Pursuant to the due call and notice thereof, a regular meeting of the North Mankato City Council was held in the Municipal Building Council Chambers on December 15, 2025. Mayor Carlson called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m., asking everyone to join in the Pledge of Allegiance. The following were present for roll call: Council Members Steiner, Oachs, Peterson, Whitlock, City Administrator McCann, Finance Director Ryan, Community Development Director Fischer, Public Works Director Arnold, Attorney Kennedy, and Administrative Services Manager-City Clerk Van Genderen.

Approval of Agenda

Attorney Kennedy requested that Agenda Item 10E on the Consent Agenda be tabled to allow the owner of the bar to complete the renewal process. Council Member Steiner moved, seconded by Council Member Peterson, to approve the tabling of Agenda Item 10E. Vote on the motion: Peterson, Whitlock, Steiner, and Carlson aye, Oachs abstain. Motion carried.

Council Member Oachs moved, seconded by Council Member Peterson, to approve the agenda. Vote on the motion: Oachs, Peterson, Whitlock, Steiner, and Carlson aye, no nays. Motion carried.

Approval of Council Minutes from the December 1, 2025, Council Meeting.

Council Member Whitlock moved, seconded by Council Member Peterson, to approve the December 1, 2025, Council Meeting Minutes. Vote on the motion: Oachs, Peterson, Whitlock, Steiner, and Carlson aye, no nays. Motion carried.

Approval of Council Work Session Minutes from November 17, 2025, Council Work Session.

Council Member Whitlock moved, seconded by Council Member Peterson, to approve the December 1, 2025, Council Work Session Minutes. Vote on the motion: Oachs, Peterson, Whitlock, Steiner, and Carlson aye, no nays. Motion carried.

Public Hearing, 7 pm on the Stormwater and Annual Stormwater Pollution Prevention Program Review.

Stormwater Compliance Specialist Baker appeared before the Council and reviewed the City's Stormwater and Pollution Prevention Program. She reported that the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) regulates stormwater under the federal Clean Water Act. As a Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) serving a population over 10,000, the City of North Mankato must comply with the MS4 General Permit and maintain a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Program (SWPPP). The SWPPP addresses six Minimum Control Measures, including public education and participation, illicit discharge detection, construction and post-construction runoff control, and pollution prevention for municipal operations.

The City's current MS4 permit was issued in September 2021, with the SWPPP updated in 2022 and revised again in 2023 and 2025. The 2025 updates include revised demographic data and updated communication terminology. Program progress in 2025 includes implementation of an Erosion Prevention and Sediment Control permit for sites disturbing 5,000 square feet or more, expanded stormwater education and community outreach, and comprehensive MS4 training for City staff.

Overall, the City continues to strengthen its stormwater program through ordinance updates, staff training, public engagement, and ongoing implementation of the SWPPP to protect water quality and meet all MS4 requirements.

Tom Hagen, 927 Lake Street, appeared before Council and stated that because he lives at the bottom of a bluff, he and others who live at the bottom of a bluff experience a lot of run-off from the houses at the top of the bluff, and the City should mitigate the issue.

Benton Bakke, 1243 Lake Street, appeared before Council and stated he believed the City should install stormwater diversion in the stormwater drains to catch debris before it enters the river.

Public Works Director Arnold noted that as the City completes reconstructions, it may be possible to have some consideration for a system.

With no one else appearing, Mayor Carlson closed the Public Comments.

Public Comments

Barb Church, 102 Wheeler Avenue, appeared before Council and stated that history will repeat itself if we don't take action. She indicated that she believed the City Council should have a plan for when ICE (U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement) comes to North Mankato.

Tom Hagen, 927 Lake Street, appeared before Council and indicated that he thought the Police Department should serve and protect from ICE.

Joe Tougas, 923 Lake Street, appeared before the Council and reported he has not had any issues with his Somali neighbors, and the City should be prepared to defend the Somali population.

Benton Bakke, 1243 Lake Street, appeared before Council and stated he thought the City Council should consider a kiddie council to promote civic engagement among youth and create more committees so more people can be on the committees.

Danielle Bollman, 515 Page Avenue, appeared before Council and requested clarification on the City's plans for the size of replacement trees. Ms. Bollman apologized to City Administrator McCann for stating he did not reply to her questions and thanked him for ensuring she received them.

Consent Agenda

Council Member Whitlock moved, seconded by Council Member Oachs, to approve the Consent Agenda.

A. Bills and Appropriations.
B. Res. No. 111-25 Approving Donations/Contributions/Grants.
C. Res. No. 112-25 Setting Fees and Charges.
D. Res. No. 113-25 Approving Committee Assignments.
E. ~~Consider Approving, On-Sale, Off-Sale, Cabaret, Soft Drink, and Mechanical Amusement Device License for Circle Inn of North Mankato, 232 Belgrade Avenue, for 1/1/2026-12/31/26.~~
F. Res. No. 114-25 Approving Board and Commission Appointments for 2026.
G. Res. No. 115-25 Setting Council Meeting Dates for the Year 2026.
H. Res. No. 116-25 Waiving Waiting Period for Exemption from Lawful Gambling License for North Mankato Fire Relief Association.

Vote on the motion: Oachs, Peterson, Whitlock, Steiner, and Carlson aye, no nays. Motion carried.

Business Items

Res. No. 117-25 Calling Public Hearing on the Proposed Adoption of an Ordinance Authorizing the Issuance of Bonds of the North Mankato Port Authority Commission.

Tammy Omdal from Northland Securities reported that the Port Authority must obtain authority from the City Council to issue bonds. The bond issuance would be for a not-to-exceed amount of $27 million. The $27 million includes the current estimated cost of the building, $24

million, which covers the purchase of the land and a contingency fund. The Public Hearing would be held on January 5, 2026, with the sale of the bonds to follow and a closing date on March 17, 2026.

Council Member Whitlock moved, seconded by Council Member Peterson to Adopt Res. No. 117-25 Calling Public Hearing on the Proposed Adoption of an Ordinance Authorizing the Issuance of Bonds of the North Mankato Port Authority Commission. Vote on the motion: Peterson, Whitlock, and Carlson aye, Oachs and Steiner nay. Motion carried.

Res. No. 118-25 Approving 2025 Tax Levy Collectible in 2026.

Finance Director Ryan reported the numbers remained the same as what was presented at the Truth in Taxation hearing on December 1, 2025. The total taxes collected are projected to be $10,227,000, which is a 1.591% Tax Rate Change.

Council Member Peterson moved, seconded by Council Member Whitlock, to adopt Res. No. 118-25 Approving 2025 Tax Levy Collectible in 2026. Vote on the motion: Oachs, Peterson, Whitlock, Steiner, and Carlson aye, no nays. Motion carried.

Res. No. 119-25 Approving the General Fund Budget and Auxiliary Fund Budget for Fiscal Year 2026.

Council Member Peterson noted that the budget was not quite where they wanted it, but thanked staff for their work to get it where it is.

Council Member Oachs requested clarification on a bridge she thought she saw in the budget. Finance Director Ryan reported in the 2025 budget that a bridge was projected for 2026, but it has since been removed.

Council Member Peterson moved, seconded by Council Member Whitlock, to adopt Res. No. 119-25 Approving the General Fund Budget and Auxiliary Fund Budget for Fiscal Year 2026. Vote on the motion: Oachs, Peterson, Whitlock, Steiner, and Carlson aye, no nays. Motion carried.

Res. No. 120-25 Approving the Capital Improvement Plan 2026-2030.

Finance Director Ryan reported that the CIP includes 2026 items, but the items will be brought before the Council before final action.

Council Member Oachs moved, seconded by Council Member Steiner to Adopt Res. No. 120-25 Approving the Capital Improvement Plan 2026-2030. Vote on the motion: Oachs, Peterson, Whitlock, Steiner, and Carlson aye, no nays. Motion carried.

Res. No. 121-25 Setting Rates and Charges for Stormwater Utility Fund.

Finance Director Ryan reported that the only utility fund that will be changing is the Stormwater Utility Fund, with $0.50 increase on the base.

Council Member Steiner moved, seconded by Council Member Peterson, to adopt Res. No. 121-25 Setting Rates and Charges for Stormwater Utility Fund. Vote on the motion: Oachs, Peterson, Whitlock, Steiner, and Carlson aye, no nays. Motion carried.

Res. No. 122-25 Approving Plans and Specifications and Ordering Bids for Belgrade Avenue Improvement Project No. 23-02 CEF.

City Engineer Sarff reported that the plans are the same as those presented during the improvement hearing. He noted that the total estimated City cost is $3,039,000, which includes the City's portion of the Highway 169 interchange. The project will be paid for with $1,225,000 Federal

Funds, and an estimated $1,664,000 in Municipal State Aid Funds, with the remaining $150,000 being paid through City Bonding/or Special Assessment.

Council Member Whitlock moved, seconded by Council Member Steiner to Adopt Res. No. 122-25 Approving Plans and Specifications and Ordering Bids for Belgrade Avenue Improvement Project No. 23-02 CEF. Vote on the motion: Oachs, Peterson, Whitlock, Steiner, and Carlson aye, no nays. Motion carried.

Res. No. 123-25 Adopting North Mankato Parks Plan 2025.

City Planner Lassonde reported that the update is the official guiding document for the City's parks, trails, open spaces, and recreational facilities. Building on the 2015 Parks Plan, the update incorporates extensive public input, evaluates the current park system against state and national standards, identifies capital needs, and includes a 10-year Capital Improvement Plan with updated master plans for each park. The plan also outlines strategies for future park expansion in line with the City's Comprehensive Plan, population growth, and development patterns, ensuring the park system continues to meet community needs and expectations. Resident notification for the Parks Plan engagement included social media posts, City website updates, flyers at City Hall and the Taylor Library, and information included with utility bills. Three written comments were received from North Mankato residents. Comments focused on limited awareness of the surveys, concerns about project costs and funding transparency, and opposition to the proposed Highway 14 bridge in favor of prioritizing park improvements and dog-friendly amenities. Staff also received positive verbal feedback on the plan, though those comments were not submitted through the survey.

In response, staff noted that individual park surveys were available online from May to July 2024, with extended outreach for Caswell Sports facilities in 2025 due to low participation. Outreach included QR-code flyers in parks and multiple reminders through City communication channels, and the plan recommends creating ongoing engagement tools. To address funding concerns, an additional page was added to the draft plan explaining how park projects are funded through the General Fund, capital budgets, bonds, grants, and potential sales tax revenue.

Staff recommends that the City Council approve the resolution adopting the 2025 Parks Plan.

Council Member Whitlock moved, seconded by Council Member Oachs, to adopt Res. No. 123-25 Adopting North Mankato Parks Plan 2025. Vote on the motion: Oachs, Peterson, Whitlock, Steiner, and Carlson aye, no nays. Motion carried.

Approved the Lee Boulevard Corridor Study.

City Planner Lassonde reported that Mankato/North Mankato Area Planning Organization (MAPO), in coordination with North Mankato, conducted a study of Lee Boulevard from Lookout Drive to Belgrade Avenue, focusing on flood mitigation, traffic flow, intersection safety, and pedestrian/bicycle connections. After reviewing four alternatives and public input, Alternative 4 was recommended, which includes extending the floodwall near Lookout Drive, adding a single-lane roundabout at Lookout/Lee, converting and realigning Judson Bottom Road and South Avenue, and constructing a roundabout at Lee/Belgrade. Phase 1 improvements (Lookout/Lee roundabout and Judson/South realignment) are pursuing funding through federal grants such as the EDA Disaster Supplemental, BUILD, and Flood Hazard Mitigation programs, with Phase 2 (Lee/Belgrade roundabout) planned for future funding. City Council approval is recommended to formalize support for the study and its recommendations, aiding grant applications.

Council Member Oachs moved, seconded by Council Member Steiner, to approve the Lee Boulevard Corridor Study. Vote on the motion: Oachs, Peterson, Whitlock, Steiner, and Carlson aye, no nays. Motion carried.

Approved the Final Plat of Birchwood Cottages No. 2.

Community Development Director Fischer reported that in 2017, Birchwood Cottages was approved for development of an assisted living facility at Lee Boulevard and Lor Ray Drive, creating Lot 1 for development and dedicating Outlot A as ravine property. During the construction of a second building on Lot 1, it was discovered that the original ravine breakline had been incorrectly defined. After review, the City and surveyor determined that Lot 1 should be expanded and Outlot A reduced. To correct this, the applicants propose replating the property as Birchwood Cottages No. 2, increasing Lot 1 from 3.90 to 4.07 acres and reducing Outlot A from 2.96 to 2.79 acres. The increased lot size would allow a sidewalk to be built. The Planning Commission recommended approval.

Council Member Steiner moved, seconded by Council Member Oachs, to approve the Final Plat of Birchwood Cottages No. 2. Vote on the motion: Oachs, Peterson, Whitlock, Steiner, and Carlson aye, no nays. Motion carried.

Approved CU-6-25 Lot 1, Block 6, Maple Tree Estates.

City Planner Lassonde reported that Capital Land Development, LLC is requesting a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) for a Planned Unit Development (PUD) to construct 176 twin home and townhome units on 25.09 acres in the third phase of Maple Tree Estates, north of the proposed Sophia Lane. The PUD allows flexibility beyond standard R-3A zoning, including zero lot lines, narrower streets, and increased density (7 units per acre), to provide affordable housing while maintaining compliance with building setbacks and City Code. A Common Interest Community (CIC) with a homeowners' association (HOA) will manage shared property and amenities, while individual buyers own their units. Off-street parking will be provided via garages, driveways, and 209 shared guest spaces. A neighborhood meeting was held on January 22, 2025, with no objections from nearby residents. Staff recommend approval of CUP-6-25 with conditions including completion of developer-financed infrastructure, HOA responsibility for on-site maintenance, City-approved landscaping, properly striped parking, and rental licenses for all rental units.

Council Member Steiner moved, seconded by Council Member Whitlock, to Approve CU-6-25 Lot 1, Block 6, Maple Tree Estates. Vote on the motion: Oachs, Peterson, Whitlock, Steiner, and Carlson aye, no nays. Motion carried.

Approved Developer Agreement for Privately Financed Improvements, Maple Tree Cottages Planned Unit Development (North).

Community Development Director Fischer reported the development agreement is for the just-approved PUD and outlines the private financing, installation, and maintenance of the development.

Council Member Oachs moved, seconded by Council Member Steiner, to Approve the Agreement for Privately Financed Improvements, Maple Tree Cottages Planned Unit Development (North). Vote on the motion: Oachs, Peterson, Whitlock, Steiner, and Carlson aye, no nays. Motion carried.

Public Comments

Barb Church, 102 Wheeler Avenue, appeared before City Council and asked if there were any active NDA's and stated she does not believe the City should have NDA's because it is the tax payers money. She also noted that the City has a number of TIF agreements and asked if the City was looking into any affordable housing.

Tom Hagen, 927 Lake Street, stated he did not believe the City should proceed with the proposed new Public Works Building because it will put too much burden on residents. He stated that while the Parks Plan may be good, he did not believe the City followed any of its plans.

Danielle Bollman, 515 Page Avenue, appeared before Council and asked that the City work with Birchwood Cottages so that when they build the sidewalk behind the properties, it will ensure residents are safe.

Benton Bakke, 1243 Lake Street, appeared before Council and stated he did not think the Council was utilizing the Climate Action Plan and maybe the City could purchase electric vehicles.

Duane Rader, 715 Lyndale Street, appeared before Council and stated the City has two Corp lift stations, and they both have grates to reduce the debris that goes into the river. He also indicated that the Boulevard Tree Program assists residents in purchasing trees for their boulevards, but if the residents want to purchase and plan their own, they can certainly do that also.

City Administrator and Staff Comments

Community Development Director Fischer reported that the City in cooperation with the DNR removed 14 deer this fall. So in the past two years the City has removed 29 deer.

Community Development Director Fischer reported the City does not have any active NDAs.

Community Development Dirctor Fischer reported the City has had several meetings with interested developers who would like to build affordable housing.

Public Works Director Arnold reported the City planned to work separately with residents of reconstructions and would provide additional information to the homeowners impacted.

City Administrator McCann reported that information concerning the All Seasons Arena was included in the packet.

City Administrator McCann encouraged residents to sign up for TextMyGov to stay aware of Snow Emergencies.

City Administrator McCann reported closures on Range Street and Pierce and Lookout Drive in the next few weeks.

Mayor and Council Comments

Council Member Whitlock stated he was pleased that the Belgrade Avenue reconstruction was moving forward, it has taken 21 years for it to occur.

Mayor Carlson noted the Council was thankful for the opportunity to serve the community.

At 8:21 p.m., on a motion by Council Member Steiner, seconded by Council Member Whitlock, the Council Meeting adjourned.

_____
Mayor

_____
City Clerk