



City Council Meeting Minutes

June 02, 2026 at 5:30 PM

St. James City Hall – Council Chambers

1. CALL TO ORDER

Meeting called to order at 5:30 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL: Mayor Christopher Whitehead, Councilpersons: Susan Craig, Kathleen Hanson, Paul Harris, Stephen Lindee, Mary Shupe

PRESENT: Mayor Christopher Whitehead, Councilpersons Sue Craig, Kathleen Hanson, Paul Harris, Stephen Lindee, Mary Shupe

STAFF PRESENT: City Manager Amanda Knoll, City Clerk-Treasurer Kris Hurley, City Attorney Mike Kircher

3. DETERMINATION OF QUORUM

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. Consideration to Approve Minutes - 05.19.2026 Council Work Session Minutes

Motion made by Craig, Seconded by Lindee.

Voting Yea: Craig, Hanson, Lindee, Shupe

Voting Abstaining: Harris

Upon voice vote, it was approved 4-0-1.

B. Consideration to Approve Minutes – 05.19.2026 Council Meeting

Motion made by Lindee, Seconded by Hanson.

Voting Yea: Craig, Hanson, Lindee, Shupe

Voting Abstaining: Harris

Upon voice vote, it was approved 4-0-1.

5. CONSENT ITEMS

A. Payment of Claims and ACH Payments

Payment of Claims totaling \$651,734.09 is as follows: \$330,995.95 Check No. 706500 - 706585 and \$320,738.14 ACH No. 2347 - 2363 as listed in the check register.

Motion made by Craig, Seconded by Harris.

Voting Yea: Craig, Hanson, Harris, Lindee, Shupe

Upon voice vote, it was unanimously approved.

6. SCHEDULED BID LETTING

7. SCHEDULED PUBLIC HEARINGS

8. ADMINISTRATIVE APPEALS

9. FINANCIAL REPORTS

10. LICENSES AND PERMITS

11. OLD BUSINESS

12. NEW BUSINESS

- A. Consideration to Approve Resolution 06.26.01 - Declaring Abandoned and Surplus Property and Ordering the Disposal

Resolution 06.26.01 declares the 1994 Ford L8000 Dump Truck #34 - Water Department, and the Katolight Emergency Generator - Water Department as excess property and authorizes the disposal.

Motion made by Hanson, Seconded by Craig. Upon hand vote, the following voted:

Voting Yea: Craig, Hanson, Harris, Lindee, Shupe

Whereupon Mayor Christopher Whitehead declared Resolution 06.26.01 duly passed 5-0.

- B. Consideration to Approve Resolution 06.26.02 - Granting Special Use Permit to Allow for an Auto Salvage Yard in a I-2 General Industrial District

Resolution 06.26.02 grants the Special Use Permit recommended by the Planning Commission to allow a salvage yard within I-2 General Industrial District.

Motion made by Harris, Seconded by Lindee to approve the Special Use Permit. Additional discussion regarding pollution and the creek on the property. Upon voice vote, the following voted:

Voting Nay: Craig, Hanson, Harris, Lindee, Shupe

Whereupon Mayor Christopher Whitehead declared Resolution 06.26.02 not passed, 0-4.

Motion made by Hanson, Seconded by Craig to get additional information on pollution and adding conditions to the permit, if necessary. Upon voice vote, the following voted:

Voting Yay: Hanson, Craig, Harris, Lindee, Shupe

Whereupon Mayor Christopher Whitehead declared motion duly passed 4-0.

- C. Consideration to Approve Resolution 06.25.03 - Adopting the City of St. James Active Transportation Plan

Resolution 06.25.03 adopts the City of St. James Active Transportation Plan.

Motion made by Craig, Seconded by Harris. Upon voice vote, the following voted:

Voting Yea: Craig, Hanson, Harris, Lindee, Shupe

Whereupon Mayor Christopher Whitehead declared Resolution 06.25.03 duly passed 5-0.

- D. Consideration to Approve Resolution 06.26.04 - Accepting Bid, Project No. 26X.143591, 2026 Sealcoating

Resolution 06.26.04 accepts the lowest responsible bidder, Allied Blacktop Company for Project No. 26X.143591, 2026 Sealcoating.

Motion made by Lindee, Seconded by Harris. Upon voice vote, the following voted:

Voting Yea: Craig, Hanson, Harris, Lindee, Shupe

Whereupon Mayor Christopher Whitehead declared Resolution 06.26.04 duly passed 5-0.

E. Consideration to Discussion Ad Hoc Working Group Report & Identified Action Items

The Ad Hoc Working Group met on Monday, May 18, 2026, to discuss concerns raised by Watonwan County Cares (WCC) related to immigration enforcement activity within the community and the impact those events have on residents. The goal communicated by representatives of WCC is to increase transparency with the public. It was communicated that 1 in 400 people in Watonwan County were arrested and residents felt targeted.

Immigration enforcement is a federal responsibility, and the City does not have authority over federal immigration law or ICE operations. The City does not have policies requiring proactive cooperation with ICE beyond any legal obligation required under state or federal law.

A significant portion of the discussion centered around community perception, fear, misinformation, and the role communication and social media played during prior immigration enforcement activity. Representatives from WCC expressed interest in the city providing additional public communication intended to reassure residents and clarify the city's role and jurisdiction. City representatives communicated the importance of maintaining a neutral position focused on public safety, avoiding political escalation, and ensuring the city does not unintentionally create confusion regarding its legal authority or responsibilities.

Two potential action items were identified for possible consideration:

1. Drafting a neutral public statement clarifying that the City is a local government entity and does not enforce federal immigration law.
2. Exploring whether immigration-related resource information should be linked or referenced on the city website.

Motion made by Craig, Seconded by Harris to hold a council work session on July 7, 2026, to work on creating a public statement and discuss options for resources on the city website.

Voting Yea: Craig, Hanson, Harris, Lindee, Shupe

Upon voice vote, it was unanimously approved.

13. REPORT OF BOARDS, COMMISSIONS AND DEPARTMENT HEADS

14. ADJOURNMENT

Motion made by Harris, Seconded by Lindee.

Voting Yea: Craig, Hanson, Harris, Lindee, Shupe

All Yea - motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 6:05 p.m.

Kristin Hurley, City Clerk-Treasurer