



MINUTES

**Mankato City Council
Regular Meeting
July 28, 2026 - 6 p.m.
IGC - Council Chambers**

1. **Call Meeting to Order**

Roll Call

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

Staff Present: City Manager Susan Arntz, Administrative Services Director Parker Skophammer, City Engineer Cory Bienfang, Associate Director of Public Utilities Kyle Hinrichs, and City Clerk Renae Kopischke.

Pledge of Allegiance

2. **Approval of Agenda**

Mayor Massad noted that staff requested item 6.N. be removed from the agenda. Mr. Mettler moved and Ms. Hatanpa seconded a motion to approve the agenda as amended. The motion carried unanimously.

3. **Approval of Minutes**

Mr. Dieken moved and Ms. Hatanpa seconded a motion to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of July 13, 2026, as written. The motion carried unanimously.

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

Recognition of employees who have reached a milestone of 20 or more years of service with the City of Mankato.

Abby Schmidt, Abdo, presented the City of Mankato 2025 Financial Review and Audit.

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

Ava Corey-Gruenes commented on the mayor having contracts with business organizations and how there could potentially be a conflict where she should recuse herself from voting on certain items. She asked that the Mayor publish contracts as well as tax information and noted the upcoming primary election.

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. McLaughlin pulled item 6.K. Ms. Hatanpa moved and Mr. Mettler seconded a motion to approve the Consent Calendar as amended (including removal of Item 6.N. as requested under agenda approval). With all members voting in favor, the motion carried.

- A. Motion approving Proclamation designating September 2026, as Celebrate Recovery Month in the City of Mankato.
- B. Motion approving the donation of one punch pass for Tourtellotte Pool to Cornerstone Lutheran School.
- C. Resolution approving application to conduct off-site gambling on October 22, 2026, for Mankato Area Hockey Association (MAHA) at Sky One Eleven Event Space, 111 South 2nd Street, 7th Floor.
- D. Resolution approving application to conduct off-site gambling on October 8, 2026, for Mankato Area Youth Baseball Association (MAYBA) at Loose Moose Saloon and Conference Center, 119 South Front Street.
- E. Resolution appointing Prosecuting Attorney and authorizing the City Manager to enter into an Agreement for Legal Services.
- F. Resolution authorizing City Manager to execute First Amendment to Development Agreement (Axis).
- G. Resolution authorizing a Joint Powers Agreement with Minnesota State University Mankato for 2026-2027 Transit Services.
- H. Resolution to accept State Funds for the Airport Entrance Road Pavement Rehabilitation Project.

- I. Resolution awarding Nielsen Blacktopping and Concrete Inc. as the contractor for the 2026 Bus Stop Improvement Construction Project.
- J. Resolution to accept MnDOT funding for the Airport Clear Zone Acquisition Plan.
- K. Resolution authorizing the use of City funds to replace private Lead and Galvanized service lines.

Mr. McLaughlin mentioned the grants received and how they will help with the associated costs. Mr. Hinrichs explained that the city's plan is to replace all private lead and galvanized water service lines by the federally required 2037 deadline. He noted that of approximately 10,500 service lines, about 200 have been identified as lead or galvanized and roughly 3,000 remain unknown; the city has secured a \$1 million state grant in 2026 and intends to use available state funding to cover eligible replacement costs, with the goal of eliminating direct costs to property owners.

Mr. McLaughlin moved and Mr. Mettler seconded a motion to approve the Resolution authorizing the use of City funds to replace private Lead and Galvanized service lines. The motion carried unanimously.

- L. Resolutions considering bids on Capital Improvement Project 11200; Land of Memories Park; accepting the DNR Outdoor Recreation Grant and also authorizing City Manager to Direct Purchase Play System/Surfacing.
- M. Resolution accepting feasibility report, ordering plans and authorizing bids for Capital Improvement Project 11213; Lead Service Line Replacement Project - Phase 1.
- N. ~~Set August 24, 2026, as date of public hearing for Capital Improvement Project 11189; TH 169 Revitalization Project.~~ (Removed with approval of the agenda).
- O. Set August 10, 2026, as the date of public hearing for a variance from Chapter 10, Article II, Division 3, Sec.10-97 of the Mankato City Code to decrease the front yard setback from 30 feet to 0 feet in the R-1, One-Family Dwelling District, to allow for the construction of an accessory structure (405 Ridgewood Street); by request of Brian and Tricia Sarff.
- P. Set August 10, 2026, as the date of public hearing for a variance from Chapter 10, Article V, Division 6, Sec. 10-584 of the Mankato City Code to decrease the front yard setback from the code required 15 feet to 12 feet and to decrease the corner side yard from the code required 7 feet, 6 inches to 0 feet in the B-1, Community Business District, to allow for an updated façade with new finishes and a new exit door and related foundation (1028 North Riverfront Drive); by request of Dustin Lee.

- Q. Set August 24, 2026, as date of public hearing for Capital Improvement Project 11121; Long Street and Emerson Lane.

7. **Council Business**

- A. Ms. Arntz reviewed the process for implementing the Minnesota River-Mankato Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan. She noted that following the city's participation in developing the plan beginning in 2024, the Council adopted the plan in January 2026, and it has since been approved by the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources. She stated that since then, member jurisdictions have developed and adopted bylaws and a cost-sharing policy through the Policy Advisory Committee, on which Council Member Laven has served as the city's representative.

Ms. Arntz indicated that the next step is for the Council to consider authorizing the city to join the Joint Powers Collaborative by Agreement, which establishes a framework for cooperative watershed management among participating counties, cities, and soil and water conservation districts. She highlighted key provisions of the agreement, including the city's ability to withdraw with 60 days' notice, Nicollet County serving as fiscal agent, and the recommendation to appoint Rick Baird, Environmental Services Coordinator, as the city's authorized representative. Staff also noted the annual participation cost of \$1,000 for 2026–2027, to be funded from the Storm Water Fund membership budget, and recommended approval of the resolution authorizing the agreement.

Mr. Laven provided a report of the Policy Advisory Committee's activities to date.

Mr. Laven moved and Mr. McLaughlin seconded a motion to approve the Resolution approving the Minnesota River-Mankato Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan Joint Powers Collaborative Agreement. The motion carried unanimously.

8. **Reports and Miscellaneous Business**

Mr. Dieken provided a brief update on his attendance at the Coalition of Greater Minnesota Cities Conference in New Ulm with Mr. Laven and Ms. Arntz.

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Regular Council Meeting, August 10, 2026, 6 p.m., Council Chambers (with EDA and/or Work Session to follow)

Regular Council Meeting, August 24, 2026, 6 p.m., Council Chambers (with Work Session to follow)

9. **Adjournment**

There being no further business, Mr. Mettler moved and Mr. Laven seconded a motion to adjourn. With all members voting in favor, the meeting adjourned at 6:46 p.m.

Minutes Approved.

Mayor Massad

ATTEST:

Renae Kopischke
City Clerk