



CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION MINUTES

Tuesday, February 17, 2026 at 5:30 PM

Baxter City Hall, 13190 Memorywood Drive, Baxter, MN

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Olson called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Mayor Darrel Olson and Council Members Connie Lyscio, Zach Tabatt, Patrick Sundberg, and Mark Cross were present.

City Administrator Brad Chapulis, Assistant City Administrator Kelly Steele, Police Chief Matt Maier, Community Development Director Josh Doty, Finance Director Jeremy Vacinek and Public Works Director Trevor Walter were present.

BUSINESS ITEMS

1. Presentation of the Brainerd Wastewater Treatment Facility (WWTF) Plan

Morgan Salo, with Bolton and Menk, presented an update on the ongoing work of the joint wastewater management board and its review of the wastewater treatment facility. Mr. Salo's presentation provided an overview of the existing facility, long-term capacity needs including current design flows for loading conditions, regulatory consideration, as well as the treatment processes used for both liquid and solid waste streams.

Mr. Salo outlined potential alternatives for liquor stream treatment and biosolids management, highlighting the benefits, challenges, and long-term implications of each option. Cost comparisons of each option were summarized and recommendations to ensure the wastewater treatment plant can serve the community for the next 25 years.

The facility plan must be submitted to the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency for review and approval before funding opportunities can be explored.

The wastewater treatment board will be seeking federal funding.

City Administrator Chapulis explained staff is seeking council consensus to have our staff continue to work with Brainerd and Bolton and Menk for funding sources.

The council consensus was to have staff continue working with Brainerd and Bolton and Menk for funding.

2. Guidance and Best Practices for Citywide Speed limits, Stop Signs, Dynamic Speed Feedback Signs,

Justin Anabis, SEH, presented general traffic guidance and best practices. The project scope included guidance and best practices on citywide speed limits, stop signs, dynamic speed feedback signs, speed humps, center line markings and no passing zones.

Public Works Director Walter explained this document only provides guidance for the public. The council will be asked to accept the document on the regular council agenda.

The council discussed being careful in calling the document an actual policy as it only provides guidance. The council would need to decide how to fund any initiatives from the document. The council also discussed if any of the proposed recommendations will actually slow traffic.

3. Presentation related to Receiving Feasibility Report and Calling the Improvement Hearing for the 2026 Mill & Overlay Improvements Project Municipal Project No. 4426

Alex Bitter, Widseth, presented the details for the 2026 Mill and Overlay and Full Depth Reclamation Improvements Project feasibility report.

The feasibility report identifies a total estimated project cost of \$1,511,512, with 72% estimated in special assessments and 28% city cost.

There are three action items on the regular council agenda. Those action items include ordering preparation of the report, receiving the feasibility report and calling for the improvement hearing, and approving a Widseth contract for engineering services.

4. Presentation related to the 2027 Mill & Overlay and Full Depth Reclamation Improvements Project

Alex Bitter, Widseth, presented the details for the proposed 2027 Mill and Overlay and Full Depth Reclamation Improvement Project and schedule.

The feasibility report for the project has not yet been prepared. The roads moved from the 2026 project bring approximately \$2,584,800 to the 2027 project. The draft CIP has the 2027 project totaling \$9,951,400. These two costs bring the total estimated 2027 project cost to \$12,536,200.

5. Sick Leave Donation Policy

City Administrator Chapulis explained many years ago the council adopted a sick leave donation policy. The policy established a procedure through which employees could voluntarily donate a portion of their accrued vacation, sick leave, or compensatory time balance to be used by another employee who has exhausted all forms of paid leave due to the experience of a catastrophic illness or injury. Donations to the program have decreased and the policy has not been used. Employees can now also utilize leave through the state mandated paid family medical leave program, in addition to accrued leave.

The consensus of the council is to terminate the sick leave donation policy at an upcoming council meeting.

ADJOURN

MOTION by Council Member Tabatt, seconded by Council Member Lyscio to adjourn at 6:51 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

Approved by:

Respectfully submitted,

Darrel Olson

Kelly Steele