinance 25-37 Approving and Authorizing the City of Braidwood to enter into and for the Mayor of Braidwood to execute quotes from Surf Internet regarding Internet Services and Products for City buildings
- C. Clerk**
 - 1. Request a motion to change the dates for the Knights of Columbus Tootsie Roll Drive to October 3, 4, and 5th, 2025.
 - 2. Request a motion for the Knights of Columbus to host a Prayer for Life Chain known as "Respect Life Sunday" at the corners of Route 53 and Route 129 on Sunday, October 5, 2025, from 2:30 pm-3:30 pm
- D. Engineer**
- E. City Attorney**

VII. REPORTS BY CITY COMMISSIONERS

- A. Accounts and Finances**
 - 1. Approve Payment of Bills \$181,740.16
 - 2. Approve Payroll \$85,769.36
 - 3. Motion to approve Resolution 25-16 Authorizing the City of Braidwood to Close its Accounts at Bank of Pontiac

4. Motion to approve Police Chief Eric Allen as an added designated signatory for the City of Braidwood Police Department bank accounts

B. Streets and Public Improvements

C. Public Buildings & Property

1. Motion to approve Ordinance 25-38 Approving and Authorizing the City of Braidwood to enter into and for the Mayor of Braidwood to execute a quote from 120 Water regarding EPA Lead and Copper Regulations

D. Public Health & Safety

E. Planning & Zoning

1. Next Planning and Zoning meeting to be announced.

VIII. OLD BUSINESS

IX. NEW BUSINESS

X. EXECUTIVE SESSION

- A. Motion to go into executive session to discuss (i) the appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees (5 ILCS 120/2 (c) (1)) and (ii) pending, probable, or imminent litigation against, affecting, or on behalf of the City (5 ILCS 120/2 (c) (11))
- B. Motion to close executive session

- XI.** Next City Council Meeting is Tuesday, September 23, 2025 at 7:00pm

XII. ADJOURNMENT

Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Braidwood City Council, Tuesday, September 9, 2025
Braidwood City Hall 141 W. Main St., Braidwood, IL 60408

Call to Order: The Regular Meeting of the Braidwood City Council on September 9, 2025 was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Mayor Lyons in the Council Chambers of the Braidwood City Hall.

Pledge of Allegiance: Mayor Lyons requested that all rise for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call: Upon Roll Call by the Clerk, the following members of the corporate authorities answered "Here" or "Present";

Elected Officials:

Present: Commissioner Dixon, Commissioner Wietting, Commissioner Walsh, Commissioner Mikel, and Mayor Lyons

Absent: None.

Appointed Officials:

Present: City Consultant Manager Gulden, Police Chief Allen, City Clerk Weaver, City Engineer Sean Kelly, and City Attorney Wellner

Absent: None.

Quorum: There being sufficient members of the corporate authorities in attendance to constitute a quorum, the meeting was declared in order.

Public Comment:

Greg Cholek: Stated he would not take a position on whether the 1% grocery tax should or should not pass, but wanted to address the potential intergovernmental agreement with the Park District if the tax is enacted. Requested that the agreement include financial controls to ensure that funds are used only for the intended purpose (playground equipment). Recommended creating a separate bank account and a separate line item in the Park District's budget for this revenue, requiring an audit trail. Suggested that funds must be spent within 12 months (e.g., by October 31 the following year) and that unspent funds should be rebated back to the City of Braidwood.

Tony Altieri: Commented on budget priorities and expressed concern over spending. Stated that the city took \$800,000 from the Water Department surplus to purchase equipment. Criticized the Mayor and Commissioner Dixon for prioritizing park spending, stating the grant for the park is a matching grant, not a full grant, requiring city tax money. Stated that \$150,000 is already in the line item for parks and expressed preference for using that for improvements such as asphalt work, dog parks, or other smaller enhancements rather than multi-million-dollar park projects. Stressed preference for funding police and public safety over park expansion. Noted sales tax revenue has increased from \$300,000 to over \$800,000 annually.

Chris Earling: Identified himself as a “middle ground” resident. Appreciated efforts by both current and past councils. Asked the council not to take credit for projects like Mastodon, Ford, and Chevy dealerships, noting they campaigned against them previously. Expressed concern over cumulative taxes, referencing the proposed 1% grocery tax, 4% water rate increase, and upcoming projects such as the community center. Requested transparency and specific financial figures for proposed developments before commitments are made.

Verna Clark: Expressed concern over sidewalk conditions in town. Reported observing residents with walkers and canes struggling due to missing or cracked sidewalks. Urged the council to prioritize sidewalk repairs and installations over spending on new park projects

George Koczek: Noted that Route 66 will turn 100 years old in 2026 and recommended the city prepare to participate in celebrations. Provided examples of other small towns already planning signage, events, and Route 66 promotions. Highlighted the city’s comprehensive plan (approved earlier this year) as a valuable resource with detailed demographic, economic, and infrastructure data that should guide city planning.

Bob Earling: Expressed frustration with city ordinances and enforcement practices. Claimed ordinances are being enforced unfairly and inconsistently. Questioned the council’s long-term vision and raised concerns about increasing property taxes, comparing to higher-tax neighboring communities. Voiced concerns about the lack of sidewalks and accessibility for elderly residents.

Jay Dixon: Addressed a prior meeting where Commissioner Wietting accused Commissioner Dixon of acting illegally. Clarified that open burning was legal and that he, not Commissioner Dixon, performed the burning. Requested a public apology, which was offered by Commissioner Wietting. Also praised the high school sign and expressed appreciation for beautification efforts.

Kim Earling: Requested that Mayor Lyons publicly apologize to Commissioner Wietting for cutting him off during the discussion. Mayor Lyons apologized.

Jeremy McPherson: Reported an incident where his daughter’s parked car was struck by a golf cart, causing \$3,000 in damage. The driver had no insurance, resulting in a \$1,000 deductible cost to his family. Noted that golf cart insurance requirements are not being consistently enforced. Suggested implementing a city sticker or insurance proof system for golf carts. Stated ordinances should be consistently enforced, particularly where public safety and liability are concerned. Shared views on the 1% grocery tax, stating he personally supports small taxes but believes city spending should prioritize maintaining and improving existing parks rather than creating new ones with high long-term costs. Requested better balance and enforcement of ordinances to protect residents from financial harm.

Approval of Minutes: Commissioner Wietting made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Walsh, to approve the meeting minutes from the August 26, 2025 Regular Council Meeting. Motion carried with 5 ayes: 0 nays; 0 Abstain (Wietting, Walsh, Dixon, Mikel, and Lyons)

Mayor’s Report: Lyons: The Mayor addressed concerns raised during public comment about ordinance enforcement. Emphasized that residents have varying priorities for which ordinances

should be enforced (e.g., golf carts, abandoned vehicles, yard conditions). Noted the city faces a “no-win” situation since enforcing one ordinance often results in complaints from others. Stressed that enforcement priorities must be determined collectively by the council, guided by community needs. Referenced the C-MAP plan, which highlights residents’ calls for stricter and more consistent code enforcement.

Mayor Lyons requested a motion to appoint Sarah Weaver as Braidwood City Clerk. Commissioner Mikel made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Wietting, to appoint Sarah Weaver as Braidwood City Clerk. Motion carried with 5 ayes; 0 nays (Mikel, Wietting, Dixon, Walsh, and Lyons)

Sarah Weaver was sworn in as City Clerk. The mayor commended her performance, noting her attention to detail and ability to locate historical ordinances quickly.

Mayor Lyons requested a motion to approve Resolution 25-14. Commissioner Mikel made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Walsh to approve Resolution 25-14 to approve benefits to be provided to Braidwood City Clerk Sarah Weaver. Motion carried with 5 ayes; 0 nays (Mikel, Walsh, Dixon, Wietting, and Lyons)

Mayor Lyons requested a motion to approve Resolution 25-15. Commissioner Mikel made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Dixon to approve Resolution 25-15 OSLAD Grand Program Resolution of Authorization. Motion carried with 3 ayes; 1 nay; 1 abstain (Mikel, Dixon, and Lyons)

City Consultant Steve Guldán explained the resolution was required to demonstrate the city has sufficient matching funds for the grant. The grant requires a \$600,000 local match, enabling \$600,000 in grant funding for a total of \$1.2 million. Proposed projects include: Walking trails connected to the park, band shelter, Splash pad, pavilion, Pickleball courts (Phase 2), additional parking, Bocce ball courts, and fitness area.

The mayor emphasized these priorities align with community feedback gathered through the C-MAP plan and direct conversations with residents, which highlighted desires for: More activities and recreation for kids and teens, Beautification of Main Street, Farmers market, Community events and spaces, and Recreation center, splash pad, and improved trails.

Blood Drive: Scheduled for September 17, 2:00–6:00 p.m. at City Hall.

Beautification Committee: Commended for visible improvements and ongoing work throughout the city.

Hotel Development: The mayor and staff met with a hotel developer, toured potential sites, and discussed opportunities for investment in the city.

Holiday Parade: The mayor met with Fire Chief Jude and Angie Hutton regarding the annual Christmas Parade, held on the first Saturday of December each year. Angie was commended for her organization. The city intends to increase involvement and welcomes resident suggestions, including potential parade themes.

Data Center Negotiations: Discussions with a potential data center developer are moving forward, with negotiations ongoing.

Sidewalk Grant: Sidewalk concerns raised in public comment were acknowledged; the mayor reaffirmed the city’s commitment to expanding sidewalk infrastructure. The city has applied for the Safe Routes to School grant through IDOT. Application deadline: October 13. Funding cap: \$250,000. The city must cover Phase 1 engineering/design costs, which are not reimbursable. The goal is to secure maximum

funding while minimizing local upfront costs. The mayor noted challenges due to a historic lack of sidewalks but expressed commitment to making improvements. Discussion included pursuing additional grant opportunities, such as State membership grants and Route 66 program grants (similar to those received by Wilmington).

Administrator Report: Gulden: Echoed the Mayor's praise for City Clerk Sarah Weaver. Noted her administrative support and strong partnership with staff.

D'Orazio Ford Project: Grading scheduled to begin around September 15. Equipment was moved to the site earlier today.

Community Open House: Reminder: Open House at 6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at City Hall. Architect, Mayor, consultant, and certain board members will be present to answer questions.

Economic Development Projects (Current/Upcoming)

- Ongoing projects include:
 - Ultimate Rides (parking lot expansion)
 - Bauer/D'Orazio dealerships
 - Mastodon Truck Stop
 - Oasis Truck Stop (new concept plan submitted)
 - Globe Builders (Diamond Lake)
 - Katlyn's Crossing
 - McPherson's projects
 - The Towns
 - Secure Trucking (truck parking)
 - Will Road Truck dealership
 - Wedding Venue proposal
 - Potential Data Centers

Letters of Credit / Development Process: Meetings scheduled for tomorrow regarding permits and letters of credit. New process underway with the planning team and city attorney. The goal is to create a sufficient, streamlined process.

Working on a development handbook for phased projects. Separate permit handouts are being prepared for smaller projects (windows, decks, fencing, etc.) to improve clarity for residents.

Public Works / Infrastructure Updates: Chief Allen contacted IDOT regarding guardrails at Route 113 interchange; repairs were completed the next day. A mine shaft was discovered near Commissioner Dixon's property (First & Lincoln) during roadwork. IDNR's Division of Mines will cap the shaft for safety.

Requested a motion to approve Ordinance 25-37. Commissioner Mikel made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Wietting to approve Ordinance 25-37 approving and authorizing the City of Braidwood to enter into and for the Mayor of Braidwood to execute quotes from Surf Internet regarding internet services and products for city buildings. Motion carried with 5 ayes; 0 nays (Mikel, Wietting, Dixon, Walsh, and Lyons)

City Clerk Report: Weaver: Requested permission to change the dates of the Tootsie Roll drive that was approved at the last council meeting. Commissioner Wietting made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Dixon, to approve the change of dates to October 3, 4, and 5, 2025, for the Knights of Columbus Tootsie Roll Drive. Motion carried with 5 ayes, 0 nays (Wietting, Dixon, Mikel, Walsh, and Lyons)

Requested permission for the Knights of Columbus to host a prayer for Life Chain. Commissioner Walsh made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Wietting, to approve the Prayer for Life Chain known as "Respect Life Sunday" at the corners of Route 53 and Route 129 on Sunday, October 5, 2025, from 2:30 to 3:30 pm. (Walsh, Wietting, Dixon, Mikel, and Lyons)

Engineer Report: No report.

City Attorney Report: Wellner: The City Attorney clarified that city ordinances are laws and carry the same enforceable weight as laws passed at the state level. While enforcement may vary in practice, ordinances can be upheld in court, and judges will enforce them when brought forward. Stated that the city is doing its best to apply enforcement consistently, though discretion is sometimes used inappropriately or imperfectly. Reiterated the importance of following ordinances as written, since they are not suggestions but binding laws.

Accounts & Finance Report: Commissioner Dixon made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Mikel, to approve the Payment of Bills, in the amount of \$181,740.16 as identified in the Accounts Payable General Ledger dated September 9, 2025. Motion carried with 5 ayes; 0 nays. (Dixon, Mikel, Wietting, Walsh, and Lyons)

Commissioner Dixon then made a Motion, seconded by Commissioner Mikel, to Approve Payroll Expenses in the amount of \$85,769.36 as identified in the Payroll General Ledger dated August 29, 2025. Motion carried with 5 ayes; 0 nays. (Dixon, Mikel, Wietting, Walsh, and Lyons).

Commissioner Dixon requested a motion for Resolution 25-16. Commissioner Mikel made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Walsh, to approve Resolution 25-16 authorizing the City of Braidwood to close its accounts at Bank of Pontiac. All ARPA funds have been expended in compliance with federal requirements. The balance will be moved to the Illinois Funds account to secure higher interest returns. Motion carried with 5 ayes; 0 nays (Mikel, Walsh, Dixon, Wietting, and Lyons)

Illinois Funds Account Update: Balance at the end of August: \$9.7 million, which includes: Deposits of \$692,000 and interest income of \$35,000. Revenue sources include: motor fuel tax, personal property replacement taxes, sales tax, local use tax, income tax, excise tax, cannabis tax, and interest. Funds are allocated monthly into the General Fund, MFT, and Enterprise accounts. Policy: funds are only used when necessary and are not designated for special projects at this time.

Financial Report Highlights: General Fund operated at an \$826,000 surplus, compared to \$427,000 surplus the prior year. Across all governmental funds: Revenue: \$3.2 million. Expenditures: \$1.65 million. Net change in fund balance: \$1.5 million surplus. Water penalties and shutoffs: Revenue trending at 36–70% of budget due to increased enforcement of collections. Outstanding water bills (as of August 27): \$94,000. The Council thanked Donna Geiss for her dedicated efforts in collections.

Audit Update (FY24): Audit has been delayed due to inconsistencies between the FY24 budget file approved by council in 2023 and the distributed version. Staff is working to reconcile discrepancies.

Commissioner Dixon requested a motion to add Chief Eric Allen to the police department bank accounts. Commissioner Mikel made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Wietting to approve Chief Eric All as an added designated signatory for the City of Braidwood Police Department bank accounts. Authority limited to non-tax-funded accounts (e.g., asset forfeiture funds). This

authorization transfers responsibilities previously held by the former chief. Motion carried with 5 ayes, 0 nays (Mikel, Wietting, Dixon, Walsh, and Lyons)

Streets & Public Improvement Report: Walsh: City crews recently completed mowing along Reed Road and I-55, including the exit ramps, middle sections, and stretches along Will Road near Spring Road. This effort helps keep the area maintained and prevents overgrowth similar to the 113 interchanges. Appreciation was expressed to the crew for their work. A comment was made regarding town hall meetings: discussions are on hold for now, pending further consideration with the mayor. Roadwork projects on Vita Lane, 3rd Street, and Stacey Court are scheduled to begin in mid-October. Crews also completed landscaping work at the water tower site, removing grass and installing gravel in the back area to reduce future maintenance. Council noted the work was well done and looks good.

Public Property Report: Wietting: Work completed the last couple weeks: 108 locates completed, 3 hydrant repairs and 1 new hydrant installed on Walnut (self-initiated by staff in a concern area), 4 B-box repairs, 5-meter repairs, 7 final reads, 4 water shutoffs, and staff were commended for their efforts in collections of past-due accounts, which helps fund additional city projects.

Commissioner Wietting made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Mikel, to approve Ordinance 25-38 approving and authorizing the City of Braidwood to enter into and for the Mayor of Braidwood to execute a quote from 120 Water regarding EPA Lead and Copper Regulations. The ordinance covers: Proposal 3: \$24,906.96 for full-service application with inventory management and sampling. The complete program will ensure the city meets compliance obligations. Staff explained that additional sampling sites had been identified due to regulatory requirements and previous efforts had encountered resistance from homeowners. Funding will come from the water fund, as this was not included in the current budget. Motion carried with 5 ayes, 0 nay (Wietting, Mikel, Dixon, Walsh, and Lyons)

Public Health & Safety Report: Mikel: Expressed thanks to Josh and the ESDA volunteers for their work at the Friday night football game, highlighting the hours of volunteer effort they put in. Special thanks to Chief Eric Allen for attending the game, meeting community members, and engaging with residents. Recognition given to Joe Turek, the new head football coach, for his dedication in his first season with the small-town team.

Braidwood Police Department Press Release for August 26 to September 8, 2025: Total number of calls for service 265, case reports 31, total subjects arrested 5, total arrest charges 8, total number of traffic stops 68, citations 24, written warnings 27, semi-truck violations 2, and total number of P-tickets 1.

Chief Allen noted that he has spent additional time working directly with officers on code enforcement procedures. Efforts are focused on bringing consistency to enforcement and ensuring residents understand that enforcement actions are fair and not targeted. Chief emphasized that the process will take time, but the goal is to achieve uniform application of rules and improve outcomes for the community.

Planning & Zoning Report: No report. The mayor inquired whether the Chairman of Planning and Zoning should be invited to meetings regarding new development projects. Consultant confirmed that while the chairman can participate, certain procedural boundaries must be

maintained to avoid conflicts with formal council actions. The mayor indicated plans to provide development meeting dates to interested parties to ensure awareness and understanding of project discussions.

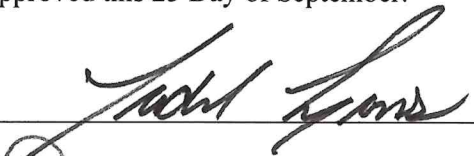
Old Business: None.

New Business: Commissioner Walsh: The Braidwood Area Healthy Coalition expressed interest in helping to beautify the city. The mayor requested that members of the Beautification Committee provide a list of ideas or a “wish list” for improvements in the downtown area. Residents and council members were invited to submit suggestions via email to dwalsh@braidwood.us

Adjournment: Commissioner Wietting made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Mikel, to adjourn the September 9, 2025 regular meeting of the Braidwood City Council. Motion carried with 5 ayes: 0 nays. (Wietting, Mikel, Dixon, Walsh, and Lyons)

The next regular meeting of the Council will be held Tuesday, September 23, 2025 at 7:00 pm

Approved this 23 Day of September.

 Mayor

 City Clerk

