



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

CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Monday, December 15, 2025

5:00 PM

Mayor Connelly called the meeting to order at 5:29 PM.

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

STAFF: Tom Pagel, Kimberly Gibeau, Chad Sterle, Amy Dettmer, Chery Pierzina, Andy Morgan, Kevin Ott, Carl Babich.

POSITIVE HAPPENINGS IN THE CITY:

Mayor Connelly acknowledged City employees for years of service. The Mayor stated that the annual Shop with a Hero program took place last Sunday at Walmart. The event was reported to be highly successful based on feedback received through a Council email and from the community at large. The program provided Christmas gifts for children in the area and was made possible entirely through donations and volunteer support. No taxpayer funds were used for this event. Council noted that the Police Department will later formally accept donations related to the program under a subsequent agenda item. Council expressed appreciation to all volunteers, donors, and participants who contributed to the success of the Shop with a Hero program and recognized it as a valuable community event supporting local children during the holiday season.

Councilor Blake reported that on Friday, the President signed into law the Miracle on Ice Congressional Gold Medal Act. The legislation honors the 1980 United States Olympic men's hockey team for its historic victory over the Soviet Union at the Winter Olympics. Bill Baker, a member of the 1980 team, is a Grand Rapids resident, and extended acknowledgment and congratulations for his role in this historic achievement.

PUBLIC FORUM:

No one from the public wished to speak.

COUNCIL REPORTS:

Councilor Blake reported attending the RAMS Annual Meeting on December 9th. During the meeting, Tony Sertich of the Northland Foundation served as the keynote speaker, and Roy Smith was honored posthumously.

Councilor Blake further reported attending the first meeting of the MnDOT State Rules Advisory Committee earlier that day. The committee establishes transportation-related rules affecting city, county, and state entities. The advisory process is anticipated to span approximately 18 months, with meetings

held monthly. It was noted that Matt Wegwerth, City Engineer, is aware of the committee's work and may assist during the process.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

1. Approve Council minutes for Monday, December 1, 2025 Worksession and Regular meetings.

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

VERIFIED CLAIMS:

2. Approve the verified claims for the period November 25, 2025 to December 8, 2025 in the amount of \$319,787.35.

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

CONSENT AGENDA:

3. Consider approving the Workers Compensation coverage through the League of Minnesota Cities Insurance Trust.
4. Consider revised job description for Library Public Services Clerk I
5. Consider rehiring PT Seasonal Civic Center Employee, Matthew Brenny, and new hires - PT Seasonal Civic Center Employee, Gage Meeks and Maintenance – Winter (Public Works) Timothy Jobe.
6. Consider approving temporary liquor licenses for MacRostie Art Center for 2026 First Friday events.
7. Consider approving temporary liquor licenses for Itasca Curling Association events in 2026.
8. Consider approving starter ranger contract with David Johnson
9. Consider approving an agreement with SEH for 2026 miscellaneous services.
10. Consider approving 2026 Taxi Licenses
11. Approve 2026 Theatre License for Mann Theatres Inc.
12. Consider a resolution approving the Final Plat for Crystal Lake Estates Second Addition and authorize the Mayor and City Clerk to sign plat documents.

Adopted Resolution 25-78

13. Consider adopting a Resolution Establishing 2026 Compensation for City of Grand Rapids Exempt & Non-Exempt Non-Represented Employees.

Adopted Resolution 25-79

14. Adopt the official City Calendar for 2026
15. Consider Voiding Lost Accounts Payable Check and Issue Replacement Check.
16. Consider authorizing the Police Department to enter contract with service provider Angie Baratto MA, LPCC.
17. Consider authorizing the Police Department to enter into contract with service provider Steven E. Breitbarth, M. Div., LMFT.
18. Consider authorizing the Police Department to enter into contract with service provider Borealis Health / Jennie Bata DNP.
19. Consider approving on-sale liquor license for Thunder Alley XL.

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

ADMINISTRATION:

20. Consider approving resolutions adopting the 2024 Tax Levy Payable 2025, 2025 General Fund Budgets, 2025 Special Revenue Budgets and 2025 Enterprise Budgets.

Corrections regarding dates on RCA noted.

Administrator Pagel presented information regarding the 2025 tax levy payable in 2026, the 2026 General Fund Budget, 2026 Special Revenue Budget, and 2026 Enterprise Budget, including a comparison of levy amounts year over year.

The proposed levy includes the use of \$118,566 in fund balance. When accounting for fiscal disparities, this results in an identical net levy for payable 2026 compared to payable 2025.

Administrator Pagel explained that significant budget reductions were required to reach the proposed levy. It was noted that achieving a zero percent net levy increase is uncommon compared to other municipalities and counties statewide.

Motion made by Councilor Mertes, Seconded by Councilor MacGregor to **adopt Resolutions 25-80 through 25-93**, approving 2026 budgets and adopting the final levy, payable in 2026. Voting Yea: Mayor Connelly, Councilor MacGregor, Councilor Blake, Councilor Mertes

POLICE:

21. Consider adopting a resolution accepting thirteen (13) separate donations totaling \$4,700 to support Grand Rapids Police Shop with a Hero Program.

Motion made by Councilor MacGregor, Seconded by Councilor Mertes to **adopt Resolution 25-94**, accepting donations for the Shop with a Hero program. Voting Yea: Mayor Connelly, Councilor MacGregor, Councilor Blake, Councilor Mertes

CITY COUNCIL:

22. Consider appointing applicants to Boards & Commissions

Councilor MacGregor has contacted all three applicants to the Library Board and recommends re-appointment for Jennifer Barr, Sheena Richards and Janelle Dobbs for three year terms expiring December 31, 2028.

Councilor Blake contacted the applicant who was requesting re-appointment to the Police Community Advisory Board and recommends Tom Nuestrom for another term expiring December 31, 2028.

Motion made by Councilor MacGregor, Seconded by Councilor Mertes to approve appointments to Library Board and Police Community Advisory Board as recommended. Voting Yea: Mayor Connelly, Councilor MacGregor, Councilor Blake, Councilor Mertes

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 6:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted:

Kimberly Gibeau, City Clerk