

City of Eldridge Special Committee of the Whole Meeting Minutes

The City of Eldridge, Iowa, City Council held a joint meeting with the Eldridge Volunteer Fire Company at the Eldridge Community Center at 7:00 pm on September 9, 2026.

Council Members Present: Adrian Blackwell, Jeff Ashcraft, Scott La Plante, Brian Dockery and Ryan Iossi. Quorum was met.

Presiding: Mayor Scott Campbell

Also Present: Nevada Lemke, Jeff Martens, City Attorney Allison Wright, Sergeant Ryan Gale, Tabbitha Kramer, Seth Porter, Jim Perkins, Marty O'Boyle, Judith Gilbert, Adam McMillins, Nancy Case, Scott Case, JB Ruiz, Scott Dickman, Dave Sarafin, Linda Voros, Darlys Dickman, Beth Campbell, Kelly Dean, Roy Leonard, Scott Haycraft, Dan Morgan, Tim Martinek, Ben Leka, Shellie Kriley, Dave Engler, Caroline Eakins, Kelly Dean, Isabella Meier, Abby Pacha, Trevor Matthaidess, Megan Matthaidess, Erin Gentz, Donna Brady, Jim Brady, Madison Mackie, Patrick Gainer, Keith Schneckloth, Andrew Doyle, Cody Harkey, Dewayne Scott, Dick Cole, Jacob Harkey, Kelly Engler, Lisa Engler, Nicole Engler, Terry Jurisic, Crista Ashcraft, Suzanne Gainer, Nate Gainer, Mindy Martinek, Wesley Martinek, Ginny Zink, Janelle Dickman, and Conrad Miller.

Mayor Campbell provided a summary of the meetings that have been held between the EVFC and select councilmen since August 17th. The EVFC and the City Council presented their proposals on how to move forward with the transition from a volunteer fire department to a municipal fire department.

Fire Department representatives raised concerns with the 12-month timeline proposed by the City and would prefer a 36-month transition period with scheduled evaluations and clear benchmarks. They also suggested creating a more detailed plan to determine who is responsible for which budget items and how hiring the chief would be handled. Fire Department representative Andrew Doyle stated that he is optimistic about hiring a chief but feels that a three-year transition would help to attract a quality chief.

Councilman Iossi emphasized that the priority is to transition without member loss and that the emergency services encompass both EMS and fire. He questioned the three-year transition period.

Councilman Ashcraft suggested a compromise of a two-year transition period. Councilman Dockery pointed out the difference in the City's and the EVFC's fiscal years and suggested a 28- or 30-month transition. He also suggested that the city vet the chief candidates and pass those to the fire department for final selection.

City Attorney Allison Wright discussed the need for a 28A Agreement and an oversight mechanism and explained that with that comes certain legal requirements. She pointed out that when analyzing the different relationships and costs involved, especially with the city being the primary funding mechanism for the volunteer fire company, ultimately it is the city's responsibility to be funding each party's insurance.

Seth Porter, the insurance provider for both the City and the EVFC, urged both sides to avoid complexity. He cited transferring ownership to the City but questioned who would be responsible for the maintenance or who has oversight of the chief as examples. He emphasized that the structure and the wording of the agreement must be precise.

The composition of an oversight board was discussed by both the EVFC representatives and the Council. Daniel Morgan, the attorney for the EVFC, introduced a completely new entity that handles all the things that need to be clarified to avoid any insurance complexities.

There was discussion on both sides regarding completing the renovation of the second floor of the fire station as a priority.

Both parties agreed that to move forward, another meeting should be scheduled with some actionable items in the interim. The EVFC and the Council will re-evaluate their transition timelines. The Council and EVFC requested their attorneys meet to discuss the governing board and then bring recommendations to each party. Both parties agreed to a Committee of the Whole Meeting on October 5, 2026.

Motion by Dockery to adjourn at 8:29 pm. Second by Ashcraft. Motion was approved unanimously by voice vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Scott Campbell
Mayor

Tabbitha Kramer
Deputy City Clerk