

**From:** [Jennifer Argelander](#)  
**To:** [Mikolajewski, Matthew](#); [Rhodes-Conway, Satya V.](#); [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Subject: Oppose Legistar 86169 - Proposed forgiveness of \$1,613,365 of debt held by Madison Ice Inc.  
**Date:** Tuesday, December 17, 2024 7:15:04 PM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from jargelander@yahoo.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

I am in support of having a community recreational facility that focuses on ice-based activities.

But **I do not support a huge public gift to a private nonprofit** that so far has not met its financial or maintenance responsibilities. I do not support the mayor's proposal to forgive the land contract the city made with Madison Ice Incorporated (MII) in 2004, giving MII the ice arenas for \$1. The mayor and Common Council should not give away taxpayers property to a non-profit that has allowed Hartmeyer to be in need of \$3 Million in capital improvements. The purchasers are 3 years in arrears on land contract payments. Please explain to other landowners/property tax payers why some people get special treatment.

You should not support a policy to forgive private debt to the City without penalty. What track record do Madison Ice Inc.'s principals bring to manage the property and ensure that existing facilities will be properly maintained and not fall into disrepair as they have in the past?

Furthermore, how do you explain the lack of transparency and rushed deadline, without opportunity to consider alternative proposals, address concerns, and engage community members? And where is the staff report? Citizens deserve a complete, clearly-stated cost/benefit analysis of this extremely complex proposal. Check MII tax returns, you will find they are not broke, they should have a surplus of \$1.5+ mil. Where is the money their 990 tax returns show they made? Why is (MII) in default? An audit of MII financials must be done.

<!--[endif]-->

I am requesting that you find a better way to ensure good ice facilities rather than giving taxpayers property to a non-profit that has mis-managed Hartmeyer Arena and defaulted on their land contract by not making a payment since 2021. The city should NOT be rewarding them.

Thanks.

Jennifer Argelander  
1715 Erie court  
Madison 53704

**From:** [noreply](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** [All Alders] Madison Ice, Inc, bailout.  
**Date:** Thursday, December 12, 2024 5:07:06 PM

---

Recipient: All Alders:

Thursday, December 12, 2024 – 5:01pm

Jeff Reinke and Karen Banaszak  
1144 Curtis Court

Madison, Wisconsin. 53703 Yes, by email. [jsreinke@yahoo.com](mailto:jsreinke@yahoo.com) All Alders Madison Ice, Inc, bailout. Dear Alders, we hope you are all well. We are writing to STRONGLY oppose the multi-million bailout of Madison Ice, Inc. There are so very many other worthwhile needs and purpose that these tax dollars should go to. Also, there are the recent tax referendums which recently passed in Madison. We have lived and worked in Madison our entire lives ( Karen was actually born in St.Mary's Hospital. I have lived here since 1957 ). We are now retirees, on fixed incomes. I am concerned regarding the tax increases on our home in the coming years. We may need to do some belt-tightening. Please do not give this huge amount of tax dollars to a private business. How totally unfair that would be. We appreciate all the good the Alders do and have done. We realize your work can be demanding and at time unrecognized. Thank you for all you do. Please do the correct thing here and not give a subsidy to a private business. Lastly, would someone please forward our comments, statement, to the Mayor's Office. We would appreciate your doing so. Thank you for your time and consideration of our message, writing. Happy Holidays to all.

**From:** [Marsha Cannon](#)  
**To:** [Mikolajewski, Matthew](#); [Rhodes-Conway, Satya V.](#); [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Legistar 86169 - Proposed forgiveness of \$1,613,365 of debt held by Madison Ice Inc.  
**Date:** Tuesday, December 17, 2024 3:37:53 PM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from mpcannon76@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

**TO:** Economic Development Committee (via Econ. Devel. Dir.), Mayor , All Alders  
**RE:** Legistar 86169 - Proposed forgiveness of \$1,613,365 of debt held by Madison Ice Inc.

I am in favor of having a community recreational facility that includes ice-based activities. But **I do not support a huge public gift to a private nonprofit** that so far has not met its financial or maintenance responsibilities.

As you consider the current proposal, I urge you not to recommend it.  
Please consider the following questions:

- **Who benefits from the provision to give away up to 7 acres of land for a token \$1?**  
If major debt can be erased by decree, what guarantees that a proposed deed restriction (requiring use solely for recreational purposes) will be enforced?
- **Do you support a policy to forgive private debt to the City without penalty?** The purchasers are 3 years in arrears on land contract payments. Please explain to other landowners/property tax payers why some people get special treatment.
- **Is an exclusively ice-based recreational facility the best use of public funds?**  
Northside residents have enjoyed ice hockey at Hartmeyer Ice Arena for decades. But today our community is in the midst of significant change. New housing will soon accommodate thousands of new residents of all ages, interests, abilities and incomes. **We need a year-round range of indoor recreational opportunities . . .** a run/walk track, a climbing wall, an indoor pool, options not currently available in nearby public or private facilities.
- **What track record do Madison Ice Inc.'s principals bring** to manage the property and ensure that existing facilities will be properly maintained and not fall into disrepair as they have in the past?
- **How do you explain the lack of transparency** and rushed deadline, without opportunity to consider alternative proposals, address concerns, and engage community members?

- **Where is the staff report?** Citizens deserve a complete, clearly-stated cost/benefit analysis of this extremely complex proposal.

Thank you for your consideration.

Marsha Cannon, D18 resident  
5 Cherokee Circle, #202  
Madison, WI 53704 <[mpcannon76@gmail.com](mailto:mpcannon76@gmail.com)>

**From:** [Tish Johnson](#)  
**To:** [Mayor](#); [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Opposition to Agenda Item #11  
**Date:** Sunday, January 5, 2025 3:54:13 PM

---

[Some people who received this message don't often get email from tish.johnson920@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification> ]

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Mayor and Alders,

I am sending this to communicate my strong opposition to forgiving the debt owed the City of Madison for the two Madison ice arenas and for selling these properties for \$1.00.

The land, alone, is worth millions of dollars (one estimate I saw was \$750,000 per acre). Giving this land away, along with the \$1.6 mil in proposed debt forgiveness is beyond fiscally irresponsible, it is financial malfeasance.

Please do not move forward with this plan. Instead, take the fiscally responsible steps to collect the debt we are owed, establish and receive a fair market value for these properties and ensure the development and use of these properties in a manner that benefits our community.

Sincerely,  
Patricia Johnson  
5505 Tolman Terrace  
Madison, WI 53711

Sent from my iPhone

**From:** [Shannon Kennedy](#)  
**To:** [Mayor](#); [All Alders](#)  
**Cc:** [Channel 27 News](#); [citydesk@captimes.com](mailto:citydesk@captimes.com); [City Editor](#)  
**Subject:** Madison Ice Arenas- The City's Incompetence, negligence or both regarding decision making  
**Date:** Monday, January 6, 2025 11:23:32 AM

---

You don't often get email from shannonkennedy1151@aol.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

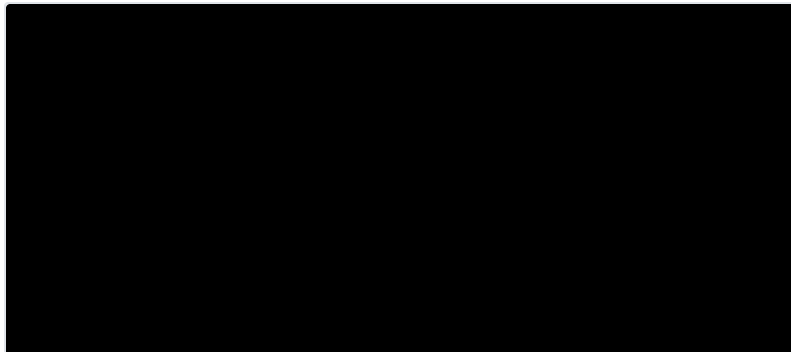
Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Greetings Mayor Rhodes-Conway and City Alders,

- The City of Madison, tax paying citizens deserve answers.
- Was the City of Madison leadership incompetent, negligence or both?
- Please see the link to the article below. If you do not subscribe to the WSJ, the article is also printed out.

Sincerely,  
Shannon Kennedy

[Madison's ice arena giveaway demands answers | Paul Soglin and David Ahrens](#)



**Madison's ice arena giveaway demands answers | Paul Soglin and David Ahrens**

Three weeks after Madison voters approved a \$22 million increase in property taxes based on Mayor Satya Rhodes-C...

COLUMN

## **Madison's ice arena giveaway demands answers | Paul Soglin and David Ahrens**

4 hrs ago

Three weeks after Madison voters approved a [\\$22 million increase](#) in property taxes based on Mayor Satya Rhodes-Conway's assertion that the city was broke, she now has proposed giving away our two ice arenas and the adjacent 7 acres of land.

Paul Soglin

David Ahrens

In addition to this extraordinary giveaway of valuable land and buildings, she proposes that the city “forgive” a [debt of \\$1.6 million](#) owed to the city by the recipients of the property, Madison Ice Inc.

In 2004, Madison Ice Inc. was deeded the two ice arenas (Hartmeyer on the East Side and a rink off Schroeder Road on the West Side) provided they make payments under a land contract.

From 2021 to date, Madison Ice Inc. has failed to make hundreds of thousands of dollars in payments. The company claimed that it was unable to make payments during the pandemic because of a loss of customers. But its [IRS statements](#) for 2021, 2022 and 2024 indicate it made a profit in each of those year. In 2023, it had a small loss when it increased staff salaries by \$100,000.

Madison could have demanded that the properties be returned to the city for nonpayment. This is a standard practice under the law. Instead, the mayor allowed the failure to make payments continue.

□

[POLITICS](#)

ALERT TOP STORY

## **Madison backs plan to rescue Hartmeyer Ice Arena after business tanked by pandemic**

[Lucas Robinson | Wisconsin State Journal](#) | Dec 4, 2024 |

The newly formed East Madison Ice Collective seeks to raise \$3 million for improvements to secure ownership of the arena.

The proposed giveaway of land and the forgiven debt appears to violate city ordinance [8.075](#), which requires that an economic feasibility analysis be conducted when disposing of city property. The city does not have title to the property, but it does have a legal interest in that it is the seller under the defaulted land contract. This study would include answers to many questions since no analysis was apparently conducted in 2004 when the land contract was established, and no study appears on the city's website now.

Here are some of the questions that should be answered by this review:

- How much is the property worth? This is 7 acres of land that is likely worth many millions of dollars with or without the arenas. Is the city now so fiscally healthy that we can forgo these funds?
- What is the state of the buildings? Hartmeyer arena needs millions of dollars of repairs to stay open. Property transfers should always include a building inspection and evaluation. Why hasn't one occurred in this case?
- What are other uses of the property? A senior city official wrote in an email, "We have not explored any alternative in detail." Why? Clearly, the city has not met its "duty of due diligence" and considered all options for the land and facilities.
- What is the use of the arenas? Most time on the ice is given to hockey teams from Madison, Monona Grove and DeForest schools as well as youth "prep" teams from the region, according to our review of recent schedules. Only about 5% of time on the ice appears to be for "public skating." Are the rates for use consistent with other arenas in the area? Is the level of use worth the actual cost to the city of many millions of dollars?

The mayor is attempting to rush this proposal through by characterizing it as a loss to the city of "only \$1.6 million." The

problem is that we don't know how many millions of dollars are at stake because of the failure of our elected officials to get the payments due and establish the value of 7 acres of prime city real estate.

Soglin is Madison's longest-serving former mayor. Ahrens is a former city alderman.

**From:** [Amy P](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Cc:** [Mayor](#); [Amy P](#)  
**Subject:** Support for Madison's Ice Rinks  
**Date:** Sunday, December 15, 2024 2:39:58 PM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from teachlearn34@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

**Hello Leaders!**

I am writing a quick note to ask for your support on the Ice Arena Resolution that will be voted on in January 2025. Please support this resolution to help secure funding for critical infrastructure updates so that community programming can be enjoyed by all now and in the future!

Two years ago, I relocated to Madison with my young son, who has Down syndrome and ADHD knowing Madison's reputation for school and community inclusion. For us, the MIA was yet another amazing surprise that we did not know about until we got here and began exploring!

We have enjoyed the adaptive learn-to-skate program and are looking forward to joining open skate and other opportunities as he becomes more comfortable with ice skating!

We also enjoy coming to watch events at Madison ice rinks, where he can see others skating, playing hockey, which has motivated him to want to learn more!

I hope to continue to build on our engagement in the future in new ways, taking part in all that Madison ice rinks have to offer!

Thanks for your support,

Amy Plica

**From:** [Beth Rawlinson](#)  
**To:** [Office of Business Resources](#); [Latimer Burris, Amani](#); [Guequierre, John](#); [EDC](#); [Finance Committee](#); [All Alders](#); [Mayor](#)  
**Subject:** Re #86169 MAI and Hartmeyer loan & land sale proposals  
**Date:** Thursday, December 12, 2024 9:36:01 PM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from [bethrawlinson@yahoo.com](mailto:bethrawlinson@yahoo.com). [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Dear City of Madison leaders,

My 17-year-old daughter Eliza is a short track speed skater. She started skating at our local rinks in the learn to skate programs at age 4. She loved it immediately and it became her passion.

When she was about 8, we had been watching the Winter Olympics. She turned to me and said, "I'm going to the Olympics and I'm not returning without the gold". It got me thinking, because as good as she is at skating, her body type was going to have limitations in figure skating.

I asked her if she would like to try speedskating and she agreed, with hesitation. After her first lesson she lost all hesitation. At her first race a few months later, she qualified to race at Nationals.

Currently she trains every morning at 6:30 in Milwaukee at the Pettit Center, goes to high school two blocks away and then we drive back to Madison to skate at our local rinks. She is no longer competing with figure skating, but the relationships she has formed with coaches and skaters over the years are too important to her to lose.

Two years ago, Eliza made the US Speedskating Jr National Development team. Last year she was named by US Speedskating to be the US Speedskating Jr Development skater of the year. In January she is competing in Salt Lake City, hoping to make the Jr National Team.

This past January, Eliza was one of two girls nationally to represent Team USA at the Youth Olympics in Gangneung, Korea. Her relay team, the 2 girls and 2 boys representing the US, won a silver medal. She was voted by her fellow Team USA athletes to be the female flag bearer in the Youth Olympics opening ceremony.

Last month she represented Team USA in Bormio Italy at the Jr World Cup. Last week she represented Team USA at the Canadian Invitational in Montreal.

Skating has defined the trajectory of her life. It has given her a purpose and huge life goals that she is starting to achieve. 100%, without our local rinks, she would not be the person she is today.

Without our local rinks, our children will have limited options of sports to participate in. We'll end up with just the basic school sports, as good as they may be. Ice sports will be lost, along with the potential they give to young athletes to find themselves, believe in themselves and excel.

I do understand the question of forgiving loans made using taxpayer money. It does bother me that we work hard for our earnings which in turn we give to the city, but the effort does not seem to be fully reciprocated by Madison Ice Inc. But to me, the issue of how losing our rinks would impact our kids and community exceeds my irritation with what looks to me like fiscal irresponsibility.

It worries me that thousands of children who use our rinks will lose this outlet. It is my hope that you can find a way to continue the rinks, and our kids can find confidence through skating and have their lives changed by it as my daughter has.

Please work your hardest to support our kids. Thank you very much for your time.

Best wishes,  
Beth Rhodehamel

**From:** [Bonnie Roe](#)  
**To:** [Finance Committee](#)  
**Cc:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Skating Rinks  
**Date:** Monday, January 6, 2025 3:32:11 PM

---

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Members of the Finance Committee,

I am writing in opposition to Agenda Item #11 on today's meeting. There needs to be more transparency and discussion regarding the forgiveness of the \$1.6 million owed to the city, and the donation of 7 acres of prime city real estate.

Madison Ice, Inc's assertions do not line up with the IRS 990 filings and more in-depth analysis and problem-solving needs to be done.

To my knowledge, an economic feasibility study has not been done. Once that analysis is done, those studies should be released to the public for further public discussion before any action is taken on the two skating rinks. This will add public transparency to the process, which is currently lacking.

Please slow this process down and do right by all parties instead of rushing this through.

Sincerely,

Bonnie Roe  
District 11

**From:** [sluysb@aol.com](mailto:sluysb@aol.com)  
**To:** [All Alders](#); [EDC](#); [Myadze, Charles](#)  
**Subject:** A Safe Sport Center for All - Legistar 86169  
**Date:** Monday, December 16, 2024 8:05:43 AM

---

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Dear Alders,

Recently, Alder Amani hosted a public meeting about EMIC's proposed Hartmeyer ice arena project.

It seems with the announcement of the surplus within our budget, that the city could give \$1.6 million towards a community sports and recreation center at the Hartmeyer ice arena location. Either way, we give those dollars whether as a component of debt relief or a direct portion of the project. I believe these young athletes deserve a state of the art, energy efficient ice arena. In addition, a second story could be added to this site with an indoor track and workout area. If EMIC is committed to raising 3 million dollars, then with almost 5 million dollars in combined assets, and any loans needed based on **real land value** appraisal based on the pro-active zoning that this area has undergone, the community would all benefit from such a facility.

Years ago, 2018, the OSCAR Group hosted community focus group meetings and there was mention then of a community sports center. We asked for community input for what they thought would be possible within the OMSAP area. This focus group report was sent to city staff and was incorporated into the Oscar Mayer Special Area Plan (OMSAP).

Even during the strategic assessment for the Oscar Mayer area, one of the goals for redevelopment was: **OBJECTIVE 5. INTEGRATE A WELCOMING DISTRICT THAT SERVES ALL AGES AND DIVERSE CULTURES - Prioritize the community's desire to create inclusive gathering spaces and places through uses and activities (entertainment venues, youth activities, sports, etc.) that serve and celebrate the Northside's culture and diversity.**

In truth, a community sports and recreation ice center would allow **more people** access and would provide a great space for the future families and seniors that are going to be living just next door in the new apartment complex, as well as the over 1,000 people who will be living in the new apartments at First and Johnson, as well as current Sherman neighborhood residents. Over 3,000 new neighbors, including seniors and families with children, will have a great place to build community and stay healthy, and also learn about ice skating and the game of hockey. This sports hub will be a community space for all of the northside. Not just for skaters.

This ice arena facility is old, needs major updates. Why throw good money into a building that is exclusive and only serves ice focused users? A two story building with a variety of uses would only stand to serve the community well now and into the future with new neighbors. With the adjacent land having been proactively zoned for

high density housing and commercial space, why not be future focused on more than just a handful of residents when you could provide a welcoming activity center, a community hub space, and create a legacy center, not just a ice arena. This is about place making, community building and spreading the use of this space outwards for more residents. What a great use for public dollars.

This is a true opportunity. Let's move forward with a larger vision. These future skating Olympians deserve a state of the art facility, but then, all of our community members deserve the use of a facility that will foster community, health and be for the public good.

Thank you,

Beth Sluys  
District 18

**From:** [Paul Soglin](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** The Hartmeyer Ice Arena Rip Off. Part II  
**Date:** Friday, December 20, 2024 9:09:29 AM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from psoglin@yahoo.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

How we got here.

1. In 2004 the city had a Parks Director (Jim Morgan (2000-2007) who hated ice hockey and was glad to rid the city government of the program.
2. In 2004 we had a mayor who, like his predecessor, did not have a clue about the nuances of public private partnership in managing public facilities. There are numerous choices with different structures witness: golf courses, Olbrich Botanical Gardens, Goodman Swimming Pool, Civic Center, Overture, Public Library.
3. In 2004 after over 25 years of successful management of ice arenas (1975-2000) the city agrees to a hairbrained scheme to "Privatize" the ice arenas.
4. In 2017 I give the 2004 agreement one "last chance" and agree to let the debtors delay some payments to the city.
5. 2020-2024. Mayor Satya Rhodes-Conway and City Attorney Haas conspire to hide from the City Council and the public that the city is owed millions and payments were missed. In addition they demonstrate malfeasance and SNEAKINESS in office by refusing to get the payments owed to the city.
6. 2024 The mayor and City Attorney conspire with the debtors to create a false narrative that there is only one solution to the ice arena problem which is a lie.
7. Lying narrative: If you oppose the theft of city property (The cash owed and, if the city forecloses on the Land Contract, the title to the property which reverts back to the city.) in the form of the present proposal you hate children.

Paul R. Soglin

Do the right thing. It will gratify some people and astonish the rest. Mark Twain

**From:** [Paul Soglin](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Skating  
**Date:** Monday, January 6, 2025 9:13:20 AM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from psoglin@yahoo.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

In response to the op-ed piece (see link below) published in the Wisconsin State Journal that Dave Ahrens and I wrote, supporters of the Mayor's Ice Rink proposal are casting us as opponents of skating programs and children.

Nothing could be further from the truth. While I cannot speak for David, let it be clear that no public official has a record to match mine when it comes to supporting skating. In the 1970's when the privately operated Hartmeyer went bankrupt, I fashioned a city takeover of the facility. In the 1990's when the privately owned and operated Medalist (Madison West) went under I led the city to acquire and operate the facility. In 2017 when the present operators of the facilities could not make their payments, I supported more favorable terms.

The challenge for this city is to find a working model that is supportive of skating and the taxpayers. It cannot be done by secret meetings and looking at one operating model which has repeatedly failed.

For over thirty years the city successfully operated skating rinks until 2004. Then a Parks Superintendent came along who hated skating operations and a mayor who saw no future in athletic activity that did not include bicycle wheels. Thus, the present disaster.

I know that many people are invested in the current proposal and are frustrated by the thought of going back to square one. This is a "hundred year" decision involving millions of dollar. Figuring out the correct course of action over another year or two is worth the it. Let's get it right.

Start over with the basic questions: "What is the best site for skating rinks?" and "what is the best use of the Hartmeyer site?"

Has anyone thought of building new rinks at the airport? Has anyone thought of a financial model based on previous successes such as city operation (Olbrich, Monona Terrace, the Public Library, the original Civic Center) with private sector support?

Let's do this right.

[Madison's ice arena giveaway demands answers | Paul Soglin and David Ahrens](#)



**Madison's ice arena giveaway demands answers |  
Paul Soglin and David Ahrens**

Here are some of the questions that should be answered by a review of the situation.

Paul R. Soglin

Do the right thing. It will gratify some people and astonish the rest. Mark Twain

**From:** [Fields, Debbie](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Continued Support of the Ice Arena Resolution Requested at the 1/6/25 Finance meeting  
**Date:** Monday, January 6, 2025 8:28:23 AM

---

Alders,

Following please find a message that was received in the Council Office inbox.

Thanks,  
Debbie Fields  
Program Assistant 2  
Common Council Office  
608-266-4297

---

**From:** Laura Swisher <[laurabeaswisher@gmail.com](mailto:laurabeaswisher@gmail.com)>  
**Sent:** Sunday, January 5, 2025 7:31 PM  
**To:** Conklin, Nikki <[district9@cityofmadison.com](mailto:district9@cityofmadison.com)>  
**Cc:** council <[council@cityofmadison.com](mailto:council@cityofmadison.com)>; Finance Committee <[financecommittee@cityofmadison.com](mailto:financecommittee@cityofmadison.com)>; Mayor <[Mayor@cityofmadison.com](mailto:Mayor@cityofmadison.com)>  
**Subject:** Continued Support of the Ice Arena Resolution Requested at the 1/6/25 Finance meeting

Some people who received this message don't often get email from [laurabeaswisher@gmail.com](mailto:laurabeaswisher@gmail.com). [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Your previous support of this important resolution is appreciated and your continued support would mean the world to our family and many others.

Thank you in advance! Laura Swisher

On Tue, Nov 26, 2024 at 1:06 PM Laura Swisher <[laurabeaswisher@gmail.com](mailto:laurabeaswisher@gmail.com)> wrote:

Dear Alder Conklin -

Thank you in advance for reading my message. I hope it is helpful as you consider your support of the resolution that is to be discussed in your council meeting this evening...I wanted to include how much the rinks mean to us (it is a great deal) and I'll try not to make it too long.

My name is Laura Swisher and I live in your district (on Oxwood Circle). My husband and I moved to the area 10 years ago from Pittsburgh for an amazing opportunity for him. We were excited to join an amazing place where we had only spent long weekends despite it being far from home (we are both new englanders). When we told our then 5 year old son, Will, we were moving he asked two questions - it went something like this:

Will - "Okay - Wisconsin - well, what are they?"  
Us - (looking puzzled) - "what do you mean?"

Will - "Will Pittsburgh is the Panthers - what is Madison?" (He was referring to the University of Pittsburgh's mascot.)

My Husband "The Badgers"

Will - "Okay, I can be a badger. Can I play hockey when we get there?"

Us - "Yes - we will work on it."

Our then 5 year, asked for a cookie and went to pack. We moved here 2 months later, looked for a close ice rink and quickly enrolled him in skating lessons and then 6 months later - he started playing for the West Madison Polar Caps in their cross ice program. Fast forward 10 years later and that 5 year old is still playing. Tonight as you are in your meeting, he will have his first game as a Memorial Spartan and he couldn't be more excited or proud to represent his school and his community. I am not one to get emotional but there will probably be a tear in my eye when he takes to the ice.

Over the past 10 years I think we have spent countless days, nights and early mornings at the rink for practices, games, volunteering, lessons, clinics and community events. The friends that he met playing have supported him throughout celebrations of his first goal to heart breaks of losing to a long time rival yet again. My son is not the best player on the ice by far but he loves the game. He has learned teamwork, perseverance, hard work, handling disappointment with his head held high and winning with grace ... and that is all because MIA gave him a place to play.

And he is just one of many many kids and adults who have benefited from the city's generosity. I can only imagine how hard your job and the job of your fellow council members is as you work to balance spending and community priorities. You must receive requests all day and from a number of perspectives. In your discussion tonight about our rinks, I ask that for kids like Will you please strongly consider supporting the Ice Arena Resolution so that we can continue to provide these experiences for many more years to come. I have attached two photos of Will one from his first year as a Polar Cap and a second in his Memorial uniform. Despite the more grown up look on the most recent photo, please know he is smiling just as big as in the earlier one on the inside.

Thank you for your time, your effort and your dedication to our community. If you have any questions about my message - please don't hesitate to reach out.

Best - Laura Swisher  
412-260-2476

**Will Swisher**





**From:** [tom](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** FYI  
**Date:** Sunday, January 5, 2025 6:01:34 PM

---

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

' | "Three weeks after Madison voters approved a \$22 million increase in property taxes based on Mayor Satya Rhodes-Conway's assertion that the city was broke, she now has proposed giving away our two ice arenas and the adjacent 7 acres of land. In addition to this extraordinary giveaway of valuable land and buildings, she proposes that the city "forgive" a debt of \$1.6 million owed to the city by the recipients of the property, Madison Ice Inc. In 2004, Madison Ice Inc. was deeded the two ice arenas (Hartmeyer on the East Side and a rink off Schroeder Road on the West Side) provided they make payments under a land contract. From 2021 to date, Madison Ice Inc. has failed to make hundreds of thousands of dollars in payments. The company claimed that it was unable to make payments during the pandemic because of a loss of customers. But its IRS statements for 2021, 2022 and 2024 indicate it made a profit in each of those year. In 2023, it had a small loss when it increased staff salaries by \$100,000. Madison could have demanded that the properties be returned to the city for nonpayment. This is a standard practice under the law. Instead, the mayor allowed the failure to make payments continue. The proposed giveaway of land and the forgiven debt appears to violate city ordinance 8.075, which requires that an economic feasibility analysis be conducted when disposing of city property. The city does not have title to the property, but it does have a legal interest in that it is the seller under the defaulted land contract. This study would include answers to many questions since no analysis was apparently conducted in 2004 when the land contract was established, and no study appears on the city's website now. Here are some of the questions that should be answered by this review: ● How much is the property worth? This is 7 acres of land that is likely worth many millions of dollars with or without the arenas. Is the city now so fiscally healthy that we can forgo these funds? ● What is the state of the buildings? Hartmeyer arena needs millions of dollars of repairs to stay open. Property transfers should always include a building inspection and evaluation. Why hasn't one occurred in this case? ● What are other uses of the property? A senior city official wrote in an email, "We have not explored any alternative in detail." Why? Clearly, the city has not met its "duty of due diligence" and considered all options for the land and facilities. ● What is the use of the arenas? Most time on the ice is given to hockey teams from Madison, Monona Grove and DeForest schools as well as youth "prep" teams from the region, according to our review of recent schedules. Only about 5% of time on the ice appears to be for "public skating." Are the rates for use consistent with other arenas in the area? Is the level of use worth the actual cost to the city of many millions of dollars? The mayor is attempting to rush this proposal through by characterizing it as a loss to the city of "only \$1.6 million." The problem is that we don't know how many millions of dollars are at stake because of the failure of our elected officials to get the payments due and establish the value of 7 acres of prime city real estate." --By Paul Soglin and Dave Ahrens

=====

**Tom,**  
**Protect the 1st amendment, stop the censorship Google, FB, Twitter, MSM!**

**From:** [taylor.warsek](mailto:taylor.warsek)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Ice Rinks  
**Date:** Sunday, January 5, 2025 2:07:43 PM

---

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

It appears that something seems VERY WRONG with the Mayor's and Alder Guequierre's resolution to sell both ice rinks for \$1, with a total lack of transparency to the taxpayers and also apparently to the members of the council. Further it appears that there was no report to the council that both land contracts needed to be/should be foreclosed on, and turned over to a receiver when the owner stopped making payments on both these loans in 2021. The Mayor and the Alder co sponsored this resolution and originally were going to try to get a decision thru the finance committee and the council in a little over a week or two, before there was public negative feedback. Then the resolution was pushed out for a decision until Jan 6. Something seems very "fishy" with this whole situation, and totally laughs in the face of the city's current financial situation, that is, to turn our backs on collection of monies due the taxpayers, and essentially give away 7 acres of prime city land for no cost.

It seems that this could be a reportable situation to the City of Madison Ethics Board for review and also wonder if advice was sought from the Wisconsin League of Municipalities to see this transaction could set up an "Abuse of Discretion" for attempting to sell land for less than what is owed and/or market rate? It seems there is a president with the Wisconsin Supreme Court, who made a decision against the city of Lake Mills in the Hermann vs Lake Mills for a somewhat similar sale of city property that was undervalued.

see link to Wisconsin League of Municipalities Powers of Municipalities  
FAQ1 <http://www.lwm-info.org/1242/Powers-of-Municipalities-FAQ-1>

It seems that the best thing to do is foreclose on the two ice rinks and appoint a receiver to get the properties belonging to the city of Madison taxpayers again, and then investigate what the next best step should be.

Rick Taylor & Linda Warsek 1118 Risser Rd, Madison