



## GOSHEN COMMON COUNCIL

### Minutes of the JANUARY 26, 2026 Regular Meeting

*Convened in the Council Chambers, Police & Court Building, 111 East Jefferson Street, Goshen, Indiana*

Assisted by Mayor Gina Leichty, Evelyn Adair called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance. Emma is a student at Parkside Elementary School.

Mayor Leichty asked Clerk-Treasurer Richard R. Aguirre to conduct the roll call. The result:

Present: Linda Gerber (At-Large) Phil Lederach (District 5) Doug Nisley (District 2)  
Megan Peel (District 4) Donald Riegsecker (District 1) Matt Schrock (District 3)  
Council President Brett Weddell (At-Large)

Absent: Youth Adviser Abril Reyes (Non-voting)

Before any Council action, Clerk-Treasurer Aguirre made the following statement:

"On Jan. 9, 2026, the Common Council met in an Executive Session at City Hall. The Executive Session was convened pursuant to the provisions of the Open Door Law and Indiana Code 5-14-1.5- 6.1(b), and as permitted by state statute: (10) When considering the appointment of a public official, to (B): Consider applications. "More specifically, the Common Council reviewed and only discussed the 2026 applicants for City Boards and Commissions. Appointments to City Boards and Commissions are scheduled to be made publicly at tonight's Council meeting. The Jan. 9 Executive Session was convened at 3:35 p.m. and adjourned at 4:41 p.m."

#### Approval of Council Minutes:

Mayor Leichty asked the Council's wishes regarding the minutes of the Oct. 6 and Oct. 27, 2025 Regular Meetings as prepared by the Clerk-Treasurer. Councilor Nisley moved to accept the minutes as presented. Councilor Lederach seconded the motion. **Motion passed 7-0 on a voice vote.**

#### Approval of Meeting Agenda:

Mayor Leichty presented the agenda as prepared by the Clerk-Treasurer. Councilor Nisley moved to approve the agenda as presented. Councilor Riegsecker seconded the motion. **Motion passed 7-0 on a voice vote.**

#### 1) Introduction and swearing in of the Kid Council

##### **Background:**

The Kids Council consists of fourth-grade students from Goshen's Prairie View, Waterford, Parkside, Model, West Goshen, Chamberlain and Bethany Christian elementary schools. The program reflects the City's ongoing partnership with Goshen Community Schools to foster civic engagement among students through initiatives such as the Kids Council, Youth Advisory Council, and related leadership programs.

The Kids Council election process began in November. Students across Goshen Community Schools prepared presentations and participated in elections held at each elementary school. The Council will meet monthly during the year and will: develop and complete a community service project; participate in the Memorial Day Parade on May 25; participate in the Elkhart County 4-H Fair Parade on July 19; and recite the Pledge of Allegiance to open Fireworks on the Fairway at Black Squirrel Golf Club on July 4 in celebration of the nation's 250th anniversary.



The 2025 Kid Mayors were Whitney Gwaltney from Parkside, who ran on a platform of helping people who lost everything, and Calla Hobbs from Model, whose platform was reducing food waste. The 2025 Kid Council members were: Lucas Graber from Model; Camila Gallardo Sandoval from Prairie View; Victoria Serrano Muro from Prairie View; Ezra Shenk from Waterford; Jones Lehman from Parkside; and Lydla Jordan from Chamberlain.

Mayor Leichty said she would welcome and swear in the 2026 Kids Council. She invited a presentation from Wendy Clark, the Parent Liaison at Model Elementary School and the Kid Council coordinator.

Clark said there was a change in the program this year. This Kid Mayor election was discontinued and there only will be a Kid Council. In addition, each elementary school elected their own representative.

Clark said candidates made a video about an issue that they saw in Goshen, and they had to come up with a solution that would be something a fourth grader could do. Their classmates got to view the videos for their own schools and got to elect their own school's representative to the Kids Council.

Clark said five out of the six Goshen elementary schools and Bethany Christian participated this year. That left space for two at-large candidates, so there were seven candidates for this year's Kid Council.

Clark said the 2026 Kids Council members and their schools are:

- Zulema Gaytan, Chamberlain Elementary
- Sadie Maust, Model Elementary
- Malachi Kamp, Parkside Elementary
- Fordham Tarman, Waterford Elementary
- Jose Garcia, West Goshen Elementary
- Mateo Schmucker, At Large, Model Elementary
- Thea Budiardja, At Large, Chamberlain Elementary.

Mayor Leichty then administered an oath of service to the members of the 2026 Kids Council who then posed for photos with the Mayor and City Councilors.

## 2) Retirement recognition of Goshen Police Officer Tara Powell

Mayor Leichty honored School Resource Officer Tara Powell who retired on Jan. 9 after 22 years of dedicated service to the City of Goshen. Using a PowerPoint presentation, the Mayor discussed Powell's career and what she has meant to the department. Mayor Leichty said:

"It's really hard to sum up 28 years of service, especially when that service was not just a job, but a calling. For Tara Powell, law enforcement was never simply a career. It was who she was and is. It shaped her days, her relationships, her sense of purpose, and her deep commitment to people, especially those who needed someone steady in the midst of the hardest moments of their lives.

"She told me that retiring from the Goshen Police Department wasn't easy. It was one of the most difficult choices she had to make though she knew the time for change was here, and that tells you something important about the kind of officer that she was.

"In March 2025, Tara gave an inspirational speech to a group of 200 women at Goshen's International Women's Day event and the topic of the day was about breaking barriers. During her presentation, Tara shared stories of persistence, grit, humor, and character, and she closed with a message that still resonates: 'Women belong wherever they choose to be. If you have a dream, do not let anyone tell you that you do not belong. Just prove them wrong.'



**Mayor Leichty** continued: "Over the last few years, I have had the chance to get to know Tara and her family through our work at the City. The first thing you'll notice about Tara is her kindness and her quickness to laugh. She is thoughtful, listens carefully, and stays grounded. She's also incredibly strong and relentlessly determined.

"I remember her telling a story about chasing a dangerous suspect through the woods at night with her K-9 and catching him. That story says a lot about who Tara is. While she is warm and lighthearted, she is absolutely serious when it comes to protecting her community and pursuing justice.

"But just as important to Tara as catching bad guys was her love of kids. Tara loved being a School Resource Officer. She loved building trust with students of all ages, being a steady presence in schools, supporting teachers during critical moments, and showing up for kids and families facing some of the most difficult circumstances of their lives. For many students, Tara was not just an officer. She was safety. She was calm. She was someone who truly cared. "Throughout her career, Tara served in all kinds of roles that required strength, discipline, and resilience. K-9 officer. Field Training Officer and doing Detective work. And yet, what people remember most is how she treated them. With respect. With humanity. With fairness. That was not accidental. She worked hard to build relationships with people across the community, from Judges to those she put behind bars.

"Like so many people who serve quietly and consistently, Tara did not seek the spotlight. And as a community, we do not always pause as often as we should to recognize that kind of steady commitment. Tonight, we do.

"Tara's decision to step away from the Goshen Police Department was not about leaving service behind. It was about listening to herself and knowing it was time for a new chapter. And in that next chapter, at Elkhart County Victim Assistance, she continues the same work at its core: standing with people in their most vulnerable moments and helping them navigate a system that can feel overwhelming.

**Mayor Leichty** concluded: "Tara, I want you to know this: Your work mattered. Your presence mattered. And you shaped this department, this community, and countless lives in ways that will never fully be measured. And I want everyone in this room to know that, too. Extraordinary service does not always announce itself loudly. Sometimes it shows up every day, and does the job with excellence, treats people with dignity, and leaves things better than they found. That's Tara."

**Mayor Leichty** invited **Officer Powell** to the front of the Council chamber beside Councilors. **The Mayor** then presented her with a **Key to the City** in recognition of her service and lasting impact on the community. **Mayor Leichty** also presented **Officer Powell** with an award on behalf of **Chief José Miller**, who could not be present. **Mayor Leichty** invited **Officer Powell** to share a few words. **She** said the following.

"I'm not very good at this, but I'm going to try. For the Goshen Police Department to take me on over 22 years ago, it was a dream of mine to be of service to people and to do the right thing. And I just appreciate the City of Goshen for allowing me to do this over 22 years. It's formed so many relationships for me, through the Police Department, through all the guys that I worked with, through all the school employees that I worked with; just a huge community that you don't realize are out there that are supporting you. So, I appreciate it and that's it."

### **3) Election of Council President & Minority Party Representative for 2026**

**Mayor Leichty** announced that the Council would now elect a **Council President** and a **Minority Party Representative for 2026**. **She** invited nominations for the position of **Council President**.

**Councilor Nisley** nominated **Councilor Weddell** to be **Council President**. **Councilor Riegsecker** seconded the nomination.



Councilor Gerber nominated Councilor Peel to be Council President. Councilor Lederach seconded the nomination.

There were no further nominations, so Mayor Lederach conducted a roll call vote.

Councilors voted as follows: Councilor Gerber voted for Councilor Peel; Councilor Lederach voted for Peel; Councilor Nisley voted for Councilor Weddell; Councilor Peel voted for Peel; Councilor Riegsecker voted for Weddell; Councilor Schrock voted for Weddell; Councilor Weddell voted for Weddell.

**RESULTS: Four Council votes for Councilor Weddell and three votes for Councilor Peel, so Councilor Weddell was elected Council President for 2026.**

**Designation of Minority Party Representative:**

Mayor Leichty said that it was now time to designate the Minority Party Representative for 2026.

Councilors Peel nominated Councilor Lederach. Councilor Gerber seconded the nomination.

There were no further nominations. All three Councilors affirmed Lederach.

**RESULTS: The three Democratic Council members, Gerber, Lederach and Peel, voted for Councilor Lederach, so Councilor Lederach was elected the Minority Party Representative for 2026.**

#### **4) 2026 appointments to City Boards, Committees and Commissions**

Mayor Leichty said the Council would now make the 2026 appointments to City Board and Commissions. The Mayor said Councilors should have received a two-page document at the beginning of the meeting with a recommended slate of candidates (EXHIBIT #1). The candidates were listed as follows on the document:

##### ***BOARD OF PUBLIC WORKS & SAFETY (STORMWATER)***

Mayor Gina Leichty

Michael Landis, Mayor appointee (2026)

Mary Nichols, Mayor appointee (2026)

Barb Swartley, Mayor appointee (2026)

Orv Myers, Mayor appointee (2026)

##### ***REDEVELOPMENT COMMISSION***

Brian Garber, Mayor appointee (2026)

Jonathan Graber, Mayor appointee (2026)

Megan Hessel, Mayor appointee (2026)

Colin Yoder, Council appointee (2026)

Brett Weddell, Council appointee (2026)

Bradd Weddell, Non-voting School Board Liaison appointed by Council (2026)

##### ***PLAN COMMISSION***

Tom Holtzinger, Mayor appointee (1/26 -12/28) – *Should be listed as a four-year term to 12/29*

Hesston Lauver, Mayor appointee (1/26- 12/28) – *Should be listed as a four-year term to 12/29*

2026 Council Liaison/appointee: Doug Nisley



**BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS**

Tom Holtzinger, Mayor appointee (1/26 -12/28) – *Should be listed as a four-year term to 12/29*

Lee Rohn, Council appointee (1/26-12/28) – *Lee Rohn was actually appointed in 2025 to a four-year term to 12/28*

Hesston Lauver, Plan Commission appointee (1 /26-12/28) – *Should be listed as a four-year term to 12/29*

**BOARD OF AVIATION COMMISSIONERS**

Roger Yoder, Mayor appointee (1/26-12/28)

Jeff Hartzler, Mayor appointee (1/26 -12/28)

**COMMUNITY RELATIONS COMMISSION**

Tim Swartzentruber, Mayor appointee (1/26 - 12/28)

**BOARD OF CEMETERY TRUSTEES**

Discussion with candidates still in progress (bring to Feb meeting)

**PARKS & RECREATION BOARD**

Jenni Samuel, Mayor appointee (1/26-12/28)

**SHADE TREE BOARD**

Bob Guth, Mayor appointee

Anne Birkey, Mayor appointee

**TRAFFIC COMMISSION**

Nick Kieffer, Chamber of Commerce representative

Alan Metcalfe, Goshen Community School representative

Dennis Richmond, Community member

**Mayor Leichty asked if there was a motion to approve the slate of candidates as presented.**

**Council President Weddell made a motion to approve all of the appointees.**

Mayor Leichty said she was still in communication with possible appointees to confirm their participation on some commissions, including the Cemetery Board. She said those appointees would be brought to the February Council meeting for review.

Council President Weddell asked if the only Council appointments were two members of the Redevelopment Commission (Colin Yoder and Brett Weddell) and one member of the Board of Zoning Appeals (Lee Rohn).

Mayor Leichty said she was only asking Councilors to approve those three appointments but included the list of her appointees to make them part of the public record.

**Council President Weddell then made a motion to approve the slate of Colin Yoder and Brett Weddell as Council appointees to the Redevelopment Commission and Lee Roan as a Council appointee to the Board of Zoning Appeals. Councilor Nisely seconded the motion. The motion passed 7-0.**



Clerk-Treasurer Aguirre asked for clarification of the appointments, saying he thought there would be more Council appointments at the meeting. Mayor Leichty and Council President Weddell confirmed the necessary appointees.

#### **5) City financial report and budget update**

Clerk-Treasurer Richard Aguirre delivered a financial report and budget update that was prepared by Amber Nielsen, a senior manager for Baker Tilly Municipal Advisors, LLC, and financial consultant for the City.

#### **BACKGROUND:**

In a Jan. 20, 2026 memorandum to the Common Council, Amber Nielsen, a senior manager for Baker Tilly Municipal Advisors, LLC, wrote that she had prepared financial reports summarizing the budget and cash balance performance for Civil City funds included in the 2025 budget, which was approved by the Council in October 2024. She wrote that these reports were intended to provide a reasonable understanding of the City's financial position. They were unaudited and may have required some interpretation.

**Fund Balance Report – Nielsen** wrote that this report provided the cash balance of the budgeted funds for December 31, 2025, illustrating the City's liquidity position across all funds and demonstrating that each fund has maintained a sufficient balance to support budgeted expenditures. She noted that as the date of this report, the cash balances may be unreconciled and are subject to change..

**Budget Report – Revenues – Nielsen** wrote that this page summarized revenue collections for each fund through Dec. 31, 2025, showing progress toward projected revenue levels. She wrote that some funds receive the levy in two allotments in June and December (General, Debt Service, MVH, Cumulative Fire, Park & Recreation, Aviation, CCD, Cumulative Sewer).

**Budget Report – Expenditures – Nielsen** wrote that this report displayed expenditures incurred to date for each fund, allowing for an assessment of spending trends relative to annual appropriations, with an expected 40.25% of the budget remaining at this point in the year in total across all budgeted funds.

**Budget Report – Expenditures in the General Fund – Nielsen** wrote that the final page broke down the General Fund by department, providing a focused view of each department's budget performance to date.

#### **SUMMARY OF JAN. 26, 2026 COUNCIL DISCUSSION OF CITY FINANCIAL REPORT & BUDGET UPDATE:**

Clerk-Treasurer Aguirre provided an overview of his City's financial status and budget update. Key points:

- The report was straightforward and similar to reports from the past few months, showing that the City spent what needed to be spent and took in what needed to be taken in.
- The December bank accounts won't be reconciled for another week or so. After that the City can close out the year and provide a comprehensive report on 2025, probably in February.
- However, it appears City revenues are what we expected as are the City's expenditures.
- Departments didn't overspend their budgets and some spent well under them.
- End-of-year activity was especially intense this year, which was a significant challenge because financial consultant Jeffery Weaver (the former Deputy Clerk-Treasurer) worked limited hours, but the office was able to persevere.
- This year, we had six year-end appropriations, seven category transfers and 33-line transfers. The Council approved those appropriations and category transfers in December.



- In addition, the City had 32 encumbrances – carrying over funds from 2025 budgets to use in 2026. The Clerk-Treasurer will bring those encumbrances to the Board of Works in a few weeks for approval.
- A final note is that the Clerk-Treasurer's Office is holding its own although it is down two employees – the Deputy Clerk-Treasurer and a Financial Assistant.
- The Clerk-Treasurer has good applicants for Financial Assistant and is hoping to fill this position by the end of February or early March, which would be very helpful to the office because that will provide a backup person for payroll, accounts receivable and accounts payable.
- There is not that confidence level, however, for the Deputy Clerk-Treasurer position because we have not had applicants who have a CPA or Jeffery Weaver's level of experience.
- So, the City might need to consider seeking Council approval for a higher pay rate for the position or offering a cash incentive for a staff member who recommends a successful candidate for Deputy Clerk-Treasurer or offering a cash bonus to a candidate hired for the position.
- The Clerk-Treasurer thanked City Departments for their patience as the office continues doing its best to serve them and the public. He also thanked Councilors for their understanding.

There were no further questions or comments from Councilors about the report.

Mayor Leichty invited a motion to approve the financial and budget report.

**Councilors Weddell and Peel made a motion to approve the budget and financial report. On a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously, a by a 7-0 vote at 6:30 pm.**

#### **6) Public Hearing and consideration of Ordinance 5246, Goshen Water Utility Schedule of Rates and Charges**

At 6:30 p.m., Mayor Leichty asked if there was anyone present who wanted to comment on Ordinance 5246, the Goshen Water Utility Schedule of Rates and Charges.

Ordinance 5246 was introduced for consideration on Dec. 15, 2025. Notifications were published in the *Goshen News* with the proposed rate increases and the public was notified that a public hearing on them would be held on Jan. 26, 2026.

Despite her invitation, no one asked to speak on Ordinance 5246, so the Mayor closed the public hearing.

Mayor Leichty then called for the introduction on Second Reading of Ordinance 5246, *Goshen Water Utility Schedule of Rates and Charges*. Council President Weddell asked the Clerk-Treasurer to read Ordinance 5246 by title only, which was done.

**Weddell/Schrock moved to approve Ordinance 5246 on Second Reading.**

#### **BACKGROUND:**

Before the Council was Ordinance 5246, *Goshen Water Utility Schedule of Rates and Charges*. As amended for Second Reading consideration on Jan. 26, 2026, Ordinance 5246 would establish that:



- The rates and charges for services of the Goshen Water Utility must produce an income sufficient to maintain the utility property in a sound physical and financial condition to render adequate and efficient service;
- The rates and charges for services of the Goshen Water Utility must be nondiscriminatory, reasonable and just;
- The reasonable and just rates and charges for services provided by the Goshen Water Utility must produce sufficient revenue to the utility to meet the requirements of Indiana Code § 8-1.5-3-8(c) and (d);
- A recent financial study of the Goshen Water Utility by Baker Tilly Municipal Advisors, LLC, indicates that its current rates and charges are not sufficient to meet the reasonable financial requirements of the Water Utility; and
- The Common Council finds it necessary to increase certain rates and charges for the services of the Goshen Water Utility.

If the Common Council passed Ordinance 5246, the following would be ordained:

**Section 1. Water Rates and Charges**

A. Monthly Water Usage Charge. Each customer shall pay the monthly water usage charge in accordance with the following schedule based on the metered volume of water per one hundred (100) cubic feet supplied.

Cubic Feet of Water Supplied	2026
First 3,000 cubic feet	\$3.67
Next 97,000 cubic feet	\$2.39
Next 100,000 cubic feet	\$1.86

B. Monthly Water Service Charge. Each customer shall pay the monthly water service charge in accordance with the following schedule based on the applicable size of the meter installed. If there is a compound meter, only the larger meter will pay a service charge. This service charge pays for administrative costs, billing charges, fire protection charges and meter maintenance. This service charge is in addition to the monthly water usage charge.

Meter Size	2026
5/8-inch meter	\$12.61
3/4-inch meter	\$15.74
1-inch meter	\$23.06
1 1/2-inch meter	\$41.74
2-inch meter	\$64.14
3-inch meter	\$116.42
4-inch meter	\$191.11
6-inch meter	\$373.57
8-inch meter	\$573.91

C. Monthly Water Service Charge for Sprinkler Meters. Each customer with a sprinkler meter shall pay the monthly water service charge for sprinkler meters in accordance with the following schedule based on the applicable size of the meter installed. The amount is different than the service charges set forth in paragraph (B) so that customers are not billed twice for fire protection.



<b>Meter Size</b>	<b>2026</b>
5/8-inch meter	\$6.90
3/4-inch meter	\$7.20
1-inch meter	\$8.80
1 1/2-inch meter	\$13.25
2-inch meter	\$18.50
3-inch meter	\$30.90
4-inch meter	\$48.55
6-inch meter	\$88.45
8-inch meter	\$117.70

**D. Fire Protection Charges.**

**(1) Public Fire Protection Charge.**

**(i) Public Fire Protection Charge for Water Utility Customers.** The monthly public fire protection charge for customers of the Goshen Water Utility is included in the monthly water service charge set forth in paragraph (B).

**(ii) Public Fire Protection Charge for Sewer-Only Utility Customers.** Each customer of the Goshen Sewer Utility whose premises is not connected to the services provided by Goshen Water Utility shall pay a monthly public fire protection charge in accordance with the following schedule based on the applicable size of the meter installed. A customer of the Goshen Sewer Utility who does not have a meter installed will be charged a monthly public fire protection charge based on the rate for a 5/8-inch meter.

<b>Meter Size</b>	<b>2026</b>
5/8-inch meter	\$5.70
3/4-inch meter	\$8.55
1-inch meter	\$14.26
1 1/2-inch meter	\$28.51
2-inch meter	\$45.62
3-inch meter	\$85.54
4-inch meter	\$142.56
6-inch meter	\$285.12
8-inch meter	\$456.19

**(1) Private Fire Hydrants.** Each customer with a private fire hydrant shall pay the annual private fire hydrant protection charge in accordance with the following schedule.

**2026**  
\$619.10

**(2) Private Fire Sprinkler Lines.** Each customer with a private fire sprinkler line shall pay the annual private fire sprinkler line protection charge in accordance with the following schedule based on the applicable size of the sprinkler line connection.

<b>Connection Size</b>	<b>2026</b>
1 1/2-inch connection	\$39.53
2-inch connection	\$68.19
3-inch connection	\$153.40
4-inch connection	\$275.22



6-inch connection	\$619.11
8-inch connection	\$1,306.55
10-inch connection	\$2,349.60
12-inch connection	\$3,795.23

**E. Building Water Repair Program.**

(1) **Building Line Assessment** (the combined water/sewer charge) - \$1.10 per month

**E. Miscellaneous Charges.**

(1) **New Meters and Related Accessories.** The charge for new meters and related accessories will be charged to each customer at cost plus applicable taxes, without any mark-up.

(2) **Water Sample Testing for Total Coliforms and E. Coli.** The charge to test water samples to determine compliance for the maximum contaminant level for total coliforms and E. coli pursuant to the Revised Total Coliform Rule for drinking water when performed for other cities and towns located in Elkhart County shall be as follows:

(i) For tests performed Monday through Friday between 6:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m., excluding City-observed holidays, the charge shall be \$45.00.

(ii) For tests performed Monday through Friday between 2:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m., and for all tests performed on Saturdays, Sundays, and City-observed holidays, the charge shall be \$180.00.

Section 2. **Other Ordinances.** This ordinance repeals any provision of a prior ordinance that conflicts with the terms, conditions, rates and charges established by this ordinance. Terms, conditions, rates and charges of prior ordinances that are not in conflict with this ordinance shall remain in full force and effect.

Section 3. **Effective Date.** This ordinance shall be in full force and effect from and after its passage, approval and adoption according to the laws of the State of Indiana.

**Ordinance 5246 was considered on First Reading by the Common Council on Dec. 15, 2025.**

**After hearing an overview on Ordinance 5246 and some discussion, Councilors unanimously passed Ordinance 5246, *Goshen Water Utility Schedule of Rates and Charges*, on First Reading by a 6-0 margin, with all Councilors present voting yes. (Councilor Peel, who was attending remotely, did not feel well and left the meeting before this vote).**

**A Public Hearing and the Second Reading of Ordinance 5246 was placed on the agenda of the Jan. 26, 2026 meeting.**

**In a Jan. 26, 2026 memorandum to the Common Council, City Legal Compliance Administrator Shannon Marks outlined proposed amendments to Ordinance 5246.**

**Marks wrote that Ordinance 5246, *Goshen Water Utility Schedule of Rates and Charges*, was introduced and passed on first reading Dec. 15, 2025.**

**Marks wrote that the Water Utility would like to provide a service to other cities and towns located in Elkhart County to test water samples to determine compliance for the maximum contaminant level for total coliforms and E. coli pursuant to the Revised Total Coliform Rule for drinking water. Therefore, it was necessary to establish a charge for this service in Ordinance 5246.**

**Marks recommended that the Common Council amend Ordinance 5246, Section 1, Water Rates and Charges, paragraph (F) to read as follows:**

**(F) Miscellaneous Charges.**



**(1) New Meters and Related Accessories.** The charge for new meters and related accessories will be charged to each customer at cost plus applicable taxes, without any mark-up.

**(2) Water Sample Testing for Total Coliforms and E. Coli.** The charge to test water samples to determine compliance for the maximum contaminant level for total coliforms and E. coli pursuant to the Revised Total Coliform Rule for drinking water when performed for other cities and towns located in Elkhart County shall be as follows:

(i) For tests performed Monday through Friday between 6:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m., excluding City-observed holidays, the charge shall be \$45.00.

(ii) For tests performed Monday through Friday between 2:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m., and for all tests performed on Saturdays, Sundays, and City-observed holidays, the charge shall be \$180.00.

Marks noted that Item (2)(i) and (ii) above was the new language for the ordinance. The version of Ordinance 5246 attached to her memo – and provided to the Council – incorporated this recommended amendment.

**City Director of Public Works & Utilities Dustin Sailor also provided Councilors with a memorandum, dated Jan. 15, 2026, which provided a summary of Water and Sewer Utility Rate Changes the past eight years. In his memo, Sailor wrote, “Over the past eight years, the City of Goshen has implemented periodic water and sewer rate adjustments to maintain safe, reliable service and ensure the long-term financial stability of both utilities. These changes reflect rising operational costs, infrastructure maintenance needs, regulatory requirements, and long-term capital improvements.”**

**Sailor provided charts summarizing the sewer and water rates from 2019 to 2025 and proposed rates for 2026.**

**Sailor’s key takeaways:**

- Utility rates have increased gradually over the past eight years, rather than through a single large adjustment.
- Adjustments were made to ensure the utility remains financially sustainable and able to maintain required service levels.
- Rate changes were structured to support ongoing system investments and compliance with state and federal standards.
- Larger rate jumps occurred in 2005 for the construction of the wastewater combined sewer overflow trunkline sewer system, in 2009 for the wastewater CSO Wet Weather Detention facility, and in 2015 for the water system upgrades to support the U.S. Hwy. 33 realignment through the community.

**Rate Change Trend Summary:**

***Across the last eight years, the overall trend has been:***

- Steady upward adjustments aligned with increasing costs for labor, chemicals, equipment, and contracted services
- Increased focus on capital reinvestment, including replacement of aging mains, upgrades at treatment and distribution facilities, and improvements to system reliability
- Long-term planning to avoid deferred maintenance, which can lead to larger rate increases later and higher risk of service disruptions
- Customer billing impact

***Sailor concluded: “While the exact impact varies by customer usage level, the cumulative result of eight years of adjustments has been an increase in the average residential customer’s monthly bill.”***



**JAN. 26, 2026 COUNCIL DISCUSSION AND APPROVAL OF ORDINANCE 5246:**

Mayor Leichty reminded Councilors that City Director of Public Works & Utilities Dustin Sailor provided some additional information to the Council about the history of the proposed fee changes. She asked if there were any Council questions or comments about the additional information Sailor provided or anything else.

Councilor Lederach said, "I have to reiterate, Dustin, this is very helpful and thank you for doing that extra work."

Mayor Leichty asked if Councilors were ready to vote for final approval of Ordinance 5246.

Clerk-Treasurer Aguirre pointed out that there was a suggested revision to this ordinance that was presented in a memorandum by City Legal Compliance Administrator Shannon Marks.

Mayor Leichty asked City Attorney Bodie Stegelmann to clarify the proposed amendment.

Stegelmann said there was a proposed amendment to Ordinance 5246 in the Council's meeting packet. He said after the First Reading, "it came to light that the Water Department would like to provide a service to other municipalities in the area for water testing for coliforms and E. coli." The City would charge \$45 if tests were performed Monday through Friday during normal business hours and \$180 if not during those times.

Stegelmann said, "So, we thought it would be easy to add to this ordinance rather than create a new one, because it is a charge of the department and it's consistent with services that are being provided."

Council President Weddell made a motion to amend Ordinance 5246 as it appears in the Council packet.

Councilor Peel seconded the motion.

Councilor Riegsecker clarified the specific amendment with Stegelmann. There were no other Council questions or comments. And Councilors said they were ready to vote on the amendment.

**On a voice vote, Councilors approved the amendment proposed by Councilors Weddell and Peel in Section 1, Water Rates and Charges, paragraph (F), on page four, of Ordinance 5246. The motion passed unanimously, 7-0.**

Mayor Leichty asked if Councilors were ready for the final vote on Ordinance 5246. They indicated they were.

**On a voice vote, Councilors unanimously passed Ordinance 5246, Goshen Water Utility Schedule of Rates and Charges, on Second Reading by a 7-0 margin, with all Councilors present voting yes at 6:34 p.m.**

**7) Public Hearing and consideration of Ordinance 5247, Goshen Sewer Utility Schedule of Rates and Charges**

At 6:34 p.m., Mayor Leichty asked if there was anyone present who wanted to comment on Ordinance 5247, the Goshen Sewer Utility Schedule of Rates and Charges.

Ordinance 5247 was introduced for consideration on Dec. 15, 2025. Notifications were published in the Goshen News with the proposed rate increases and the public was notified that a public hearing on them would be held on Jan. 26, 2026.

No one asked to speak, so Mayor Leichty closed the public hearing.



Mayor Leichty then called for the introduction on Second Reading of Ordinance 5247, *Goshen Sewer Utility Schedule of Rates and Charges*. Council President Weddell asked the Clerk-Treasurer to read Ordinance 5247 by title only, which was done.

**Weddell/Nisley moved to approve Ordinance 5247 on Second Reading.**

**BACKGROUND:**

Before the Council was Ordinance 5247, *Goshen Sewer Utility Schedule of Rates and Charges*. As amended for Second Reading consideration on Jan. 26, 2026, Ordinance 5247 would establish that:

- The rates and charges for services of the Goshen Sewer Utility must produce an income sufficient to maintain the utility property in a sound physical and financial condition to render adequate and efficient service;
- The rates and charges for services of the Goshen Sewer Utility must be just and equitable;
- The just and equitable rates and charges for services provided by the Goshen Sewer Utility must produce sufficient revenue to the utility to meet the requirements of Indiana Code § 36-9-23-25;
- A recent financial study of the Goshen Sewer Utility by Baker Tilly Municipal Advisors, LLC, indicates that its current rates and charges are not sufficient to meet the reasonable financial requirements of the Sewer Utility; and
- The Common Council finds it necessary to increase certain rates and charges for the services of the Goshen Sewer Utility.

**If the Common Council passed Ordinance 5247, the following would be ordained:**

**Section 1. Sewer Rates and Charges.**

**A. Monthly Sewer Rates and Charges.** Each customer shall pay the monthly sewer rates and charges in accordance with the schedules set forth below.

**(1) Metered Customers.**

**i. Monthly Sewer Usage Charge.** Each metered customer shall pay the monthly sewer usage charge in accordance with the following schedule based on the volume of sewage per one hundred (100) cubic feet discharged.

**2026**  
\$8.19

**ii. Monthly Sewer Service Charge.** Each metered customer shall pay the monthly sewer service charge in accordance with the following schedule based on the applicable size of the meter installed. If there is a compound meter, only the larger meter will pay a service charge. This service charge pays for administrative costs, billing charges, and meter maintenance. This service charge is in addition to the monthly sewer usage charge.

<b>Meter Size</b>	<b>2026</b>
5/8-inch meter	\$12.84
3/4-inch meter	\$16.26
1-inch meter	\$25.64
1 1/2-inch meter	\$53.92
2-inch meter	\$89.85
3-inch meter	\$201.06



4-inch meter	\$346.57
6-inch meter	\$782.94
8-inch meter	\$1,391.32

(2) Unmetered Customers.

i. City Water Available - Monthly Sewer Usage Charge and Service Charge. Each customer receiving sewer services for an unmetered residential lot, or unmetered residential building that has city water available shall pay the following monthly sewer usage charge and service charge in accordance with the following schedule.

2026  
\$115.81

ii. City Water Not Available - Monthly Sewer Usage Charge and Service Charge. Each customer receiving sewer services for an unmetered residential lot or unmetered residential building that does not have city water available shall pay the following monthly sewer usage charge and service charge in accordance with the following schedule.

2026  
\$83.03

B. Surcharges. The following treatment surcharges shall be charged per pound in accordance with the following schedule.

Surcharges (per pound)	2026
Biochemical Oxygen Demand (BOD) (in excess of 200 mg/l)	\$0.15
Total Suspended Solids (TSS) (in excess of 200 mg/l)	\$0.15
Ammonia-Nitrogen (NH3-N) (in excess of 30 mg/l)	\$0.61
Phosphorus (P) (in excess of 10 mg/l)	\$0.90
Fats Oil and Grease (FOG) (in excess of 200 mg/l)	\$0.83

C. Building Sewer Repair Program.

(1) Building Line Assessment (the combined water/sewer charge) - \$1.10 per month.

(2) Building Sewer Claim Fee - \$350.00 per claim.

Section 2. Other Ordinances. This ordinance repeals any provision of a prior ordinance that conflicts with the terms, conditions, rates and charges established by this ordinance. Terms, conditions, rates and charges of prior ordinances that are not in conflict with this ordinance shall remain in full force and effect.

Section 3. Effective Date. This ordinance shall be in full force and effect from and after its passage, approval and adoption according to the laws of the State of Indiana.

Ordinance 5247 was considered on First Reading by the Common Council on Dec. 15, 2025.

After hearing an overview on Ordinance 5247 and some discussion, Councilors unanimously passed Ordinance 5247, *Goshen Sewer Utility Schedule of Rates and Charges*, on First Reading by a 6-0 margin, with all Councilors present voting yes (Councilor Peel, who was attending remotely, did not feel well and left the meeting before this vote).



A Public Hearing and the Second Reading of Ordinance 5247 was placed on the agenda of the Jan. 26, 2026 meeting.

In a Jan. 26, 2026 memorandum to the Common Council, City Legal Compliance Administrator Shannon Marks outlined proposed amendments to Ordinance 5247.

Marks wrote that Ordinance 5247, Goshen Sewer Utility Schedule of Rates and Charges, was introduced and passed on first reading Dec. 15, 2025.

Since that time, Marks wrote, "it has come to my attention that corrections (were) needed to the description of the treatment surcharges (not to the surcharge amounts themselves). She recommended that the Common Council amend Ordinance 5247, Section 1, Sewer Rates and Charges, paragraph (B), Surcharges, to read as follows: (B) Surcharges. The following treatment surcharges shall be charged per pound in accordance with the following schedule.

Surcharges (per pound)	2026
Biochemical Oxygen Demand (BOD) (in excess of 200 mg/l)	\$0.15
Total Suspended Solids (TSS) (in excess of 200 mg/l)	\$0.15
Ammonia-Nitrogen (NH3-N) (in excess of 30 mg/l)	\$0.61
Phosphorus (P) (in excess of 10 mg/l)	\$0.90
Fats Oil and Grease (FOG) (in excess of 200 mg/l)	\$0.83

Marks wrote that the version of Ordinance 5247 attached to her memo incorporated this recommended amendment.

City Director of Public Works & Utilities Dustin Sailor also provided Councilors with a memorandum, dated Jan. 15, 2026, which provided a summary of Water and Sewer Utility Rate Changes the past eight years. In his memo, Sailor wrote, "Over the past eight years, the City of Goshen has implemented periodic water and sewer rate adjustments to maintain safe, reliable service and ensure the long-term financial stability of both utilities. These changes reflect rising operational costs, infrastructure maintenance needs, regulatory requirements, and long-term capital improvements."

Sailor provided charts summarizing the sewer and water rates from 2019 to 2025 and proposed rates for 2026.

Sailor's key takeaways:

- Utility rates have increased gradually over the past eight years, rather than through a single large adjustment.
- Adjustments were made to ensure the utility remains financially sustainable and able to maintain required service levels.
- Rate changes were structured to support ongoing system investments and compliance with state and federal standards.



- Larger rate jumps occurred in 2005 for the construction of the wastewater combined sewer overflow trunkline sewer system, in 2009 for the wastewater CSO Wet Weather Detention facility, and in 2015 for the water system upgrades to support the U.S. Hwy. 33 realignment through the community.

**Rate Change Trend Summary:**

***Across the last eight years, the overall trend has been:***

- Steady upward adjustments aligned with increasing costs for labor, chemicals, equipment, and contracted services
- Increased focus on capital reinvestment, including replacement of aging mains, upgrades at treatment and distribution facilities, and improvements to system reliability
- Long-term planning to avoid deferred maintenance, which can lead to larger rate increases later and higher risk of service disruptions
- Customer billing impact

***Sailor concluded: "While the exact impact varies by customer usage level, the cumulative result of eight years of adjustments has been an increase in the average residential customer's monthly bill."***

**JAN. 26, 2026 COUNCIL DISCUSSION AND APPROVAL OF ORDINANCE 5247:**

**Mayor Leichty asked if Councilors had questions or comments on Ordinance 5247.**

**Council President Brett Weddell pointed out that Ordinance 5247 also needed to be amended.**

**Council President Weddell/Councilor Nisley then made a motion to amend Ordinance 5247 as presented in the Council's meeting packet.**

**Mayor Leichty asked if Councilors had any questions or comments about the amendment.**

**Councilor Gerber asked for an explanation of the amendments for the audience.**

**City Attorney Stegelmann said the ordinance includes certain surcharges that are charged by the Wastewater Department. He said some surcharges were provided in the draft that was approved by Council on First Reading in December.**

**However, the City Attorney said the surcharges were not spelled out; only abbreviations were given for each one. He said this amendment would spell out the types of items that the Wastewater Department would be charging or surcharging for wastewater (treatment)."**

**Mayor Leichty thanked Stegelmann for that added clarity.**

**Councilors indicated they were ready to vote on the amendment.**

**On a voice vote, Councilors approved the amendment proposed by Councilors Weddell and Nisley in Section 1, Sewer Rates and Charges, paragraph (B), Surcharges, on page four, of Ordinance 5247. The motion passed unanimously, 7-0.**

**Councilors indicated they were ready for the final vote on Ordinance 5247.**

**On a voice vote, Councilors unanimously passed Ordinance 5247, Goshen Sewer Utility Schedule of Rates and Charges, on Second Reading by a 7-0 margin, with all Councilors present voting yes at 6:36 p.m.**



**Privilege of the Floor**

At 6:36 p.m., Mayor Leichthy invited public comments for issues not on the Council agenda. There were none.

**Elected Official Reports:**

Mayor Leichthy asked if there were any reports from Councilors. There were none.

**Adjournment:**

Councilor Nisley made a motion to adjourn the meeting, which was seconded by Councilor Peel

**On a voice vote, Councilors unanimously approved the motion to adjourn the meeting.**

Mayor Leichthy adjourned the meeting at 6:37 p.m.


*EXHIBIT #1: A two-page document prepared by the Mayor's Office and distributed to Councilors before the meeting with a list of suggested 2026 appointments to City Board and Commissions. Councilors affirmed the appointments during the meeting (agenda item #4):*

**APPROVED:**

A blue ink signature of Gina Leichthy, Mayor of Goshen, written over a horizontal line. The signature is stylized and cursive.

Gina Leichthy, Mayor of Goshen

**ATTEST:**

A black ink signature of Richard R. Aguirre, Clerk-Treasurer, written over a horizontal line. The signature is cursive.

Clerk-Treasurer Richard R. Aguirre

*Exhibit #1*

**Boards and Commissioners**

**BOARD OF PUBLIC WORKS & SAFETY (STORMWATER)**

- Mayor Gina Leichy
- Michael Landis, Mayor Appointee (2026)
- Mary Nichols, Mayor Appointee (2026)
- Barb Swartley, Mayor Appointee (2026)
- Orv Myers, Mayor Appointee (2026)

**REDEVELOPMENT COMMISSION**

- Brian Garber, Mayor Appointee (2026)
- Jonathan Graber, Mayor Appointee (2026)
- Megan Hessel, Mayor Appointee (2026)
- Colin Yoder, Council Appointee (2026)
- Brett Weddell, Council Appointee (2026)
- Bradd Weddell, Non-voting School Board Liaison appointed by Council (2026)

**PLAN COMMISSION**

- Tom Holtzinger, Mayor Appointee (1/26 – 12/28)
- Hesston Lauver, Mayor Appointee (1/26 – 12/28)
- 2026 Council Liaison/appointee: Doug Nisley

**BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS**

- Tom Holtzinger, Mayor Appointee (1/26 – 12/28)
- Lee Rohn, Council Appointee (1/26 – 12/28)
- Hesston Lauver, Plan Commission Appointee (1/26 – 12/28)

**BOARD OF AVIATION COMMISSIONERS**

- Roger Yoder, Mayor Appointee (1/26 – 12/28)
- Jeff Hartzler, Mayor Appointee (1/26 – 12/28)

**COMMUNITY RELATIONS COMMISSION**

- Tim Swartzentruber, Mayor Appointee (1/26 – 12/28)

**BOARD OF CEMETERY TRUSTEES**

- Discussion with candidates still in progress (bring to Feb meeting)

**PARKS & RECREATION BOARD**

- Jenni Samuel, Mayor Appointee (1/26 – 12/28)

**SHADE TREE BOARD**

- Bob Guth, Mayor Appointee
- Anne Birkey, Mayor Appointee

**TRAFFIC COMMISSION**

- Nick Kieffer, Chamber of Commerce Representative
- Alan Metcalfe, Goshen Community School Representative
- Dennis Richmond, Community Member