



City Council Meeting Agenda

March 17, 2026 at 5:30 PM

St. James City Hall – Council Chambers

1. **CALL TO ORDER**
2. **ROLL CALL:** Mayor Christopher Whitehead, Councilpersons: Susan Craig, Kathleen Hanson, Paul Harris, Stephen Lindee
3. **DETERMINATION OF QUORUM**
4. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**
 - A. Consideration to Approve Minutes – 03.10.2026 Council Meeting
5. **CONSENT ITEMS**
 - A. Payment of Claims and ACH Payments
6. **SCHEDULED BID LETTING**
7. **SCHEDULED PUBLIC HEARINGS**
8. **ADMINISTRATIVE APPEALS**
9. **FINANCIAL REPORTS**
10. **LICENSES AND PERMITS**
11. **OLD BUSINESS**
12. **NEW BUSINESS**
 - A. Consideration to Approve Resolution 03.26.07 - Expressing Appreciation to Tracy Anderson Upon Her Retirement
 - B. Consideration to Approve Resolution 03.26.08 - Approving the St. James CVB Budget for the Year 2026
 - C. Consideration to Discuss and Approve Resolution 03.26.09 - Appointing City Council Vacancy
 - D. Proposed Fiber-to-the-Home Network Expansion Presentation, Fidium Fiber
13. **REPORT OF BOARDS, COMMISSIONS AND DEPARTMENT HEADS**
14. **ADJOURNMENT**

March 17, 2026

ITEM: Approval of Minutes – 03.10.2026 Council Minutes

BACKGROUND: The Minutes of March 10, 2026, City Council Meeting are attached for review and approval.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Approve/Deny Minutes.



City Council Meeting Minutes

March 10, 2026 at 5:30 PM

St. James City Hall – Council Chambers

1. CALL TO ORDER

Meeting called to order at 5:30 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL: Mayor Christopher Whitehead, Councilpersons: Susan Craig, Kathleen Hanson, Paul Harris, Stephen Lindee

PRESENT: Mayor Christopher Whitehead, Councilpersons Sue Craig, Kathleen Hanson, Stephen Lindee

ABSENT: Paul Harris

STAFF PRESENT: City Manager Amanda Knoll, City Attorney Mike Kircher

3. DETERMINATION OF QUORUM

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. Consideration to Approve Minutes – 02.17.2026 Council Meeting

Motion made by Lindee, Seconded by Hanson.

Voting Yea: Craig, Hanson, Lindee

Upon voice vote, it was unanimously approved.

B. Consideration to Approve Minutes – 02.17.2026 Council Work Session Meeting

Motion made by Lindee, Seconded by Hanson.

Voting Yea: Craig, Hanson, Lindee

Upon voice vote, it was unanimously approved.

5. CONSENT ITEMS

A. Payment of Claims and ACH Payments

Payment of Claims totaling \$770,534.61 is as follows: \$336,276.20 Check No. 705970 - 7060502 and \$434,258.41 ACH No. 2250 - 2264 as listed in the check register.

Motion made by Craig, Seconded by Hanson.

Voting Yea: Craig, Hanson, Lindee

Upon voice vote, it was unanimously approved.

6. SCHEDULED BID LETTING

7. SCHEDULED PUBLIC HEARINGS

8. ADMINISTRATIVE APPEALS

9. FINANCIAL REPORTS

10. LICENSES AND PERMITS

A. Consideration to Approve Gambling Permit - St. James Youth Baseball Association

A gambling permit application has been submitted for the St. James Youth Baseball Association to host a raffle at the St. James American Legion located at 620 1st Avenue South on March 21, 2026.

Motion made by Lindee, Seconded by Hanson.

Voting Yea: Craig, Hanson, Lindee

Upon voice vote, it was unanimously approved.

B. Consideration to Approve Gambling Permit - St. James Ambulance Association

A gambling permit application has been submitted for the St. James Ambulance Association to host a raffle at the St. James High School located at 1001 10th Avenue North on May 4, 2026

Motion made by Hanson, Seconded by Craig.

Voting Yea: Craig, Hanson, Lindee

Upon voice vote, it was unanimously approved.

11. OLD BUSINESS

12. NEW BUSINESS

A. Consideration to Approve Resolution 03.26.01 - Authorizing Certain Tax Forfeited Properties Located in the City of St. James be Returned to Private Ownership and Requesting Certain Tax Forfeited Lots be Conveyed to the City

This resolution authorizes certain tax forfeited properties located in the City of St. James be returned to private ownership and requesting certain tax forfeited lots be conveyed to the City.

Motion made by Craig, Seconded by Hanson.

Voting Yea: Craig, Hanson, Lindee

Whereupon Mayor Christopher Whitehead declared Resolution 03.26.01 duly passed 3-0.

B. Consideration to Approve Resolution 03.26.02 - Approving Plans and Specifications and Ordering Advertising for Bids; Project No. 24X.139514 Airport 6 Unit T Hangar Project

This resolution approves plans and specifications and orders advertising for bids for Project No. 24X.139514 Airport 6 Unit T Hangar Project.

Motion made by Hanson, Seconded by Lindee.

Voting Yea: Craig, Hanson, Lindee

Whereupon Mayor Christopher Whitehead declared Resolution 03.26.02 duly passed 3-0.

C. Consideration to Approve Resolution 03.26.03 - Authorizing the EMS Director to File an Application and Administer Management of Grant with the State of Minnesota, Office of Emergency Medical Services

This resolution authorizes the EMS Director to file an application and administer management of grant with the State of Minnesota, Office of Emergency Medical Services.

Motion made by Craig, Seconded by Hanson.

Voting Yea: Craig, Hanson, Lindee

Whereupon Mayor Christopher Whitehead declared Resolution 03.26.03 duly passed 3-0.

- D. Consideration to Approve Resolution 03.26.04 - Authorizing the St. James Economic Development Director, Light Superintendent, and City Manager to Enter into the Grant Contract Agreement with the State of Minnesota, Acting through its Department of Commerce

This resolution authorizes the St. James Economic Development Director, Light Superintendent and City Manager to enter into the grant contract agreement with the State of MN for a solar panel project at the Water Treatment Plant.

Motion made by Hanson, Seconded by Craig.

Voting Yea: Craig, Hanson, Lindee

Whereupon Mayor Christopher Whitehead declared Resolution 03.26.04 duly passed 3-0.

- E. Consideration to Approve Resolution 03.26.05 - Authorizing the St. James Economic Development Director, Light Superintendent, and City Manager to Enter into the Grant Contract Agreement with the State of Minnesota, Acting through its Department of Commerce

This resolution authorizes the Economic Development Director, Light Superintendent, and City Manager to enter into the Grant Agreement with the State of Minnesota for the solar panel project at the Generation Plant.

Motion made by Lindee, Seconded by Hanson.

Voting Yea: Craig, Hanson, Lindee

Whereupon Mayor Christopher Whitehead declared Resolution 03.26.05 duly passed 3-0.

- F. Consideration to Approve Resolution 03.26.06 - Declaring Abandoned and Surplus Property and Ordering the Disposal

This resolution declares the 2005 Sterling Tanker (Wastewater) and the 1999 Chevy K3500HD Turbo Diesel (Fire Department) as excess property and orders the disposal of said property through the Minnesota Surplus Service Program.

Motion made by Craig, Seconded by Lindee.

Voting Yea: Craig, Hanson, Lindee

Whereupon Mayor Christopher Whitehead declared Resolution 03.26.06 duly passed 3-0.

- G. Consideration to Approve Resolution 03.26.07 - Approving the Preliminary and Final Plat of Jorgensen Subdivision and Approving the Street Name

This item was removed the agenda pending more information.

- H. Consideration to Discussion and Approve Creation of Council Appointed Committee - Watonwan County Cares

Council discussed the structure and creation of a new committee with Watonwan County Cares group to provide a forum for discussion and information sharing. Appointments to the committee will be discussed at the next council meeting.

- I. Council Vacancy Applicant Interviews: Jake Beckius, David Forsyth, Lucas Sauer, Kelly Schiller, Mary Shupe, and Liam Skogen

The following residents of Ward 2 have applied for the vacant seat and were interviewed by council: Jake Beckius, David Forsyth, Lucas Sauer, Kelly Schiller, Mary Shupe, and Liam Skogen

Council will appoint the vacant seat at the next meeting.

13. REPORT OF BOARDS, COMMISSIONS AND DEPARTMENT HEADS

14. ADJOURNMENT

Motion made by Lindee, Seconded by Hanson.

Voting Yea: Craig, Hanson, Lindee

All Yea - motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 6:22 p.m.

Kathy Grothem, Deputy City Clerk

March 17, 2026

ITEM: New Business – Resolution 03.26.07: Expressing Appreciation to Tracy Anderson Upon Her Retirement

BACKGROUND: Tracy Anderson, EMT with the St. James Ambulance, has given her intent to retire from the City of St. James effective March 31, 2026. Anderson has been employed with the city for nearly 38 years. Please help congratulate her on her retirement.

ACTION REQUESTED: Approve/Deny Resolution.

**State of Minnesota
County of Watonwan**

RESOLUTION NO. 03.26.07

**RESOLUTION EXPRESSING APPRECIATION TO TRACY ANDERSON UPON HER
RETIREMENT**

WHEREAS, Tracy Anderson joined the St. James Ambulance on July 1, 1988 and has faithfully served the residents of St. James and the surrounding communities as an Emergency Medical Technician for nearly thirty-eight (38) years; and

AND WHEREAS, throughout her years of service, Tracy Anderson has demonstrated a strong committee to providing compassionate, professional, and dependable emergency medical care to those in need; and

AND WHEREAS, Tracy Anderson has been recognized by her fellow crew members and city staff as a dedicated team member whose positive attitude, reliability, and work ethic have contributed greatly to the success and strength of the St. James Ambulance Service; and

AND WHEREAS, the City of St. James and the community it serves have greatly benefited from Tracy Anderson’s years of service, dedication, and willingness to respond whenever called upon.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ST. JAMES, MINNESOTA, that the City of St. James hereby expresses its sincere appreciation and gratitude to Tracy Anderson for her nearly thirty-eight (38) years of outstanding service and dedication to the St. James Ambulance Service and the community.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the City of St. James extends its best wishes to Tracy Anderson for a long, healthy, and well-deserved retirement.

Adopted by the City Council this 17th day of March 2026.

Christopher Whitehead, Mayor

ATTEST:

Kathy Grothem, Deputy City Clerk

March 17, 2026

ITEM: New Business – Resolution 03.26.08: Approving the St. James CVB Budget for the Year 2026

BACKGROUND: Annually the St. James Convention and Visitors Bureau presents to the city council its budget for review and acceptance.

The funds to support the CVB come from the 2% lodging tax paid by the customers of the Super 8 motel and the St. James Campground. In addition, funds are raised for special projects by hosting fundraisers or soliciting funds from local businesses.

The 2026 budget includes annual membership dues to resort and lodging associations, annual promotional ads in regional tourism magazines, Southern MN Tourism Assoc. and misc. ads, billboard expenses, visit/live guide fees and lead visitor packets.

ACTION REQUESTED: Approve/Deny Resolution.

State of Minnesota
 County of Watonwan

RESOLUTION NO. 03.26.08

RESOLUTION APPROVING THE ST. JAMES CVB BUDGET FOR THE YEAR 2026

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ST. JAMES, MINNESOTA, as follows:

| Income | 2026 Budget |
|--|--------------------|
| Lodging Tax | \$13,500.00 |
| Donations | \$0.00 |
| Grants | \$0.00 |
| Marketing Income | \$350.00 |
| Total General & Special Revenue | \$13,850.00 |

| Expenses | 2025 Budget |
|----------------------------------|--------------------|
| Dues | |
| Hospitality Minnesota | \$450.00 |
| Promotional Items | |
| Southern Minnesota Explorer | \$0.00 |
| MN Trails Ads - Winter | \$900.00 |
| CVB Regional Meeting | |
| SMTA Regional Meeting Attendance | \$375.00 |
| SMTA Regional Meeting Mileage | \$575.00 |
| Miscellaneous | |
| Insurance | \$600.00 |
| BikeShare | \$500.00 |
| Farmer's Market | \$250.00 |
| Marketing St. James Sign | \$2,050.00 |
| Advertising | \$6,000.00 |
| Postage | \$350.00 |
| Visitor's Guide | \$900.00 |
| SHRPA | \$0.00 |
| Kiosk | \$0.00 |
| Donations | \$400.00 |
| Website | \$400.00 |
| Petty Cash | \$0.00 |
| Misc Expense | \$100.00 |
| Total Enterprise Funds | \$13,850.00 |

Adopted by the City Council this 17th day of March 2026.

Christopher Whitehead, Mayor

ATTEST:

Kathy Grothem, Deputy City Clerk



February 2026

To whom it may concern,

Attached is the proposed budget for the St. James Area Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB) for year 2026. The proposed budget for 2026 has been approved by the CVB board and must be annually approved by the St. James Area Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors and the St. James City Council. The budget may only be approved or disapproved in total.

The St. James CVB was established in 2006 by an agreement made and entered between the St. James Area Chamber of Commerce and the City of St. James. The St. James CVB is funded by the collection of a 2% lodging tax imposed on lodging facilities in St. James including the Super 8 and Tiell Campground. The purpose of the CVB is to advance the impact of tourism in the St. James area by attracting visitors.

| | Position | Name | Representing |
|---|--------------------|-----------------|------------------------------------|
| • | Executive Director | Sarah Gustafson | Chamber of Commerce |
| • | President | Tammy Stevens | City of St. James/Tiell Campground |
| • | Vice President | Amanda Glass | City Manager |
| • | Director | Sam Chuudari | Super 8 |
| • | Director | Pam Runge | Chamber Member |
| • | Director | Beth Schwanz | Chamber Member |
| • | Director | Kayla Hanson | Chamber Member |
| • | Director | Steve Heil | District 840 Superintendent |

The 2026 budget includes annual ads for events such as Railroad Days, Multi-Culture Fiesta, Winter Carnival, Music in the Park & miscellaneous ads. Promotional ads in Southern Minnesota Explore magazine, Explore MN and MN Trails magazine, travel expenses for board members and visitor packets. New last year: Yodel which is an event platform on the discoverstjamesmn.com website.

Thank you for taking the time to consider the approval of our budget.
Sincerely,

Tammy Stevens
President, St. James Convention & Visitors Bureau
Community Outreach/ Marketing Director, City of St. James

Convention & Visitors Bureau 2026 Budget

| Income | 2026 Budget |
|---|---------------------|
| Lodging tax | \$13,500.00 |
| Donations | |
| Grants | |
| | |
| Marketing St. James | |
| Farmers Market | \$250.00 |
| Bikeshare | \$100.00 |
| | |
| Total Income | \$ 13,850.00 |
| | |
| Expenses | |
| Dues | |
| Hospitality Minnesota | \$ 450.00 |
| | |
| Promotional Items | |
| Southern Minnesota Explorer | \$ 0.00 |
| MN Trails Ad - Winter | \$ 900.00 |
| | |
| CVB Regional Meeting Expenses | |
| SMTA Regional Meeting Expense- Attendance | \$ 375.00 |
| SMTA Regional Meeting Expense-Mileage | \$ 575.00 |
| | |
| Miscellaneous | |
| Insurance | \$ 600.00 |
| BikeShare (maint & 1/2 annual fee) | \$ 500.00 |
| Farmers Market | \$ 250.00 |
| Marketing St. James Sign | \$ 2,050.00 |
| Advertising | \$ 6,000.00 |
| Postage: LEADS, Visitors Packets | \$ 350.00 |
| Vistors Guide | \$ 900.00 |
| Kiosk | |
| Donations | \$ 400.00 |
| Website / Internet | \$ 400.00 |
| Petty Cash | |
| misc expense | \$ 100.00 |
| | |
| Total Expenses | \$ 13,850.00 |
| Net Income (loss) | \$ 0.00 |
| | |

March 17, 2026

ITEM: New Business – Resolution 03.26.09: Appointing City Council Vacancy

BACKGROUND: Following the City Council interviews for the vacant council position at the meeting held on March 10, 2026, council members individually submitted their rankings of the applicants to the City Manager. In order to assist the Council in reviewing the information in a clear and organized manner, the City Manager compiled the rankings into a summary format.

Each council member ranked the six applicants in order of preference from 1 (most preferred) to 6 (least preferred):

| | Interviewer 1 | Interviewer 2 | Interviewer 3 | Interviewer 4 | Interviewer 5 |
|------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| Candidate | | | | | |
| Jake Beckius | 3 | 2 | 1 | 5 | 5 |
| David Forsyth | 6 | 6 | 6 | 4 | 4 |
| Lucas Sauer | 2 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 |
| Kelly Schiller | 4 | 5 | 5 | 6 | 6 |
| Mary Shupe | 5 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 |
| Liam Skogen | 1 | 4 | 4 | 2 | 1 |

Points were assigned as follows:

| Ranking Position | Points Awarded |
|------------------|----------------|
| 1st Choice | 6 |
| 2nd Choice | 5 |
| 3rd Choice | 4 |
| 4th Choice | 3 |
| 5th Choice | 2 |
| 6th Choice | 1 |

Points assigned from each council member's ranking were then total for each candidate to produce an overall score:

| | Interviewer 1 | Interviewer 2 | Interviewer 3 | Interviewer 4 | Interviewer 5 | Total Points |
|------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|
| Candidate | | | | | | |
| Jake Beckius | 4 | 5 | 6 | 2 | 2 | 19 |
| David Forsyth | 1 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 3 | 9 |
| Lucas Sauer | 5 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 21 |
| Kelly Schiller | 3 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 9 |
| Mary Shupe | 2 | 6 | 5 | 6 | 5 | 24 |
| Liam Skogen | 6 | 3 | 3 | 5 | 6 | 23 |

This summary was prepared administratively to:

- Organize the ranking information submitted by Council Members
- Provide neutral overview of collective ranking results.
- Assist the Council in reviewing the information prior to discussion.

The summary is provided for informational purposes only. The summary of rankings does not determine the appointment and does not replace the Council's formal decision-making process. The appointment to fill the council vacancy will occur through motion and majority vote of the City Council. Council members may discuss any candidate at the council meeting and are not bound by the summarized rankings when making a final decision.

ACTION REQUESTED: Approve/Deny Resolution.

**State of Minnesota
County of Watonwan**

RESOLUTION NO. 03.26.09

RESOLUTION APPOINTING CITY COUNCIL VACANCY

WHEREAS, a vacancy exists on the St. James City Council for the Ward 2 seat following the resignation of Council Member Hannah Rushing; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Minnesota Statutes and the St. James City Charter, the City Council is authorized to appoint an individual to fill the vacancy until the next regular municipal election or until a successor is elected and qualified; and

WHEREAS, the City Council has reviewed the applications and conducted interviews with interested applicants.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ST. JAMES, MINNESOTA, that the City Council appoints, _____, a resident of Ward 2, is hereby appointed to fill the vacant Ward 2 seat on the St. James City Council, effective April 7, 2026, and shall serve until the terms expires, in accordance with Minnesota law.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the appointed individual shall take the oath of office on April 7, 2026, prior to assuming the duties of the office of City Council Member.

Adopted by the City Council this 17th day of March 2026.

Christopher Whitehead, Mayor

ATTEST:

Kathy Grothem, Deputy City Clerk

March 17, 2026

ITEM: New Business – Proposed Fiber-to-the-Home Network Expansion Presentation, Fidium Fiber

BACKGROUND: Representatives from Fidium Fiber will be present to provide an overview of their proposed Fiber-to-the-Home (FTTH) network expansion.

Fidium Fiber intends to construct fiber optic infrastructure to serve approximately 2,000 locations within the community, with construction anticipated to begin Spring 2026.

ACTION REQUESTED: Approve/Deny Proposed Expansion



Town of St James

Dear Board Member,

We are pleased to announced that Fidium Fiber has decided to build our award-winning Fiber To The Home network within your community. This network will give you access to greater internet speeds, better reliability of service, and more cost-effective levels of service to select from to better meet your needs.

As part of this on-going effort, Fidium Fiber and its contractors are being tasked with building the network to serve 2000 locations within the City of St James. The project is slated to start in spring of 2026. Construction requires installing new fiber optic lines along roads or in public utility areas. Crews will be working along the edge of private property, within the public right-of-way, and/or within the public utility easements. We will place new dirt following our installation and will seed restoring any area to its original condition.

Today, more than 25,000 homes and businesses in Minnesota have access to Fidium Fiber. Fiber broadband is a future-proof network that is more sustainable than other technologies with significantly lower power needs and reduced use of plastics. Fiber optic cables are not susceptible to corrosion or electrical interference making them more resilient to extreme weather conditions, including high winds, lightning strikes and floods. Fiber networks require less overall repair and maintenance and boasts up to 67% faster repair times than other wired technologies.

To learn more about the fiber internet construction process and sign up for updates on our progress, visit FidiumFiber.com. Residents with specific construction questions or concerns should contact 507-387-1858.

Fidum Fiber

St James MN



Google Earth

Image © 2026 Airbus

2000 ft