

MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF
THE INDEPENDENCE CITY COUNCIL
TUESDAY, JUNE 24, 2025 – 6:30 P.M.
City Hall Chambers

1. CALL TO ORDER

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, a regular meeting of the Independence City Council was called to order by Mayor Spencer at 6:30 p.m.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE.

Mayor Spencer led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. ROLL CALL

PRESENT: Spencer, McCoy, Betts, Fisher, Grotting
ABSENT: None
STAFF: City Administrator Kaltsas, Administrative Services Director Simon,
Public Works Supervisor Ben Lehman, WHPS Chief DuRose
VISITORS: See Sign in Sheet

4. ****CONSENT AGENDA****

All items listed under Consent Agenda are considered to be routine by Council and will be acted on by one motion. There will be no separate discussion of these items. If discussion is desired, that item will be removed from the Consent Agenda and will be considered separately.

- a. Approval of City Council Minutes from the June 3, 2025, Regular City Council Meeting.
- b. Approval of Accounts Payable (Batch #1; Checks Numbered 23703-23720, Batch #2, Checks Numbered 23739-23756 and Batch #3, Checks Numbered 23757-23768, *please note that Checks Numbered 23721-23738 were voided due to printing error*).
- c. Large Assembly Permit:
 - i. Zuhrah Shrine Horse Patrol – October 4, 2025.
- d. Recommended Funds Transfer:
 - i. **RESOLUTION No. 25-0624-01** – Considering a transfer of \$35,218 from *Fund 100 – General Fund* to *Fund 407 – Public Safety*.

Motion by Fisher, seconded by McCoy to approve the Consent Agenda. Ayes: Spencer, McCoy, Betts, Grotting and Fisher. Nays: None. Absent: None. Abstain: None.
MOTION DECLARED CARRIED. 5-0

5. Set Agenda – Anyone Not on the Agenda can be Placed Under Open/Misc.

6. Reports of Boards and Committees by Council and Staff.

Fisher attended the following meetings:

- None

Betts attended the following meetings:

- None

McCoy attended the following meetings:

- May 28th Sensible Land Use Comp Plan review – mandating higher density

Grotting attended the following meetings:

- None

Spencer attended the following meetings:

- Party in the Park
- NW League meeting of Mayors
- Meeting with Kristin Robbins & Kaltsas
- Meeting with Mayor Maas-Kuske and Fire Chief Denneson about fire merger
- Battle of the Badges Organization meeting

Kaltsas attended the following meetings:

- None outside what has been mentioned

Simon attended the following meetings:

- None

7. West Hennepin Public Safety – Director Matthew DuRose: Presentation of the May 2025 Activity Report.

Public Safety Director Matt DuRose presented the May 2025 activity report for West Hennepin Public Safety. He highlighted an increase in incidents, attributing it to catching up on burn permits and increased traffic enforcement. Notable incidents included:

1. A second-degree DWI arrest of an individual with two priors.
2. A package theft investigation.
3. An assault complaint involving acquainted individuals, which was referred for prosecution.
4. Assistance to Maple Plain Fire with a significant fire on May 25th on Geggen-Tina Road.

DuRose noted that West Hennepin Public Safety had no direct involvement in the recent investigations or manhunt related to Representative Horton Portman or Senator Hoffman, but staff was on standby.

He reminded the council about the upcoming Night to Unite event on Tuesday, August 5th, encouraging neighborhoods to register their parties.

Councilmember Betts inquired about the Citizens Academy, to which DuRose responded that they plan to bring it back, possibly next spring.

Councilmember Grotting raised a question about e-bikes and potential city ordinances. DuRose and City Administrator Kaltsas explained that while e-bikes haven't been a significant issue in

Independence, neighboring jurisdictions have faced challenges. They noted that current enforcement often relies on DNR statutes.

Mayor Spencer asked about the city's recent safety ranking. DuRose reported that West Hennepin, Maple Plain, and Independence were ranked as the second safest cities in Minnesota, up from a previous ranking of third.

8. BridgeVine Development – Discussion Relating to Developer’s Letter Requesting Reconsideration of Sidewalk Requirement.

City Administrator Mark Kaltsas presented the issue regarding the BridgeVine development's sidewalk requirement. He explained that while reviewing the public improvements for the development, it was discovered that a sidewalk was included and approved in the final plat and plan unit development. The developer had requested reconsideration of this requirement.

Kaltsas provided background on the sidewalk's inclusion, noting it was added as a condition by the Planning Commission during the preliminary stage of development. He explained that the sidewalk was intended to address pedestrian safety concerns in the city's most dense subdivision.

Council members discussed the history of the sidewalk requirement, with some recalling discussions about pedestrian safety and the unique nature of the development. Councilmember Betts initially expressed confusion about the sidewalk's location and purpose but was clarified by Kaltsas.

After discussion, the council decided to uphold the original requirement for the sidewalk.

Motion to maintain the sidewalk requirement as originally approved in the Bridgevine development plans was made by Grotting, seconded by McCoy. Ayes: Spencer, McCoy, Betts, Grotting and Fisher. Nays: None. Absent: None. Abstain. None. MOTION DECLARED CARRIED. 5-0

9. A proposed text amendment to the City of Independence Ordinance as follows:

- a. **ORDINANCE No. 2025-03** – Considering a text amendment to Chapter VII, Section 705 of the city’s ordinance relating to regulations governing On-Site Sewage Treatment. The amendment will consider minor changes that will bring the ordinance into alignment with recent changes to state statute and also establish provisions relating to the “type” of systems allowed as alternate systems in the city. Council will also consider establishment of language requiring more specific language pertaining to the transfer of properties in the city.

City Administrator Mark Kaltsas presented the proposed text amendment to the ordinance governing on-site sewage treatment. He highlighted the following changes:

1. Additional language in subdivision 2a2 allowing the city to be named on and draw from the escrow.
2. A change to the fee schedule for private on-site septic compliance escrow to \$45,000.
3. In section 705.08, a change from "within 3 years" to "within 12 months" for bringing a system into compliance after a notice of noncompliance.

Kaltsas noted that he had researched exceptions for when SSTS compliance inspections are not needed but found the current language to be consistent with other municipalities.

Motion to approve Ordinance 2025-03, the text amendment to Chapter VII, Section 705 of the City's Ordinance Relating to Regulations Governing On-Site Sewage Treatment by McCoy, seconded by Betts. Ayes: Spencer, McCoy, Betts, and Fisher. Nays: None. Absent: None. Abstain. None. MOTION DECLARED CARRIED. 5-0

- b. **RESOLUTION No. 25-0624-02** – Approving publication of a summary of Ordinance No. 2025-03.

Motion to approve Resolution No. 25-0624-02, approving the publication of a summary of Ordinance No. 2025-03, was made by Councilmember Betts, seconded by Councilmember Grotting. The motion carried unanimously. 5-0

As a separate motion, Kaltsas requested approval for the fee schedule change.

Motion to amend the fee schedule to include a \$45,000 private on-site septic on-site compliance escrow was made by Mayor Spencer, seconded by Councilmember Fisher. The motion carried unanimously. 5-0

10. Pioneer Sarah Creek Watershed Commission - Proposed 2026 Budget Review.

Mayor Spencer presented the preliminary 2026 budget from the Pioneer Sarah Creek Watershed Commission. He read a summary provided by Joe Baker, noting that while the overall budget increase was 2.5%, Independence's portion increased by 5.2% due to higher property value assessments.

Key points from the budget summary included:

1. A \$5,000 increase in Hennepin County staff allocation for administering the Watershed Based Implementation Funding (WBIF).
2. The watershed will receive \$241,000 over the next two years from the Board of Water and Soil.
3. The watershed is in a strong financial position to implement projects to improve water quality in Lake Independence, Lake Sarah, and Lake Rebecca.

Mayor Spencer also mentioned that Joe Baker had been nominated for a League of Minnesota Cities award, receiving support letters from various entities, though he was ultimately not selected.

Motion to recommend approval of the draft 2026 Pioneer Sarah Creek Watershed Commission budget was made by Mayor Spencer, seconded by Councilmember Betts. The motion carried unanimously. 5-0

11. Consideration of the 2025 Asphalt Maintenance and Repair Quotations.

City Administrator Mark Kaltsas presented the 2025 asphalt maintenance and repair quotations. He explained that the city annually inspects roads and identifies areas needing repair or maintenance. For this year, culvert and asphalt repairs were identified on Perkinsville Road, Woodhill Drive, and the intersection of Maine and County Road 90.

Kaltsas provided a breakdown of the recommended bids, totaling \$47,455, which is within the annual budget of \$55,000 for general maintenance. He noted that while competitive bids are required for projects over \$150,000, the city seeks multiple quotes for projects over \$25,000.

Motion to approve the asphalt maintenance and repair quotations as highlighted in Ben Lehman's report was made by Councilmember McCoy, seconded by Councilmember Fisher. The motion carried unanimously. 5-0

12. Open/Misc.

Mayor Spencer reminded everyone that the July 1st meeting had been canceled, with the next meeting scheduled for July 15th.

The council discussed rescheduling the August 5th meeting due to a conflict with Night to Unite. They agreed to move the meeting time to 5 PM to accommodate participation in Night to Unite events.

Motion to reschedule the August 5th meeting to 5 PM was made by Councilmember McCoy, seconded by Councilmember Betts. The motion carried unanimously. 5-0

13. Adjourn.

Motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Councilmember Fisher, seconded by Councilmember McCoy. The motion carried unanimously. 5-0

After the official adjournment, it was noted that it was Mayor Spencer's birthday. City Clerk Amber Simon had arranged for a cake to celebrate the occasion.

Meeting adjourned at 7:14 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Amber Simon/ Recording Secretary