

ELLSWORTH CITY COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, April 9, 2026

5:30 PM City Council Chambers

1. Call to Order The special meeting of the Ellsworth City Council was called to order by the Chair at 5:30 PM.

2. Council Order #040900: Public Hearing and action on the Ellsworth School Budget Resolutions for FY2027:

Superintendent's Presentation: School Superintendent Amy Boles presented version 4 of the FY2027 budget. She explained that while the bottom line remained consistent with previous versions, funds were reallocated from debt service to student and staff supports. This change was made because an instructional technology project came in under bid, allowing the school to pay for it directly using reserve funds and the FY2027 budget rather than financing it over several years. The Superintendent requested an additional \$25,000 from the fund balance be added to the student and staff support reserve (increasing it from \$125,000 to \$150,000) to cover the project in full without increasing the tax appropriation.

Council Action: The Council proceeded to vote on the specific resolutions associated with the budget:

- **Order 040900A (State/Local EPS Funding Allocation):** The Council considered the appropriation of \$8,471,827.84 for the total cost of funding public education.
 - **Move by:** Councilor Lyons; **Seconded by:** Councilor White.
 - **Result:** Passed 5-1-1 (Councilor Shea opposed, Councilor O'Halloran abstain).
- **Order 040900B (Non-State Funded Debt Service):** The Council addressed raising and appropriating funds for annual debt service payments on previously approved school construction projects.
 - **Moved by:** Councilor Lyons; **Seconded by:** Councilor N. Smith.
 - **Result:** Passed 6-0-1 (Councilor O'Halloran abstain).
- **Order 040900C (Additional Local Funds):** This order involved raising \$7,562,718.02 in additional local funds exceeding the state's allocation model to cover facilities, special education, and other costs. The Chair moved an amendment to correct the specific dollar amount to \$7,562,718.02.
 - **Moved by:** Councilor Lyons; **Seconded by:** Councilor M. Smith.
 - **Result:** Passed 6-0-1 (Councilor O'Halloran abstain).
- **Order 040900D (Total School Operating Budget):** This order authorized the School Board to expend \$34,413,781.64 for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2026.
 - **Moved by:** Councilor Lyons; **Seconded by:** Councilor White.
 - **Result:** Passed 6-0-1 (Councilor O'Halloran abstain).
- **Orders 040900E through 040900I (Grouped):** The Council voted on a block of orders including Adult Education (275,052.75), expenditure of grants, and additions to various

reserve accounts (HCTC, Special Education, Transportation, Student and Staff Support, and Food Service).

- **Moved by:** Councilor Lyons; **Seconded by:** Councilor M. Smith.
- **Result:** Passed 6-0-1 (Councilor O'Halloran abstain).
- **Order 040900J (Additional State Subsidy):** This order authorized the School Board to expend any additional state education subsidy received beyond the budgeted amount.
 - **Moved by:** Councilor Lyons; **Seconded by:** Councilor Shea.
 - **Result:** Passed 6-0-1 (Councilor O'Halloran abstain).

3. Council Order #040901: Request of the Fire Chief to execute a purchase agreement for a new fire truck:

Presentation: Fire Chief Guillerault requested authorization to execute a purchase agreement for a new fire engine to replace the 20-year-old Engine 7. He explained that the department had secured a dealer-allocated slot with Pierce Manufacturing through the Sourcewell cooperative, which reduced the build time to 13 months. By prepaying 100%, the city would secure a total cost of \$866,118, a significant savings over other quotes that ranged up to \$1.1 million.

Council Discussion: Councilor O'Halloran expressed disappointment in the city's spending priorities and questioned the risks of 100% prepayment, though he acknowledged the Fire Department did an excellent job researching the value. Councilor Smith noted that the 3.7% savings from prepayment was a better return than what could be earned in a CD.

Council Action: The Council considered a four-part motion to authorize the purchase agreement, utilize previously approved bond anticipation note (BAN) funding, authorize an additional \$133,882 for outfitting, and designate Engine 7 as surplus property. A clerical amendment was made to correct the outfitting amount to \$133,882.

- **Move by:** Councilor N. Smith; **Seconded by:** Councilor Martineau.
- **Result:** Passed 6-1 (Councilor O'Halloran opposed).

4. Adjournment: The Council considered a motion to adjourn the special meeting.

- **Moved by:** Councilor Shea; **Seconded by:** Councilor N. Smith.
- **Result:** Passed 7-0.