



City of Northfield

Meeting Minutes - Draft City Council

City Hall
801 Washington Street
Northfield, MN 55057
northfieldmn.gov

Tuesday, January 6, 2026

6:00 PM

Council Chambers

6:00 PM - CITY COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Zweifel called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m.

Present: 7 - Council Member Brad Ness, Council Member Kathleen Holmes, Council Member Davin Sokup, Council Member Jessica Peterson White, Council Member Chad Beumer, Council Member Peter Dahlen, and Mayor Erica Zweifel

Also present: Community Development Director Scott Wopata; Public Works Director/City Engineer David Bennett; Engineering Manager Sean Simonson; Police Chief Jeff Schroepfer; Library Director Natalie Draper, City Administrator Ben Martig and City Clerk Lynette Peterson. City Attorney Chris Hood attended remotely.

OPEN PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mayor Zweifel noted Supplemental Agenda Background Memos No. 1 and 2.

A motion was made by Council Member Beumer, seconded by Council Member Ness, to approve the agenda. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 7 - C. Ness, C. Holmes, C. Sokup, C. Peterson White, C. Beumer, C. Dahlen, and Mayor Zweifel

PRESENTATIONS

1. 26-001 Presentation - Stormwater Pollution Prevention Poster Contest Winners.

Engineering Manager Sean Simonson introduced the item along with Emma Harte, Clean River Partners, and James McDermott, Water Quality Technician. The City of Northfield and Clean River Partners host an annual poster contest with local elementary schools. This year, second through fifth grade students from Prairie Creek Community School, Greenvale Park Elementary, Spring Creek Elementary, St. Dominic Elementary and Bridgewater Elementary schools were asked to design a post with the theme "Stormwater Heroes". This year, a record 170 posters were submitted for the contest: 2025 winners are as follows:

Grades 2-3

1st place - Wagner Whitney, 3rd Grade, Prairie Creek Community School; 2nd place -

Sophia Orrego Zapata, 3rd Grade, Spring Creek Elementary; 3rd Place - Jameson Weaver, 3rd Grade, Bridgewater Elementary; Honorable Mention - Alfonso Abad, 3rd Grade, Spring Creek Elementary, and Hannah Schrader, 3rd Grade, Spring Creek Elementary.

Grades 4-5

1st Place - Ingrid Jorgenson, 4th Grade, Prairie Creek Community School; 2nd Place - Ellen Van Someren 5th Grade, Prairie Creek Community School; 3rd Place - Caroline Griemann, 5th Grade, Prairie Creek Community School; Honorable Mention - Liv Tapper, 5th Grade, Bridgewater Elementary, and Henry Davis, 5th Grade, Prairie Creek Community School.

A group photo was taken after the presentation.

CONSENT AGENDA

Councilor Ness asked a clarifying question on the disbursements.

A motion was made by Council Member Peterson White, seconded by Council Member Ness, to approve the Consent Agenda. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 7 - C. Ness, C. Holmes, C. Sokup, C. Peterson White, C. Beumer, C. Dahlen, and Mayor Zweifel

2. [26-002](#) Consider Approval of December 2, 2025 City Council Meeting Minutes.

A motion was made by Council Member Peterson White, seconded by Council Member Ness, to approve the Consent Agenda. The motion carried by the following vote:

3. [26-003](#) Consider Approving Disbursements totaling \$10,507,348.43

A motion was made to approve the Consent Agenda. The motion carried by the following vote:

4. [26-004](#) Consider Designation of Official Newspaper.

5. [26-005](#) Consider Designation of Official Depositories for the City of Northfield

6. [Res. 2026-001](#) Consider Amendments to Council Rules of Business and Appendices.

7. [Res. 2026-002](#) Consider Amendments to Board and Commission Rules of Business and Appendices.

8. [Res. 2026-003](#) Review and Approval of Amended 1.09 Council Representation on Boards and Commissions Policy.

9. [Res. 2026-004](#) Review and Approval of Amended 2.03 Meeting Room Policy.

10. [Res. 2026-005](#) Consideration of a Resolution for the approval of the cannabis retail registration application for Maverick Greens L.L.C. to operate a cannabis microbusiness

with a retail operations endorsement at 2010 Jefferson Rd. Suite C.

11. [26-006](#) Consider approval of Tobacco License Renewal.
12. [26-007](#) Consider Approval of Lease Agreement with Northfield Senior Citizens Inc. d.b.a. FiftyNorth.
13. [Res. 2026-006](#) Consider Resolution Setting Bond Sale and Authorizing Application for MN Credit Enhancement for Utility Bonds for Jefferson Parkway/Sandstone Street Utility Extension Project.
14. [Res. 2026-007](#) Consider Resolution Amending 2026 Carted Yard Waste Rate.
15. [26-008](#) Contract Approval to Hire Houseal Lavigne to Update & Redesign the City's Zoning Code.
16. [Res. 2026-008](#) Community Development Block Grant - Consider Adopting Resolution in Support of Fiscal Year 2026 Allotment of Program Funds.

PUBLIC HEARINGS AND RELATED ACTION

17. [26-009](#) Public Hearing for Liquor License for Northfield Ballroom Inc. DBA Northfield Ballroom, 450 Montessori Court.

Mayor Zweifel declared the public hearing open at 6:12 p.m. City Clerk Lynette Peterson introduced the item. Rick Tonjum, Realtor for the Northfield Ballroom, addressed the Council regarding the licensees and their plans for the Northfield Ballroom.

A motion was made by Council Member Ness, seconded by Council Member Holmes, to close the Public Hearing at 6:15 p.m. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 7 - C. Ness, C. Holmes, C. Sokup, C. Peterson White, C. Beumer, C. Dahlen, and Mayor Zweifel

18. [26-010](#) Consideration of New Liquor License for Northfield Ballroom Inc. DBA Northfield Ballroom at 450 Montessori Court.

A motion was made by Council Member Sokup, seconded by Council Member Ness, to approve the On-Sale Intoxicating Liquor and Sunday Liquor licenses for Northfield Ballroom Inc. DBA Northfield Ballroom. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 7 - C. Ness, C. Holmes, C. Sokup, C. Peterson White, C. Beumer, C. Dahlen, and Mayor Zweifel

19. [26-011](#) Public Hearing on Adopting the Street Reconstruction and Overlay Plan (SROP) and Issuance of Street Reconstruction and Overlay Bonds.

Mayor Zweifel declared the public hearing open at 6:16 p.m. Public Works Director/City Engineer David Bennett introduced Nick Anhut with Ehlers Financial Advisors. Anhut gave background information for the street reconstruction and overlay bonds. The plan

is to issue bonds for up to \$4,750,000 for street reconstruction projects. Anhut answered questions from the Council.

A motion was made by Council Member Holmes, seconded by Council Member Ness, to close the Public Hearing at 6:25 p.m. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 7 - C. Ness, C. Holmes, C. Sokup, C. Peterson White, C. Beumer, C. Dahlen, and Mayor Zweifel

20. Res. 2026-009 Consider Resolution Adopting the Street Reconstruction and Overlay Plan (SROP) and Issuance of Street Reconstruction and Overlay Bonds.

A motion was made by Council Member Beumer, seconded by Council Member Holmes, to approve Resolution No. 2026-009 Approving a Street Reconstruction and Overlay Plan and Giving Preliminary Approval to the Issuance of Street Reconstruction Bonds. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 7 - C. Ness, C. Holmes, C. Sokup, C. Peterson White, C. Beumer, C. Dahlen, and Mayor Zweifel

REPORTS FROM THE MAYOR AND COUNCILMEMBERS

21. 26-012 Reports From the Mayor and Council Members.

Councilor Holmes - Planning Commission Meeting.

Councilor Dahlen - NAFRS Meeting.

Councilor Beumer - No report.

Councilor Sokup - November and December EQC Meetings; Closed HRA Meeting; Mill Towns Trail Meeting.

Councilor Peterson White - Hospital Board Meetings.

Council Ness - NAFRS Meeting.

Mayor Zweifel - Mayor's Youth Council.

REGULAR AGENDA

22. 26-013 Consideration of Election of President Pro Tem.

Mayor Zweifel gave an overview of the duties of President Pro Tem.

A motion was made by Council Member Ness, seconded by Council Member Dahlen, to elect Council Member Beumer as President Pro Tem for 2026. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 7 - C. Ness, C. Holmes, C. Sokup, C. Peterson White, C. Beumer, C. Dahlen, and Mayor Zweifel

23. Res. 2026-010 Consider Resolution Approving Sponsorship of the MnDOT Transportation Alternatives Grant Application for the funding year 2030 - Lincoln Parkway Walking and Biking Improvement Project.

Engineering Manager Sean Simonson introduced the item giving background on the Transportation Alternatives Grant including the project location and details. Public Works Director/City Engineer David Bennett added additional information regarding the grant. Bennett answered questions from the Council.

A motion was made by Council Member Ness, seconded by Council Member Holmes, to approve Resolution No. 2026-010 2025-2026 Transportation Alternative Solicitation Sponsorship Approval revising the resolution to include a rapid flashing beacon at the intersection of Linden Street and Lincoln Parkway. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 7 - C. Ness, C. Holmes, C. Sokup, C. Peterson White, C. Beumer, C. Dahlen, and Mayor Zweifel

24. Res. 2026-011 Consider Resolution Approving Maintenance responsibility for the proposed Lincoln Parkway Walking and Biking Improvement Project related to the Transportation Alternatives Grant Solicitation.

Public Works Director/City Engineer David Bennett answered questions from the council regarding snow removal on the trail.

A motion was made by Council Member Ness, seconded by Council Member Beumer, to approve Resolution No. 2026-011 2025-2026 MnDot Transportation Alternative Solicitation Maintenance Responsibility. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 7 - C. Ness, C. Holmes, C. Sokup, C. Peterson White, C. Beumer, C. Dahlen, and Mayor Zweifel

25. Res. 2026-012 Consider Resolution Approving Plans and Specifications and Order Advertisement for Bids for the Spring Creek Road Reconstruction & Mill Towns State Trail Project (STRT2026-A84).

Engineering Manager Sean Simonson introduced the item giving background on the Spring Creek Road Reconstruction and Mill Towns State Trail Project including project location, intersection improvements at Woodley Street and Spring Creek Road, estimated project costs and funding and the project schedule.

Public Works Director/City Engineer David Bennett answered questions from the Council.

Council discussed the possibility of a four-way stop at the intersection of Spring Creek Road and Woodley Street and the pros and cons of four-way stops. Council also discussed lowering the speed limit on those streets.

Simonson added additional information and discussion at the neighborhood meeting.

Ryan Johnson addressed the Council regarding the 4-way stop option at the intersection.

City Administrator Ben Martig highlighted options for approval regarding this item after discussion.

A motion was made by Council Member Sokup, seconded by Council Member Peterson White, to approve Resolution No. 2026-012, with the additional direction to consult with the Rice County Engineer to bring to the Rice County Board of Commissioners to further explore safety improvements at the intersection of Spring Creek Road and Woodley Street, including consideration of a four-way stop, a red flashing beacon, and speed control measures. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 7 - C. Ness, C. Holmes, C. Sokup, C. Peterson White, C. Beumer, C. Dahlen, and Mayor Zweifel

RECESS

Council recessed at 7:25 p.m. Council meeting resumed at 7:32 p.m.

26. 26-014

Consider Council Member Roles on Boards and Commissions for 2026-2027.

City Administrator Ben Martig introduced the item giving background information on Council Member Roles on Boards and Commissions for 2026. Martig presented four options with the staff recommendation as Option 2 which includes representation on all required boards/commissions plus the addition of one voting member on the Hospital Board and NAFRS. Staff liaisons would be responsible for additional updates to Council on boards/commissions without Council representation.

A motion was made by Council Member Holmes, seconded by Council Member Peterson White, to approve Option 4 including Council representation of one voting member appointed to NAFRS and the Hospital Board and one non-voting member appointed to the Planning Commission and EQC.

A motion was made by Council Member Sokup, seconded by Council Member Peterson White, to amend the motion to remove adding one non-voting member to the EQC and include regular updates to the Council regarding EQC work from the Sustainability Coordinator. The amended motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 7 - C. Ness, C. Holmes, C. Sokup, C. Peterson White, C. Beumer, C. Dahlen, and Mayor Zweifel

The original motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 7 - C. Ness, C. Holmes, C. Sokup, C. Peterson White, C. Beumer, C. Dahlen, and Mayor Zweifel

27. 26-015

Review & Discuss Options for Potential Resolution Supporting the Authority to Impose a Local Sales Tax to Fund Specific Capital Improvements Providing Regional Benefit, to Establish the Duration of the Tax and the Revenue to be Raised by the Tax, and to Authorize the City to Issue Bonds Supported by the Sales Tax Revenue.

City Administrator Ben Martig introduced the item giving background on the option to impose a local sales tax to fund specific capital improvements providing regional benefits. Martig highlighted current law requirements, Minnesota Sales Taxes, details on projects for consideration, estimated project costs, estimated revenue, timeline and process. Library Director Natalie Draper presented details on the Library Project. Martig presented policy questions for the Council to consider. Martig answered questions from the Council.

EXTEND THE MEETING

A motion was made by Council Member Sokup, seconded by Council Member Ness, to extend the meeting until business is complete. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 7 - C. Ness, C. Holmes, C. Sokup, C. Peterson White, C. Beumer, C. Dahlen, and Mayor Zweifel

27. 26-015

Review & Discuss Options for Potential Resolution Supporting the Authority to Impose a Local Sales Tax to Fund Specific Capital Improvements Providing Regional Benefit, to Establish the Duration of the Tax and the Revenue to be Raised by the Tax, and to Authorize the City to Issue Bonds Supported by the Sales Tax Revenue.

After discussion all Council Members indicated interest in exploring a local option sales tax in the 2026 legislative session. Council indicated interest in the projects staff presented to include the library project and NCRC renovations. The Council was interested in Riverfront parks project and/or 3rd Street parking structure but indicated the need for additional public restrooms in the downtown area. Education and citizen engagement regarding the projects/local option sales tax was a high priority for the Council.

ADMINISTRATORS UPDATE**28. 26-016**

City Administrator's Update.

City Administrator Ben Martig updated the Council on the hiring of a Sustainability Coordinator who will start the week of January 19.

ADJOURN

A motion was made by Council Member Ness, seconded by Council Member Beumer, to adjourn the meeting at 9:25 p.m. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 7 - C. Ness, C. Holmes, C. Sokup, C. Peterson White, C. Beumer, C. Dahlen, and Mayor Zweifel