MINUTES

Mankato City Council
Regular Meeting
June 8, 2026 - 6 p.m.
IGC - Council Chambers

1. **Call Meeting to Order**

Roll Call

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

Members Excused: Kevin Mettler.

Staff Present: City Manager Susan Arntz, Administrative Services Director Parker Skophammer, Community Development Director Mark Konz, Associate Director of Housing and Economic Development Nancy Bokelmann, and Economic Development Coordinator Courtney Kramlinger, and Deputy City Clerk Jennie Guerrero.

Pledge of Allegiance

2. **Approval of Agenda**

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

3. **Approval of Minutes**

Ms. Hatanpa moved and Mr. Laven seconded a motion to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of May 26, 2026, as written. The motion carried unanimously.

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

Bryan Schnedier thanked the council for appointing him to the Public Safety Advisory Committee. He wanted to fill the council in on what they spoke about at their last meeting, which included the Emergency ordinance and accountability regarding ICE, and Metro Surge, and community trust . He felt that a permanent ordinance would give people clarity. He commented on Congress passing new federal funding for immigrant enforcement and a new prison opening in Appleton, MN.

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 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. Resolution approving acquisition of certain property owned by the Economic Development Authority of Mankato, MN and to enter into a Property Management Agreement with Blue Earth County.

B. Resolution approving the Final Plat of Snell Addition; Lots 3, 4, and 5, Block 1, Menard Addition; except a portion of Lot 5, Block 1 (1900 and 1990 Madison Avenue); by request of Snell Real Estate, LLC.

C. Resolution approving the Final Plat of Eastwood Energy Center No. 7; Tract B, Registered Land Survey No. 175 (1731, 1751, 1761 Energy Drive); by request of Old Town Riverfront Properties, LLC.

D. Motion to select Nielsen Blacktopping & Concrete Inc. as the contractor for the Bus Stop Improvement Construction Project.

E. Resolution to select a bid and submit a grant request for the Airport Taxiway A/D/E Reconstruction and Enhanced Taxiway Markings Project.

F. Resolution to Conditionally accept a Bid and Submit a Grant Request for Replacement of the Airport Snow Removal Unit 91.

G. Resolution considering bids for 2026 Sealcoating.

H. Resolution considering bids for 2026 Striping.

I. Resolution accepting feasibility report and ordering project for Capital Improvement Project 11239; 2026 Pavement Maintenance Project.

J. Resolution receiving feasibility report, ordering improvement, preparation of plans and specifications, and ordering advertisement for bids for Capital Improvement Project 11200; Land of Memories Park.

K. Resolution ordering preparation of feasibility report for Capital Improvement Project 11121; Long Street and Emerson Lane.

L. Motion approving Change Order No. 1 for 11190 - Facilities Snow Removal.

M. Resolution authorizing the City Manager to enter into a long-term parking lease for Parking Lot #2; (Graif Lot).

N. Resolution authorizing the City Manager to enter into a Project Rebate Agreement with Centerpoint Energy and to participate in the “Commercial Hybrid Heating Pilot Rebate Program” for Capital Improvement Project 11144; Intergovernmental Center Rooftop Unit Replacement.

O. Resolution authorizing the execution of the Vetter Stone Amphitheater Construction Manager at Risk Agreement with Knutson Construction.

P. Motion authorizing the City Manager to execute the Naming Rights Agreement for Vetter Stone Amphitheater.

Q. Resolution authorizing the Department of Public Safety to apply for a Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) Grant.

R. Resolution authorizing the City Manager to accept a cash donation from North Star Aviation for Firefighter Training.

S. Resolution authorizing the Department of Public Safety to apply for an Assistance to Firefighters (AFG) Grant.

T. Resolution requesting allocation of Public Safety Aid Funding.

6. **<u>Planning Commission</u>**

A. Mr. Konz stated that Cherry Creek, Inc. is requesting a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) to modify the approved grading and drainage plan for a residential lot at 112 Butler Falls Road in the Miller Creek 1st Addition subdivision. He indicated that the lot was originally graded and approved for a walkout or lookout basement home, but the applicant now proposes constructing a slab-on-grade patio home. He commented that the change requires substantial regrading of the site, including the import and movement of more than 25 cubic yards of fill, which exceeds the threshold established by Mankato City Code for substantial land alteration. He noted that because the proposed grading and drainage differ significantly from the subdivision's approved grading plan, the project does not qualify for the exemption normally granted to developments with an approved subdivision grading plan, making a CUP necessary.

Mr. Konz reported that the proposed development includes a 2,214-square-foot single-family home, an attached garage, a rear deck, and retaining walls designed to manage drainage and prevent impacts to neighboring properties. He mentioned that the grading changes will alter how stormwater drains across the lot, directing runoff toward Butler Falls Road and designated drainage easement areas. He added that the site also contains environmentally sensitive features, including bluff areas and a wetland along the western portion of the property. He stated that applicant's plans demonstrate compliance with required bluff setbacks and wetland buffer requirements, as well as additional measures which will be required during construction to prevent disturbance of the protected areas.

Ms. Hatanpa moved and Mr. Laven seconded a motion to approve the Resolution approving a Conditional User Permit to allow for a modification to the approved subdivision grading plan that will allow the construction of a patio home on a lot that was graded for a walkout basement; Lot 3, Block 1, Miller Creek 1st Addition (112 Butler Falls Road). The motion carried unanimously.

B. Mr. Konz stated that Bridgewater Group is requesting a Conditional Use Permit and a Certificate of Design Compliance to convert the existing three-story Motel 6 at 1731 Premier Drive into an assisted living facility called Bridgewater. He indicated the project would repurpose the hotel's 66 rooms into approximately 60–63 affordable residential units for elderly and disabled adults, providing long-term housing with assisted living services. Interior renovations would include adding a licensed commercial kitchen, dining facilities, laundry areas, office space, and a second-floor social area, while largely preserving the building's existing structure, mechanical systems, furnishings, and safety features. He noted that residents would receive services such as 24-hour caregiving, nursing support, meals, medication management, therapy services, transportation coordination, housekeeping, and assistance with daily living activities.

Mr. Konz reported the proposal emphasizes adaptive reuse of a relatively new building that is considered to be in excellent condition, making the conversion both practical and cost-effective. He stated that exterior changes would be modest, consisting primarily of removing the Motel 6 signage, repainting red façade elements brown, and creating a landscaped outdoor courtyard with gardens, seating, and walking access. He mentioned existing parking, landscaping, lighting, and pedestrian connections would remain largely unchanged, and the site significantly exceeds minimum parking requirements. He explained that because assisted living/congregate housing is not specifically listed as a permitted use in the B-3 Highway Commercial district, the applicant argues that it is similar in character to multifamily residential development, which is allowed through a Conditional Use Permit. The proposal has received support from Blue Earth County human services staff, who cite a significant local need for affordable assisted living housing for low-income seniors and individuals with disabilities. Additional building code reviews, licensing approvals, and site compliance updates would be required before redevelopment can proceed.

Mr. Dieken moved and Mr. Laven seconded a motion to approve the Resolution approving a Conditional Use Permit allowing an assisted living facility serving elderly and disabled adults in the B-3, Highway Business District, and for a Certificate of Design Compliance for exterior modifications in the Highway Gateway Overlay District; Lot 4, Block 1, Venstar Subdivision (1731 Premier Drive). The motion carried unanimously.

7. **Public Hearings**

A. Ms. Kramlinger reported that the City of Mankato is preparing its 2026 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Annual Action Plan, which outlines how it will use $415,169 in federal funding from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) during the program year beginning July 1, 2026. She mentioned the plan follows the goals established in the City's 2025–2029 Consolidated Plan, adopted in May 2025, and focuses on benefiting low and moderate-income residents, defined as households earning 80% or less of the area median income. As an entitlement grantee, Mankato receives annual CDBG funding and must adopt an Action Plan each year to guide spending.

Ms. Kramlinger summarized that the 2026 funding allocation includes $179,169 for rehabilitating four owner-occupied homes, $24,000 for rehabilitating two rental housing units, $100,000 to support affordable housing projects through site acquisition assistance, $62,000 for public service grants addressing community needs, and $50,000 for program administration and planning. She indicated that housing rehabilitation efforts will continue to focus on targeted neighborhoods identified through a 2022 slum and blight analysis, where older housing stock and higher concentrations of low and moderate-income households create greater rehabilitation needs. HUD requires a public comment period and hearing before approval of the plan. She stated that the comment period ran from May 8 to June 7, 2026, and no comments had been received at the time the memo was written, though additional feedback from the public hearing may still result in revisions before the plan is submitted to HUD.

Mayor Massad opened the Public Hearing. There being no one winching to speak, Mayor Massad closed the Public Hearing.

Ms. Melby-Kelley moved and Ms. Hatanpa seconded a motion to approve a resolution adopting the City of Mankato 2026 Community Development Bock Grant (CDBG) Annual Action Plan. The motion carried unanimously.

8. **Council Business**

A. Ms. Bokelmann stated that the Southwest Minnesota Housing Partnership (SWMHP) is seeking funding through the Minnesota Housing Impact Fund Program to support Phase VI of the Partnership Community Land Trust (PCLT) initiative, which aims to develop up to 10 newly constructed affordable single-family homes in Mankato by 2028. She mentioned the project supports the City's housing goals by expanding affordable homeownership opportunities for income-qualified households earning up to 80% of the area median income.

Ms. Bokelmann stated that to strengthen its application, SWMHP is requesting funding commitments from the City of Mankato and Blue Earth County. She explained that the proposed $2.4 million funding package includes $200,000 from the City's Affordable Housing Trust Fund, $100,000 from the County's Affordable Housing Trust Fund, $100,000 in Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds, and $2 million from the Minnesota Housing Impact Fund. She concluded that staff recommend approving a resolution and letter of support committing up to $100,000 in CDBG funding, contingent on the project receiving state financing. She explained the City's contribution would be distributed as homes are completed and sold through December 31, 2029, helping leverage significant additional investments from state, philanthropic, and housing development partners.

Mr. Laven moved and Ms. Melby-Kelley seconded a motion to approve the Resolution authorizing Community Development Block Grant support for Phase VI of the Partnership Community Land Trust seeking MN Housing Impact Funding. The motion carried unanimously.

B. Ms. Arntz mentioned that In February 2026, the Mankato City Council adopted an emergency ordinance regulating law enforcement activities within the city. She noted that the ordinance requires outside law enforcement agencies to make a good-faith effort to notify the Mankato Department of Public Safety before conducting operations in the city. She also mentioned that it also mandates that officers wear and use portable recording devices if their agency normally uses them, prohibits officers from wearing facial coverings that conceal their identity except where permitted by state law, and requires officers to provide identifying information such as their last name and badge number upon request from the public or city personnel, with certain exceptions.

Ms. Arntz also reported that on April 13, 2026, the Council approved an updated version of the ordinance, which took effect on April 24 and is scheduled to expire on June 25, 2026. She added that the revision clarified that “law enforcement activity” includes actions by local, state, or federal agencies to enforce laws, such as traffic stops, detentions, searches, warrant executions, and arrests. She noted that as of the date of the staff memo, the city had not issued any citations for violations of the ordinance. She asked that the Council review the ordinance’s status and provide guidance for potential action at the June 22, 2026, City Council meeting.

Following discussion by the Council, members expressed differing views on the future of the emergency ordinance. Some council members supported keeping the ordinance in place and making it a permanent part of the city code, while others indicated they would like additional discussion before making a decision and were open to allowing the ordinance to expire or discontinuing it altogether.

Mayor Massad suggested working with the advisory committee to review the ordinance and explore potential revisions that would better align it with the city's needs. The goal of this process would be to refine the ordinance and determine whether a modified version should be considered for permanent adoption. Further discussion and direction from the Council are expected as the ordinance approaches its June 25, 2026, expiration date.

9. **Reports and Miscellaneous Business**

View all city committee meetings by clicking on our City Calendar

Regular Council Meeting, June 22, 2026, 6 p.m., Council Chambers (with Work Session to follow)

Regular Council Meeting, July 13, 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 Mr. McLaughlin seconded a motion to adjourn. With all members voting in favor, the meeting adjourned at 6:45 p.m.

Minutes Approved.

____
Mayor Massad

ATTEST:

____
Jennie Guerrero
Deputy City Clerk