



Approved

MEETING MINUTES
August 26, 2025

Present: Mayor Jeremy Dresel, Council members, Marie Rivers, Nikki Battles, Mark Anderson, and Craig Meyer.

Absent: None

Staff: City Administrator John Pechman, Associate Planner Leah Nelson, Deputy Clerk Alisa Bodell, Chief of Police Bill Schlumbohm, and Fire Chief Zach Reed

Public Attendance: Leilani Freeman, Chris Dubose, Gary Noren, and Melinda Posner

1. REGULAR MEETING-CALL TO ORDER 6:30

Mayor Dresel called the meeting to order.

1a. "Pledge of Allegiance"

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

1b. Roll Call

All members are present.

2. AGENDA

Mayor Dresel asked if there were any additions to the agenda. Council member Rivers made a motion to approve the agenda; Council member Anderson seconded; all ayes; motion carried.

3. CONSENT AGENDA

3a. Minutes of June 24, 2025

3b. Payment of Bills-Finance Information

3c. Committee Reports

Council member Rivers made a motion to approve the consent agenda; Council member Anderson seconded; all in favor, all ayes; motion carried.

Council member Meyers stated that the fire department has received the truck for the dive team.

4. PUBLIC COMMENT/AGENDA PLACEMENT

4a. Chris Dubose

Mr. Dubose addressed the council on behalf of the Rotary Club; he is asking council for a letter of support. The Rotary is applying for the Big Idea Grant given by the Chisago Lakes Community Foundation, if awarded the grant will be used to make improvements to the Swedish Immigrant trail. Improvements would include mile markers along the 20-mile trail, historical markers, QR codes for local information, pollinator gardens and creative bike racks for each of the cities along the trail. He stated that Chisago City has the longest stretch of the trail. Along with the letter of support, he is asking the cities for a donation to the project. If the grant is received and with donations from the local Rotary Club,

neighboring Rotary Clubs, individual donors, and the cities, the project could have \$30,000 in funding.

Council member Rivers asked about purchasing a bike rack.

Council member Meyer made a motion to approve a letter of support from the city, Council member Anderson seconded; all in favor, all ayes; motion approved.

5. PETITIONS, REQUESTS, COMMUNICATION

5a. Gary Noren-Gift from Algutsboda

Gary Noren, a member of the choir Unexpected Company Chorale visited Algutsboda last May along with other sister cities. He stated that during one of his events the Mayor of Algutsboda presented him with something to give back to Chisago City. Mr. Noren explained that they brought a gift to them of an art print from Chisago City and the friends of the Karl Oscar house. Mr. Noren presented Mayor Dresel with a glass blown apple figurine from a local glass shop in Emmaboda to symbolize the friendship between the two cities.

5b. November City Council Meeting Date

Administrator Pechman explained to the council that the meeting date for November falls during the week of Thanksgiving, there was communication from council that there was a conflict for some. November is quickly approaching, he is asking council if they would like to keep the meeting scheduled for November 25th or change the date. The second Tuesday of the month is reserved for council meetings, but that is Veterans Day. Commission discussed dates and decided to change the meeting date to Monday November 10th at 6:30pm.

Council member Meyers made a motion to move the November council meeting from the 25th to the 10th of the month, Council member Rivers seconded; all in favor, all ayes; the motion was approved.

5c. Highway 8 Workshop September 9th

Associate Planner Nelson reminded the council that there will be an upcoming workshop on September 9th for the Highway 8 study looking at the corridor between Karmel Avenue and Taylor's falls. They will be doing a study overview looking at alternatives and strategies that are being considered, public engagement and next steps.

5d. Letter of Support-2025 MN Highway Freight Grant

Administrator Pechman told the council that he signed a letter of support and sent it to the county. They are seeking additional funding for the current highway project from the city of Wyoming to Karmel Avenue. This is a grant application they're making through the Federal Highway freight program, and this letter gives them support on behalf of Chisago City for the additional funding.

5e. LMC-Mark Koran Legislator of Distinction 2025

Administrator Pechman wanted the council to be aware that the city received a letter from the League of Minnesota cities. Each year, the League of Minnesota Cities reviews the legislators and how they vote on issues important to cities. This year, the league recognized Senator Koran as a legislator of distinction, meaning in their opinion, based upon issues

facing cities Senator Koran has been a supportive member of the legislator; he is being recognized by the League of Minnesota cities for his support of city initiatives.

6. PUBLIC HEARINGS

6a. TRIO Wolf Creek-Private Activity Bond

Mike Hamernick the Executive Director of TRIO Wolf Creek School, was present to answer any questions regarding the public hearing for the Private Activity Bond.

Council member Meyer made a motion to open the public hearing, Council member Rivers seconded, all in favor, all ayes, motion carried. Mayor Dresel asked for any discussion, with no discussion Council member Meyers made a motion to close the public hearing, Council member Rivers seconded, all in favor, all ayes, motion carried.

Administrator Pechman explained that this is a conduit financing project, TRIO Wolf Creek is using the city's ability for tax exempt bonds. This has no effect on the city's credit rating and or requirement to pay. The city is allowing them to go to that market for the tax-exempt bonds, they are fully responsible for the repayment. They are using the city's bonding authority and the amount we have available; their request is a little over 1 million.

Council member Anderson made a motion to approve Resolution 25-08-05 for the Issuance of TRIO Wolf Charter School Lease Revenue Note, Council member Rivers seconded, all in favor, all ayes, motion was approved.

Council member Meyer made a motion to suspend the meeting and make a change to the agenda allowing New Business 7f. Fund 23 Request for Fire Department Equipment moved between 6a. and 6b. on the agenda; Council member Rivers seconded, all in favor; all ayes, motion was approved.

7f. Fund 23 Request-Fire Department Equipment

Chief Reed addressed the council and gave them an update on the new tactical rescue truck; he is getting quotes on lighting and the logo for the truck. The truck should be fully operatable by October 15th. Chief Reed is requesting funds from Fund 23 for equipment. The equipment is to better equip the firefighters for calls. He is asking for a water appliance for Engine 12, 12 helmet lights, thermal imaging cameras for engine 12 and a SEEK thermal bundle.

Council member Meyer made a motion to approve the Fund 23 request of \$15,319.29 for equipment; Council member Anderson seconded; all in favor, all ayes, motion was approved.

Chief Reed informed council that there are two potential firefighters that are going through the application process now and once the backgrounds are complete, he will ask council for approval of the new hires.

6b. Proposed Cannabis Ordinance Chapter 177

Associate Planner Nelson provided the council with some background, she stated that the purpose of the proposed ordinance is to implement the provision of Minnesota Statutes,

chapter 342, which authorizes the City of Chisago City to protect the public health, safety, and welfare of Chisago City residents by regulating cannabis businesses within the legal boundaries of Chisago City. City staff have proposed an ordinance that will promote the community's interest in reasonable stability in zoning for now and in the future, and that the proposed provisions are in public interest and for the public good. Staff is asking for approval of ordinance 335 Municipal Code Chapter 177 Cannabis and to authorize the Mayor and Administrator to execute Resolution 25-08-02 and to publish a summary in the local paper.

Associate Planner Nelson and council discussed Section 2, registration of cannabis businesses. Administrator Pechman stated based on the city population the minimum retail business allowed would be one business.

Mayor Dresel asked why this ordinance is coming to the council as he was understanding the county was going to handle the cannabis. Administrator Pechman explained that the League of MN Cities has encouraged cities to come up with their own ordinance.

Council discussed the buffer requirements for cannabis and thought they should be the same as the alcohol and tobacco requirements. The only park that is prohibited from smoking is Rotary Park as that is located across from a school. Associate Planner Nelson let the council know that the ordinance does have Section 6. Use in Public Places, that prohibits the use in public places. Council agreed to treat the retail cannabis business the same as the liquor and tobacco businesses when it comes to the distance from day care centers and schools. They also wanted to make a change to 3.2.5 Cannabis Retail Business to only be allowed in the commercial zoning district. Council also discussed Section 4 Temporary Cannabis Events where a special event permit could be issued and approved on private property that is over 20 acres in size.

Council member Meyer made a motion to open the public hearing; Council member Anderson seconded, all in favor, all ayes, motion carried. Hearing no public comment, Council member Meyer made a motion to close the public hearing; Council member Anderson seconded, all in favor, all ayes, motion carried.

Council member Meyer made a motion to approve Chapter 177 with the discussion points about registrations at two, Section 3 Zoning and Land use to match the alcohol and tobacco ordinance, a temporary cannabis event with a special permit needs to be on private property that is over 20 acres, and the city may be a cannabis retailer. Council member Rivers seconded, all in favor, all ayes, motion carried.

Council member Meyer made a motion to approve Resolution 25-08-02 for publication and summary; Council member Rivers seconded, all in favor; all ayes, motion carried.

6c. Proposed Amendment to Fee Schedule Chapter 180

Associate Planner Nelson stated that city staff has proposed additions to the existing schedule to reflect recent code adoptions and amendments; council received a new fee schedule, and the changes were in bold and include fees related to Municipal Code 176 THC Product, Municipal Code 177 Cannabis, Municipal Code 210 Therapeutic Massage.

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Council member Meyer made a motion to open the public hearing; Council member Anderson seconded; all in favor, all ayes, motion carried. Hearing no public comment, Council member Meyer made a motion to close the public hearing; Council member Anderson seconded; all in favor, all ayes, motion carried.

Council member Meyer made a motion to approve the updated Chapter 180 Fee Schedule, Resolution 25-08-04 summary and press notice; Council member Anderson seconded; all in favor, all ayes, motion was approved.

7. NEW BUSINESS

7a. Variance Application-9926 Kismet Isle

Associate Planner Nelson stated that Mark & Melinda Posner, owners of 9926 Kismet Isle, have submitted a variance application for a proposed addition and new deck to the existing house on the property. The variance application pertains to the required setback to the ordinary high-water mark (OHW). The Planning Commission held a duly notified public hearing on 08/07/2025. The Commission discussed that the property has significant area to the shoreline and felt the addition would not impact neighbors, with the shoreline being almost 100 feet from the proposed addition. No public comment was received. Planning Commission voted to recommend approval. The property is zoned Low/Medium Density Residential (R-2) and is being used for residential purposes. Residential use is permitted in the R-2 district per Chisago City Zoning Code Chapter 4.2.5.b. The property is also in the Shoreland Overlay District. The property measures roughly 0.62 acres above the OHW. There is an existing house, with an attached garage, shed and deck. Zoning Code Chapter 4.7.3.F.2 outlines the setback requirements from a structure to the OHW. The required structure setback to the OHW is 75'. The applicant is proposing a 50' setback to the OHW.

Council member Meyer made a motion to approve the Variance for 9926 Kismet Isle; Council member Anderson seconded; all in favor, all ayes, the motion was approved.

Council member Meyer stated that the planning commission felt that the addition and deck fit in with the neighborhood, it would not encroach on neighboring properties, and it is a flat lot. Pechman stated that according to the survey where the OHW mark is located the water has never reached that point.

7b. Design Review-9387 Wyoming Trail Baptist Church

Associate Planner Nelson detailed that the Baptist Church at 9387 Wyoming Ave., has submitted a request for a design review to add a 16' x 36' accessory structure to the property. The Planning Commission held a duly notified public hearing on 08/07/2025. Andy Brink was present to answer questions related to the project. He explained the purpose of the building would be for taking tickets during games and primarily for storage of field maintenance equipment. The building, to be delivered and placed on a Class 5 pad, is proposed to feature a front porch with a roll-up window for ticket sales, and no utilities initially though it's wired for future power connection. The proposed structure will mainly be used during soccer season, with no plans for full concessions, just possibly some bottled water and candy. No other public comment was received. Planning Commission voted to recommend approval. The property is zoned Public/Semi-Public Facilitates (PSP-F) is approximately 23 acres and currently has a church, school, pavilion and accessory structure. The used is permitted in the PSP-F district per Zoning Code Chapter 4.6.2.C. The

use is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. City staff are asking for approval of the design review required to construct an accessory structure at 9387 Wyoming Ave.

Council member Meyer made a motion to approve the design review for an accessory structure at 9387 Wyoming Trail; Council member Anderson seconded; all in favor, all ayes, the motion was approved.

7c. Municipal Code 200 Violation-Chisago Liquors Store

Administrator Pechman stated that on June 18th the LAPD had conducted a compliance check for alcohol and tobacco sales in Chisago City. A clerk at Chisago Liquors Store sold an alcohol and tobacco product to a buyer under the age of 21. The city issued a letter to Chisago Liquors Store on August 13th with a notice of the violation and a copy of the Liquor Ordinance. There have been no prior compliance check failures in the last three years, based on this, the presumptive penalties according to the ordinance are a 60-day liquor license suspension, or a \$500.00 fine. Staff are proposing a \$500.00 fine to Chisago Liquors, they were told they could pay the fine or contest it at the meeting tonight. No one is present on behalf of the liquor store; staff would like approval of the \$500.00 fine.

Council member Meyer made a motion to approve the \$500.00 fine; Council member Rivers seconded; all in favor, all ayes, the motion was approved.

Mayor Dresel asked Chief Schlumbohm about the compliance checks, he stated that they did check all establishments that sold liquor and tobacco products.

7d. Petition for Annexation- 30979 Wallmark Lake Drive

Associate Planner Nelson stated that the city has received a petition for annexation of a property in Chisago Lakes Township. The petition is for approximately 1.4 acres at 30979 Wallmark Lake Drive. The property owner Kelsey Hero would like to hook up to city sewer services. The petition for annexation was received by staff on August 19th. Staff were aware the township had a regular meeting scheduled for that evening, so a jointly orderly annexation agreement was drafted and provided to the township to expedite the annexation process. The petition was approved by the Chisago Lakes Township at their regular meeting that night. If council approves the petition for annexation the jointly orderly annexation agreement shall be signed by the Mayor and Administrator. Staff is asking the council to accept the petition and direct staff and the mayor to execute the agreement and Resolution 25-08-03. If approved, it will be sent to the State Boundary Adjustments for review and approval.

Council member Anderson approved the Petition for Annexation Resolution 25-08-03; Council member Rivers seconded; all in favor, all ayes, motion was approved.

7e. Approval of Aalyse Eik-Administrative Assistant

Administrator Pechman stated that the council approved the hiring of an Administrative Assistant after the retirement of Deputy Clerk Oeheme. City staff recommend the promotion of Executive Assistant Bodell to Deputy Clerk, staff also presented a new part-time job classification of Administrative Assistant to replace the position of full-time Executive Assistant. Staff received 27 applications and conducted 10-minute interviews, that round was cut down to 8 for a second interview and then 3 final interviews were given. Aalyse Eik was given a conditional offer of employment on July 29. She has successfully

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completed a background investigation and was given a final offer of employment on August 12th. Pechman stated that this was a team effort and thanked staff and Council member Battles for helping in the hiring process.

Council member Meyer made a motion to approve the hiring of Administrative Assistant Aalyse Eik; Council member Rivers seconded; all in favor, all ayes, the motion was approved.

7g. Ojiketa Haunt and Falloween

Administrator Pechman stated that after 16 years of celebrating the fall season with Falloween and the Ojiketa Haunt, we have collectively agreed to take it in a new direction. The event has become an overwhelming demand not only for staff but with those directly impacted on the implementation of design, lighting, electrical and orchestration of volunteers. Staff spent many late evenings and most weekends in October setting up and running this event. The past few years these discussions have been happening. When the spring thaw caused a backup in Strom Hall which led to the flooding of the haunted house, subsequent removal of all the temporary walls, and damage to the décor, the tough decision was made to not continue the haunt.

Pechman stated that he is not sure how Falloween will look for our community, but staff are planning an interactive Halloween display and activities in Moberg Park. The goal would be to have families that can participate in the displays and activities on their own time.

Pechman thanked the City Council for all their support, he noted that Council member Anderson has given so much of his time, energy and money to the Haunt and it was appreciated and did not go unnoticed.

8. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

9. ADJOURN

Council member Meyer made the motion to adjourn, Council member Rivers seconded, all in favor; all ayes; motion carried.

Respectfully Submitted by:
Alisa Bodell,
Deputy City Clerk