

Meeting Opening

Mayor Diana Merdian called the Sterling City Council to order at 6:30 PM on Monday, May 4, 2026.

Present: Alderman Retha Elston, Alderman Joe Strabala-Bright, Alderman Josh Johnson, Alderman Aida Baker, Alderman Allen Przysucha, Alderman Jim Wise.

Absent: None.

City Manager Scott Shumard, City Attorney Tim Zollinger, Police Chief E. Pat Bartel, Fire Chief David Northcutt, Superintendent of Public Works Brad Schrader, Superintendent of Building and Zoning Amanda Schmidt, Superintendent of Wastewater Cory Bradshaw, and City Clerk Teri Sathoff were also present.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Communication from Visitors

Rachel Padilla stated that she lives on West 10th Street between Avenue E and Avenue F. Padilla stated that she has lived at this location for five years and has witnessed several accidents and near accidents at the intersection. She noted that there are currently no traffic control devices in place and expressed concern that accidents will continue and potentially become more severe.

Marissa Rodriguez, who resides on the corner of Avenue F and West 10th Street, stated that she witnessed the accident that occurred today. Rodriguez expressed concern regarding the recent traffic accidents at the intersection and stated that traffic control signs are needed. She further noted concerns for the safety of children in the area and the potential for serious injuries if corrective measures are not implemented.

Consent Agenda

Alderman Elston made a motion to approve the following items on the consent agenda;

- A. Approval of Minutes
- B. Approval of Bills and Payroll
- C. Resolution 2026-05-10 MFT Supplemental for 2014
- D. Resolution 2026-05-11 MFT Supplemental for 2015
- E. Resolution 2026-05-12 MFT Supplemental for 2018

- F. Resolution 2026-05-13 MFT Supplemental for 2019
- G. Resolution 2026-05-14 MFT Supplemental for 2021
- H. Resolution 2026-05-15 MFT Supplemental for 2022
- I. Resolution 2026-05-16 MFT Supplemental for 2023
- J. Resolution 2026-05-17 General Obligation Bonds for 2016 and 2017
- K. Supplemental MFT Expenditures for 2012 through 2023
- L. IDOT Maintenance Supplemental Expenditure Statement for 2012
- M. IDOT Maintenance Supplemental Expenditure Statement for 2013
- N. IDOT Maintenance Supplemental Expenditure Statement for 2014
- O. IDOT Maintenance Supplemental Expenditure Statement for 2015
- P. IDOT Maintenance Supplemental Expenditure Statement for 2016
- Q. IDOT Maintenance Supplemental Expenditure Statement for 2017
- R. IDOT Maintenance Supplemental Expenditure Statement for 2018
- S. IDOT Maintenance Supplemental Expenditure Statement for 2019
- T. IDOT Maintenance Supplemental Expenditure Statement for 2020
- U. IDOT Maintenance Supplemental Expenditure Statement for 2021
- V. IDOT Maintenance Supplemental Expenditure Statement for 2022
- W. IDOT Maintenance Supplemental Expenditure Statement for 2023
- X. National Day of Prayer Proclamation
- Y. Proclamation declaring May 3rd–May 9th as Municipal Clerk's Week
- Z. Proclamation declaring May 15th as Police Memorial Day and May 12–18, 2026, as Police Officers Week.
- AA. Taste of Fiesta to hold a Bucket Brigade on May 2, 2026
- BB. Sterling American Legion Women's Auxiliary to hold a Bucket Brigade on May 23, 2026

Seconded by Alderman Strabala-Bright. Voting: Ayes – Retha Elston, Joe Strabala-Bright, Josh Johnson, Aida Baker, Allen Przysucha, Jim Wise. Nays – None.

Mayor Merdian presented the proclamation for Municipal Clerk's Week to City Clerk Sathoff.

Mayor Merdian presented the proclamation for Police Officers Memorial Week to Chief Bartel and Deputy Chief Bland.

Recommended Personnel Action

Chief Bartel introduced three new officers: Cameron Schneider, Jason McMurty, and Loren Rice. The officers graduated from the Sauk Valley Police Academy on April 23, 2026.

City Clerk Sathoff swore in the new officers.

Business Items

Alderman Przysucha made a motion to Approve Pay Request #6 to Martin & Company Excavating of Oregon, Illinois in the amount of \$102,299.96 for Street Reconstruction; Seconded by Alderman Elston. Voting: Ayes – Retha Elston, Joe Strabala-Bright, Josh Johnson, Aida Baker, Allen Przysucha, Jim Wise. Nays – None.

Alderman Baker made a motion to approve the Pay Request #4 to Martin & Company Excavating of Oregon, Illinois, in the amount of \$104,527.66 for Street Reconstruction; Seconded by Alderman Elston. Voting: Ayes – Retha Elston, Joe Strabala-Bright, Josh Johnson, Aida Baker, Allen Przysucha, Jim Wise. Nays – None.

The Collective Bargaining Agreement with the Sterling Fire Department was removed from the agenda.

Staff Reports

Superintendent of Public Works Brad Schrader reported crews have been working on landscaping, cleaning catch basins, mowing parks, planting trees, and converting one alley to gravel. He stated that crews will be hosting Touch-a-Truck events at area kindergarten classes this week, as well as the Clean and Green event on Friday and Saturday. Schrader also provided an overview of the Clean and Green program and outlined which items will be accepted.

Superintendent of Building and Zoning Amanda Schmidt reported that the department will be hiring a summer intern for grass-related duties. The advertisement for the second rental inspector position will be published this week. Schmidt also noted that a Plan Commission meeting is scheduled for May 21.

Superintendent of Wastewater Cory Bradshaw reported that crews replaced a leaking seal at one of the City's largest lift stations. Staff also met with Willett Hofmann to discuss preliminary plans for the new treatment facility. Bradshaw stated that sludge depth in the lagoon was checked and that a sludge-reducing bacteria program will be implemented.

Chief Pat Bartel reported that enforcement efforts regarding e-bikes and motorized bikes have continued, with citations issued and one additional bike confiscated. Unit 5 distributed information to parents regarding the use of these bikes. Bartel also reported that the power disruption on Saturday caused the failure of one server. The Run for the Badge 5K will be held on May 9.

Chief Northcutt reported that the Fire Department responded to 208 calls during the month of April, including 13 fires. The Illinois State Fire Marshal's Office is investigating those incidents. Northcutt stated that the assessment center process has been completed and that an offer will

be extended to one applicant this week. Firefighters attending the academy continue to receive positive reports, with approximately six weeks remaining in the program. Two firefighters also completed NIMS 300 and 400 training. In addition, a drive simulator trailer from the National Fire Service Institute is currently at the station.

City Clerk Teri Sathoff reported that Kori Elston and Monique Castillo have now been trained to process Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests. The City's new FOIA software is expected to be operational soon. Sathoff noted that the City has already received more FOIA requests this year than during all of 2025, with the majority of the requests appearing to originate from bots. She also reported that a planning meeting was held regarding the June 2 stop of the Big Boy Steam Engine in Sterling. In addition, a Riverfront meeting is scheduled for Friday at 12:30 p.m.

City Manager Scott Shumard reported that the fire union agreement has been completed. However, the item was removed from the current agenda due to clerical corrections that must be addressed and will appear on the next agenda. Shumard also reported that meetings are scheduled this week with Riverfront engineers and the project contractor. The City submitted its Opportunity Zone Agreement application, which could provide capital gains tax savings benefits. ADA sidewalk work is scheduled to begin this week with an anticipated completion date of June 1. Shumard stated that the Woodburn Griswold informational meeting held last week was well attended and received. The City is currently awaiting an estimated timeline from NICOR regarding its portion of the project.

Council Reports

Aldersperson Baker thanked staff for their work on the Griswold and Woodburn project, stating that the improvements are much needed. She also said she is looking forward to the opening of the Riverfront Park. Baker expressed concern regarding vandalism on the bridge and loose railings. She also inquired about the status of the Wallace Park sign. Superintendent Brad Schrader responded that the sign still needs to be ordered and noted that it was included in the current fiscal year budget.

Aldersperson Johnson asked about the progress of the remediation work at Riverfront Park. Schrader reported that a meeting with the contractor is scheduled for Friday afternoon. Johnson also asked whether additional measures could be taken to assist the Police Department with issues involving e-bikes. Attorney Zollinger stated that he would meet with the Chief to determine whether there are gaps in current State law that could be addressed locally.

Aldersperson Strabala-Bright reported receiving concerns from a resident regarding intersections on the west end of the City. He stated that he understands the frustrations of residents and noted that although the Safe Streets for All grant was awarded in 2024, the City is still waiting for the funding. He added that the delay is frustrating for both citizens and the Council. Additional discussion was held regarding the open intersections.

Aldersperson Elston thanked the City Clerk's Office and the Police Department for their work and congratulated them on receiving proclamations. She reminded residents to participate in the Clean and Green event. Elston also asked whether the City participates in No Mow May. Superintendent Amanda Schmidt advised that the practice is not permitted under the City code and that citations will be issued for grass exceeding eight inches in height. Elston additionally expressed concern regarding the lack of sidewalks on the east end of town, leading to Walmart.

Aldersperson Przysucha thanked Public Works staff for the Arbor Day tree planting at local schools. He also inquired about the progress of the 2nd Street project and expressed concern that the 4th Street construction project could create significant traffic congestion.

Aldersperson Wise asked Superintendent Cory Bradshaw whether there had been a noticeable decrease in inflow and infiltration following the relining project and stormwater management improvements. Wise stated that he would be contacting Bradshaw for additional information.

Mayor Merdian reminded the public that CGH will hold a ribbon-cutting ceremony for its cafeteria on Tuesday. She thanked Sterling Main Street for its efforts in organizing the car show and noted that the National Day of Prayer will be held at New Life Church. Mayor Merdian also expressed appreciation for teachers and nurses and wished everyone a Happy Mother's Day.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 7:24 pm.

Teri Sathoff

City Clerk