

Holdingsford City Council Minutes Monday, September 8, 2025.

Council Members in attendance: Travis Harlander, Jayme Opatz, Eric Berscheid, Seth Young.

Others in attendance: Nicky Lahr, Dave Blommel, Herman Lansing, Matt Spies, Matt Kunstleben, Allen Fedor, Jeff & Deb Ebnet, Keith Hommerding, Steve Horvath, and Linda Harlander.

Travis called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Jayme made a motion to approve the consent agenda, including August council minutes, and August financial documents. Tim seconded the motion and it passed with all in favor.

Guests: Allen Fedor gave a presentation on a product that could be used to seal the brick and stucco at City Hall which could prevent further water leakage and damage. He gave a quote for the services and told the council to let him know if they are interested in moving forward with this.

Matt Spies spoke about ongoing concerns with the trailer park. He stated that he has been in contact with Stearns County as well to try to get the property cleaned up and looking better. He would like the City to uphold ordinances that prohibit trash and brush piles on properties as well as removing the condemned trailers. The Council explained that they have issued letters, and asked the Sheriff to issue a citation for the trash and brush on the property. They reminded Matt that this process can take time, and if the owner requests, it can be contested in court. The Council also explained that they will continue to try to work with the owner on getting the trailers maintained as they are attracting wildlife to the neighborhood in the state that they are in.

Linda Harlander stated that she was told that her property located at 701 4th Street West needed to be re-zoned from Highway-Business to residential as she has someone living at the property. Nicky explained to the Council that she attempted to find out when the zoning was changed in the past since people had lived on the property prior. She could not find it and believed that the change may have been made inadvertently. She requested to the council that the property would be converted to residential with no cost to the resident. Jayme made a motion to change zoning at 701 4th street West from H-B to R-1. Seth seconded the motion and it passed with all in favor.

Jeff Ebnet requested a refund or credit for the water and sewer connections that he paid for his new home. He had paid \$1800, and the price was reduced to \$400 at a previous meeting. Eric said that he did not agree with making the reduction retroactive. No motions were made and the request was denied.

Department reports:

Engineering: Dave Blommel asked the council to pass two resolutions to move forward with the North High Court assessments. Eric made a motion to approve resolution 25-9-8-34 for the final assessment amount for North High Court in the amount of \$27,247. Jayme seconded the motion and it passed with all in favor. Eric made a motion to approve resolution 25-9-8-5 to approve a hearing date of October 14th for the North High Court assessments. Jayme seconded it, and it passed with all in favor. The Council asked Nicky to send WMD Scepaniak a letter asking them to remove or reroute the downspout drain that they placed facing into the City Hall parking lot. Dave Blommel mentioned that he would help them come up with a plan for diverting the water somewhere else. Dave also stated that the City Hall parking lot construction would begin on Wednesday, September 10th. He also said that he would be sending cost estimates for drilling a test well.

Fire Department: Keith Hommerding said that there were 121 calls this year so far and he has not received any word from the FEMA grant yet. It was decided that the annual Fire meeting with the Townships will occur in January since we have not heard back from anyone yet. Nicky will set the date and let everyone know.

Maintenance: Steve explained that there have been more issues with pumps at the Wastewater plant getting plugged with wipes. He would like to start a campaign reminding citizens even wipes that claim they are flushable cause damage to the plant. The WWTP operating permit is in the final stages of issuance. The city will need to update the chloride minimization

Minutes are not official until approved by the City Council and signed by the Clerk.

plan with SEH. Steve mentioned that the Kubota had some repairs done and that he also got a quote to trade the unit in. Eric made a motion to move forward with the trade/purchase. Seth seconded and the motion passed with all in favor.

Clerks: Nicky stated that the council will need to make decisions on 2026 COLA increases for non-union employees, as well as how the new MN paid leave rates will be paid. She recapped the new budget process and forms. The council was reminded that dog tag renewal notices will go out next month. She is looking to the council for any adjustments to the fee schedule for 2026 at the October meeting so the final numbers can be accepted at the November meeting.

Travis shared that the City received a letter from Corky's Carwash owners, Corky and Hank VanKoevering. The letter stated that they would be willing to donate the property to the City. Jayme made a motion to accept the property. Eric seconded and the motion passed with all in favor.

Eric made a motion to approve resolution 25-9-8-1 for a bond in the amount of \$230,000 for upfitting a fire truck. Jayme seconded and the motion passed with all in favor.

Jayme made a motion to change ordinance 92.42 as indicated in resolution 25-9-8-2. Seth seconded and the motion passed with all in favor. Resolution 25-9-8-3 was presented requesting approval of a gambling permit from All Saints for an upcoming raffle. Jayme made a motion to approve the resolution with the stipulation that a representative from All Saints church present an update on what they intend to do with the existing churches. Eric seconded and the motion passed with all in favor.

The Lions submitted a project request for replacing the door at the park shelter and refurbishing the picnic tables. They also requested some funds for the project which they estimated at \$2500. Jayme made a motion to approve the project. Seth seconded it. The council discussed and decided not to contribute to the project at this time. The motion passed with all in favor.

Then lions submitted a project request for repairing and repainting the wooden train at the Trail Head Park. Jayme made a motion to approve the project, and Seth seconded it. Discussion on paint color determined that the Lions would decide what was best. The motion passed with all in favor.

Eric made a motion to set the 2026 preliminary levy at 10% above the 2025 levy. Seth seconded and the motion passed with all in favor. Nicky will submit the preliminary levy of \$275,000 to the County.

Jayme made a motion to approve the 2026 Stearns County Sheriff contract at the same rate as the current year. Seth seconded and the motion passed with all in favor.

Jayme made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:36 p.m. Seth seconded and the motion passed with all in favor.

Looking forward: Next Council meeting is on Tuesday, October 14th. City Hall will be closed on Monday October 13th for Columbus Day. The pillow clinic will be held at City Hall on October 2nd from 2pm-6pm sponsored by the Lioness Club. October 15th Employees from Magnifi Financial will decorate Main Street with new decorations provided by the Chamber of Commerce.

Notices were sent for past due water bills: Tawner Cleland, Covered Bridge LLC, Joseph and Lana Doll, Kevin Feia, Roger Jensen, Josh Krueger, Dale Lundberg, and Jared Voudry.

Signed:

Nicky Lahr _____

City Clerk-Treasurer, Holdingford