



CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY APRIL 21, 2026

CITY COUNCIL MEETING TIME: 6:30 PM

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Brad Spencer called the meeting to order on Tuesday, April 21, 2026, at 6:30 PM

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Spencer led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. ROLL CALL

PRESENT: Spencer, Betts, Fisher, Grotting

ABSENT: McCoy

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

VISITORS: Mayor Emeritus Johnson, Congressman Kevin Anderson, 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 April 7, 2026, Local Board of Appeals and Equalization City Council Meeting.
- b. Approval of City Council Minutes from the April 7, 2026, Regular City Council Meeting.
- c. Approval of Accounts Payable; (Batch #1 - Checks No. 24321-24349).
- d. Dust Control Bid Award: Consider approval of the 2026 dust control bids as recommended by the Public Works Director.
- e. Seal Coat Bid Award: Consider approval of the 2026 seal coat bids as recommended by the Public Works Director.

Motion by Betts, seconded by Fisher to approve the consent agenda. Ayes: Spencer, Fisher, Grotting and Betts. Nays: None. Absent: McCoy. Abstain: None. Motion Approved. 4-0

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:

- Celebration of Life of a City Resident

Council member Betts Attended the following meeting:

- None

Council member Grotting Attended the following meeting:

- None

Mayor Spencer Attended the following meeting:

- NW Hennepin League of municipality
- West Suburban pancake breakfast
- PSCWS TAC (zoom)
- Delano Scouts Cake Auction

Mark Kaltsas Attended the following meeting:

- Lobbyists

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

Director DuRose presented the March activity report for West Hennepin Public Safety. He noted that calls for service were up approximately 9-10 percent year-to-date compared to the previous year, representing the highest level seen in five years. He explained that much of this increase was due to proactive traffic enforcement, traffic stops, and DWI enforcement rather than an increase in crime or 911 calls.

DuRose reported on a death investigation that occurred on March 16th, where someone was found deceased in a ditch on County Road 6 near Nelson. With assistance from the sheriff's office, crime lab, and medical examiner, it was determined to be a suicide. The individual was discovered by two teenage snowmobilers and was not a local resident. DuRose noted the location was not visible from the road due to hills and the ditch configuration.

He also provided an update on a recent incident from that morning, involving a domestic situation in Minneapolis where a vehicle was stolen and a gun was involved. Wright County's flock cameras detected the vehicle traveling eastbound on Highway 12 from Delano. West Hennepin Public Safety located the vehicle and engaged in a high-speed pursuit through Baker Park, Highway 12 westbound through Maple Plain and Independence. Due to dangerous speeds

and heavy traffic, they terminated the pursuit before reaching Delano. Wright County later found the vehicle and set up a perimeter, but the individual was ultimately picked up and taken away from the area. DuRose emphasized there was no connection to Maple Plain or Independence.

On a personal note, DuRose announced that he had recently passed his probationary period after completing a full year of service. He expressed gratitude to the council and community for their warm welcome and support, noting that despite initial concerns about working with two mayors, two councils, and two city administrators, his experience had been extremely positive. He indicated his commitment to continuing in the role for many years.

The Mayor noted that as part of DuRose's probation ending, his annual review would be conducted in the following week by the police commission leaders (the Mayor and another leader). They had submitted a survey to staff for feedback and invited any council members to provide input for the review.

8. Hennepin County Commissioner Annual Visit – Commissioner Kevin Anderson.

Commissioner Anderson began by wishing everyone a happy Work Zone Awareness Week, emphasizing the importance of slowing down in construction areas to protect workers. He announced his next town hall would be held on June 16th at 6:00 PM, with Mayor Whelan joining, and invited all community members to attend.

Anderson discussed significant financial challenges facing Hennepin County due to federal cuts passed through HR 1. The county had to account for \$20 million in cuts this year to programs like SNAP and housing, representing about 2% of their property tax levy (every \$10 million equals about 1% of the property tax levy). Next year, they anticipate an additional \$40 million in identified cuts, with potential Medicaid cuts ranging from \$60-100 million, which could translate to 10-15% property tax increases.

To address these challenges, the county is reducing staff by approximately 5% across all departments and scrutinizing all programs to distinguish between mandated and non-mandated services. This will likely result in longer wait times for human services, health, and economic assistance. Non-essential services like libraries and economic development work may also face impacts.

Anderson provided an extensive update on Hennepin County Medical Center (HCMC), explaining that the county took over direct governance last year when the hospital board indicated it would close without significant additional funding. The hospital faces approximately \$100 million annually in uncompensated care, with county property taxpayers backfilling about \$40 million and the hospital managing the remaining \$60 million through cost controls and deferred maintenance.

Due to additional federal cuts, next year the hospital faces another \$100 million in cuts, potentially rising to \$200 million annually over the next ten years. The county is asking the

legislature to repurpose the ballpark sales tax, changing it from 0.15% to 1% to provide sustainable funding for the hospital's core mission as a public safety net hospital and level 1 trauma center.

Anderson acknowledged he doesn't particularly like sales taxes, calling them regressive, but noted they're better than property taxes and would capture revenue from users outside Hennepin County (about 30% of the hospital's uncompensated care comes from non-Hennepin County residents). He warned that without legislative action, HCMC will close this year, and the county doesn't have the means to keep it operating independently.

He reported recent executive leadership changes at the hospital, with co-administrator Dr. Crosson submitting his resignation and former county administrator David Huff stepping into an advisory role while Dr. Cummings was appointed as interim CEO. Anderson emphasized the catastrophic impact that losing the busiest level 1 trauma center in Minnesota would have on the entire healthcare system.

Regarding county road work in Independence, Anderson mentioned projects including overlay work on Highway 19, County Road 11 improvements, and ultra-thin bonded warehouse applications designed to extend road life. Most work focuses on maintenance rather than major reconstruction.

Anderson addressed concerns about the sheriff's department, stating clearly that he would not support anything that reduces their ability to perform their duties. He emphasized the importance of partnerships with the crime lab, violent offender task force, and 911 operations, committing to maintaining these resources for all Hennepin County communities.

He concluded by mentioning his role on the mosquito control board and the upcoming helicopter applications of non-toxic bacterial pellets designed to control mosquito larvae without affecting other ecology.

The Mayor raised concerns about the sheriff's department budget and the responsibility for backfilling shortfalls in Minneapolis police coverage. He distinguished between mutual aid and supplemental coverage, encouraging commissioners to find a way for Minneapolis to pay for additional coverage rather than having taxpayers subsidize a \$15 million rolling budget in the sheriff's department. The Mayor noted that when sheriff's department staff are deployed to downtown Minneapolis, there's less coverage available for outlying communities, creating both a service reduction and a cost increase for suburban taxpayers.

Anderson agreed this was problematic and noted the county encourages the sheriff to enter into contracts similar to those with Rockford, Greenfield, and Medicine Lake, which pay for contracted patrol services. He indicated the county would absolutely approve such contracts with Minneapolis and encouraged direct communication with the sheriff's office on this issue.

Council Member Grotting asked about issues that had packed a previous county meeting. Anderson explained this related to the county's garbage incinerator, which some residents want closed. He stated his belief that it's an essential part of waste management while acknowledging efforts to reduce overall garbage through their zero-waste plan, composting programs, and

recycling initiatives. He noted the 40-year-old facility is reaching end of life but emphasized the need to maintain operations while finding long-term solutions for waste management.

9. Open/Misc.

The Mayor took the opportunity to discuss the dust control and seal coat bids with Public Works Supervisor Ben Lehman, who was present. The dust control bids appeared normal, but there was significant variation in seal coat bids. Lehman explained that Allied's unusually low price was due to union subsidization as they sought to secure more jobs, while Pearson Brothers provided their normal pricing. He had requested re-bids to stay within budget, focusing on the most necessary roads rather than trying to complete all desired work.

The Mayor noted the importance of Lehman's cost-saving efforts for taxpayers, highlighting that the difference between the low bid (\$58,000) and high bid (\$103,000) demonstrated the value of competitive bidding. They confirmed the use of magnesium chloride for dust control this year, with Lehman explaining that the higher concentration (38% versus 30% active ingredients) and proper timing of application were more important factors than the specific type of chloride used.

The Mayor mentioned discussing remnants of a beaver dam in the culvert under Highway 90 with Hennepin County Public Works, confirming they had reached out to Lehman about the issue.

10. Adjourn.

Motion by Grotting, seconded by Fisher to adjourn the meeting at 7:15PM. Ayes: Spencer, Fisher, Betts, Grotting. Nays: None. Absent: McCoy. Abstain: None. Motion Approved. 4-0

