



MINUTES

**Mankato City Council
Regular Meeting
May 27, 2025 - 6 p.m.
IGC - Mankato Room**

1. **Call Meeting to Order**

Roll Call

Members Present: Mike Laven, Dennis Dieken, Michael McLaughlin, Jenn Melby-Kelley, and Mayor Najwa Massad.

Members Excused: Jessica Hatanpa and Kevin Mettler.

Staff Present: City Manager Susan Arntz, Community Development Director Mark Konz, Interim Public Works Director Karl Keel, Economic Development Coordinator Courtney Kramlinger, and City Clerk Renae Kopischke.

Pledge of Allegiance

2. **Approval of Agenda**

Mr. McLaughlin moved and Mr. Laven seconded a motion to approve the agenda as written. The motion carried unanimously.

3. **Approval of Minutes**

Mr. Dieken moved and Mr. McLaughlin seconded a motion to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of May 12, 2025, as written. The motion carried unanimously.

4. **Appearances, Recognition, and Proclamations**

Presentation of Ambassador Award to Jon Bergquist.

5. **Public Open Forum (15 Minutes)**

Lou Schwartzkopf, 210 Floral Avenue, stated that he felt that the draft Climate Action Plan aligns with Mankato's Strategic Plan. He commented on the areas of focus and felt that they were appropriate for a river city like Mankato. He asked that the suggestions provided by the Clean Energy Council be seriously considered relating to the Climate Action Plan. He mentioned opportunities for citizens to participate and touched on areas he ponders frequently and commented on items he felt should be considered as local solutions.

Jody Swanson, 110 Pheasant Drive, thanked the Council for undertaking the Climate Action Plan and noted that she felt that there were two things missing from the plan, which included an ongoing citizen sustainability committee and measurable and attainable goals and timelines.

Sabri Fair, 518 North Broad Street, mentioned that the plan recommendations do not mention anything related to locally distributed renewable energy. He referred to comments that were received that mentioned solar energy as well as other comments that were received related to food access, waste, and composting. He indicated that he would also like to see information added on bike lanes and infrastructure.

Brenda Flannery, 20091 Stoltzman Road, stated that as a new member of the South-Central Minnesota Clean Energy Council she was thrilled that climate action is being addressed. She commented on how climate action is critical and important for the community.

June Reichert, 405 North 5th Street, mentioned concerns with flock cameras and protection of data as well as commented on data breaches with the information that is gathered by the program.

Cole Koets, 422 James Avenue, representing a strong coalition of several students and community members, commented on concerns about the increase in AI surveillance at a time when information was no longer being left at the discretion of local municipalities. He commented on domestic violence and data breaches.

Ava Corey-Gruenes, Mankato, indicated concerns by the victims and survivors of domestic violence and how the funds could instead be used for victim services. She mentioned racial bias with the use of AI surveillance and how it has already affected people of color.

Natalia Orocio, no address, commented on her background in Human Resource Management and how the proposal would be an HR nightmare. She mentioned ongoing lawsuits related to the use of flock cameras.

Chris Schoenstedt, Mankato, asked what needs to be done to ensure that public concerns related to the use of AI surveillance are addressed. He summarized the comments received on the proposal and touched on the areas of concern as well as touched on issues to date.

6. **Consent Calendar**

NOTE: All items listed under the Consent Calendar will be enacted by one motion. There will be no separate discussion of these items. If a Council Member wishes to discuss any of these items, they may ask that the item be removed from the Consent Calendar. Removed item(s) will be discussed and acted upon by separate motion.

Mr. Laven moved and Ms. Melby-Kelley seconded a motion to approve the Consent Calendar as written. With all members voting in favor, the motion carried.

- A. Motion approving the submission of a grant to apply for 2025 Historic Preservation Funds from the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO).
- B. Motion approving a change order for All Seasons Arena.
- C. Resolution approving application for Eagles Aeries 269-Mankato to conduct lawful gambling at The 507, 526 South Front Street, Mankato.
- D. Resolution rejecting bid for the Riverfront Drive Lighting and Streetscape project.
- E. Resolution accepting petition and waiver for private utility improvements on 8th Avenue.
- F. Resolution authorizing the City Manager to request grant agreements for State and Federal funding of the Air Traffic Control Tower Design – Phase 2 Project at the Mankato Airport.

7. **Public Hearings**

- A. Ms. Kramlinger reported that on June 8, 2020, the Council adopted the City of Mankato 2020-2024 Consolidated Plan for the utilization of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding, which details how the expected annual funding from the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) will be used in conformance with CDBG guidelines and guides the use of funds for each annual action plan. She noted that the final year of the plan ends on June 30, 2025, and the city is required to adopt a new plan to guide CDBG utilization for the next five years.

Ms. Kramlinger stated that in an effort to gather input on the housing, homeless, social service and economic development needs within the community, three focus groups were held in February, an online survey was developed and open to the public, and comments were solicited from local nonprofit and service organizations, as well as the public. She indicated that the community feedback and identified needs have been incorporated into the full plan.

Ms. Kramlinger added that in addition to discussing strategies to meet the identified community needs and specifying the goals over the next five years, the Consolidated Plan includes the 2025 Action Plan, which spells out the goals and spending plan for the next year. She mentioned that the funding level for the 2025 program year is \$435,932, and it is suggested that program income and past unspent funds, which total \$2,000, be reallocated for the 2025 program year. She summarized the funding and proposed activities.

Ms. Kramlinger commented that the plan was posted for public comment from April 11, 2025, through May 11, 2025, and no comments were received during the public comment period.

Brief discussion on proposed activities and funding amounts as well as the process.

Mayor Massad opened the public hearing. There being no one wishing to speak, Mayor Massad closed the public hearing.

Mr. Laven moved and Ms. Melby-Kelley seconded a motion to approve the Resolutions adopting the City of Mankato 2025-2029 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Consolidated Plan and 2025 Annual Action Plan. The motion carried unanimously.

- B. Mr. Keel stated that the City of Mankato has been coordinating with the State of Minnesota on their Bureau of Criminal Apprehension development, which requires the extension of Bassett Drive east of Carver Road. He noted that the road extension is also adjacent to the Blue Earth County Justice Center; thus, the County has also been part of discussions related to the extension of Bassett Drive.

Mr. Keel indicated that the City of Mankato, State of Minnesota, and Blue Earth County recently entered into a Joint Powers Agreement to initiate the design of Bassett Drive and set expectations between the governing entities. He added that the city has also hired ISG, Inc. to perform the engineering scope of work for the road extension since the Agreement was executed.

Mr. Keel explained that an existing Subdividers Agreement states that the adjoining properties to the Bassett Drive right-of-way be willing petitioners of the project and the associated costs. He stated that despite a new Subdividers Agreement being necessary for the road extension, the city is electing to move forward with the Minnesota Statute Chapter 429 process for special assessments. He commented that the feasibility report and/or new Agreement will help determine cost sharing between the State of Minnesota and Blue Earth County. He summarized the costs and funding sources for the project and mentioned that Kyle Renneke from ISG was available if there were any questions.

Mayor Massad opened the public hearing. There being no one wishing to speak, Mayor Massad closed the public hearing.

Mr. Dieken moved and Ms. Melby-Kelley seconded a motion to approve the Resolution receiving a feasibility report, ordering improvement, preparation of plans, specifications, and ordering advertisement for bids on Improvement 11188; Bassett Drive Extension. The motion carried unanimously.

8. **City Manager's Report**

None.

9. **Reports of City Council Members**

None.

10. **Miscellaneous Business**

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Work Session, June 2, 2025, 6 p.m., Mankato Room

Regular Council Meeting, June 9, 2025, 6 p.m., Mankato Room (with EDA to follow)

Regular Council Meeting, June 23, 2025, 6 p.m., Mankato Room (with Work Session to follow)

11. **Adjournment**

There being no further business before the Council, Mr. Dieken moved and Mr. McLaughlin seconded a motion to adjourn. With all members voting in favor, the meeting adjourned at 6:52 p.m.

Minutes Approved.

Mayor Massad

ATTEST:

Renae Kopischke
City Clerk