



MINUTES

**Mankato City Council
Regular Meeting
July 14, 2025 - 6 p.m.
IGC - Mankato Room**

1. **Call Meeting to Order**

Roll Call

Members Present: Dennis Dieken, Jenn Melby-Kelley, Jessica Hatanpa, Kevin Mettler, Mike Laven, and Mayor Najwa Massad.

Members Excused: Michael McLaughlin.

Staff Present: City Manager Susan Arntz, Administrative Services Director Parker Skophammer, Community Development Director Mark Konz, City Attorney Pam Whitmore, and City Clerk Renae Kopischke.

Pledge of Allegiance

2. **Approval of Agenda**

Mr. Dieken moved and Ms. Melby-Kelley seconded a motion to approve the agenda as written. The motion carried unanimously.

3. **Approval of Minutes**

Mr. Dieken moved and Mr. Mettler seconded a motion to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of June 23, 2025, as written. The motion carried unanimously.

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

Abby Schmidt, Abdo, presented the City of Mankato 2024 Financial Review and Audit.

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

Curt Thompson, 413 North 4th Street, commented on issues he has noticed at Jackson Park and experiences that he has had while being at the park. He felt that the people hanging out in the park needed to be moved out of town.

Kate Hohenstein, Mankato, addressed the Free Press article referencing the Council meeting of June 9. She commented on an excuse being given to shut the public out on discussions related to AI surveillance. She stated that she was at the meeting and noted that every civilian attending was incredibly peaceful. She referenced public safety and a call being made for backup as well as the amount of funding that is given to public safety.

Chris Shoenstedt, Mankato, felt that the Council should be ecstatic that people have been participating in meetings. He referenced the June 9 meeting and how the participation was loud, intrusive, and uncomfortable. He commented on how the only thing that created change was a loud, angry group and how the democratic process was lost and left residents no choice but to get loud and yell to show irreverence to public leaders. He noted that the public was afraid of things that were happening at the federal level of government and how rights have been given away.

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. Dieken moved and Mr. Mettler seconded a motion to approve the Consent Calendar as written. With all members voting in favor, the motion carried.

- A. Motion approving change orders for All Seasons Arena.
- B. Motion approving the Preliminary Plat of Good Counsel Meadows Subdivision (PID's R010905379004, R010905379005, etal.); by request of the Southwest Minnesota Housing Partnership.
- C. Motion increasing the scope of Project 11121 for the Long Street and Emerson Lane Feasibility Report to include the consideration of improvements identified in the Hilltop Neighborhood Traffic Study.

- D. Resolution updating the City of Mankato Fee Schedule to include updates to Minnesota State Statute 461.12, Subd. 2, relating to administrative penalties for sales and furnishing of tobacco.
- E. Resolution considering quotations for the supply of Quicklime for Water Treatment.
- F. Resolution accepting feasibility report and ordering project for Capital Improvement Project 11031; Public Safety Center Apparatus Bay Door Replacement.
- G. Resolution accepting feasibility report and ordering project for Capital Improvement Project 11144; Intergovernmental Center Rooftop Unit Replacement.
- H. Resolution considering bids on Capital Improvement Projects 11131; 2025 Resurfacing, Miscellaneous Sidewalks, Alley Improvements and 11125; 2025 Petition Alley Improvement.
- I. Resolution authorizing Joint Powers Agreement with Minnesota State University Mankato for 2025/2026 Transit Service.
- J. Resolution adopting the Transit Safety Plan Update.
- K. Resolution accepting sanitary sewer easements for the sanitary sewer line between Ridge Lane and Hinckley Street.
- L. Resolution authorizing the City Manager to enter into an agreement with Short, Elliott, Hendrickson (SEH) to provide construction services for the reinstallation of the Kern Bridge.
- M. Resolution approving temporary construction easements for Veteran's Memorial Bridge Project.
- N. Resolution accepting State of Minnesota Hazardous Materials grant.
- O. Set July 28, 2025, as the date of the public hearing to review a Conditional Use Permit to allow the expansion of an existing essential service utility facility located in the R-1, One-Family Dwelling District, and for a variance to allow for the continuation of an eight-foot barbed wire fence in the residential district (1204 and 1210 Warren Street); by request of Northern Natural Gas Company.

- P. Set July 28, 2025, as the date of the public hearing to review a request for rezoning of properties from M-1, Light Industrial, to O-R, Office Residential; for a Preliminary and Final Plat review of Mankato Housing LP Subdivision; for a Planned Unit Development; for the vacation of alleys and a portion of Sibley Parkway street, dedicated as Patterson Avenue, on the plat of Oakwood Addition (PID's R010813253001, R010813253002, R010813253010); by request of Trellis.
- Q. Set August 11, 2025, as the date of the public hearing to review a request for rezoning of properties from P-I, Planned Industrial, to R-3, Limited Multiple Dwelling District (Lot 4, Block 10; Lots 1-2, Block 9; Lots 9-16, Block 7; Lots 1-8, Block 8; Columbia Park Addition; Lots 1-6, Block 24, Germania Park Addition); by request of Fisher Development.

7. **Public Hearings**

- A. Mr. Konz reported that the Wrestling Brotherhood, with the approval of property owners, is requesting a land use plan amendment to change the classification of certain parcels in Mankato from Light Industrial to Medium Density Residential. He stated that the City Council referred the request to the Planning Commission on April 28, 2025, as per the City Charter. He noted that the Commission reviewed the proposal during its May 28, 2025, meeting and recommended approval with conditions.

Mr. Konz indicated that the proposed change would allow for the development of a wrestling facility, including a gymnasium for training and classes. He stated that the three parcels involved, located near Spruce Street and 2nd Avenue, total 0.72 acres. He mentioned that the applicant hosted community meetings to gather feedback, with no opposition reported. He noted that the traffic study indicates that the facility would have a minimal impact on the local road network. He added that any further development would require rezoning, conditional use permits, and other zoning approvals in line with Mankato's Land Use Plan, which guides city growth in a coordinated and sustainable way while promoting public welfare and effective use of resources.

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

Mr. Dieken moved and Mr. Mettler seconded a motion to approve the Resolution approving a Land Use Plan amendment to change the guided land use from Light Industrial to Medium Density Residential (1416, 1420, 1430 2nd Avenue); by request of the Wrestling Brotherhood. The motion carried unanimously.

- B. Mr. Konz stated that Big Blue Hospitality, LLC, has requested a land use amendment to change the land use designation of the property from Public-Semi-Public to Central Business District to allow for the redevelopment of the existing post office. He stated that the City Council referred the request to the Planning Commission on April 28, 2025, as per the City Charter. He noted that the Commission reviewed the proposal during its May 28, 2025, meeting and recommended approval with conditions.

Mr. Konz reported that the parcel in question, which currently houses the former Post Office, is located within a block bordered by Broad Street to the west and east, and Jackson Street to the north (parcel ID R01.09.18.107.001). He indicated that the proposed redevelopment envisions transforming the site into a mixed-use development featuring a restaurant, event center, rooftop patio, and office space. He added that a hotel and parking ramp are proposed on the eastern side of the property, adjacent to Broad Street.

Mr. Konz noted that the applicant held two neighborhood meetings on March 31 and April 3; however, no residents attended, and no negative feedback was reported. He mentioned that a traffic study was also submitted to assess the potential impacts from the proposed redevelopment. He explained that the applicant will need to undergo several regulatory steps, including submitting requests for rezoning, platting, and planned unit development approvals, as well as any other relevant zoning requirements, before moving forward with development. Brief discussion on the location of a new parking garage.

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

Ms. Hatanpa moved and Mr. Dieken seconded a motion to approve the Resolution approving a Land Use Plan amendment to change the guided land use from Public-Semi-Public to Central Business District (401 South 2nd Street); by request of Big Blue Hospitality, LLC. The motion carried unanimously.

- C. Mr. Konz indicated that the request is to amend the Mankato City Code, Section 10-173, which provides guiding criteria for signage in the O-R, Office Residential, zoning district. He noted that the purpose of the amendment is to provide some clarity.

Mr. Konz explained that the O-R, Office Residential, zoning district is designed and intended to provide for medium-density development in strategic locations and encourage an optimum mix of office, institutional, and residential uses. He noted that permitted uses within the district include a wide variety of office and residential-type uses, including, but

not limited to, one, two, and multiple-family dwellings, nursing homes, churches, child daycare, dental and medical clinics, professional service offices and schools. He stated that, as such, the signage code pertaining to this zoning designation currently contains two sections; one section provides signage criteria for non-office uses, such as residential-type properties, and one section provides signage criteria for office uses. He commented that the code update combines two existing sections into a unified section in which each particular use is addressed and provides consistency between the uses on the number of allowable monument signage, among other modifications. He summarized the proposed changes.

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

Mr. Dieken moved and Mr. Mettler seconded a motion to approve the Ordinance amending Mankato City Code, Chapter 10, Section 10-1703 related to signage requirements in the Office Residential zoning district. The motion carried unanimously.

8. **City Manager's Report**

Ms. Hatanpa moved and Mr. Mettler seconded a motion to recess the Council Meeting for the Economic Development Authority (EDA) Meeting. The motion carried unanimously. (6:46 p.m.)

Mr. Dieken moved and Ms. Melby-Kelley seconded a motion to resume the Council Meeting following the EDA Meeting. The motion carried unanimously (7:24 p.m.).

Ms. Hatanpa moved and Mr. Mettler seconded a motion to go into Closed Session pursuant to Minnesota Statutes, Section 13D.05, subdivision 3(d), to receive a security briefing related to elected official and staff safety, review current strategies and protocols for physical safety in meetings and to discuss future plans to strengthen protections and proactively address issues related to security systems, room layouts and security deficiencies as disclosure of the information discussed in an open meeting would pose a danger to public safety or compromise security procedures or responses . The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Laven moved and Mr. Mettler seconded a motion out of Closed Session to resume the Council Meeting. The motion carried unanimously.

9. **Reports of City Council Members**

None.

10. **Miscellaneous Business**

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Regular Council Meeting, July 28, 2025, 6 p.m., Mankato Room (with Work Session to follow)

Work Session, August 4, 2025, 6 p.m., Minnesota River Room

Regular Meeting, August 11, 2025, 6 p.m., Mankato Room (with EDA to follow if needed)

11. **Adjournment**

There being no further business before the Council, Ms. Hatanpa moved and Mr. Mettler seconded a motion to adjourn. With all members voting in favor, the meeting adjourned at 8:33 p.m.

Minutes Approved.

Mayor Massad

ATTEST:

Renae Kopischke
City Clerk