MINUTES

Mankato City Council
Regular Meeting
August 24, 2026 - 6 p.m.
IGC - Council Chambers

1. **Call Meeting to Order**

Roll Call

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

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

Pledge of Allegiance

2. **Approval of Agenda**

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

3. **Approval of Minutes**

Mr. Dieken and Mr. Mettler seconded a motion to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of August 10, 2026, as written. The motion carried unanimously.

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

No one spoke.

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.

Ms. Hatanpa 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. Motion approving Proclamation designating September 10th -13th, 2026 as Mankato Pride Celebration Days in the City of Mankato.

B. Resolution adopting negotiated changes to the 2027-2028 LELS (Sergeants) Labor Agreement.

C. Resolution requesting Decertification of Tax Increment Financing District No. 33-2 (Habitat for Humanity Housing Project).

D. Resolution authorizing the City Manager to amend the Subdivision Agreement for Wolfe Addition No. 2 to allow the development of the Excel Drive extension to occur in conjunction with the development of Lot 2, Block 1, Lot 2, Block 3, Lot 3, Block 3, or Lot 1, Block 4, Wolfe Addition No. 2.

E. Resolutions directing Traffic Control changes:
- Adams Street and Hope Street
- Technology Drive and Excel Drive; Technology Drive and Power Drive
- Valliant Lane and Woodland Avenue
- West 5th Street and Owatonna Street
- 215 East Hickory Street

F. Motion approving Change Order 1 for the proposed striping improvements on Pohl Road.

G. Report on project and Change Orders 5 and 6 for Capital Improvement Project 11188; Bassett Drive Extension.

H. Report on project and Change Orders 6 and 8 for MnDOT Project SP 5212-35 (169); Veteran's Bridge (Bridge 07042) Rehabilitation project.

I. Report on project and Change Orders 3 and 4 for Capital Improvement Project 11193; 2026 Resurfacing.

J. Report on Projects and Change Orders 1 and 2 for Capital Improvement Project 11206; Hiniker Parkway and Hiniker Pond Park Parking Lot.

K. Resolution authorizing the City Manager to enter into an agreement with Bolton & Menk, Inc. to provide construction engineering services for Groh Farm Subdivision No. 2; Improvement Project 11003.

L. Resolution authorizing the submission of an amended application for the Mankato/North Mankato Area Planning Organization (MAPO) Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP).

M. Resolution authorizing the City Manager to execute the grant agreement for the Airport Traffic Control Tower Construction under the Federal Contract Tower Program.

N. Resolution authorizing the City Manager to dispose of surplus Public Safety equipment and acquire modern equipment.

O. Resolution authorizing bids for the 2027 Water Treatment Plant and Water Resource Recovery Facility chemical supply.

P. Resolution accepting feasibility report and authorizing bids for the Water Resource Recovery Facility (Project 11280), Biolsolids hauling and land application.

Q. Set September 14, 2026, as the date of public hearing for the Consolidated Annual Performance Evaluation Report (CAPER) for the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program.

R. Set September 14, 2026, as the date of public hearing for a variance from Chapter 10, Article X, Division 1, Sec.10-1463 of the Mankato City Code to increase the allowable mechanical projection into a required yard from 3 feet to 10 feet in the R-3, Limited Multiple Dwelling District (1422 2nd Avenue); by request of Kody Schendel.

S. Set September 14, 2026, as the date of the public hearing for a variance from Chapter 10 of the Mankato City Code to decrease the rear yard from 66 feet to 11.2 feet in the R-3, Limited Multiple Dwelling District and a Conditional Use Permit to construct and operate a 16-unit congregate micro-apartment addition (1429 3rd Avenue); by request of Kody Schendel of New Hope Board and Lodge and KD2 Properties, LLC.

T. Set September 14, 2026, as the date of the public hearing to review a request to rezone the subject property from T, Transition, to B-3, Highway Commercial and M-1, Light Industrial District (R43.09.11.300.021); by request of Scott Brown.

U. Set September 14, 2026, as the date of the public hearing to review a request to rezone the subject property from M-1, Light Industrial, to R-3, Limited Multiple Dwelling District (1618, 1620 and 1622 3rd Avenue); by request of RJC Rental Properties LLC.

V. Resolution setting October 13, 2026, as the date of public hearing for establishment of Development District No. 51 and Tax Increment District No. 51-1 (Quarry View).

6. **Public Hearings**

A. Mr. Smith reported on Capital Improvement Project 11121; Long Street and Emerson Lane. He stated that staff conducted several opportunities for public input regarding the proposed Long Street corridor improvements from Main Street to Madison Avenue. He indicated that the open house on June 25, 2026, presented three roadway alternatives, with additional feedback collected through Every Voice Mankato. The majority of feedback supported the traffic circle alternative included in the feasibility report.

Mr. Smith mentioned that following the July 13 Council work session, staff surveyed residents in the project area regarding a proposed sidewalk on the east side of Long Street. He noted that at a subsequent open house on August 12, staff presented the proposed project, estimated costs, and preliminary assessments. He commented that a new sidewalk on the east side of Long Street from Main Street to Madison Avenue was the primary topic of discussion, and most residents attending opposed its construction; therefore, the recommendation is for a sidewalk only on the west side.

Mr. Smith summarized the project timeline as well as the estimated costs and funding sources. He concluded that based on the feasibility report and public input, staff recommends that the Council accept the report, set a date for the improvement hearing, direct the City Engineer to prepare final plans and specifications, and authorize the City Manager to advertise the project for bids as required by law.

Ms. Hatanpa wondered about the plans for the traffic circle and felt that it should be more substantial and defined so that people do not drive over and/or through them.

Mr. McLaughlin commented on the stop sign at Belle Avenue. He mentioned that there was some existing sidewalk on the east side and wondered if the isolated sections would be removed. Mr. Smith replied yes; removed and replaced with grass.

Discussion centered on the narrowing of the roadway, the location of stop signs, the traffic circles, and the associated costs.

Mr. Laven mentioned how he frequently uses Long Street and has observed that speeds do increase as people get closer to Madison Avenue.

Mayor Massad asked how the city works with those affected to ensure that they have access to their homes during the construction. Mr. Smith stated that they would meet in the spring with the residents and the contractor prior to the start to address any concerns with a thoughtful phasing plan being implemented. Mayor Massad opened the public hearing.

Scott Dzwonkowski expressed that a sidewalk wasn't needed on the east side as there is a nice sidewalk along the west side. He commented on how they would lose green space if there was a sidewalk added. He mentioned how the construction of Victory Drive helped ease traffic along Long Street.

Theresa Dzwonkowski commented on her ability to get to her home and wondered how they were to pay for the assessment. She expressed concerns that if the traffic circles were raised, it would affect visuals along the street. She requested a removable speed bump be installed as well as stops signs all along Long Street.

Mr. Smith referred to the phasing and noted that Emerson Lane and Long Street would not be done at the same time.

Cindy Winters stated that she was an advocate for those that walk and for people with disabilities and felt that a sidewalk should be placed on the east side of the street. She commented on how it has been a 70-year span since the street was last done, and how those that live in the neighborhood will turn over; thus, if a sidewalk isn't installed with the project, it will not happen for another 70 years. She noted how having sidewalks on both sides would provide options for those walking and with disabilities.

Tom Korth appreciated that there wouldn't be a sidewalk on the east side. He mentioned the intersection of Marsh and Long and requested an enhanced stop sign be placed as he felt that people go through there as well as the intersection on Belle Avenue.

Heidi Burns thanked Council for listening to the neighborhood regarding the sidewalk on the east side of the street.

A resident requested the roadway be reconstructed the same as it is today.

Xiuying Zhao stated that the reconstruction was good for the neighborhood, but she couldn't afford it right now. She mentioned that she lives on the corner of Emerson Lane and Long Street; thus, she has more frontage.

Ms. Arntz explained the special benefit appraisal process and how in many cases the assessment can be reduced. She noted the burden on corner lots and how the policy addresses the issue of frontage on two streets and reduces it by 50%. She added that the assessment could be at 10 or 15 years and indicated that someone would follow up with Ms. Zhao re her options and to address any further questions.

Mayor Massad closed the public hearing.

Mr. McLaughlin moved and Mr. Mettler seconded a motion approving the Resolution receiving a feasibility report, ordering improvements, preparation of plans and specifications, and ordering advertisement for bids on Capital Improvement Project 11121; Long Street and Emerson Lane. The motion carried unanimously.

B. Mr. Konz stated that the city entered into a ground lease for 116 and 120 East Walnut Street in 1993, which was later assigned to Brennan Properties, LLC, the owner of the adjacent property at 124 East Walnut Street. He noted that the 7,851-square-foot leased property is used as a private asphalt parking lot for customers of the adjacent business. He commented that although the lease generates $4,125 in annual rent, the parking lot, curb, and landscaping had deteriorated over time, and Brennan Properties recently spent approximately $36,100 of its own funds on parking lot reconstruction, permit fees, and landscaping improvements, even though the lease did not require the lessee to pay for reconstruction.

Mr. Konz indicated that Brennan Properties has asked to purchase the property for $1.00. He explained that the sale would recognize the lessee's investment while transferring future maintenance, repair, capital, insurance, overhead, and property tax responsibilities to the lessee. He mentioned that staff recommends authorizing the City Manager to negotiate the sale after verifying the improvement costs. He added that because the city cannot locate a resolution designating 116 East Walnut Street as development property when it was acquired through tax foreclosure in 1991, staff also recommend adopting an ordinance specifically authorizing its sale under Section 2.14 of the City Charter. This would ensure the proper legal process is followed and help avoid potential future title issues.

Discussion centered on the sale of the property as well as the associated maintenance and the lease being in effect since 1993. It was noted that there was a parcel that was not taxed that would be taxable upon the sale.

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

Mr. Laven moved and Mr. Dieken seconded a motion to approve the Ordinance authorizing the conveyance of real property at 116 East Walnut Street and Resolution authorizing the sale of city-owned property located at 116 East Walnut Street and 120 East Walnut Street . The motion carried unanimously.

7. **Council Business**

Ms. Arntz noted that the Kern Bridge was placed today and that the project continues to be on schedule.

8. **Reports and Miscellaneous Business**

Mr. McLaughlin commented on the positive feedback he received from the construction along Main Street.

View all city committee meetings by clicking on our City Calendar

Regular Council Meeting, September 14, 2026, 6 p.m., Council Chambers (with EDA and/or Work Session to follow)

Council Community Investment Plan Bus Tour, September 17, 2026, 5 p.m.

Regular Council Meeting, September 28, 2026, 6 p.m., Council Chambers (with Work Session to follow)

9. **Adjournment**

There being no further business, Mr. Dieken moved and Ms. Melby-Kelley seconded a motion to adjourn. With all members voting in favor, the meeting adjourned at 7:09 p.m.

Minutes Approved.

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Mayor Massad

ATTEST:

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Renae Kopischke
City Clerk