



# City of Racine

City Hall  
730 Washington Ave.  
Racine, WI 53403  
[www.cityofracine.org](http://www.cityofracine.org)

## Meeting Minutes - Final Common Council

*Mayor John T. Dickert*

*Alderman Jeff Coe, Alderman Robert Anderson*

*Alderman Michael Shields, Alderman Jim Kaplan, Alderman David L. Maack*

*Alderman Sandy Weidner, Alderman Terry McCarthy, Alderman Raymond DeHahn*

*Alderman Q.A. Shakoor, II, Alderman Aron Wisneski, Alderman Gregory Holding*

*Alderman James T. Spangenberg, Alderman Ronald D. Hart, Alderman Robert Mozol,*

*Alderman Kelli Stein*

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Monday, October 19, 2009

6:00 PM

Room 205, City Hall

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### SPECIAL COMMON COUNCIL MEETING

#### A. Call To Order

**PRESENT:** 13 - Coe, Anderson, Shields, Kaplan, Maack, Weidner, McCarthy, DeHahn, Shakoor, II, Holding, Wisneski, Spangenberg and Stein

**EXCUSED:** 2 - Hart and Mozol

#### B. Communication

**Refer to Committee of the Whole, by Ald. Q. A. Shakoor, II**

[09-4275](#)

**Subject:** Communication from Mayor Dickert submitting the 2010 proposed budgets for the General Fund, Special Revenue Funds, Capital Projects Funds, Debt Service, Enterprise Funds, Utilities, and Internal Service Funds

**Referred to Committee of the Whole**

Mayor Dickert presented his City of Racine 2010 Budget Address

2009 – 2010 Budget Address

If there is one thing we learned in 2009, every challenge is an opportunity.

On May 5th of this year I was honored with the opportunity to begin work as your mayor. The first day on the job I received a challenge greater than most elected officials would expect. The Governor had called the top 12 city's Mayors to Madison to inform us that we would be facing a decline in state aid or shared revenues from 2-5%.

As I sat with outgoing Mayor Tom Friedel, we discussed the problem and determined this was the perfect time to re-examine each department and put in place my 10 year strategy for the city to provide savings and efficiency.

Looking back, I am happy to see the same person who worked with me through the transition would end up working so seamlessly with me as our City Administrator. Thanks Tom.

This year we faced a 2% cut from the state and an increase in fees to cities totaling nearly \$1.3 million. Add to that a drop in interest income from our investments and a large decrease in revenue and the picture looked pretty bleak.

However, I was looking forward to working with everyone here in city hall, and I can assure you they stepped up to the plate. Together, we worked and worked and worked to get to the budget I am presenting today.

Members of the City Council, I offer you a city budget that has cut back its spending by \$683,000 over last year. This General Fund Budget for 2010 has no increase.

I would ask all department heads to stand and accept my gratitude for all their hard work and diligence in working with me for the last 6-8 weeks. In 2010 with a 17% unemployment rate, I was not willing to lay anyone off this year or reduce services. This was the challenge and we accomplished both.

Let me tell you that the departments and the unions came to the table and we got it done together. Never in my life have I seen such sacrifice and selfless effort as I saw this year, you have my gratitude and thanks. I would like all the Union leadership who negotiated this year's contracts to stand up and be recognized.

Good fiscal management has allowed us to be where we are without layoffs or a cut in services. But we face an uncertain economic environment and 2010 will be a challenge for all of us.

I have been asked about the ten year plan often, and the first step in any long range plan is fiscal responsibility. So I am happy to say you will see it incorporated often in this budget, as well as in every budget as long as I serve the people of Racine. Because long range planning saves money and creates efficiencies that are vital to balancing difficult budgets.

Part of the long range plan for Racine also includes putting all regional services and partnership opportunities back on the table for conversation. It's all about relationships,

working with the County, Villages and Towns for the betterment of our community.

Let's talk about some of those efficiencies we are already working on:

Advancing Family Assets is a perfect example of coordination for the benefit of everyone; the City, County, RCEDC and the United Way all working together to create efficiency to lift families out of poverty.

Renew Racine has held 2 cleanups along the Riverview area to date. Nearly ½ a dozen groups and over 100 volunteers have assisted in making the area a more beautiful place to live, and at the same time made some friends in the neighborhood.

We will hold our final cleanup for the year on Saturday October 31st at Riverside Park off of Kinzie & 6th and hope to see you all down there as we demonstrate to the city and the world that the Riverview area is one of the best places to live.

In this budget I have included a recycled walkway to be installed on North Beach, which will be the first handicapped walkway of its kind providing all the amenities of the lakefront to everyone no matter what their limitations.

We are working with local businesses to expand our efforts in utilizing recyclable products in our day to day operations protecting our environment for ourselves and our children. Racine has joined a consortium to purchase products from local companies to help in the effort.

Finally, we will be implementing a recycling program to reduce our waste disposal costs by \$150,000 annually, while making it more convenient for our residents.

During my campaign I talked at length about housing, crime and jobs. Here's where we are so far.

In the area of housing, we are currently rewriting our housing ordinances to reward good landlords and good tenants. We are focusing our efforts into revitalizing one area of town at a time. By creating efficiency and focusing our work we anticipate revitalizing 20-30 houses a year instead of the 2-5 we have in years past.

Another component is crime; this budget includes 3 new community policing officers funded with federal stimulus dollars. We will locate them in our hardest hit areas, creating safer neighborhoods and reducing the cost of police calls, again, saving taxpayer dollars.

I will also be meeting with our police chief as we continue our efforts to reduce street crimes. Our police department has done an incredible job with Gangs and Drugs this year. We owe all the men and women in public safety a debt of gratitude.

In our neighborhoods, a final component has to include unquestionably, our greatest resource - our children. That's why as part of my ten year plan I will be introducing a public/private task force whose goal it will be to review our parks and community centers to create the best park system in the country.

As part of that effort I have incorporated into this budget a new splash pad for the Riverview area to remind our children that they are special and we will never forget that, even in our

toughest times.

It's not about spending more money, that's not the idea or even the goal. It using your money more wisely and planning for the future, not reacting to it.

It's building partnerships with the city the neighbors and the private sector to create the best parks for their families. No one can do it alone. If we are to build a great city - we will do it together. Just like Kids Cove and Lockwood Park.

Furthermore, I will put together a working group of public and private citizens to review our community centers. I am working with local organizations to create partnerships to make our community centers a place where children never want to leave and feel welcomed from the minute they walk in the door.

As you know, we have already begun our efforts with the Senior Center and Hispanic Center & Business Incubator. Neither of these will be an easy task, but if we are going to build a great community embracing our assets - then they are imperative. Our residents and especially our senior's deserve nothing less.

Finally, in the area of jobs – We have had two big wins for Racine. We are bucking the trend of unemployment nationwide and hopefully this is only the beginning. Rest assured, as long as I have a job, I won't give up until I find opportunities for those of you who don't.

I want to thank Gordy Kacala and Jenny Trick at RCEDC, Roger Caron at RAMAC. As well as our staff in the City Development & the City Attorney's office for their efforts to Keep and Expand A&E manufacturing and the 28 new jobs coming into Racine.

I also want to thank them for their efforts with Treasurers Books which will be building a new 80,000 sq ft facility in our industrial park and hiring 26 of our people from the area into a promising future.

Opportunities are out there but we have to be aggressive in bringing them in. Whether we are talking with companies or countries wishing to do business in Racine I have one common theme. "I will do everything in my power to help you locate here, but you have to hire my people!

Throughout the last several months I have had the pleasure of working with our City Council, I want to thank and remind them that they are an important part of the process. As we continue to challenging each other we build a stronger Racine and more opportunity for our citizens.

And finally, I want to talk about our partnerships with Madison and Washington, which has helped us to weather this fiscal storm.

We have worked aggressively to bring in funds from the state and federal stimulus packages to the tune of over \$9 million. And we have put that money to good use. Furthermore, our aggressiveness has lead to an additional \$2 million in transportation funds.

Our energy funds will be used to put up new LED lights we purchased from RUUD Electric to be installed in our highest crime ridden areas by Racine's own IBEW workers living in the city. I want to thank Rick Jones and Jeff Van Konigsveld for their work to put this national

model program together.

In regards to the state budget – Racine is fortunate to have 3 members Senator Lehman, Reps. Vos and Mason who sit on the Joint Finance Committee. I want to thank Rep Mason and Sen. Lehman who worked hand in hand with this office to bring funds vital to our efforts back to Racine where they belong. Those dollars allowed us to leverage money for our 2009 and 2010 budgets.

A couple of items I continue to work on with the state include:

- Nearly a million dollars in transportation funds for our Douglas Avenue corridor project.
- Additional I-94 highway construction jobs for our Racine workers.
- Cleanup funds for our contaminated or Brownfield sites.

I have and will continue to work with these fine people in front of me as we bring Racine back to the prominence it once held. If there is one thing I can assure you is that Racine is now a player at the national and international level. Those I meet with in Madison & Washington or around the world have a new appreciation for what we have to offer, and I will use those relationships to expand our opportunities for the betterment of Racine.

Thank you and God bless this great City and its wonderful citizens.

Good Night

## **C. Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned at 6:25p.m. by Alderman Shakoor.