MINUTES

Mankato City Council
Regular Meeting
May 11, 2026 - 6 p.m.
IGC - Council Chambers

1. **Call Meeting to Order**

Roll Call

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

Members Excused: Jessica Hatanpa.

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

Pledge of Allegiance

2. **Approval of Agenda**

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

3. **Approval of Minutes**

Mr. Mettler moved and Ms. Melby-Kelley seconded a motion to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of April 27, 2026, as written. The motion carried unanimously.

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

Rich Shermock, 221 Tanager Road, speaking on the request for a planned unit development for Campus Cottages Subdivision and how it didn't comply with zoning. He felt that a traffic study needed to be done in the area when college is not in session. He noted how they are surrounded by apartment complexes; enough is enough.

Joan Roca, 321 Tanager Road, speaking against the proposed Campus Cottages Subdivision development of the apartment units. He commented on the wetlands in the area and the density in the area as well as parking. He noted he was skeptical of the city enforcing occupancy restrictions. He asked that the city work with the developer to mitigate the impact of the high-density project on the neighborhood.

Silas Born, 108 Priscilla Court, stated that he lived less than 300 feet from where the apartments were being built for Campus Cottages Subdivision. He referred to an email he sent to the Council. He mentioned the request for an appeal to the 25% density requirement. He requested that the project be postponed for additional studies to be done.

Sister Joyce Kolbet, stated she was one of the sisters that still lives in the area and read a letter from the School Sisters of Notre Dame (SSND) Provincial Leader Debra Sciano. She touched on the SSND campus area and noted the commitment that they have to the stewardship of the property. She commented on the work and collaboration with the Southwest Minnesota Housing Partnership. She stated that they supported the project.

Brian Maciej, 209 Tanager Road, mentioned that he lived next to the proposed Campus Cottages Subdivision development. He wondered if the ordinance meets the requirements for a planned unit development. He mentioned that there would be about seven units per acre. He commented on the city ordinance related to surrounding areas. He was concerned that the gross density didn't reflect the intensity experienced by the neighborhood.

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. Laven pulled item 5.E. Mr. Laven moved and Mr. McLaughlin seconded a motion to approve the Consent Calendar as amended. With all members voting in favor, the motion carried.

A. Motion approving appointments to Committees.

B. Resolution amending the Penalty/Strike Matrix for Taxicab Licenses.

C. Resolution amending the Penalty/Strike Matrix for Transportation Network Companies Licenses.

D. Resolution authorizing the City Manager to purchase annual subscription from Tyler Technologies.

E. Resolution approving the Final Plat of Quarry View Addition (Lots 1-6, Block 24, Germania Park Addition; Lots 1-8, Block 8 & Lots 1-2, Block 9, Columbia Park Addition; and to be vacated portion of Lind Street); by request of Brett Skilbred.

Mr. Laven mentioned the Southwest Minnesota Housing Partnership and the purchase of seven lots along 8th Avenue and Lind Street, and wondered if they were included in the development request. Mr. Konz replied that they were not included and pointed out the location of the seven lots.

Mr. Laven mentioned the density restriction and asked for clarification. Mr. Konz noted that since the property is zoned R-3, the restriction is not in effect; however, the developer has chosen to honor it.

Mr. Laven moved and Mr. Mettler seconded a motion to approve the Resolution approving the Final Plat of Quarry View Addition (Lots 1-6, Block 24, Germania Park Addition; Lots 1-8, Block 8 & Lots 1-2, Block 9, Columbia Park Addition; and to be vacated portion of Lind Street); by request of Brett Skilbred. The motion carried unanimously.

F. Resolution approving a Certificate of Design Compliance for construction of two new structures in the Highway Gateway Overlay District (1830 and 1840 Adams Street); by request of Tripoint Development, LLC.

G. Resolution approving terms of up to a $484,005 interfund loan in connection with Tax Increment Financing District No. 47-1.

H. Resolution authorizing the City Manager to enter into a Professional Services Agreement with Bolton & Menk, Inc. to provide construction engineering services for Improvement Project 11193; 2026 Resurfacing.

I. Resolution accepting a Local Climate Action Grant from the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency for replacement of an electric vehicle charger.

J. Resolution authorizing the execution of the Airport Tower Construction Manager at Risk Agreement with Knutson Construction.

K. Resolution authorizing Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) Agency Agreement for Federal participation in preliminary engineering of Bus Stop Improvements with Carbon Reduction Program funds.

L. Set date May 26, 2026, as the date of the public hearing for an ordinance amending Mankato City Code Chapter 10 related to parkland dedication fees; by request of the City of Mankato.

M. Motion authorizing an amendment to the Professional Engineering Services Agreement for the Airport Perimeter Road Project.

6. **Planning Commission**

A. Mr. Konz stated that M & J Holdings, LLC is seeking a planned unit development for the construction of 122 residential slab-on-grade dwellings. He noted that the subject properties are described as Lot 1, Block 2, and Lot 1, Block 3, Mesenbrink Subdivision (PID R010915400007 and R010915400006); informally named "Aveyda Preserve".

Mr. Konz indicated that the proposed Mesenbrink Mixed-Use Development has undergone a lengthy approval process beginning in 2023. He provided a brief history of the approvals to date. He mentioned that the project covers approximately 105 acres and originally included plans for retail, apartment, and single-family residential development. He pointed out that the developer completed a new Environmental Assessment Worksheet (EAW), which evaluated the project’s environmental, social, and economic impacts, and following review, it was determined that an Environmental Impact Statement was not necessary. He added that the developer then secured a Land Use Plan Amendment in July 2023 to redesignate the property from Public/Semi-Public to Medium Density Residential, enabling the proposed mixed-use development.

Mr. Konz reported that the current request involves creation of a new planned unit development covering approximately 64.94 acres within Lots 1, Block 2 and Lot 1, Block 3 of Mesenbrink Subdivision. He mentioned that the property is zoned R-2 One- and Two-Family Dwelling District, with portions also located within the Shoreland Overlay District near an unnamed public lake regulated by the Minnesota DNR. He stated that the development is located east of CSAH No. 12 and spans areas north and south of the newly extended Hoffman Road.

Mr. Konz indicated that the proposed residential development includes 122 slab-on-grade homes consisting of 88 detached single-family homes and 34 attached single-family units. He commented that the site is divided into northern and southern sections: the north portion would contain 34 detached homes, while the south portion would include 54 detached homes and 34 attached homes. He noted that although the project is dense compared to surrounding development, it remains below the maximum number of units technically permitted under R-2 zoning standards. He added that the developer does not intend to phase out construction and instead plans to install all private roads, utilities, and landscaping infrastructure up front, while constructing homes individually based on market demand.

Mr. Konz explained that access to the development would come from the newly extended Hoffman Road through private drives named Meridian Trail and Aveyda Bend Trail, both of which would remain privately maintained by the homeowners' association or property owner, and sidewalks along Hoffman Road will connect residents to the broader city sidewalk and trail network, although no internal pedestrian-specific pathways are currently proposed. He stated that emergency vehicle access has been reviewed, though modifications to cul-de-sac geometry and no-parking fire access zones may still be required to meet Public Safety standards.

Mr. Konz concluded that the development meets City parking requirements by providing at least two off-street parking spaces per dwelling unit through garages and driveways. He noted that any future rental units would also be required to comply with limited occupancy rental regulations and maintain the same parking standards.

Mr. McLaughlin moved and Mr. Mettler seconded a motion to approve the Resolution approving a Planned Unit Development for a residential development containing 122 residential slab-on-grade dwellings (Lot 1, Block 2, and Lot 1, Block 3, Mesenbrink Subdivision). The motion carried unanimously.

B. Mr. Konz reported that Southwest Minnesota Housing Partnership (SWMHP) is requesting several approvals from the City of Mankato for redevelopment of the historic Good Counsel Hill Campus at 170 Good Counsel Drive. The requests include preliminary and final plat approval for a new subdivision called Good Counsel Hill, a conditional use permit (CUP) to allow multiple buildings on a single lot within the Office-Residential zoning district, a planned unit development (PUD) to permit a mixed-use campus, and an amendment to the Institutional Overlay District to update the campus development plan. He noted that the proposal focuses on reusing existing buildings and spaces while adding parking and preparing the site for future redevelopment phases.

Mr. Konz stated that the proposed plat would create a single 40.63-acre lot encompassing the former School Sisters of Notre Dame campus. He mentioned that existing streets and utilities would largely remain unchanged, though additional right-of-way would be dedicated for a future cul-de-sac improvement. He commented that existing sanitary sewer infrastructure would continue to serve the site, while long-term plans call for eventually connecting the campus to the City water system after future reservoir upgrades. He indicated that the site includes wetlands, bluffs, and protected woodland areas, and the development plan avoids disturbing these environmentally sensitive features. Conservation easements and setbacks will be required to preserve natural resources on the property.

Mr. Konz explained that Phase 1 of the redevelopment centers on adaptive reuse of existing buildings without major new construction or site alterations. He stated that proposed uses include workforce housing, office space, and assembly space within Isidore Hall, Theresa Hall, the Chapel, and portions of Schied Hall. He pointed out that the housing component would include studio, one-bedroom, and two-bedroom apartments targeted toward moderate-income residents at approximately 80% of area median income. He added that amenities would include secure access, laundry facilities, common spaces, bike parking, maintenance services, and potentially meal service through a future assisted living provider. He concluded that overall, Phase 1 proposes approximately 53 residential units plus office and community gathering space.

Mr. Konz reported that a major issue identified during the review was parking compliance, as the applicant proposed 154 parking stalls using existing paved areas, and staff determined only 113 stalls met current City standards and fire access requirements. He noted that because the proposed Phase 1 uses would normally require approximately 170 parking spaces, staff recommends limiting occupancy and uses to the number supported by the available compliant parking. He indicated that the chapel would rely partly on off-site parking at the Kato Ballroom with shuttle service during events. He added that City staff also recommend limiting special event frequency and excluding Schied Hall from Phase 1 approval until updated redevelopment plans are submitted.

Mr. Konz commented that the proposal is designed as the first phase of a larger long-term redevelopment effort. Future phases may eventually include up to 110 residential units, assisted living facilities, office space, and community-oriented uses such as educational spaces, a museum, catering kitchens, and recreational amenities. However, any future expansions, new parking lots, stormwater facilities, or additional buildings would require separate City approvals and infrastructure review before proceeding.

Mr. Mettler asked if everything was being met for Phase I by the applicant. Mr. Konz replied yes and indicated that the appropriate staff were brought in to conduct the parking review (fire, public safety, engineering, etc.).

Mr. Mettler wondered what would happen if there was a change in the parking arrangement for events. Mr. Konz responded that notification is required for any changes. Brief discussion on the requirements for non-residential and residential parking.

Mr. Laven moved and Mr. Mettler seconded a motion to approve the Resolutions approving the Final Plat review of Good Counsel Hill Subdivision; a Conditional Use Permit to accommodate more than one building on a single lot on a property zoned O-R, Office Residential; a Planned Unit Development to allow mixed uses (170 Good Counsel Drive); by request of Southwest Minnesota Housing Partnership. The motion carried unanimously.

C. Mr. Konz stated that APX Construction Group is requesting approval for a planned unit development (PUD) to construct a multi-family housing project consisting of three residential buildings with a total of 84 units. He indicated that the proposal also includes a request to amend the City of Mankato's rental density map, so the subdivision would not be subject to the city's 25% rental density cap. He commented that the site is located along the east side of Pohl Road and would include a new access point to the development. He noted that at approximately 7.2 units per acre, the project meets the city's medium-density residential standards for the R-2 zoning district.

Mr. Konz reported that the development plan includes one two-story building and two three-story buildings featuring primarily two-bedroom units. He mentioned that amenities such as a gym, study rooms, gathering spaces, bike racks, a dog run, and a patio area are proposed to enhance the resident's experience. Building materials and finishes are planned in earth-toned siding, and all structures would remain within the district's maximum height requirement of 35 feet. He added that parking concerns were addressed during the review process, with the applicant providing 138 parking spaces, exceeding the 126 spaces required by city code.

Mr. Konz stated that environmental and site design considerations were also reviewed. The existing stormwater pond will be redesigned to manage onsite stormwater treatment, and the Wetland Technical Evaluation Panel (TEP) determined that modifications to the smaller pond are permissible because it was originally created for stormwater purposes. He indicated that while some concerns were raised regarding potential tree removal near the expanded pond, the applicant indicated efforts would be made to preserve as many trees as possible while still meeting grading and access requirements, and new trees are also proposed around the basin area. Additionally, the adjacent wetland on the eastern side of the property will remain undisturbed, with a required 16.5-foot setback maintained in accordance with city code.

Mr. Konz concluded that the Planning Commission recommended approval of the rental density amendment and the planned unit development, while maintaining occupancy restrictions limiting units to no more than two unrelated individuals or a family. He noted that the proposal aligns with Mankato's Strategic Plan and Housing Needs Analysis, both of which emphasize the need for additional and more diverse housing options. The Housing Needs Analysis specifically identified demand for over 1,200 new market-rate units and encouraged flexibility in residential density standards, which this development seeks to address while also preserving environmentally sensitive areas such as wetlands.

Brief discussion on the location of the sidewalk, and the wetland area.

Ms. Arntz reported that the traffic study is intended to be completed and presented to the Council in August/September.

Mr. Mettler moved and Mr. Laven seconded a motion to approve the Resolution approving a Planned Unit Development for the installation of three new buildings, that contain a total of 84 residential units, in the R-2, one- and two-family dwelling zoning district (Lot 1, Block 2, Campus Cottages, and Outlot A, Campus Cottages subdivision). The motion carried unanimously.

7. **Public Hearings**

A. Chris Hogan, Baker Tilly, reported on the Resolution awarding $14,455,000 in General Obligation Improvement and Utility Bonds, Series 2026A, to Piper Sandler & Co based on the low bid of 3.1596%. She stated that the proceeds of the bonds will be used to finance various street improvement projects, related utility improvements, and to pay the costs of issuance on the bonds. She noted the overall repayment term of the bonds is 10 years. She commented on the market and provided a summary of the bond sale bid results.

Ms. Hogan indicated that S & P assigned a rating of "AA" to the bonds, which is great for the city. She explained why bonds get rated and provided credit highlights as well as factors that could lead to an upgraded designation.

Mr. Laven moved and Mr. Mettler seconded a motion to approve the Resolution awarding $14,455,000 in General Obligation Improvement and Utility Bonds, Series 2026A, to Piper Sandler & Co based on the low bid of 3.1596%. The motion carried unanimously.

8. **Council Business**

A. Ms. Arntz indicated that to focus Council time, we are recommending shifting the City Council calendar to eliminate the standing work session on the first Monday of the month. She stated that the shift would add a lighter work session, when needed, following the Regular City Council and Economic Development Authority Meetings on the second Monday of the month. She noted that there would be no change to the work session following the City Council Meetings on the fourth Monday of the month.

Ms. Arntz commented that in reviewing the budget schedule, the work session planned for November 2 would remain, and the public information meeting on the budget, also known as the "Truth in Taxation" hearing on December 7 would be as scheduled.

Ms. Arntz added that edits would also be made to the City Council Handbook accordingly reflecting the changes to the work session.

Mr. McLaughlin moved and Mr. Metter seconded a motion to approve the Resolution amending the City Council Calendar and Handbook. The motion carried unanimously.

9. **Reports and Miscellaneous Business**

A. Summary of City Manager's Performance Review.

Mr. Laven reported that on April 27, the Council met in closed session to review the performance of the City Manager in multiple categories, which included relationships with Council members and citizens, policy execution, professional skills, staffing, supervision, fiscal management and more. He stated that the combined results of the Council came in above average and excellent across the board.

Mr. Laven indicated that the Council recommends that the City Manager's salary be adjusted to add a cost-of-living adjustment, consistent with other non-union city employees, effective January 1, 2027.

Mr. Laven moved and Mr. Mettler seconded a motion to approve the cost-of-living adjustment, consistent with other non-union city employees, effective January 1, 2027. The motion carried unanimously.

View all city committee meetings by clicking on our City Calendar

Regular Council Meeting, May 26, 2026, 6 p.m., Council Chambers (with Work Session to follow)

Regular Council Meeting, June 8, 2026, 6 p.m., Council Chambers (with EDA and/or Work Session to follow)

10. **Adjournment**

There being no further business, Mr. Laven moved and Ms. Melby-Kelley seconded a motion to adjourn. With all members voting in favor, the meeting adjourned at 7:27 p.m.

Minutes Approved.

Mayor Massad

ATTEST:

Renae Kopischke
City Clerk