



## Minutes of the September 29th, 2025 City Council Work Session

\*Unofficial meeting minutes until approved by Council\*

**Monday, September 29, 2025 – 6:00 p.m.**

**Robins City Hall, 265 S. 2<sup>nd</sup> St., Robins, Iowa**

The work session of the Robins City Council was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Mayor Chuck Hinz. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

### **Roll Call:**

Present:

- Councilor Leigh Cook
- Councilor JD Smith
- Councilor Mike Foley
- Councilor Cary Smith (joined at 6:06 p.m.)

Also present: City Clerk Lisa Goodin, City Engineer Kelli Scott, Superintendent of Public Works/Building Inspector Mike Kortenkamp, Detective Greg McGivern and several Robins residents. Councilor Dave Franzman was Absent.

### **Approval of Agenda:**

Councilor JD Smith moved to approve the agenda. Councilor Cook seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

### **Presentation by Iowa American Water regarding Transition to Wholesale Water Agreement with the City of Cedar Rapids**

Mary Eggers, Iowa American Water, provided background on the private utility company. Brad Nielsen detailed potential benefits to the community, were Iowa American Water to own and operate Robins' water and wastewater utilities, including growth and economic development, future system upgrades, experienced utility operators, ensured environmental compliance and rate stability through regulatory oversight by the Iowa Utilities Board. Tony Loete provided commentary on additional considerations for Robins' water system, including fire protection improvements and the potential need to be independent of Cedar Rapids' water supply in the future. Nielsen described recent acquisitions by IAW in LeClaire, IA, Blue Grass, IA and Donahue, IA. Eggers described the path to sale of the utility systems, including independent appraisals to determine Fair Market Value and a referendum to voters to approve the sale of water infrastructure, following the signing of a Letter of Intent (LOI) by the City of Robins.

Councilor JD Smith requested clarification of the process following the signing of a LOI, which Eggers provided. Councilor Foley inquired into the possibility of a non-binding offer prior to signing a LOI, Nielsen agreed. Foley further inquired into the likelihood of IAW establishing offices in Robins. Nielsen answered that Robins would be the first system in the area to be owned by IAW and that local offices would be necessary in order to fully service the system. The size of the staff would be dependent on evaluation of the utility assets. Councilor JD Smith inquired into the necessity for future construction of elevated water storage. IAW staff responded that IAW would be responsible for that cost, which would be spread over the company's 70,000 Iowa customers.

Engineer Scott provided background regarding Cedar Rapids desire to move Robins away from its current retail water utility model and into a wholesale utility model, where Robins would assume responsibility for the operation and maintenance of the water system. Councilor JD Smith questioned IAW's willingness to dig wells and provide for water treatment should Cedar Rapids withdraw the provision of water to Robins. IAW responded in the affirmative. Smith further inquired into the utility rate structure for Robins. IAW responded

that rates would be determined based on operational and maintenance costs, future development in Robins, tax impacts and overall business costs would be considered. Nielsen further provided that IAW would offer rebates to developers to encourage economic growth in Robins.

Councilor Cary Smith inquired as to the average rate increases imposed by IAW in the past. Eggers provided that over the past 15 years, IAW customers have seen an average of a 2.5% increase annually. Responding to an inquiry by Councilor Foley if any communities recently acquired by IAW regret their decision, Nielsen responded in the negative, with Loete adding that quarterly meetings are held with all community leadership. Foley further inquired whether any consideration is given to the value of Robins' undeveloped real estate in the infrastructure appraisal. Nielsen responded in the negative, but that future potential could be considered in the offer.

Councilor Cook asked that if LOI is signed and the City proceeds with independent appraisals, would Robins be responsible for any costs. Eggers responded that if the sale is halted, Robins would be responsible for the cost of the appraisals, approximately \$12-15k each. Councilor Foley inquired if IAW was currently speaking with other communities in the area; Nielsen responded yes. Engineer Scott asked if IAW would be able to provide an estimate of Robins's future utility rates were the sale to proceed. Nielsen responded in the negative, citing that more information was needed regarding the cost of supply by Cedar Rapids. Councilor Cary Smith inquired when this information would be available, Eggers responded it would be available once IAW had completed its due diligence. Councilor JD Smith asked if IAW would cover costs to install 3 water meter pits on supply mains and Loete responded that the value of the added infrastructure would be considered in the appraisal and offer to purchase.

**Adjournment:**

Councilor Foley moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:02 p.m. Councilor JD Smith seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

ATTEST:

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Chuck Hinz, Mayor

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Lisa Goodin, City Clerk/Treasurer