



City of Racine, Wisconsin
Agenda Briefing Memorandum
Ordinance 0014-25 – Towing License Suspensions

AGENDA DATE:

According to 2026 Budget Consideration Calendar

PREPARED BY: Ian R. Pomplin, Assistant City Attorney

REVIEWED BY: Scott R. Letteney, City Attorney

SUBJECT: Communication sponsored by Mayor Mason requesting an ordinance that amends the procedure related to towing license suspensions.

BACKGROUND & ANALYSIS:

The City of Racine requires a license for all towing companies that want to be placed on a rotation list to perform on-call services when requested by the Racine Police Department (“RPD”). Most often, towing services are required in response to vehicle accidents, abandoned vehicles, illegally parked vehicles, and immobile vehicles. Licensees perform towing services for both privately owned and city owned vehicles at the request of RPD. Oftentimes, these towing services are performed without the consent or knowledge of the owners, who subsequently have to pay for these services in order to get their vehicles released. In order to protect members of the public, the City sets maximum rates and fees that may be charged by each licensee for the performance of such services.

The City of Racine has the ability to suspend or revoke towing licenses if towing companies are acting improperly or illegally. Certain suspensions may be issued by the chief of police, other suspensions and revocations must be reviewed by the public safety and licensing committee. The suspensions issued by the chief of police are instant and generally relate to overbilling of customers and safety violations. After the issue has been remedied, the chief of police is able to lift the suspension. This change in the ordinance provides clarity on the type of corrections that the chief of police is allowed to require before the suspension is lifted.

Further, under the current ordinance, the public safety and licensing committee must wait until three non-safety or non-overbilling violations occur before the committee is required to hold a hearing on suspension or revocation. This proposed change would provide the public safety and licensing committee the discretion to hold a hearing after the first violation or after any subsequent violation and determine whether the license should be suspended or revoked.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: To Approve.

FISCAL NOTE & BUDGETARY IMPACT: N/A