



Approved

**REGULAR MEETING
Minutes
07.08.25**

Absent: Dallas Fisher, Kyle Peterson
Guests:

1. CALL TO ORDER

Commissioner Jeremy Dresel called the meeting to order. Commissioners in attendance, Marlys Dunne, Marie Rivers, MaryJo Wiatrak, and Jason Houle.

Staff in attendance was City Administrator John Pechman. Nancy Hoffman from the County EDA/HRA was also present.

2. APPROVE AGENDA: July 8, 2025.

Commissioner Dresel asked if there were any additions to the agenda. Commissioner Rivers made a motion to approve the agenda; Commissioner Dunne seconded; all ayes; motion passed.

3. APPROVE CONSENT AGENDA: June 10, 2025.

Commissioner Dresel asked if there were any corrections or additions to the June 10th minutes. Commissioner Dunne made a motion to approve the consent agenda with a typo correction; Commissioner Rivers seconded; all ayes; motion passed.

4. PUBLIC COMMENTS

5. COMMUNICATIONS, REPORTS AND PETITIONS

5a. City Council Liaison Report -Marie Rivers

Commissioner Rivers updated the commission on the meeting that was held on June 24th. The new city logo is in the design stage; a graphic designer has been hired to help with the process. MnDOT is in the design phase of Highway 8 from Chisago City to Taylors Falls, they will be holding workshops to collect public comments. A final draft of the design will be presented this fall. This is a 2032 project. There was a variance and design review approved for an addition at Brinks Market. 27800 Kent Ct. applied for annexation to the city, and the fire department has received three new applications.

5b. County & Neighboring City EDA Updates

County and neighboring city updates included a real estate project for an old jail site, a BDP grant for North Branch's industrial park, and an EDA grant for infrastructure in Rush City. A meeting for the CCCI was scheduled for July 23rd in North Branch, where the County Administrator will discuss state-related matters and there will be networking opportunities.

Commissioner Dunne reported that the Lake Improvement District (LID) has received concerns about wakeboards and wake boats impacts on the lakes. The DNR is preparing a detailed study, and the LID will wait for the study results before making any decisions. Dunne confirmed that the channel widening project between North and South Lindstrom is moving forward with a feasibility study expected next month. Dunne clarified that while Highway 8 lost \$5 million in federal funding, the project is still advancing with right-of-way purchasing and final design work. She also that Chisago County received a \$1.4 million dollar grant for the Swedish Immigrant grant trail, this will be used for the connection project between Center City and Shafer, which will begin construction in 2026.

6. PUBLIC HEARINGS

7. GENERAL BUSINESS

7a. Monthly Financial Report.

Finance Director Gemuenden submitted the Financial Report.

8. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

8a. 2025 Goals & Updates

1. Highway 8 Project

2. Land Development

Pechman stated that property acquisitions at the Holmquist farm were final and that the closings went smoothly. Pechman and Hoffman set a planned meeting with Randy from Kendall Howard and Colleen from DEED to discuss project schedules and potential state assistance.

Hoffman discussed the status of LEI's expansion plans, noting that while they had been considering North Branch for a new facility, they ultimately decided to continue operations in their current location in Chisago City. They are looking to purchase an existing building to house their equipment expanding outside of Chisago County.

Pechman also provided an update on King Kind, who received four of their five licenses and are exploring options to obtain their permit without building a 100x100 new building up front. They are leveraging their attorney's expertise

in the relevant legislation. The company is also discussing a potential arrangement with the city to have their contractor build a road, similar to what a residential developer would do, and then give that road back to the city. The specifics and costs are still being determined.

Pechman attended the League of Minnesota Cities (LMC) Conference where cannabis regulation was discussed. It was reported that the state has dropped the sales tax, and city attorneys expressed concerns about the legality of county zoning authority. Pechman emphasized that cities are still responsible for zoning, despite turning over regulation and certification to the county. Dunne also mentioned that some cities took on the administrative burden of registration and certification under the belief of a 15-20% kickback, but now that this has been retracted, cities have the right to return these responsibilities to the county at any time.

3. Business and Residential Opportunities

Pechman discussed efforts to establish a long-term arrangement with the Holmquist's regarding property use. Dunne asked if there was any interest in providing a workshop to brainstorm potential businesses to attract to the community, highlighting the Holmquist's location for potential industrial development.

Pechman discussed the open lot across from the apartments, the owner was interested in developing it into commercial spaces, and open for suggestions. The commission encouraged feedback from the community to identify specific business needs.

Commission discussed the potential need for a retail study in the county, they suggested exploring the possibility of conducting a retail trade analysis with the Minnesota extension services, which could provide valuable insights into current retail trends and potential business opportunities. Commissioner Houle also emphasized the importance of being more proactive in attracting new businesses to the area, rather than waiting for them to come. Hoffman will investigate the details of a study.

4. Business Engagement Event & Community Outreach

Houle will work on an agenda and speaker for the event. Dunne suggested the Highway construction and road changes be the focus for the speaker. The commission decided that a brief 15–30-minute presentation followed by tables with detailed information would be beneficial. They would like Joe Triplet from the County to be the speaker, Dunne will see if he is available. Someone from MnDOT potentially speaking about business engagement during construction

would be supportive. Commission agreed to include displays about demographics, housing data, and city resources.

Next Steps:

- Houle to solidify a speaker and agenda for Business Engagement Event
- Dunne to contact Joe Triplet about presenting on the Highway 8 design
- Hoffman to contact MnDOT for a potential speaker at the event
- Houle to email the compiled event plan before the next meeting

9. New Business

10. Adjourn

Commissioner Rivers made a motion to adjourn; Commissioner Dunne seconded; all ayes; the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Alisa Bodell
Deputy Clerk