



CITY OF
GRAND RAPIDS
IT'S IN MINNESOTA'S NATURE

CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Monday, March 09, 2026

5:00 PM

Mayor Connelly called the meeting to order at 5:00 PM.

PRESENT: Mayor Tasha Connelly, Councilor Molly MacGregor, Councilor Rick Blake, Councilor Dan Mertes. **ABSENT:** Councilor Tom Sutherland.

STAFF: Tom Pagel, Kimberly Gibeau, Chad Sterle, Carl Babich, Jeremy Nelson, Will Richter, Kevin Ott, Rob Mattei

POSITIVE HAPPENINGS IN THE CITY:

Mayor Connelly shared two positive updates for the community. First, the City Government Academy has nearly reached its capacity with 24 participants registered for 25 spots in the upcoming nine-week program beginning next Wednesday. The free program is designed to help residents learn about city government operations and encourage greater community involvement. The Mayor thanked staff for organizing the program and expressed excitement about the strong interest compared to the previous year. Second, she highlighted the success of local youth, noting several state tournament qualifications and praising the community's representation at the state level. Congratulations to the students!

PUBLIC FORUM:

No one from the public wished to speak.

COUNCIL REPORTS:

Councilor Blake reported attending several government and advocacy meetings. He represented Grand Rapids Public Utilities at the American Public Power Association event in Washington, D.C., where they advocated for federal priorities supporting municipal utilities and met with members of Minnesota's congressional delegation. There was an opportunity during these meetings to share a community project funding request related to Central School. Attended a RAMS meeting where the Minnesota DNR explained the cause of a \$2.65 million overpayment issue and the steps taken to prevent it from happening again. Participated in Minnesota Community Action Partnership lobby day to advocate for programs that benefit local residents through Kootasca services, meeting with several state legislators. Councilor Blake also attended the RAMS legislative dinner and update, where regional priorities were discussed, including a proposal for increased annual funding for water infrastructure.

Mayor Connelly announced an upcoming K-9 unit fundraiser hosted by the Cass County and Grand Rapids Police Departments. The event will take place on Sunday, March 15, from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Timberlake Lodge Hotel. Community members are invited to attend and support the local K-9 programs. The fundraiser will include bingo, auctions, raffles, prizes, and live K-9 demonstrations, along with food

such as sloppy joes for purchase. The event aims to raise funds while engaging the community in supporting law enforcement K-9 units.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

1. Approve minutes for Monday, February 23, 2026 City Council Worksession and Regular meetings.

Motion made by Councilor MacGregor, Seconded by Councilor Mertes to approve Council minutes for February 23, 2026 meetings as presented. Voting Yea: Mayor Connelly, Councilor MacGregor, Councilor Blake, Councilor Mertes

VERIFIED CLAIMS:

2. Approve the verified claims for the period February 18, 2026 to March 2, 2026 in the total amount of \$2,484,506.90.

Motion made by Councilor Mertes, Seconded by Councilor MacGregor to approve the verified claims as presented. Voting Yea: Mayor Connelly, Councilor MacGregor, Councilor Blake, Councilor Mertes

CONSENT AGENDA:

3. Consider Approving Updated Prior Approval List
4. Consider entering into a Memorandum of Understanding between Support Within Reach and the Grand Rapids Police Department.
5. Consider adopting a resolution approving LG214 Premises Permit Application for Grand Rapids Amateur Hockey Association

Adopted Resolution 26-08

6. Consider approving an agreement with SEH for the 5-23 Slurry Seal project at the Grand Rapids / Itasca County Airport
7. Consider approving an agreement with SEH for the Taxilane Extension project at the Grand Rapids / Itasca County Airport
8. Consider approving an agreement with SEH for the SRE Acquisition at the Grand Rapids / Itasca County Airport
9. Consider approving the General Liability insurance coverage through the League of Minnesota Cities Insurance Trust.
10. Consider approving on-sale liquor license for Pours LLC dba Pinched LLC

Motion made by Councilor Blake, Seconded by Councilor MacGregor to approve the Consent agenda as presented. Voting Yea: Mayor Connelly, Councilor MacGregor, Councilor Blake, Councilor Mertes

SET REGULAR AGENDA:

Motion made by Councilor MacGregor, Seconded by Councilor Blake to approve the Regular agenda as presented. Voting Yea: Mayor Connelly, Councilor MacGregor, Councilor Blake, Councilor Mertes

POLICE:

11. Consider adopting a resolution accepting a GRPD donation from the Grand Rapids Woodland Bank

Police Captain Jeremy Nelson stated that the Grand Rapids Police Department hosted a meeting on February 10th with 61 representatives from local banks and credit unions to discuss ATM thefts, scams, and general banking security. Several department members presented information, and the event was considered very successful. The following week, local law enforcement attended an appreciation gathering hosted by Woodland Bank, where the bank presented the department with a \$500 donation. The funds will be added to the department's public safety account to support technology and equipment improvements.

Motion made by Councilor MacGregor, Seconded by Councilor Mertes to **adopt Resolution 26-09**, accepting \$500 donation from Woodland Bank on behalf of the Grand Rapids Police Department as presented. Voting Yea: Mayor Connelly, Councilor MacGregor, Councilor Blake, Councilor Mertes

PUBLIC HEARINGS: (scheduled to begin no earlier than 5:00 PM)

12. Conduct a public hearing to consider the vacation of an alley right-of-way in Block 26, Grand Rapids Second Division.

Mayor Connelly introduced the public hearing regarding a proposal to vacate an alley right-of-way located in Block 26 of the Grand Rapids Second Division plat in Grand Rapids.

Zoning Administrator Will Richter presented a recommendation from the Planning Commission to vacate an unused platted alley right-of-way located in Block 26 at the former Itasca County Farm Service site at 900 NW 4th Street in Grand Rapids. The alley, originally platted in 1890, is currently unimproved and sits between parcels owned by the petitioner. The request is intended to establish clear title so the property can potentially be sold and redeveloped as a single contiguous parcel. The proposal was reviewed by the Community Development Department, city engineering staff, and Grand Rapids Public Utilities staff, all of whom determined the alley is not needed for traffic, pedestrian access, or utilities. The Grand Rapids Planning Commission recommended approval, noting the vacation could remove blight, support redevelopment, and place additional property back on the tax rolls.

Mayor Connelly confirmed with staff that all required notices had been made and no related correspondence had been received.

Motion made by Councilor Blake, Seconded by Councilor Mertes to open the public hearing. Voting Yea: Mayor Connelly, Councilor MacGregor, Councilor Blake, Councilor Mertes

No one from the public wished to speak, therefore the following motion was made.

Motion made by Councilor MacGregor, Seconded by Councilor Mertes to close the public hearing. Voting Yea: Mayor Connelly, Councilor MacGregor, Councilor Blake, Councilor Mertes

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT:

13. Consider the adoption of a resolution approving the vacation of an alley right-of-way within Block 26, Grand Rapids Second Division.

Will Richter follows the public hearing on the proposed vacation of an alley right-of-way in Block 26 of the Grand Rapids Second Division, advising the council of the option to accept the Planning Commission's recommendation and adopt the staff-prepared resolution, or to make independent findings to approve or deny the request.

Motion made by Councilor Blake, Seconded by Councilor Mertes to **adopt Resolution 26-10**, approving the vacation of an alley right-of-way within Block 26, Grand Rapids Second Division. Voting Yea: Mayor Connelly, Councilor MacGregor, Councilor Blake, Councilor Mertes

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:18 PM.

Respectfully submitted:


Kimberly Gibeau, City Clerk