PUBLIC HEARING #1 & #2, REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
AUGUST 10, 2026, 5:30 PM
HACKENSACK COMMUNITY CENTER
310 LAKE AVENUE NORTH, HACKENSACK, MN

MINUTES

1. Call to Order

The Regular Meeting of the Hackensack City Council was called to order on Monday, August 10, 2026, at 5:30 PM at the Hackensack Community Center, 310 Lake Avenue North, Hackensack, MN

1.1 Roll Call

Mayor Kennedy noted that two public hearings would precede the regular council meeting agenda.

Present: Mayor Kennedy, Council Member Bruce Reeve, Council Member Lundgren, Council Member Karlisch, Council Member Jim Schnieder

Absent: None

Others Present: Gail DeBoer (Pilot Independent), Zach Thoma (Moore Engineering), Angela Fritze, Loren Fritze, Rhoda Pope, James Pope, Kris Biessener, Jean Eisheschink, Lois Bjerke, Jonathan Kile, Sue Toth, Doug Toth, Deb Kitzmann, Zachary Johnson, Jon Kohagen

Open Public Hearing Regarding The Streetscapes Improvements Project And The Small Cities Development Program Funding For The Project

Mayor Kennedy opened the first public hearing. City Engineer Zach Thoma of Moore Engineering provided an overview, explaining that the public hearing was a required step to gather community input on the Small Cities Development Program (SCDP) grant funding received through the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development. The city was awarded $600,000 through this grant, which was directed specifically toward sidewalks, lighting, and streetscape beautification as part of the ongoing street improvement project. Mayor Kennedy emphasized that the funding was restricted to city street-type work and could not be redirected to other purposes; any unused balance would have been returned to the state. The project, he noted, was fully planned and funded, and the second asphalt lift was scheduled for the following day.

2.1 Public Input

A community member raised a concern about damage to a ramp and sidewalk adjacent to the former carpet shop property, stating that repairs had not been made to her satisfaction. Mayor Kennedy acknowledged the concern but clarified it was outside the scope of the funding public hearing and offered to address it separately through the city engineer.

Another attendee commented positively on the project, noting it had gone as well as could be expected. Councilor Fred Karlisch remarked that during the previous weekend's community event, many visitors expressed appreciation for the new sidewalks and the ability to move safely along the street.

A question was raised regarding whether property owners adjacent to the project received direct notification. Mayor Kennedy acknowledged that directly mailing affected property owners was an oversight and attributed it in part to staff turnover. He clarified that the project had been discussed publicly for nearly four years through open forums, public notices, and publications in the Walker Pilot, the city's paper of record. He committed to improving direct notification processes going forward.

Additional questions were raised about drainage concerns and the placement of fire hydrants and trees near sidewalks. Mayor Kennedy explained that tree species were selected for their deep root systems to minimize future damage to concrete, and that city personnel were actively maintaining and watering the new plantings. He noted that current drainage concerns would likely resolve after the second asphalt lift was completed, as drain covers had been temporarily sealed during construction.

3. Close Public Hearing

> Motion to close the first public hearing was made by Councilor Reeve and seconded by Councilor Lundgren. The motion carried unanimously.

4. Open Public Hearing Regarding The Proposed Vacation Of Certain Portions Of Public Roadways Located Within The City Of Hackensack

Mayor Kennedy opened the second public hearing regarding the proposed vacation of certain public roadway portions. He provided a detailed description of the affected areas: the alleyway running from the north edge of the liquor store toward Mark's Market, the segment of Third Street ending at the Lighthouse Church property, and a diagonal road connecting Third Street to the Mark's Market parking lot. Mayor Kennedy clarified that the land in question was not originally city-owned but had been maintained by the city over time, which under legal advice could support a claim of ownership. The city's attorney recommended formalizing a vacation to remove the city's legal liability and to allow adjacent property owners to fully utilize their land.

Mayor Kennedy stressed that no decisions had been made and that the public hearing was solely for gathering community input. He also confirmed that utility rights would be retained regardless of any vacation decision.

4.1 Public Input

Kris Biessener of Edina Realty asked several questions about the scope and nature of the vacation. She inquired whether Third Street would continue to be plowed by the city, and Mayor Kennedy confirmed it would. She also raised the question of whether the vacation was a "true vacation" given the city's unclear ownership, and Councilor Schneider clarified that the city's attorney had concluded the city could make a claim based on long-term maintenance, which was the precise reason a formal vacation was being pursued.

Ms. Biessener also raised the idea of keeping open the possibility of eventually extending Third Street to serve future development on adjacent parcels. Mayor Kennedy acknowledged those past conversations but explained that the concept had largely been abandoned due to the inability to acquire the necessary land from Lighthouse Church, Mark's Market, and any future third-party property owner. He further noted that Cass County had indicated no access to County Road 5 would be permitted in that area.

A representative from Lighthouse Church noted that their insurance company had identified liability exposure due to the uncontrolled traffic patterns on the gravel area, stating that signage was urgently needed regardless of the vacation outcome. Mayor Kennedy agreed, and discussion followed about the chaotic and unsafe traffic conditions on the undesignated lot, including concerns about semi-truck traffic using the area as a cut-through.

A resident expressed concern about vehicles turning around in private driveways once Third Street was marked as a dead end. Mayor Kennedy acknowledged the issue would likely occur initially but expressed confidence that dead-end signage at the Murray Avenue entrance and appropriate lane markers would discourage through traffic over time.

One attendee raised a concern about improper snow accumulation and runoff near Doug's property along the sidewalk. Mayor Kennedy directed City Engineer Morris to inspect the sidewalk grade in that area, noting that if the installation did not match engineering plans, the contractor would be required to correct it.

Councilor Schneider recommended that the matter be carried to the August 24th planning session for further deliberation among council members. Mayor Kennedy confirmed this and advised the public that the planning session would be held on August 24th at 5:00 PM in the same room. He noted that while the public was welcome to attend and provide input, no formal vote could be taken at a planning session. A final decision would be placed on a future council meeting agenda, likely in September or October, and would be published publicly. He clarified that no additional direct mailing would be sent for that meeting.

5. Close Public Hearing

Motion to close the second public hearing was made by Councilor Karlisch and seconded by Councilor Schneider. The motion carried unanimously.

6. Open Regular Council Meeting

Mayor Kennedy opened the regular council meeting.

7. Approve The August 10, 2026, Agenda As Presented

Motion to approve the August 10, 2026 agenda as presented was made by Councilor Reeve and seconded by Councilor Karlisch. The motion carried unanimously.

8. Consent Agenda

Motion to approve the consent agenda was made by Councilor Schneider and seconded by Councilor Lundgren. The motion carried unanimously.

8.1 Approve The Minutes From July 13, 2026, Regular Council Meeting And July 27, 2026, Planning Session

8.2 Approve July Checks # 7303 -7338 Bank Drafts EFT260346-EFT260424, And Payroll Payments For 7/6/26, 7/20/26, - DD26211-DD26240 For The Total Amount Of $840,055.45, July Receipts Of $889,059.22

8.3 Approve August Claims #7747– 7770 For $19,407.68

8.4 Hackensack Lions' Donation Of $500 To Hackensack Pickleball Club For Purchase Of A Picnic Table

8.5 Approve The Proposed Street Closure For The September 25th – 27th Hackensack Chainsaw Event

8.6 Approve Nate Dorr's Letter Of Commitment And Support For A Land Use Audit For The City Of Hackensack

8.7 Approve The Placement Of Naloxone In The City Of Hackensack AED Units

9. Review And Accept The Proposal From Brad And Bonnie Beaver For The Purchase Of City Property Parcel #89-355-0414, Subject To Entering Into An Acceptable Purchase Agreement

Councilor Schneider introduced the item, noting it had been vetted over the preceding months and moved to accept the proposal. Mayor Kennedy, in response to a question from Kris Biessener, described the parcel as a small sliver of city-owned land located behind the post office, along the road leading to the lake, measuring approximately 22 by 72 feet. The parcel has no city services and is not large enough for residential construction. The proposed purchase price was $2,100. Councilor Schneider acknowledged Councilor Reeve for his work in facilitating the acquisition process.

Motion to accept the proposal from Brad and Bonnie Beaver for the purchase of city property parcel #89-355-0414, subject to entering into an acceptable purchase agreement, was made by Councilor Schneider and seconded by Councilor Karlisch. The motion carried unanimously.

10. Planning Session August 24, 2026

Mayor Kennedy confirmed the planning session is scheduled for August 24, 2026 at 5:00 PM in the council chambers. The road vacation discussion will be a primary agenda item.

11. Motion To Adjourn

Motion to adjourn at 6:16 pm was made by Councilor Reeve and seconded by Councilor Lundgren. The motion carried unanimously. The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

Trista Olander, City Administrator/Clerk-Treasurer

Approved by,

Bill Kennedy, Mayor