



CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

May 18, 2026 at 6:30 PM

7701 County Road 110 West Minnetrista, MN 55364

Pursuant to Minnesota Statutes, section 13D.02, one or more council members may participate remotely.

1) CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Whalen called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

- a) Pledge of Allegiance
- b) Introductions: City Council: Mayor Lisa Whalen, Cathleen Reffkin, Claudia Lacy, Peter Vickery, Brian Govern Staff: City Administrator Jasper Kruggel, Finance Director Brian Grimm, Community Development Director David Abel (Remote), Director of Public Safety Craig Squires, Assistant City Administrator Paula Bauman, Director of Public Works Gary Peters (Remote) and City Clerk Ann Meyerhoff (Remote) Consultants: City Attorney Sarah Sonsalla, Kennedy & Graven (Remote) and City Engineer Alyson Fauske, WSB Engineering
- c) Approval of Agenda

Mayor Whalen added item 5C to Business Items, Approve Master Plan Agreement with InfoSend

Motion made by Councilmember Vickery, Seconded by Councilmember Reffkin to approve the agenda as amended.

Voting Yea: Mayor Whalen, Councilmember Reffkin, Councilmember Vickery, Councilmember Lacy, Councilmember Govern

2) SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

- a) MMCD Presentation - Alex Carlson

Alex Carlson from Minnesota Mosquito Control District gave a presentation on mosquitos in Minnesota.

- b) Audit Presentation - 2025 Financial Report

The City Council received a presentation of the 2025 audit results from Troy Gabler and Austin Wolf. Mr. Gabler explained that the audit provides reasonable assurance, rather than absolute assurance, and is based on risk assessments, testing, and interviews with management and board members. He reported that the City received an unmodified, or "clean," audit opinion, which is the highest level of assurance auditors can provide. Auditors identified no uncorrected or corrected misstatements, no material weaknesses or significant deficiencies in internal controls, and no Minnesota legal compliance findings. Mr. Gabler noted that it is uncommon for municipalities to receive a clean opinion with no compliance issues and credited City staff, particularly the finance department, for maintaining accurate records and implementing new governmental accounting standards effectively. The auditors also confirmed that all required state reporting would be submitted on time.

Mr. Wolf reviewed financial trends and fund balances for the City. He reported that the General Fund unassigned fund balance remained healthy at just over \$2.5 million, or approximately 40 percent of expenditures, with plans to increase the balance above \$3 million in 2026. General Fund revenues and expenditures have remained stable over recent years, with property taxes serving as the largest revenue source. Public safety expenditures increased slightly in 2025 due to higher fire contract costs and the addition of police officers. Enterprise funds for water, sewer, and stormwater were also reviewed. The water fund experienced a decline in unrestricted net position due primarily to capital expenditures and lower water usage caused by wetter weather conditions. The sewer fund continued to operate at a loss due to flat base fees, while the stormwater fund remained financially healthy with revenues exceeding expenditures. Mr. Wolf also reviewed the City's debt position, noting that total debt decreased from the previous year despite recent bond issuances, and compared the City's tax and expenditure levels to similar communities, highlighting that the City maintains lower taxes and expenditures while continuing to provide comparable services.

Mr. Gabler concluded the presentation by reviewing upcoming Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) statements that will affect future reporting. He explained that the upcoming standards are less impactful than those implemented in recent years and will primarily involve changes to financial statement presentation and disclosures, including revised management discussion and analysis sections and additional reporting requirements for enterprise funds and capital assets. No major new audit areas or significant implementation challenges are anticipated. Council members thanked the auditors for the thorough presentation.

i) Receive and Accept 2025 Financial Audit

Motion made by Councilmember Reffkin, Seconded by Councilmember Vickery to Receive and Accept 2025 Financial Audit.

Voting Yea: Mayor Whalen, Councilmember Reffkin, Councilmember Vickery, Councilmember Lacy, Councilmember Govern

3) PERSONS TO BE HEARD

Barbara Salik Schaefer, 6750 Woodland Cove Boulevard, appeared before the Council to dispute her first quarter utility bill, which included a water charge of \$1,952.25. Ms. Schaefer stated that she is a seasonal resident and was away during the first quarter of the year, though friends and family occasionally stayed at the home. She explained that she had received endpoint data from City staff showing daily water usage from February 16 through March 27, including a spike of approximately 600 gallons on March 15 when her daughter and family were staying at the residence. However, Ms. Schaefer expressed concern that the City could not provide daily usage documentation for the entire billing period and requested supporting documentation for the reported 130,926 gallons of water usage. She noted that her bill had already been paid through auto-pay but requested either additional documentation or an adjustment to the bill if documentation could not be produced.

Council and staff discussed the matter with Ms. Schaefer and explained that the current metering system stores only 40 days of daily usage data, while billing is currently conducted on a quarterly basis. Staff confirmed that the water meter had been tested and passed a bucket test, indicating that the meter was functioning properly. Staff further explained that while daily usage data beyond 40 days is unavailable, the utility billing is based on beginning and ending meter readings for the quarter, which documented the total water

usage. Ms. Schaefer clarified that she was not disputing the functionality of the meter itself but rather the lack of detailed documentation showing when the water was used during the billing period. Council members acknowledged her concerns and discussed similar past experiences with unexpected high water bills, including instances involving running toilets or unnoticed water usage. Staff noted that the City plans to transition to monthly billing, which will allow daily usage data to be available within the system's 40-day storage window and provide residents with more timely information regarding water usage. No formal action was taken by the Council.

4) CONSENT AGENDA

- a) Approve Work Session Meeting Minutes from May 4, 2026
- b) Approve City Council Regular Meeting Minutes from May 4, 2026
- c) Res. No. 57-26 Approve Claims
- d) Res. No. 58-26 to Examine Fire Partnership with St. Bonifacius
- e) Res. No. 59-26 Award the Production of a Sanitary Lift Station Control Panel for Lift Station #2
- f) Res. No. 60-26 Approve Lift Station Control Panel Installation at Lift Station #2
- g) Res. No. 61-26 Authorize installation of 4-way Stop and Crosswalk at Woodland Cove Boulevard/Lotus Trail and Bellflower Drive

Motion made by Councilmember Reffkin, Seconded by Councilmember Govern to adopt the consent agenda as presented.

Voting Yea: Mayor Whalen, Councilmember Reffkin, Councilmember Vickery, Councilmember Lacy, Councilmember Govern

5) BUSINESS ITEMS

- a) Approve Task Order 17 and Authorize Preparation of Plans and Specifications for CR 110/151 Drainage Improvements, City Project 04-26

The council reviewed a drainage improvement project located at the southeast corner of County Road 110 and 151, where runoff from nearby county roads has been causing erosion between adjacent properties. The area also includes a sanitary sewer manhole that requires consideration in the design. City staff reported that coordination with Hennepin County resulted in approval of a 50/50 cost-sharing agreement for the project, which was viewed positively by the council.

A task order totaling \$24,400 was presented for engineering services, including design, bidding support, and construction administration. Staff recommended moving forward with design work this year with the goal of completing construction during the fall and winter construction season to address the ongoing erosion issues before the end of the year. Council members generally supported the proposal, noting that the shared responsibility for runoff and infrastructure made the cost split appropriate and beneficial for both parties.

Motion made by Councilmember Vickery, Seconded by Councilmember Lacy Approving Task Order 17 and Authorize Preparation of Plans and Specifications for CR 110/151 Drainage Improvements, City Project 04-26.

Voting Yea: Mayor Whalen, Councilmember Reffkin, Councilmember Vickery, Councilmember Lacy, Councilmember Govern

- b) Water Treatment Plant Change Order No. 02

The council considered Change Order #2 for the water treatment plant, which included three main adjustments: a pump modification to improve the facility's ability to reclaim and reuse process water, a required revision to the stormwater basin in response to comments from the watershed district, and a deduct related to fitting materials for the spray system on the reclaim tank. Staff noted that additional change orders are expected as the project progresses but indicated that most submittals have been completed so far. The net impact of this change order was approximately a \$23,000 increase, bringing the cumulative change order total to about \$18,000, within the 5% contingency allowance.

Council members asked for clarification on the technical aspects of the reclaim system and piping changes. Staff explained that the reclaim process captures water used during treatment, allows solids to settle, and then recycles the cleaner water back through the filtration system rather than sending it directly to the sewer, reducing discharge costs. The pump upgrades support handling thicker sludge and moving material more efficiently over longer distances. The reduction in pipe size and removal of certain manual valves were tied to the revised system design, which relies more on internal water reuse rather than direct discharge. Staff also confirmed that pump lead times will not impact the project schedule, as they are not needed until final completion, expected in 2027.

Motion made by Councilmember Reffkin, Seconded by Councilmember Vickery to Approve Water Treatment Plant Change order No. 02.

Voting Yea: Mayor Whalen, Councilmember Reffkin, Councilmember Vickery, Councilmember Lacy, Councilmember Govern

c) Approve Master Plan Agreement with InfoSend

The council discussed approving a master services agreement with InfoSend for monthly water and sewer billing mailings, which will handle printing and distribution as the city transitions from quarterly to monthly billing. The contract is estimated at about \$0.80 per mailed piece and is intended to improve efficiency by outsourcing the final step of the billing process. Staff noted the vendor reviewed and accepted some contract revisions prior to the meeting.

Councilmember Reffkin raised concerns about contract provisions allowing annual fee increases, a discontinuance fee equal to two months of prior average billing, and language permitting rate adjustments if mailing volumes change significantly. Discussion focused on how these terms could affect the city if costs rise or if more residents shift to paperless billing, potentially reducing mailing volumes. Staff and legal counsel explained that fee changes would require notice, good-faith negotiation, and could ultimately allow either party to terminate the agreement if terms cannot be resolved, though concerns remained about timing and financial exposure during any transition.

Despite reservations, staff emphasized the benefits of outsourcing billing mailings and noted that similar contracts have been successfully used by other municipalities. After extended discussion, the council considered moving forward with approval while also exploring potential modifications to strengthen the city's protections, particularly around discontinuation fees and termination flexibility in the event of significant cost increases.

Motion made by Councilmember Govern, Seconded by Councilmember Lacy to Approve the Master Service Agreement with InfoSend with the contingency of removing the two-month discontinuation fee.

Voting Yea: Mayor Whalen, Councilmember Vickery, Councilmember Lacy,
Councilmember Govern

Voting Nay: Councilmember Reffkin

6) PUBLIC HEARINGS

7) ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

a) Staff Reports

Chief Squires updated Council on Trista Day stating that they had a very good turnout.

b) Council Reports

i) Mayor Lisa Whalen

- Minnetrista received \$3 million from the Bonding Bill
- State of the City was a success and well attended
- Attended County Attorney Debate hosted by Northwest League

ii) Cathleen Reffkin

- Updated Council on the St Bonifacius Fire Meeting

iii) Claudia Lacy

iv) Peter Vickery

v) Brian Govern

8) ADJOURNMENT

Motion made by Councilmember Lacy, Seconded by Councilmember Reffkin to adjourn the meeting at 8:03 p.m.

Voting Yea: Mayor Whalen, Councilmember Reffkin, Councilmember Vickery,
Councilmember Lacy, Councilmember Govern

Lisa Whalen, Mayor

ATTEST:

Ann Meyerhoff, City Clerk