



CITY OF
GRAND RAPIDS
IT'S IN MINNESOTA'S NATURE

CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Monday, July 13, 2026

5:00 PM

Mayor Connelly called the meeting to order at 5:00 pm.

PRESENT: Mayor Tasha Connelly, Councilor Molly MacGregor, Councilor Tom Sutherland, Councilor Rick Blake, Councilor Dan Mertes

STAFF: Tom Pagel, Kim Gibeau, Chad Sterle, Andy Morgan, Will Richter, Carl Babich, Matt Wegwerth

POSITIVE HAPPENINGS IN THE CITY:

Notified of MN DNR Grant awarding \$500,000 towards the Blandin Park renovation project. Blandin Foundation has also awarded \$350,000 and IRRRB Demo grant help move this project along.

Itasca County received a grant for composting site.

PUBLIC FORUM:

No one from the public addressed the Council.

COUNCIL REPORTS:

Councilor Blake provided updates on meetings attended including Data Center presentation.

Councilor MacGregor provided overview of Trail Town event held at Tioga Beach and updated Council on Library funds, which have now surpassed the \$200,000 goal.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

1. Approve Council minutes for Monday, June 22, 2026 Worksession and Regular meetings.

Motion made by Councilor Mertes, Seconded by Councilor Sutherland to approve Council minutes as presented. Voting Yea: Mayor Connelly, Councilor MacGregor, Councilor Sutherland, Councilor Blake, Councilor Mertes

VERIFIED CLAIMS:

2. Approve the verified claims for the period June 16, 2026 to July 6, 2026 in the total amount of \$3,288,586.23.

Motion made by Councilor MacGregor, Seconded by Councilor Mertes to approve the verified claims as presented. Voting Yea: Mayor Connelly, Councilor MacGregor, Councilor Sutherland, Councilor Blake, Councilor Mertes

CONSENT AGENDA:

3. Consider adopting a resolution accepting a bench donation in memory of Manuel and Judy Jasso.

Adopted Resolution 26-49

4. Consider approving the School Resource Officer Agreement for the 2026-2027 school year with Independent School District #318
5. Consider adopting a resolution to accept \$454 donation for the Grand Rapids Police Reserve Unit, for volunteer services at 2026 U of M NCROC Visitors Day event.

Adopted Resolution 26-50

6. Consider Voiding Lost Accounts Payable Check and Issue Replacement Check.
7. Authorization to Enter into an Agreement with GovWell for Building Permit Software
8. Consider approval of a Janitorial Services Agreement with Willow Leaf Commercial Cleaning.
9. Consider allowing the Grand Rapids Fire department to obtain quotes for the purchase of a RDC, chainsaws, a skid unit for our side x side and miscellaneous firefighting equipment.

Motion made by Councilor Blake, Seconded by Councilor MacGregor to approve the Consent agenda as presented. Voting Yea: Mayor Connelly, Councilor MacGregor, Councilor Sutherland, Councilor Blake, Councilor Mertes

SET REGULAR AGENDA:

Motion made by Councilor MacGregor, Seconded by Councilor Blake to approve the Regular agenda as presented. Voting Yea: Mayor Connelly, Councilor MacGregor, Councilor Sutherland, Councilor Blake, Councilor Mertes

ENGINEERING PUBLIC WORKS:

10. Consider approving the purchase of a front-end loader for public works

Mr. Wegwerth detailed purchase, including this is replacement for 2011 machine and is budgeted as part of the Capital Improvement Plan.

Motion made by Councilor MacGregor, Seconded by Councilor Mertes to approve purchase of front-end loader for PW as presented. Voting Yea: Mayor Connelly, Councilor MacGregor, Councilor Sutherland, Councilor Blake, Councilor Mertes

FINANCE:

11. Consider approval of reimbursement resolution Water Treatment Renovation Project; and request the City Council issue G.O. bonds to finance related costs.

Motion made by Councilor MacGregor, Seconded by Councilor Blake to **adopt Resolution 26-51**, approving reimbursement for Water Treatment Renovation project and approve issuance of GO bonds to finance related costs. Voting Yea: Mayor Connelly, Councilor MacGregor, Councilor Sutherland, Councilor Blake, Councilor Mertes

PUBLIC HEARINGS: (scheduled to begin no earlier than 5:00 PM)

12. Conduct a Public Hearing to consider the adoption of an Ordinance amending and updating sections of Municipal Code Chapter 30 - Land Development Regulations (30-421 Definitions and 30-512 Table 2A District Development Regulations).

Mayor Connelly stated the purpose for the public hearing. Presentation given by Will Richter.

Motion made by Councilor Mertes, Seconded by Councilor MacGregor to open the public hearing. Voting Yea: Mayor Connelly, Councilor MacGregor, Councilor Sutherland, Councilor Blake, Councilor Mertes

No one from the public wished to speak, therefore the following motion was made.

Motion made by Councilor Blake, Seconded by Councilor Sutherland to close the public hearing. Voting Yea: Mayor Connelly, Councilor MacGregor, Councilor Sutherland, Councilor Blake, Councilor Mertes

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT:

13. Consider the recommendation of the Planning Commission regarding the adoption of an Ordinance amending and updating sections of Municipal Code Chapter 30 - Land Development Regulations (30-421 Definitions and 30-512 Table 2A District Development Regulations).

It was confirmed that all required notices have been made and there has been no correspondence received by the Clerk's office.

Motion made by Councilor Blake, Seconded by Councilor Mertes to **adopt City Ordinance 26-07-04**, amending and updating sections of Municipal Code Chapter 30 - Land Development Regulations. Voting Yea: Mayor Connelly, Councilor MacGregor, Councilor Sutherland, Councilor Blake, Councilor Mertes

PUBLIC HEARINGS: (scheduled to begin no earlier than 5:00 PM)

14. Conduct a Public Hearing to consider the rezoning of land from R-3 (Multi-family medium density) and GB (General Business) to R-4 (Multi-family high density).

Mayor Connelly stated the purpose of the hearing. Presentation provided by Will Richter.

Motion made by Councilor Mertes, Seconded by Councilor MacGregor to open the public hearing. Voting Yea: Mayor Connelly, Councilor MacGregor, Councilor Sutherland, Councilor Blake, Councilor Mertes

Lori Chrape, 607 NE11th Ave, expressed overall support for redeveloping the trailer park into a new apartment complex, noting that the property has long been an eyesore despite recent improvements. Ms. Chrape asked for clarification about the proposed rezoning from R-3 to R-4, specifically how it would affect building height and residential density, and raised concerns about increased traffic if the primary entrance were located on 11th Avenue, suggesting instead that access be provided from the commercial side near Slumberland to reduce congestion and noise in the residential neighborhood.

Paula Johnson, 601 NE 11th Avenue, voiced support for redeveloping the former trailer court while emphasizing concerns about neighborhood traffic. She agreed that the primary entrance should be located on the commercial side near Slumberland rather than on 11th Avenue to minimize traffic, noise, and disruption in the residential area. Drawing on her 24 years of living nearby, she recalled that when the trailer court was fully occupied, it generated heavy traffic, frequent litter, and regular police calls. While she appreciates the quieter neighborhood in recent years as the number of trailers has declined, she believes redeveloping the property would eliminate a longstanding eyesore and improve the neighborhood overall.

Motion made by Councilor Blake, Seconded by Councilor Sutherland to close the public hearing. Voting Yea: Mayor Connelly, Councilor MacGregor, Councilor Sutherland, Councilor Blake, Councilor Mertes

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT:

15. Consider the recommendation of the Planning Commission regarding adoption of an ordinance, amending the Official Zoning Map, by rezoning land from R-3 (Multi-family medium density) and GB (General Business) to R-4 (Multi-family high density).

It was confirmed that all required notices have been made and there has been no correspondence received by the Clerk's office.

Zoning Administrator, Will Richter, responded to questions from residents by explaining the differences between the proposed R-3 and R-4 zoning districts. Also addressed concerns about traffic access, explaining that no development plan has been submitted yet but acknowledging the residents' suggestion to locate the primary entrance on the commercial side of the property near Slumberland. This recommendation would be shared with any future developer.

Motion made by Councilor Blake, Seconded by Councilor Sutherland to **adopt City Ordinance 26-07-05**, amending official zoning map, rezoning land from R-3 and GB to R-4 as presented. Voting Yea: Mayor Connelly, Councilor MacGregor, Councilor Sutherland, Councilor Blake, Councilor Mertes

PUBLIC HEARINGS: (scheduled to begin no earlier than 5:00 PM)

16. Conduct a Public Hearing to consider the rezoning of land from LB (Limited Business) to GB (General Business).

Mayor Connelly stated the purpose of the public hearing. Will Richter provided presentation for rezone request.

Motion made by Councilor Mertes, Seconded by Councilor MacGregor to open the public hearing. Voting Yea: Mayor Connelly, Councilor MacGregor, Councilor Sutherland, Councilor Blake, Councilor Mertes

No one from the public wished to speak, therefore the following motion was made.

Motion made by Councilor Blake, Seconded by Councilor MacGregor to close the public hearing. Voting Yea: Mayor Connelly, Councilor MacGregor, Councilor Sutherland, Councilor Blake, Councilor Mertes

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT:

17. Consider the recommendation of the Planning Commission regarding adoption of an ordinance, amending the Official Zoning Map, by rezoning land from LB (Limited Business) to GB (General Business).

It was confirmed that all required notices have been made and there has been no correspondence received by the Clerk's office.

Motion made by Councilor MacGregor, Seconded by Councilor Mertes to **adopt City Ordinance 26-07-06**, amending official zoning map, rezoning land from LB to GB as presented. Voting Yea: Mayor Connelly, Councilor MacGregor, Councilor Sutherland, Councilor Blake, Councilor Mertes

There be no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:48 PM.

Respectfully submitted:

Kimberly Gibeau, City Clerk