



CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY MARCH 17, 2026

CITY COUNCIL MEETING TIME: 6:30 PM

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Brad Spencer called the meeting to order on Tuesday, March 17, 2026, at 6:30 PM

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Spencer led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. ROLL CALL

PRESENT: Spencer, McCoy, Fisher, Grotting (virtual)

ABSENT: Betts

STAFF: City Administrator Kaltsas (virtual), Administrative Services Director
Simon, WHPS Chief DuRose, Public Works Director Lehman,

VISITORS: See Sign-in Sheet

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

Mayor Spencer stated that the consent agenda items would be considered routine and acted on by one motion unless someone would like to remove an item for discussion. The consent agenda

- a. Approval of City Council Minutes from the March 3, 2026, Regular City Council Meeting.
- b. Approval of Accounts Payable (Batch # 1; Checks Numbered 24253-24274).

Motion by McCoy, seconded by Fisher to approve the consent agenda. Ayes: Spencer, Fisher and McCoy. Nays: None. Absent: Betts. Abstain: None. Motion Approved. 3-0

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

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

Council member Fisher Attended the following meeting:

- None

Council member McCoy Attended the following meeting:

- None

Council member Grotting Attended the following meeting:

- None

Mayor Spencer Attended the following meeting:

- Zoom Call with Ann Lenczewski and Hwy 12 Lobbyist team
- Itasca Water Wisdom – Strategies for Recreation Watercraft regulation. Jeff Forester/MN Lakes & Rivers, Terra Bowling/National SeaGrant Law Center, Matthew Miller/MNDNR Enforcement Duluth, MN
- Hwy 12 Safety Coalition
- MN Commissioner Daubenberger (transportation)with Mark, Khani, Ryan and Eric (MnDot)
- NW Hennepin County Mayors meeting with Josh Hoogland (Assessor)
- WMDTF Luncheon w/ Chief DuRose
- Capital Inv committee hearing

7. West Hennepin Public Safety – Director Matthew DuRose: Presentation of the February 2026 Activity Reports.

Director DuRose presented the February 2026 activity report, describing it as relatively short and uneventful, which he noted they don't mind from time to time. The report highlighted their recognition ceremony held at the beginning of the month, formally swearing in three officers and Sergeant Ebeling, which was attended by the public and was described as a fantastic event they look forward to hosting annually.

The report showed 15 criminal offenses reported in seven separate incidents using the new activity report format. DuRose noted that car versus deer incidents were down drastically from January, suggesting the deer may have gone back into hiding. Mayor Spencer complimented DuRose on the ceremony and thanked him for accompanying him to the state capitol presentation.

8. **PUBLIC HEARING:** To consider the proposal to issue tax-exempt revenue obligations, in one or more series (the “Bonds”), under and pursuant to Minnesota Statutes, Sections 469.152 to 469.1655, and Section 471.656, and loan the proceeds thereof to North Shore Gymnastics Association (the “Borrower”).

Mayor Spencer opened the public hearing and introduced Ryan Rohloff, executive director of North Shore Gymnastics Association.

Rohloff explained that he has been with North Shore for close to 30 years and has served as executive director for the last five years. The organization has served the west community for over 52 years as a nonprofit, currently serving roughly 1,000 students per week. Over 30 of their classes have waitlists of 30 or more athletes, leading to the decision to build their own facility as their lease is expiring.

They are currently in a 27,000 square foot warehouse and plan to build a 48,000 square foot facility that will service all their programming needs from 16 months old to 18 years old in recreational and competitive gymnastics. They also offer special needs programs and a ninja program combining gymnastics, martial arts, and parkour. The new facility will be built on 6.5 acres they recently purchased, including the eastern tract of the Proto Labs parking lot and land to the north.

Council Member McCoy complimented a photo in the packet featuring his granddaughter and praised North Shore's representation at a recent Arizona competition where they took third place. He expressed appreciation for the positive experience his granddaughter has had with the coaches. Rohloff noted that their average employee length is over 10 years, which is uncommon in many industries.

When asked about hosting meets, Rohloff explained they won't host competitions as it's too hard on equipment to take it down and set it back up, and larger venues like convention centers are better suited for competitions.

Mayor Spencer explained the city's role as conduit financing, which allows the organization to issue municipal bond debt that is not an obligation of the city but is issued under the city's municipal bond authority. He noted that Maple Plain is unable to issue the bonds as they have used up significant capacity with their own \$6.5 million road and infrastructure bonds, while Independence has no plans to issue municipal debt in 2026.

Motion by McCoy to close the public hearing. Seconded by Fisher. Motion carried. 4-0

Mayor Spencer noted that while they cannot act on the conduit financing that evening due to paperwork requirements, the organization appears to have the council's support.

9. Consider Adoption of an Amendment to the City's Surface Water Use Regulations on Lake Independence.
 - a. **ORDINANCE NO. 2026-02** – Amending the Lake Independence Surface Water Use Regulations.

Mayor Spencer provided extensive background on this issue, explaining it began nearly nine months ago with first council discussions in July. The Phase 2 study from Sea Grant and Saint Anthony Falls came out in late July, followed by a public hearing. The Independence Lake

Association started a survey in August, with preliminary results in August and final results in October.

He explained the jurisdictional complexity involving the joint powers agreement with Medina, requiring identical ordinances that must be submitted to the DNR for final approval. Independence initially sent a 600-foot offset ordinance to Medina, which was rejected 3-2, with Medina instead approving a two-step ordinance with triggers at 958.2 feet (600-foot offset) and 958.9 feet (whole lake no wake).

Mayor Spencer detailed his unsuccessful attempts to communicate with Medina's mayor, receiving no responses to multiple emails requesting meetings. He described the current ordinance proposal as an effort to "throw a rock at the window" and get negotiations moving again.

The proposed ordinance maintains the 600-foot offset at 958.2 feet but changes the whole lake trigger to 959.4 feet, one-tenth of a foot below the FEMA 100-year flood level, matching Lake Sarah's trigger level. This alignment addresses concerns from Lake Sarah residents about displaced boat traffic and potential zebra mussel contamination.

Mayor Spencer expressed concerns about the administrative challenges of a two-step ordinance and the fact that no other two-step ordinances exist in Minnesota. He discussed enforcement challenges and noted that lieutenant Raymond from the Sheriff's office gave the standard response that they would do their best to enforce whatever is passed.

Rich Mickschl from the Independence Lake Association board addressed the council, providing historical water level data showing the highest level reached in 73 years was 959.08 feet, noting they haven't hit the 50-year floodplain in that time. He supported a second trigger level but expressed concerns about the 959.4 level, preferring something closer to 959.0.

Mayor Spencer and Mickschl discussed historical high water events and the challenges of data accuracy over time. They noted that water levels reached the top of shoreline rock last year, which would have been about 959 feet.

Council members discussed various aspects including the reasonableness of tying triggers to FEMA flood levels versus arbitrary numbers. City Administrator Kaltsas, participating remotely, supported the 600-foot offset as beneficial for balancing lake use and noted Independence's history of water quality projects. He suggested focusing on addressing why the lake doesn't drain properly rather than perfecting the ordinance.

After extensive discussion about trigger levels, enforcement challenges, and the need to balance public access with shoreline protection, the council considered the ordinance as drafted.

Motion by McCoy to approve Ordinance 2026-02 as presented. Seconded by Fisher. Motion carried 4-0. Ayes: Spencer, Fisher, Grotting, McCoy. Nays: None. Absent: Betts. Abstain: None. Motion Approved. 4-0

10. Consider Approval of Federal Funding Request Support Letters For the Following Projects:

- a. Request for DOT Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements (CRISI) funding to Complete a Quiet Zone Railroad Crossing at Town Line Road and the Canadian Pacific Railroad.
- b. Request for Federal Community Project Funding Requested by Vineland National Center to Reconstruct Ihduhapi Road.

Mayor Spencer explained that their congressional representatives have significant discretionary funding available for special projects. The city is participating with Medina in requesting \$10 million for the Highway 12 restoration project.

He detailed the request for \$385,000 for the CP Rail quiet crossing at Town Line Road just west of Loretto, noting that similar crossings in Loretto and Medina have been completed. The project costs \$875,000 total with \$450,000 available from the county through 2028, but Medina is not interested in participating in the cost.

Mayor Spencer explained that Vineland Center is requesting \$1 million for paving of Vinland Road, which is sorely needed. He also mentioned they would likely support Corcoran's request for \$10 million for a shared law enforcement training center.

Motion by Fisher that the city supports those projects in letters. Seconded by McCoy. Ayes: Spencer, Fisher, McCoy, Grotting. Nays: None. Absent: Betts. Abstain: None. Motion Approved. 4-0

11. Open/Misc.

12. Adjourn.

Motion by Fisher, seconded by McCoy to adjourn the meeting at 8:02PM. Ayes: Spencer, Fisher, McCoy, Grotting. Nays: None. Absent: Betts. Abstain: None. Motion Approved. 4-0

