

Meeting Opening

Mayor Diana Merdian called the Sterling City Council to order at 6:30 PM on Monday, January 19, 2026.

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

Absent: None.

City Manager Scott Shumard, City Attorney Tim Zollinger, Police Deputy Chief Shane Bland, Fire Chief David Northcutt, Superintendent of Public Works Brad Schrader, and City Clerk Teri Sathoff were also present.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Communication from Visitors

There was no public comment.

Consent Agenda

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

1. Approval of Minutes.
2. Approval of Bills and Payroll.

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

Items Removed from the Consent Agenda

No items were removed from the consent agenda.

Recommended Personnel Action

There was no recommended personnel action.

Presentations and Awards

The award for Police Officer of the Year and the Non-Sworn Employee of the Year were postponed due to illness.

Business Items

Alderman Johnson made a motion to approve the **Proclamation for Dr. Martin Luther King Day**; Seconded by Alderman Przysucha. Mayor Merdian read the Proclamation. Voting: Ayes – Retha Elston, Joe Strabala-Bright, Josh Johnson, Aida Baker, Allen Przysucha, and Jim Wise. Nays – None.

Alderman Baker made a motion to approve the **Change Order #7 for Sanitary Sewer Rehabilitation & Improvements in the amount of \$64,241.00**; Seconded by Alderman Strabala-Bright. Voting: Ayes – Retha Elston, Joe Strabala-Bright, Josh Johnson, Aida Baker, Allen Przysucha, Jim Wise. Nays – None.

Alderman Wise made a motion to approve **the Pay Request to Hoerr Construction for Sanitary Sewer Rehabilitation & Improvements in the amount of \$100,785.50**; Seconded by Alderman Elston. Alderman Wise asked if this project was completed. City Manager Shumard advised that it is approximately 80% completed. Voting: Ayes – Retha Elston, Joe Strabala-Bright, Josh Johnson, Aida Baker, Allen Przysucha, and Jim Wise. Nays – None.

Alderman Przysucha made a motion to approve the **Agreement with IDOT to upgrade eight (8) ADA Sidewalk Ramps on Illinois Route 2. Four (4) at 2nd Avenue, and Four (4) at 3rd Avenue**; Seconded by Alderman Wise. Voting: Ayes – Retha Elston, Joe Strabala-Bright, Josh Johnson, Aida Baker, Allen Przysucha, and Jim Wise. Nays – None.

Alderman Elston made a motion to approve **Resolution No. R2026-01-01 Transferring Jurisdiction and Control of Real Property to the Industrial Development Commission**; Seconded by Alderman Wise. Voting: Ayes – Retha Elston, Joe Strabala-Bright, Josh Johnson, Aida Baker, Allen Przysucha, and Jim Wise. Nays – None.

Alderman Elston made a motion to approve **Resolution 2026-01-02 Authorizing a Letter of Non-Objection to the Whiteside County Board Relating to Subdivision Request for the Sulouff-Deets Subdivision PIN 1013306004**; Seconded by Alderman Przysucha. Voting: Ayes – Retha Elston, Joe Strabala-Bright, Josh Johnson, Aida Baker, Allen Przysucha, and Jim Wise. Nays – None.

Staff Reports

Superintendent of Public Works Brad Schrader reported that all the Christmas decorations have been taken down and stored. Crews have been trimming trees, cold patching, laying gravel in alleys, working on buildings and equipment, and assisting the wastewater department with getting their new employee his CDL.

Deputy Chief Shane Bland reported that the Cadet Thorp Officer of the Year award and the non-

sworn employee of the year award will be presented in March due to an illness.

City Clerk Teri Sathoff reported that the OSHA reports have been submitted for the work comp injuries in 2025. Injuries among employees were down 38% from the previous year, and the time away from work was a total of 7 days, which is a significant drop from the previous year. She advised that the employees would be volunteering at the Frosty Fun Day on February 21st at Northland Mall, which is a Tri-County Opportunities event.

Attorney Tim Zollinger reported that he and the building department attended a court appearance for a nuisance property. The court issued an order stating that the tenants must leave the property; if they refuse to leave the property, there could be a substantial monetary penalty.

City Manager Scott Shumard reported that the Safe Streets for All grant remains under review. He and Schrader met with subcontractors at the riverfront park to address several outstanding items, including landscaping and peeling paint. Second Street, from 4th Avenue to 1st Avenue, is expected to reopen on Friday; contractors will continue concrete work on the remaining sections of the project. ComEd advised that its request to the UP Railroad to relocate a line running from Lawrence Brothers to Plainwell Brass was denied, and they are developing an alternative plan for that line.

Council Reports

Alderman Baker reminded everyone to check on neighbors during this cold weather, be aware of the dangers of the cold, and assist others.

Alderman Elston stated she attended Attorney Coplan's memorial service. He will be missed, and she appreciated his dedication to the City of Sterling; he always prioritized the community and his family.

Alderman Przysucha asked if there were plans to work on the 200 block of 4th Avenue. City Manager Shumard stated they will be looking at it in the spring after the completion of Second Street.

Mayor Merdian reported that the City Manager's evaluation has been given to the department heads and the Council. She advised there have been two resignations on the Plan Commission. She will be looking at filling those vacancies. She advised she will be in Washington DC for the Mayors Innovation Project.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 6:51 PM.

Teri Sathoff

City Clerk