The Newell City Council met in special session on Tuesday September 23, 2025, at 6:00pm in City Hall with Mayor Wayne Westergaard presiding. Council members present Larry Nielsen, Bill Henrich, Dennis Ziegler, Ana Johnson, and Jeff Shedd. City Clerk Heather Copp, Pool Committee, and members of the public.

Approval of Agenda: Nielsen Motioned, Johnson 2nd, all ayes.

Mike Johnson (Pool Committee) introduced the concept of a community swim pond as a cost-effective alternative to rebuilding the city pool. Guest presenter Nathan Zickert, Pond Development Manager at Wisconsin Lake & Pond Rescue & Jones Lake Management, provided a detailed overview of the process, including Feasibility Study: $750 fee to assess site viability and permit requirements. Additional engineering support may be needed. Design & Engineering: Visual renderings, depth planning, and collaboration with excavators. Excavation & Construction: Removal of existing pool, grading, liner installation, and community-assisted liner placement. Water Treatment: Use of safe, natural enzymes and beneficial bacteria. No chlorine is used. Product approval must be confirmed with Iowa DNR. Maintenance: Annual product cost estimated at $4,000–$5,000 if applied locally. Full service would cost significantly more. Accessibility: Wheelchair access and shallow shelves for children are possible with engineered design. Inflatables: an optional feature, anchored with submerged concrete drums and stored seasonally. Overflow Management: Engineered overflow structure with sealed discharge pipe. Water runoff must be directed appropriately to avoid impact on city lagoons. Dock Options: Stationary docks preferred; customizable with benches, ladders, and lighting. Safety & Staffing: Council members discussed fencing, lifeguard staffing, insurance liability, and winter use (e.g., ice skating). A community survey was proposed to gather public input on preferences and fundraising willingness.

Second half of meeting, Council addressed several concerns related to neglected properties and code enforcement: Collapsing building on Fulton, Council agreed to send a formal letter in October requesting cleanup by a specified date. If no progress is made, enforcement options will be revisited. Overgrown Lawns: A citywide mailing was also discussed to remind property owners of the ordinance requiring grass to be trimmed below 6 inches. City Clerk previously posted the code on Facebook, but council noted that not all residents use social media. Code Enforcement: Public Works Staff encouraged to report violations during routine duties. The Determination Board may provide specific addresses for follow-up. Council discussed abandoned vehicles and deteriorating garages throughout town.

Legal Consultation and Next Steps, Council agreed to schedule a special meeting with the city attorney to clarify enforcement authority and nuisance property procedures. Topics will include Legal options for enforcing cleanup and demolition, Authority to place unpaid charges (e.g., lawn mowing & snow removal) on property taxes, Enforcement procedures for unsafe or unsightly structures. The meeting will include the City Council, Determination Board, and city attorney.

Additional agenda item, Kirk Johnson was postponed to October 6 regular council meeting. Nielsen motioned for adjournment, 2nd by Shedd, all ayes. Meeting adjourned 8:13pm

Heather Copp – City Clerk Wayne Westergaard - Mayor