



MINUTES

**Mankato City Council
Regular Meeting
September 22, 2025 - 6 p.m.
IGC - Mankato Room**

1. **Call Meeting to Order**

Roll Call

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

Members Excused: Kevin Mettler.

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

Pledge of Allegiance

2. **Approval of Agenda**

Mayor Massad noted that the addition of 5.N. and 5.O. to the agenda under the Consent Calendar. Ms. Hatanpa moved and Ms. Melby-Kelley seconded a motion to approve the agenda as amended. The motion carried unanimously.

3. **Approval of Minutes**

Mr. Dieken moved and Ms. Melby-Kelley seconded a motion to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of September 8, 2025, as written. The motion carried unanimously.

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

Dr. Bridget Kennedy, provided her background and commented on trauma-informed responses and training. She felt the city has an excellent policy on paper, but the heart of the policy is not being followed.

She provided an example and asked that the Council formally consider and support training on trauma informed responses for city officials, with priority being given to those in leadership roles.

5. **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. McLaughlin pulled item 5.C. Mr. McLaughlin moved and Ms. Melby-Kelley seconded a motion to approve the Consent Calendar as amended. With all members voting in favor, the motion carried.

- A. Motion approving Proclamation designating October 6-12, 2025, as Physicians Assistant (PA) Week in the City of Mankato.
- B. Motion approving Proclamation designating November 1, 2025, as Extra Mile Day in the City of Mankato.
- C. Motion approving Opioid Remediation Grant to the Sudanese Help Organization in support of programming that aims to promote youth recovery from opioid addiction and prevent substance abuse by offering after-school activities, early leadership development, and culturally informed support services.

Mr. McLaughlin commented that he felt that the programming would be beneficial and inquired as to where it would take place. Ms. Kopischke indicated that it would be at one of the local churches.

Mr. McLaughlin moved and Ms. Melby-Kelley seconded a motion to approve the Opioid Remediation Grant to the Sudanese Help Organization. The motion carried unanimously.

- D. Resolution petitioning District Court for a new appointment to fill a vacancy on the City of Mankato's Charter Commission pursuant to Minn. Stat. 410.05.
- E. Resolution considering quotations for the supply of Quicklime for Water Treatment.
- F. Resolution considering bids on Capital Improvement Project 11201; Council Chambers Reconfiguration.

- G. Report on project and motion approving Change Orders 1-4 for Capital Improvement Project 11131 – 2025 Adams Street Resurfacing (Alleys and Sidewalks) Project.
- H. Report on project and motion approving contract amendment for Capital Improvement Project 11074; 2024 Resurfacing and Miscellaneous Sidewalks.
- I. Resolution adopting the Mass Transit Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Program.
- J. Resolution approving the MnDOT Airport Maintenance and Operations Grant Agreement.
- K. Resolution authorizing City Manager to request a grant agreement to replace the Airport Loader and Plow (Unit 91).
- L. Resolutions setting the date of hearing for proposed assessments on Capital Improvement Projects:
 - 11005; Victory Drive - Phase 1
 - 11057; Germania Park Phase 4
 - 11058; North Belmont Drive
 - 11125; 2025 Petition Alley
 - 11131; 2025 Resurfacing, Miscellaneous Sidewalks & Alley Improvements
- M. Set October 14, 2025, as the date of the public hearing to review two variances; to increase the allowable maximum ground coverage from 30% to 37% in the R-2, one-and-two family dwelling district; and to decrease the required corner side yard setback from 15' to 8.5' (307 Mound Avenue); by request of Lori Schlueter.
- N. Resolution accepting the offer of the Minnesota Public Facilities Authority to purchase a \$49,385,616 General Obligation Sewer Revenue Note of 2025A, providing for its issuance and authorizing execution of a Bond Purchase and Project Loan Agreement with Point Source Implementation Grant.
- O. Set October 14, 2025, as the date of the public hearing to review an ordinance reducing parking requirements for multiple-family dwellings from 2 parking spaces to 1.5 parking spaces per unit (date is being reset from September 8, due to a technical error with the publication).

6. **Public Hearings**

- A. Mr. Konz indicated that due to a technical issue with the publication, it is recommended that the Ordinance rezoning property from Agriculture Transition to M-1, Light Industrial be continued to October 14, 2025. He stated that in addition to the rezoning, AJK Mankato Holdings, LLC has submitted multiple requests related to the proposed development of "The Station" subdivision. He noted that the applicant seeks approval of the final plat, a conditional use permit to permit display and retail sales in a warehouse space, and annexation of the subject parcel into the City of Mankato.

Mr. Konz touched on drainage easements, access to the property, and utility and stormwater service. He mentioned that the Blue Earth County Technical Evaluation Panel identified a wetland on the southern extent of the property. He stated that no direct impacts are proposed; however, the applicant must provide documentation that the wetland will remain viable post-construction or submit a replacement plan if impacts occur. He noted that additional analysis is required to confirm a no-loss condition, and measures such as an impervious liner in the southern basin may be necessary to prevent drawdown and wetland signage must be installed based on City standards. He added that the subdivision dedicates two 30-foot drainage and utility easements along the western and southern boundaries to accommodate an existing drainage ditch, as well as 10-foot easements along the block boundaries and between the two lots.

Mr. Konz indicated that the applicant seeks approval for a Conditional Use Permit to allow a display area and retail sales in a warehouse space and a professional office in excess of 10,000 square feet. He commented that the proposed 36,400 square-foot Rickway Carpet facility includes a 10,208 square-foot showroom and office area, which exceeds the 10,000 square-foot threshold, as well as a 25,562 square-foot warehouse. He stated that an additional 1,800 square-foot trash storage building is proposed on Lot 1 and Lot 2 is anticipated to develop as storage units.

Mr. Konz concluded that the subject property is located within Mankato Township but is contiguous to the City boundary and subject to the 2014 Orderly Annexation Agreement. The City's 2022 Land Use Plan designates the property for light industrial use, which is consistent with the proposed development and annexation of approximately 13.39 acres is necessary to support the scale and intensity of the proposed project.

Ms. Melby-Kelley moved and Ms. Hatanpa seconded a motion to continue the public hearing for the rezoning to October 14, and to approve the Resolutions approving the annexation, final plat (R430903200005), and conditional use permit, by request of AJK Mankato Holdings LLC. The motion carried unanimously.

7. Council Business

- A. Ms. Arntz reported that the Council has discussed the 2026 Budget Document, and received information regarding the General fund, Debt Service fund, Transit fund, and Economic Development fund tax levies. She stated that the proposed total levy increase is \$1,302,704, and the proposed tax rate for 2026 is 40.96%, which compares to 39.61% for 2025. She indicated that the total levy has been presented at \$26,370,000 and explained that the Preliminary Levy for FY 2026 must be certified by September 30, 2025, to both Blue Earth and Nicollet counties, and may be decreased at a future date; however, it may not be increased.

It was noted that the Public Hearing for the Proposed Final Budget is scheduled for Monday, December 1, 2025.

Mr. Dieken moved and Ms. Hatanpa seconded a motion to approve the Resolution adopting the Preliminary Property Tax Levy payable in 2026. The motion carried unanimously.

- B. Ms. Arntz stated that SRF Consulting Group, on behalf of MnDOT, conducted a traffic noise study for the Highway 169 Revitalization Project in Mankato and North Mankato. She indicated that the proposed project includes federal-aid funding; therefore, the project must comply with the noise requirements set by the Federal Highway Administration. She commented that a traffic noise analysis was required due to the proposed roundabout, which would introduce a new minor length of roadway. She mentioned that modeled traffic noise levels under future conditions in 2048 would exceed the federal noise abatement criterion, which requires noise mitigation (noise walls).

Ms. Arntz reported that a total of six walls were evaluated along the Project corridor, between Belgrade Avenue (south limit of the project) and Lake Street (north limit of the project). She noted that a total of three modeled noise walls were determined to be feasible, meet the noise reduction goal, and are cost-effective, and the other three noise walls that were modeled and evaluated did not qualify for the voting process because they did not meet MnDOT criteria.

Ms. Arntz explained that the City of Mankato is responsible for voting on one of the noise walls, due to the wall benefiting a proposed trail. This is because Mankato is anticipated to be the future trail authority for the proposed trails that are being constructed as part of this project. She stated that as a result of gathering information for voting on the noise walls, we reached out to the four businesses that would be adjacent to the proposed wall, and each business shared their desire not to have the wall constructed. Staff would ask the Council to issue a No vote on behalf of the affected area.

Mr. Laven moved and Ms. Melby-Kelley seconded a motion for a No Vote on the proposed Noise Wall for the Highway 169 Project. The motion carried unanimously.

8. **Reports and Miscellaneous Business**

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Community Investment Plan Open House, September 25, 2025, 6 p.m. to 8 p.m., Mankato Room

Work Session, October 6, 2025, 6 p.m., Minnesota River Room

Regular Council Meeting, October 14, 6 p.m., Mankato Room (with EDA to follow if needed)

9. **Adjournment**

There being no further business, Ms. Hatanpa moved and Ms. Melby-Kelley seconded a motion to adjourn. With all members voting in favor, the meeting adjourned at 6:22 p.m.

Minutes Approved.

Mayor Massad

ATTEST:

Renae Kopischke
City Clerk