



**MINUTES
CITY COUNCIL MEETING
MONDAY, AUGUST 3, 2026
5:30 PM
CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor Steve King, Council Member-At-Large Jeff Austin, Council Member Jason Baskin, Council Member Rebecca Waller, Council Member Mike Postma, Council Member Laura Helle, Council Member Oballa Oballa, Council Member Paul Fischer

MEMBERS ABSENT:

MEMBERS LATE/EXITING:

STAFF PRESENT: Interim City Administrator Dave Unmacht, Police Chief Michael Hartman, Interim Fire Chief Troy Tigner, Public Works Director Steven Lang, Library Director Julie Clinefelter, Park, Recreation and Forestry Director Jason Sehon, City Attorney Craig Byram, Human Resources Director Tricia Wiechmann, Finance Director Emily Burns and City Clerk Brianne Wolf

APPEARING IN PERSON: Austin Daily Herald, Coalition for Greater Minnesota Cities Representative Lily Hijazi-Sacay

Call to Order/Pledge of Allegiance

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

Roll Call

Council Member Helle appearing remotely via interactive technology.

1. Adoption of Agenda

Moved by Council Member Fischer, seconded by Council Member Oballa, approving the agenda. Carried 7-0.

2. Approving minutes from July 20, 2026

Moved by Council Member Postma, seconded by Council Member Waller, approving Council minutes from July 20, 2026. Carried 7-0.

3. *Consent Agenda

Moved by Council Member Fischer, seconded by Council Member Waller, approving the consent agenda. Carried 7-0.

a. Financial Reports

Claims Report: July 15, 2026 through July 28, 2026

b. Licenses

Tobacco: Buy the Way Food Mart-1, Austin, MN

Gas Station: Buy the Way Food Mart-1, Austin, MN

Tree Service: Hamberg Outdoor, LLC, Albert Lea, MN

Mobile: Brick Oven Bus, LLC, Eagan, MN

Mobile: Sunny's Ice Cream & Mexican Food, Austin, MN

Mobile: Divine Swine Catering, Lakeville, MN

c. Events

High Water on August 20, 2026

Turkey Trot on November 26, 2026

4. Recognitions and Awards

5. Presentations

a. Coalition for Greater Minnesota Cities (CGMC) Representative Lily Sacay

Representative Lily Hijazi-Sacay from the Coalition for Greater Minnesota Cities presented to the Council about their impact over the past year.

Public Hearings

None.

Bids & Awards

6. WWTP EQ/Digester Cover No 2, Recoating Project

Public Works Director Steven Lang stated the EQ Digester Coatings project was bid on June 11,

2026. They received bids from two contractors: Wapasha Construction submitted the lowest bid at \$1,723,000, while Champion Coatings followed with a second bid of \$2,369,000. The engineers had estimated the project cost to be approximately \$1.3 million, so the bids came in significantly higher than expected.

Based on this information, Mr. Lang's recommendation is to reject all bids. They will revisit this project in the future.

- a. Resolution — Rejecting bids for EQ/Digester Cover No 2, Recoating Project

Moved by Council Member-at-Large Austin, seconded by Council Member Oballa, adopting a resolution rejecting all bids for the Industrial EQ/Digester No. 2 Coatings Replacement project. Carried 7-0.

7. Flood Hazard Mitigation, Asbestos Abatement, 210 4th St NE & 500 Oakland Ave East

Public Works Director Steven Lang stated the lowest bid came from Sterling Systems Inc., with a total base bid amount of \$84,180. Bids varied significantly, with the highest bid from Mavo Systems at \$247,450.

Mr. Lang stated different contractors assess projects like this differently, which can affect their bidding amounts. Factors such as the extent of work required to abate the asbestos, their staffing, and their workload with other projects can all influence their bids.

Mr. Lang stated the City does have a grant available that will cover up to 50% of the costs for this project; it is a flood hazard mitigation grant. The remaining funding will be provided by our local option sales tax. Therefore, he recommends awarding the contract to Sterling Systems Inc.

- a. Resolution — Awarding bid for asbestos removal at 210 4th St NE & 500 Oakland Ave East

Moved by Council Member Postma, seconded by Council Member Waller, adopting a resolution awarding a bid for asbestos removal at 210 4th Street NE and 500 Oakland Avenue East to Sterling Systems, Inc. Carried 7-0.

Petitions and Requests

8. Exempt Non-Union Healthcare Savings Plan (HCSP) Participation Amendment

Human Resources Director Trish Wiechmann informed the council that this matter is being presented for consideration due to changes in the HCSP contribution for non-union, non-exempt employees. This issue arises periodically for various groups. There is no cost to the city, as the funds involved come from the employees' contributions, as well as unused sick leave or vacation time, which are applied to the HCSP upon retirement. Ms. Wiechmann is requesting approval for this proposal.

- a. Resolution — Approving an exempt non-union healthcare savings plan (HCSP) participation amendment

Moved by Council Member Oballa, seconded by Council Member Postma, adopting a resolution approving an exempt non-union healthcare savings plan participation amendment. Carried 7-0.

9. Approving a 2026-2028 Labor Agreement and Memorandum of Agreement with International Association of Firefighters

a. Resolution — Approving the IAFF 2026-2028 Labor Agreement and MOA

Moved by Council Member Fischer, seconded by Council Member Postma, adopting a resolution approving the IAFF 2026-208 Labor Agreement and MOA. Carried 7-0.

10. ICM Agreement, Envision Cold formerly Mn Freezer Warehouse

Public Works Director Steven Lang presented an ICM agreement for approval. Mr. Lang stated the ICM agreement is with Envision Cold, formerly Minnesota Freezer Warehouse. He stated these ICM agreements regulate the wastewater flow from a particular business. In this case, this is a little bit different, where Envision Cold, formerly Minnesota Freezer Warehouse, is involved. The City has an agreement with them to meter the water that goes down the sanitary sewer, and they have a lot of water lost to evaporation through their chillers. The agreement is the same. It is just a name change due to new ownership of the facility. Mr. Lang recommends approval.

a. Resolution - Approving an ICM agreement with Envision Cold

Moved by Council Member Baskin, seconded by Council Member Oballa, adopting a resolution approving an ICM agreement with Envision Cold. Carried 7-0.

11. Murphy Creek Meadows Change Order

Public Works Director Steven Lang stated the Austin Housing Resource Authority (HRA) recently acquired the Murphy Creek Meadows, a development that started in the mid-2000s and was planned for town homes on 24th Avenue NW. The development struggled for many years, and the HRA is now looking to build town homes in that area and part of the project involves completing the public infrastructure work that the original developer never completed. The HRA has worked with a local contractor that does street reconstruction projects. The City has worked together with the HRA to indicate what work needs to be completed as part of the development agreement.

Mr. Lang presented a change order to the Council amounting to \$59,772.84, proposing that the City enter into a contract with Ulland Brothers, who will be responsible for the street reconstruction project. This change order would allow the City to add the necessary quantities and facilitate payments for the work. The completion of the work is expected this fall, after which the City will pay the contractor. The City will then receive reimbursement from the HRA, as it is ultimately their responsibility to complete this infrastructure, having taken over the development agreement from the previous property owner. Therefore, Mr. Lang recommends the Council approve this change order.

a. Resolution — Approving Change Order No. 1 for Murphy Creek Meadows

Moved by Council Member Baskin, seconded by Council Member Waller, adopting a resolution approving Change Order No. 1 for Murphy Creek Meadows. Carried 7-0.

12. Granting the Planning and Zoning Department the power to contract for the removal of junk and/or illegally stored vehicles at the following location: 204 2nd Ave SW, Enright Property

Moved by Council Member Fischer, seconded by Council Member Waller, to grant the Planning and Zoning Department the power to contract for the removal of junk and/or illegally stored vehicles at 204 2nd Avenue SW, Enright Property. Carried 7-0.

Citizens Addressing the Council

Members of the public may address the City Council on items that are not otherwise on the agenda. Each speaker is limited to two minutes. The Council will listen to comments but may not enter into a dialogue, take immediate action, or answer questions during this time.

None.

Honorary Council Member Comments

None.

Reports and Recommendations

City Administrator Council Members

Council Member Oballa thanked the Police Department for their work with the recent active shooter event in town.

Council Member Helle thanked the election judges who will be working during the primary election.

Council Member Postma stated he is very excited about the Riverland-built house as it is now on the market. It's a brand-new home. He commended the Riverland Construction program for their great work. He stated Discover Austin will be moving locations at the end of the month. They have purchased the building directly across from the Spam Museum.

Council Member Baskin expressed gratitude to local law enforcement for their efforts during the recent active shooter event, and he appreciates the communications they shared with the community.

Mayor King read the August employee anniversaries and invited all to attend the retirement party for Captain Todd Clennon on August 14th @ 11:30 a.m. at City Hall in Council Chambers.

Adjourn

Moved by Council Member-at-Large Austin, seconded by Council Member Baskin, adjourning the meeting to August 17, 2026. Carried.

Adjourned: 6:03 p.m.

Approved: 08/17/2026

Mayor:

City Clerk: