

January 12, 2026 ACC Meeting Notes

The notes from the previous meeting were moved to not be read.

We had 25 people (including the board) attend Monday night's meeting.

Jessica D'Ambrosio read the Treasurer's Report:

Amery Fall Festival- \$61, 679.11

Music on the River- \$18,937.02

General Account- \$28,430.12

Deposits this month- \$7,080

Payments this month- \$10,162.53

Heather from the Public Library introduced Jake, who is the new Adult Services Librarian

Eric Alexson spoke about the Apple River Arts group. They are working on programming ideas. They currently don't have a physical home. He is now open for construction work in the Amery area.

Eric Morrissey spoke about updating the 2026 Membership Application to make it easier and more streamlined. The fee structure will stay the same as 2025. However, the ACC board will look at simplifying the structure for 2027.

The ACC board voted to move the banking from Old National to Pillar Bank. Main reasons include being able to segment the dollars for MOT and FF within the balance. Other online additions, use of QR codes, and ease of use were also big factors.

Another focus of the ACC board will be to highlight the benefits of being an ACC member. The website was updated last year to improve communication. The Board will be setting up a mass texting application to get messages out to the whole membership as well.

Mayor Rick Van Blaricom's Address:

This is his third address to the ACC. He is happy with the work of Alex, the new City Administrator. He has set up contracts for many services, so both parties understand their roles and responsibilities.

The City of Amery supports the ACC, and is looking forward to working together to improve Amery.

Rick commented about how the fireworks display had been split with the City and ACC for many years. He also stated that the City hasn't sent a bill for 5 or 6 years.

Rick is pleased with the City Council. Most votes are unanimous, with compromise, to get things done.

The Mayor highlighted several projects for 2026. The Hillcrest sidewalk project will begin with a 436K grant. It will go from the Elementary School to Keller Avenue.

There is also a sidewalk ordinance that will be enforced that will start this fall.

The Sewer Plant project is 90% done, and expected to come in under budget.

There has been some “budget angst” the past few years. This was due to several large capital budget costs. A 1.2M loan was taken by the City of Amery to refill this budget item. The dollars had been spent, but not replenished.

The City had some savings accounts that were earning very low interest. These dollars have been moved to 3,6 and 12 month CD’s so they are earning a much better return.

The City is also switching from Old National to Pillar Bank.

Construction has started in the Sundance Development. There will be single family homes, and 28 duplexes. The goal is to draw new families to Amery. Amery is “still a pretty senior town”.

The population of Amery has not gone up for the past 10 years. The challenge is finding developable land in the city limits.

There are other pending developments that Rick can’t share details, but the outlook is positive.

The new Hotel project is on hold. The increase in interest rates has caused the delay.

There is a buyer for the Soldier Field parcel of land. It will need to be re-zoned. Rick did not share any further details about the buyer, or what the use of the land will be at this time.

There is developer interest in the Daycare building. This is part of the Amery comprehensive plan. Daycare is a very important service to offer working parents in Amery.

There will be additional playground equipment installed at South Twin Beach and North Park.

The Finance Committee has been re-instated, with two CPA’s as members. Rick stated “as a city, this will get us a better handle on the finances”.

“Nothing earthshaking is on the horizon for the City”. “There are enough projects to keep busy this summer”. Rick is looking forward to a positive 2026.

There were a few questions from the attendees.

Oralee Schock asked about new forms for events in the City of Amery. Rick stated that they were completed at the end of December, and are available for use.

Rick shared that there was a Downtown Entertainment District tested during last years Fall Festival. If a person purchased a red cup at one of the taverns, they could walk outside, and not have an open container issue. The taverns said it didn’t make much difference.

Rick also shared that taxes went up to help fund cost of living increases for City of Amery employees.

Meagan Hasch spoke from the United Way of St. Croix and Red Cedar Valleys. This encompasses 6 counties. She talked about ALICE: Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed individual that they

focus on helping. This is done through grants and fundraising. She also shared a Diaper Drive event in New Richmond that is very successful. You can dial 211 to learn about resources in our community. She reminded us about the Give Big Valley's event coming Tuesday April 28 to leverage giving. She shared information about Mental Health Training in the workplace to help identify people that may be in need. She asked for partnerships with businesses, and reminded us that payroll deductions can be used to help their funding.

The next Events Committee Meeting will be on Thursday, February 5th at 8:15 am at the library. The first event to be planned is the Bunny Bash.

Fall Festival Committee met last week. They are starting to decide on a theme, and the entertainment.

Music on the River is in the final stages of booking the bands.

The next event for the ACC is the Award's Banquet in May.

The next meeting will be held at Amery Ale Works on February 9th. Information on the Regional Business Fund, and Façade Loans for main street businesses will be presented.