



CITY COUNCIL MINUTES

COUNCIL CHAMBERS

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 10,
2026

6:00 PM

Call to Order/Roll Call/Pledge of Allegiance

The City Council meeting was called to order by Mayor Tom Spooner at 6:00 pm. Councilors in attendance included Mandy Barnes, Adama Doumbouya, John Rowan, Peter van Sluis and Chuck Thiele. Councilor Royal Ross was absent. Also in attendance were City Administrator Jessica Kinser, City Clerk Heather Slechta, Community and Economic Development Director Dave Wanberg, Police Chief John Sherwin, Fire and Code Services Director Dusty Dienst, Public Works Director Travis Block, City Engineer Mark DuChene, Human Resources Director Kevin Bushard and Parks and Recreation Director Rochelle Anderholm-Parsch.

Approve Agenda

Motion by Doumbouya, seconded by Barnes to approve the agenda as presented and carried unanimously.

Presentations/Introductions

A Police Community Certificate of Merit was presented to John Blackmer by Chief of Police John Sherwin. Chief Sherwin explained that on December 17, 2025, Mr. Blackmer assisted the Police Department in locating a missing person in crisis. His efforts were instrumental in a successful outcome and providing critical medical care.

School Bus Driver Appreciation Day was presented to the Faribault area bus drivers by Mayor Spooner. School Bus Driver Appreciation Day will be on February 18, 2026.

Approve minutes of January 27, 2026, City Council Meeting

Motion by Rowan, seconded by van Sluis to approve January 27, 2026, City Council Meeting Minutes and carried unanimously.

Requests to be Heard

Matt Cavellier, 1000 Shumway Ave, spoke to the Council regarding the CAC request for emergency funding for rental assistance. Shattuck has already heard of families not sending students to Minnesota due to what is happening. He stated that we do know how long this will last. There will be an increase in the workload to the Police Department, Fire Department, social services. He urged the Council to take that into account when discussing the emergency allocation.

Dana Plank, 938 Home Place, spoke to the Council against the funding of \$50,000. He is in support of ICE, illegal immigration can cause crime, and ripple effects and requested denying funding.

John Kingland, 831 Lincoln Ave, stated that the Council has an obligation to balance the desired and imperative balance budget. He asked if we have a surplus of funds, are taxpayers in agreement with this, careful not to give aid to illegal activity, encouraged the Council to remember that we are a constitutional republic and to do what is good and just.

Jordan Brennan, 409 1st Ave NE, stated that Charter Chapter 3.05 has a great effect on income delays due to time lost, it is hard to lock-in contractors, it is a financial burden.

Nate Cunningham, 409 1st Ave NE, informed the Council that having two readings of ordinances can cost \$35,000-\$40,000 in lost revenue when they must wait, the current system does not allow to compete effectively. A change to Charter 3.05 will not fix it, but it is a step in the right direction.

Gail Burke, 717 Spring Road, informed the Council that there are several cats missing in her neighborhood due to live trapping, which is not allowed as people are baiting them. She requested that the Council draft an ordinance to protect cats.

Consent Agenda

- A. Claims List
- B. Approve Use of Central Park for Light of Hope Celebration Event
- C. Approve Use of North Alexander Park by Rice County Historical Society for Rendezvous and Spring Flea Market
- D. Approve Private Hangar Land Lease
- E. Resolution 2026-037 Approve Street Closures for IRIS 5K/10K Turkey Trot
- F. Resolution 2026-038 Approve Donation Agreement for Lots 6 and 7 in Block 2, of the Westwood Knoll First Addition
- G. Resolution 2026-039 Approve Closure of Decertified TIF District Funds in General Ledger
- H. Approve LG220 Application for Exempt Permit for Faribault Ducks Unlimited
- I. Resolution 2026-040 Approve 2026 CIP Purchase Replacement – Water Reclamation Facility Pickup Truck
- J. Resolution 2026-041 Accept Quote for Ultraviolet Light Disinfection Equipment at Water Reclamation Facility
- K. Resolution 2026-042 Approve Hiring Deputy Police Chief
- L. Resolution 2026-043 Approve Hiring Police Captain
- M. Resolution 2026-051 Approve Low Potency Hemp Product Registrations
- N. Resolution 2026-047 Approve Quote for Replacement Lift Station Pumps
- O. Resolution 2026-048 Approve MNPEA General Unit 2026 Labor Agreement
- P. Resolution 2026-049 Adopt the 2025 Rice County Hazard Mitigation Plan
- Q. Approve LG220 Application for Exempt Permit for Catholic United Financial Council 13SS Lawrence/Anne

Motion by van Sluis, seconded by Barnes to approve Consent Agenda Items A-Q and carried unanimously.

Public Hearings

Resolution 2026-044 Order Improvements and Order Preparation of Plans and Specifications for 2026 MSA Street Overlay Improvements - Contract 2026-02

City Engineer Mark DuChene explained that Resolution 2026-044 orders the improvements for the proposed 2026 MSA Street Overlay Improvements project (Contract 2026-02), including curb and gutter replacement, concrete sidewalk construction/replacement, storm sewer repairs, casting adjustment/ replacement, watermain construction, pavement milling, bituminous paving, pavement markings, and related improvements on the following streets:

Lincoln Ave. NW (TH 60 (4th Street NW) to 7th Street NW)
30th Street NW (TH 21/Lyndale Avenue to Western Avenue)
Western Avenue (30th Street NW to Village Drive)

The purpose of the hearing was to take public comment as part of the consideration by the Council in ordering the improvements. If the project is ordered, plans and specifications will be finalized and brought back to the Council for approval, along with the request for authorization to advertise for public bids.

DuChene explained that due to the popularity of virtual neighborhood meetings, where property owners can view a presentation online at their leisure rather than having to come in for one specific time, another virtual neighborhood meeting was held and people were encouraged to contact the City Engineer directly with any questions after viewing the virtual open house. DuChene stated that one question that was asked was about the impact of access to properties during construction, DuChene explained that mill and overlay projects are generally not very impactful regarding access and such. There are limited days when access is impacted primarily on days when the pavement is being milled and when the overlay paving is happening.)

DuChene stated that this results in an overall preliminary financing summary including 10% contingency and 15% engineering as follows:

MSA Street Construction Fund	\$532,900.00
Water Utility Fund (601)	\$ 2,000.00
Sanitary Sewer Utility Fund (602)	\$ 23,800.00
Total	\$558,700.00

This estimated amount exceeds the approved budget amount of \$400,000, but the project is to be funded primarily by the City's Municipal State Aid account funds which has adequate fund balance to cover the estimated costs. It was recommended to move the project forward and to complete a budget amendment if a low bid is accepted.

DuChene stated that there are no special assessments proposed as part of this project

as revenues for the street improvement fund are designated to come from the City's MSA fund. As such, a simple majority vote of the City Council was required to advance the improvements. It is tentatively planned to receive bids on this project in March 2026, pending state aid review timelines, with construction to begin in May/June 2026, and be substantially completed by the end of August 2026.

Motion by Doumbouya, seconded by Barnes to open the public hearing and carried unanimously. The public hearing opened at 6:26 pm.

There were no comments received from the public.

Motion by van Sluis, seconded by Thiele to close the public hearing and carried unanimously. The public hearing closed at 6:26 pm.

Motion by Barnes, seconded by Doumbouya to approve Resolution 2026-044 Order Improvements and Order Preparation of Plans and Specifications for 2026 MSA Street Overlay Improvements - Contract 2026-02 and carried unanimously.

Items for Discussion

Resolution 2026-050 Approve On-Sale and Sunday Liquor License for The Signature Bar & Grill, LLC dba The Signature

City Clerk Heather Slechta informed the Council that an application from Gary Ryan Abram on behalf of The Signature Bar and Grill, LLC dba The Signature for a new on-sale and Sunday intoxicating liquor license issued by City was received. The license will be effective from March 2, 2026, through December 31, 2026.

All background investigation paperwork and information submitted by the applicant has been reviewed and approved by the Police Department. The City Attorney will review the required insurance documents and once approved the application will be sent to the Minnesota Department of Public Safety-Alcohol and Gambling Enforcement for final review and approval.

Motion by Thiele, seconded by van Sluis to approve Resolution 2026-050 Approve On-Sale and Sunday Liquor License for The Signature Bar & Grill, LLC dba The Signature and carried unanimously.

Resolution 2026-045 Approve Plans and Specifications and Establish a Bid Date for 2026 Deer Pedestrian Bridge Replacement - Contract 2026-05

City Engineer Mark DuChene stated that Resolution 2026-045 approves the construction plans and specifications for the proposed 2026 Deer Pedestrian Bridge Replacement - Contract 2026-05 project including removal of existing timber bridge, replacement of bridge with new prefabricated steel bridge and related components, restoration of existing bituminous trail and other related improvements. The preliminary total estimated cost of the construction improvements, is \$604,056.00. The proposed funding for the project is from the park improvement fund and \$100,000.00 from a DNR Local Trails Connection Grant.

The resolution also establishes a bid date of March 4, 2026, for the project. Construction is scheduled to begin in the fall pending lead times for bridge fabrication.

Councilor Rowan stated that \$500,000.00 is a big ask, people are tired of being taxed, DuChene stated that this is a key cog in our trail system. Councilor Doumbouya stated that he was in favor of improving the infrastructure and glad there is DNR funding for this project. Mayor Spooner was in support of this project.

Motion by Doumbouya, seconded by Thiele to approve Resolution 2026-045 Approve Plans and Specifications and Establish a Bid Date for 2026 Deer Pedestrian Bridge Replacement - Contract 2026-05 and carried 5:1 with Rowan voting Nay.

Resolution 2026-046 Authorize the Execution of the Professional Services Contract with HGA for the Community Center Feasibility Study

Parks and Recreation Director Rochelle Anderholm-Parsch stated that the Council previously supported and directed staff in pursuing further investigation into the future of a new or renovated Community Center. This work builds directly on earlier Council discussions and the prior feasibility effort that was presented to Council and focused primarily on new construction options.

The City previously engaged HGA as a consultant to evaluate the potential for a new Community Center. While that work provided valuable insight, it did not fully evaluate the City's existing facilities, nor did it assess the feasibility of renovation, partial reconstruction, or continued use of current civic assets. Based on Council feedback and evolving priorities, staff is now advancing a more comprehensive and balanced analysis to ensure Council has the information necessary to make a strategic, financially responsible, and community-aligned decision.

The current scope of work is designed to review and build upon prior studies, identify and close key information gaps, and provide a side-by-side evaluation of three potential paths forward: renovating or expanding existing facilities, rebuilding on the current site, or constructing a new facility.

The schedule includes a series of workshops, advisory board touchpoints, and Council work sessions occurring between February and April. To ensure continuity, institutional knowledge, and cross-departmental coordination, a working group will support this effort. The working group will include City staff who participated in the prior process, including the Library Director and Buckham West Director, a representative from the Parks Board, and the Mayor.

Anderholm-Parsch stated that HGA was recommended as the consultant for this phase of work due to their direct involvement in the prior Community Center study, familiarity with the City's facilities, and understanding of the issues previously raised by Council. Retaining HGA allows the City to efficiently build upon existing work, avoid duplication of effort, and maintain continuity in analysis and assumptions.

Staff finds that HGA is well qualified to perform this work and that the proposed fee of \$79,000 is fair, reasonable, and consistent with industry standards for a study of this scope, complexity, and timeline. The proposed schedule, level of effort, and deliverables align with Council expectations and the City's stated goal of reaching a well-informed decision point in May 2026.

Motion by Doumbouya, seconded by Barnes to approve Resolution 2026-046 Authorize the Execution of the Professional Services Contract with HGA for the Community Center Feasibility Study and carried unanimously.

Bids - None

Boards and Commissions Reports, Announcements and Project Updates

City Administrator Jessica Kinser reminded the Council of the Council Chat tomorrow at the Alexander Faribault House from 3:30 pm. Mayor Spooner and Councilors Rowan and Thiele will be in attendance.

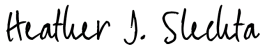
Adjournment

Motion by van Sluis, seconded by Thiele to adjourn the City Council meeting and carried unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:37 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Signed by:



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Heather Slechta
City Clerk