

CITY OF ST. FRANCIS
CITY COUNCIL AGENDA
St. Francis City Hall 3750 Bridge Street NW
November 3, 2025
6:00 p.m.

1. CALL TO ORDER/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The regular City Council meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Mayor Mark Vogel.

2. ROLL CALL

Members Present: Mayor Mark Vogel, Councilmembers Kevin Robinson, Sarah Udvig, and Joe Muehlbauer.

Members Absent: Councilmember Amy Faanes.

Also present: City Administrator Kate Thunstrom, Deputy Administrator-City Clerk Jenni Wida, Assistant City Attorney Dave Schaps (Barna, Guzy & Steffen), Deputy Administrator-Public Works Director Paul Carpenter, Police Chief Todd Schwieger, Finance Director Darcy Mulvihill, City Engineer Craig Jochum (Hakanson Associates, Inc.), and City Planner Beth Richmond (HKGi).

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTION BY: ROBINSON SECOND: UDVIG APPROVING THE REGULAR CITY COUNCIL AGENDA

A roll call vote was performed:

Mayor Vogel	aye
Councilmember Muehlbauer	aye
Councilmember Robinson	aye
Councilmember Udvig	aye

Motion carried: 4-0

4. CONSENT AGENDA

- A. City Council Minutes - October 20, 2025
- B. Rink Management Agreement
- C. River Edge 8th Addition Financial Security Reduction
- D. Vista Prairie at Eagle Point Financial Security Reduction
- E. Payment of Claims

MOTION BY: MUEHLBAUER SECOND: ROBINSON APPROVING THE REGULAR CITY COUNCIL CONSENT AGENDA

A roll call vote was performed:

Mayor Vogel	aye
Councilmember Muehlbauer	aye
Councilmember Robinson	aye
Councilmember Udvig	aye

Motion carried: 4-0

5. MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

No one came forward to address the Council.

6. SPECIAL BUSINESS

7. PUBLIC HEARINGS

A. 2025 Street Reconstruction Project – Proposed Assessment

City Engineer Jochum reviewed the Staff report in regard to the 2025 street reconstruction project.

Mayor Vogel opened the Public Hearing at 6:05 p.m.

No one came forward to address the Council.

Mayor Vogel closed the Public Hearing at 6:05 p.m.

MOTION BY: MAYOR VOGEL SECOND: ROBINSON TO ADOPT THE 2025 STREET RECONSTRUCTION PROJECT ASSESSMENT ROLL.

A roll call vote was performed:

Mayor Vogel	aye
Councilmember Muehlbauer	aye
Councilmember Robinson	aye
Councilmember Udvig	aye

Motion carried: 4-0

B. Miscellaneous Special Assessments

Resolution 2025-51 Authorizing and directing certification of municipal utility services, maintenance of private property, administrative civil notice fees, and repair of leaks as a lien upon premises

Finance Director Mulvihill reviewed the Staff report concerning the miscellaneous special assessments for the certification of municipal utility services, maintenance of private property, administrative civil notice fees, and repair of leaks. She shared that there is a resident who had requested to waive their late fee.

Mayor Vogel opened the Public Hearing at 6:07 p.m.

Dawn Steinke asked if these assessment amounts will go on top of the assessments that are already being charged. Mulvihill explained that this is just for any delinquent bills.

Mayor Vogel closed the Public Hearing at 6:09 p.m.

Muehlbauer said he would not be supportive of waiving the late fee for the resident who requested it unless they have extenuating circumstances.

Mayor Vogel asked for some more information on the property that is requesting a waiver of their late fee. Mulvihill explained that this resident has multiple properties, and they had received their notices in March and paid all that they received; however, there were two more that they did not pay. She said that they should have received four notices, but are stating they only received two.

Udvig asked if this resident has paid all four bills in the past years. Mulvihill said yes.

Robinson shared that if they have evidence that these notices were sent in March, then they should not waive the late fee.

Mayor Vogel asked about the total for the late fees for this resident. Mulvihill said it would be \$10 for each bill, totaling \$20.

Mayor Vogel said he is conflicted on this as the letter makes it seem that this resident is very conscientious about paying their bills.

Muehlbauer noted that the point of the late fees is to cover the additional administrative time that is taken to follow up and send additional notices on these delinquent accounts.

Robinson stated that next year, the stormwater charges will be included in taxes, so this will not be billed to residents in the future. He noted that residents have talked about wasteful spending happening in the City; however, not paying these bills on time and having additional late fees added on is wasteful.

MOTION BY: UDVIG SECOND: MUEHLBAUER TO ADOPT RESOLUTION 2025-51 AUTHORIZING AND DIRECTING CERTIFICATION OF MUNICIPAL UTILITY SERVICES, MAINTENANCE OF PRIVATE PROPERTY, ADMINISTRATIVE CIVIL NOTICE FEES, AND REPAIR OF LEAKS AS A LIEN UPON PREMISES.

A roll call vote was performed:

Mayor Vogel	aye
Councilmember Muehlbauer	aye
Councilmember Robinson	aye
Councilmember Udvig	aye

Motion carried: 4-0

8. **OLD BUSINESS**

A. Ordinance Amendment to Chapter 2 of the City Code – Second Reading

Ordinance 350 Amending Chapter 2, section 2-2-3, subdivision B.5 of the City Code

Resolution 2025-52 Authorizing Summary Publication of Ordinance 350

City Clerk Wida reviewed the Staff report in regard to the amendments to Chapter 2 of City Code.

Muehlbauer said he is not opposed to this change to not require residents to share their address when they come forward to address the Council; however, he suggested that they ask if the person coming forward is a St. Francis resident or business owner. He added that people have come forward in the past who do not live or own a business in the City and have no vested interest in it.

MOTION BY: MUEHLABUER SECOND: UDVIG TO ADOPT ORDINANCE 350 AMENDING CHAPTER 2 SECTION 2-2-3 SUBDIVISION B.5 OF THE CITY CODE.

A roll call vote was performed:

Mayor Vogel	aye
Councilmember Muehlbauer	aye
Councilmember Robinson	aye
Councilmember Udvig	aye

Motion carried: 4-0

MOTION BY: ROBINSON SECOND: MUEHLBAUER TO ADOPT RESOLUTION 2025-52 AUTHORIZING SUMMARY PUBLICATION OF ORDINANCE 350.

A roll call vote was performed:

Mayor Vogel	aye
Councilmember Muehlbauer	aye
Councilmember Robinson	aye
Councilmember Udvig	aye

Motion carried: 4-0

9. **NEW BUSINESS**

A. 2025 Street Reconstruction Project Adopting Assessment

Resolution 2025-53 Adopting assessment for 2025 Street Reconstruction Project

This item was approved as a part of Item 7A.

B. Dalton River Villas Final Plat

Resolution 2025-54 approving the final plat for the Dalton River Villas Subdivision

City Planner Richmond reviewed the Staff report concerning the final plat for Dalton River Villas.

Robinson asked if the DNR has been involved with the construction of this, being that it is so close to a waterway. Richmond explained that the DNR is not involved in the construction process; however, they do review the plans and provide comments and approval for these requests.

Robinson noted that if any of the additional foliage was removed that should not have been, then the developer would need to mitigate that. Richmond added that it is up to the City to enforce the requirements of the Code as well as the plans that are approved as a part of the final plat.

Robinson asked if they have any outside inspectors involved in a project like this. City Administrator Thunstrom explained that the Hakanson Anderson does conduct inspections on behalf of the City.

Jochum added that they are typically only on site during the construction of streets, sidewalks, and sewer and water systems. He added that they do have people who can look at trees if there is an issue reported by Staff.

MOTION BY: ROBINSON SECOND: UDVIG TO ADOPT RESOLUTION 2025-24 APPROVING THE FINAL PLAT FOR THE DALTON RIVER VILLAS SUBDIVISION.

A roll call vote was performed:

Mayor Vogel	aye
Councilmember Muehlbauer	aye
Councilmember Robinson	aye
Councilmember Udvig	aye

Motion carried: 4-0

C. Ordinance Amendment – Chapter 2-9-1 Fee Schedule, First Reading
Ordinance 351 Amending City Code Chapter 2-9-1 Fee Schedule

Thunstrom reviewed the Staff report in regard to the amendments to the fee schedule.

Udvig asked about the liquor compliance violation fees. Wida explained that this is a fee for anyone who holds a liquor license and violates the State statute or City Code in any way. She noted that this fee is similar to those in other cities in the area.

Mayor Vogel asked if the damage deposit for the rink rental needs to be refundable.

Thunstrom said they can add this before the second reading of the ordinance.

MOTION BY: MUEHLABUER SECOND: UDVIG TO ADOPT ORDINANCE 351 AMENDING CITY CODE CHAPTER 2-9-1 FEE SCHEDULE WITH THE ADDITION OF MAKING THE DAMAGE DEPOSIT FOR THE RINK RENTAL REFUNDABLE.

A roll call vote was performed:

Mayor Vogel	aye
Councilmember Muehlbauer	aye
Councilmember Robinson	aye
Councilmember Udvig	aye

Motion carried: 4-0

10. MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC - NONE

11. REPORTS

A. City Administrator Report

Thunstrom reviewed the City Administrator report. She shared that Vista Prairie will be welcoming their first residents next week. She added that Staff has kicked off preparations for the 2050 Comprehensive Plan. She said Staff is currently working on a lot of Fire District documentation and housekeeping items.

Robinson asked how the labor contractors are coming along. Thunstrom shared that she is meeting with legal counsel and the outstanding bargaining unit on Friday to hopefully reach a resolution.

B. Public Works Third Quarter Report

Public Works Director Carpenter reviewed the Public Works report for the third quarter. He shared some of the large projects that Public Works worked on during the quarter, including the Rum River Park playground replacement, the street projects on Woodbine and 229th, the new City Hall parking lot, and continued to work on the design for the warming house ice rink. He noted that Public Works Staff continues to evolve and take on more duties. He said Staff are working on pumps and replacing meters. He shared that Emerald ash borers are killing a lot of trees in the area. He said that Staff was able to clean up most of these trees on City property; however, residents are now having issues with them. He explained that they are learning about this and asked residents to be patient with them. He shared that rainfall over the summer was around 150% of average rainfall during this time of year. He noted that this kept them very busy with mowing and grading. He explained that they ordered a patch trailer last year, and Staff have been using this, and it has been saving a tremendous amount of time and money. He added that they are on track to have this trailer paid off in under 3 years. He noted that due to the increase in water and sewer rates, there has been a tremendous amount of interest in Public Works and the wastewater facilities. He thanked the residents

and the Council for reaching out to Staff to tour the facilities and learn more about Public Works.

Robinson asked if there was anything during the quarter that took more of Staff time than mowing. Carpenter added that road patching also took a lot of Staff time this quarter. He noted that when they use the patch trailer, it requires a minimum of three employees at one time.

Robinson asked where they get their hot patch materials. Carpenter shared that they get this material from St. Paul; however, there is now a pick-up site in Coon Rapids.

Robinson asked about the consortium put together by Coon Rapids. Carpenter explained that this was mainly for chip sealing materials. He noted that St. Francis no longer uses chip sealing.

Mayor Vogel asked if they are putting up any signage at the new City Hall parking lot. Carpenter said this has not been discussed. He stated they can look into some signage for this lot.

Mayor Vogel noted that the Trunk or Treat event at Public Works went incredibly well and thanked Public Works Staff for its success. Carpenter shared that just under 1,000 people attended this event. He thanked all the volunteers who helped make this event possible.

The Council thanked Carpenter and his Staff for all of their hard work over the quarter.

12. COUNCIL MEMBER REPORTS

The Council shared the meetings and events they attended in the past few weeks, as well as highlighting upcoming events.

Robinson thanked Staff for all the time they have put into the transition from the Fire Department to the Fire District. He shared that Small Business Saturday will be coming up at the end of the month and encouraged residents to keep up with the Chamber of Commerce podcast.

Muehlbauer read aloud a speech he had prepared, "I want to address accountability, I want to continue to hold myself accountable. We have a lot of angry, upset residents right now due to higher taxes and water rates. We have a lot of people saying you can't fight city hall, or the council will do whatever they want to do, no matter what we, the people, say. The power is in the people. When I say the power is in the people over the government, I'm not talking about protests or riots and acting like animals and destroying our own community out of anger. Knowledge is power.

"Maybe I'm brutally honest about what I'm saying, my goal is to say what needs to be said, and hopefully awaken something in the people that will spark the change you're looking for. Knowledge is power. And it starts with holding ourselves accountable and seeking out that knowledge. I can't expect anything from any individual. So instead of getting on Facebook and spouting off numbers that you think you understand, make the phone call and learn. Take the time you use to type your emotions online and use it wisely. Research, make a phone call to the staff. Ask those questions and learn. If you have a concern or want more understanding about any given topic, make a phone call, schedule an appointment with the staff that your tax dollars pay for, and learn what, why, or how we are in the position we are in.

"I understand where you're coming from because I was right where you are today before I ran for office. I was mad. I was online attacking the council that was in office at that time. I sat in the audience for 2 years at almost every meeting. Then I started meeting with staff, asking questions, researching to learn and gain knowledge because we wanted to right what we felt was wrong.

"Myself and God rest his soul, Mayor Feldman got elected. Still somewhat ignorant of things, and we did what we got elected to do. We lowered the increase in water rates in the second year of our term by 20% and fulfilled our promise. Our finance director told us the risk and what would be needed to be able to survive that 20% decrease. We were heroes who followed through with what we promised. We chose to take that risk, thinking we would get the development and Mayor Feldman, who was more optimistic than I believed, would get the development we needed to make it to 2023, and we would implement small increases to stabilize the water rates. That development didn't come. Oak Grove needed a hand with the Ponds' wastewater, and that was our saving grace. Had we not done that, given that 20% decrease, we would have had that additional 20% over the last 8 years, which would have, in turn, affected this increase significantly by not having to raise it as high as we are looking at today.

"I was the only current council member in office at that time, as Sarah, Kevin, Mark, and Amy were not in office at that time. We gave the people what they wanted and were paying for that now. We're now being asked by the people to do the same thing, and if we were to do that, we would be facing an even bigger increase in a couple of years. The decrease and relief we gave the people in 2018 have hurt us today.

"We never had a building maintenance fund. To me, that's pretty irresponsible to build multi-million-dollar buildings and not have a plan to maintain them. I think everyone could agree on that. We've implemented that. We never had a fund to maintain the parks, and actually had to scrape up one park, as it was in such bad shape because we didn't have the money to maintain it. Again, pretty irresponsible as a city in my opinion. We now have that fund.

"We used to nail residents on roads that need to be redone with 10k assessments with interest to be paid by the taxpayers on those roads because we didn't have a road fund. We now have that, and people aren't assessed for roads anymore. You can be assessed for water or sewer, as that is a different thing, and it's a little more complicated to get into at the moment.

"The issue we're having now, which is unfair to the residents, is that these things were not in place years and years ago. So we did a lot of catching up all at once. Why past councils before me never implemented these funds, I don't know. So by giving people what they ask for, who choose to be ignorant of the effects of their demands or desires, it can have a detrimental impact on the future.

"The city gets accused of hiding things all the time. I would love to know how having packets online, videos of every meeting on YouTube, staff phone numbers, councilmember phone numbers, and emails all available online is hiding something. The information is there if you choose to consume it. And if you don't, that's ok too. But please take a moment to take a breath and ask yourself, "Can I do better? Do I care about what's going on in my city? And if you do, then please prioritize some of your time to learn, listen, and become more knowledgeable before you blame others for what you can control. I often ask to be granted the serenity to accept things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can. And the wisdom to know the difference.

"I don't intend to come off condescending, and I really hope people don't view it that way. If you do feel that way, know that this is not my intent. Ignorance is a choice in the age of information. The information is there, and in today's society, it seems people have expectations that we are their personal public servants. I believe this is part of the problem at all levels of government. We have busy lives, and if I'm honest with myself, I make time for things that are important to me. Sometimes life may get in the way of some of those things, but if we really want something, we will find a way to get to that sports event, that concert, our child's play, or school event. It's how we choose to use our time.

"What happens after this, or how people feel about what I said, is out of my control. Knowledge is power, the power of the people. When that knowledge is used collectively to find solutions and suggestions by our community, that's my hope."

Mayor Vogel shared that he is disappointed to see the lack of engagement from the community with the government. He said he is always thrilled to see residents attending Council meetings, whether or not they have anything to say. He encouraged residents to attend a few meetings a year to stay up to date with the City.

13. UPCOMING EVENTS

November 11 - City Offices Closed in observance of Veterans' Day

November 13 - Parks Commission Meeting 7:00 pm

November 17 - City Council Meeting 6:00 pm
November 18 - URRWMO Meeting
November 19 - Planning Commission Meeting 7:00 pm
November 22 - Recycling Event 8:00 am - 12:00 pm
November 27 - City Offices Closed in observance of Thanksgiving Day
November 28 - City Offices Closed

14. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Mayor Vogel adjourned the regular City Council at 6:56 p.m.

Jennifer Wida, City Clerk