Minutes Of The Plaza City Council

PLAZA CITY COUNCIL
MEETING MINUTES
JULY 9, 2026

PRESENT: Mayor Phil Westgard; Council members Bob Blunck, Ethan Stein, Darrell Salter, Jason Yoder

OTHERS PRESENT: City Attorney Bill Woods; City Engineer Jason Strand; Wayne Olson; Jackie Dwyer; Payloader Buy

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Bob moved, seconded by Ethan, to approve the agenda as amended. The vote was all in favor, motion carried.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Darrell moved, seconded by Jason Yoder, to approve the June 8, 2026 minutes. The vote was all in favor, motion carried.

APPROVAL OF BILLS

Darrell moved, seconded by Ethan, to approve the July 2026 bills. Voting in favor were Bob, Ethan, Darrell and Jason, with none opposing or abstaining, the motion carried.

Phil called the Council's Organization Meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. and conducted roll call. The City Attorney and City Engineer were present, the City Assessor seat is not filled at the time of roll call.

Ethan moved, seconded by Bob, to approve the official election of Darrell Salter. The vote was all in favor, motion carried. Darrell's oath of office was carried out.

Bob moved, seconded by Ethan, to nominate Darrell as President of the City Council. The vote was all in favor, motion carried.

Darrell moved, seconded by Jason, to nominate Ethan Stein as Vice President. The vote was all in favor, motion carried.

Phil appointed Pem Yellow Bird as City Auditor. Darrell moved to ratify the appointment, seconded by Bob, the vote was all in favor, motion carried.

Phil appointed Jason Strand as the City Engineer. Darrell moved to ratify the appointment, seconded by Ethan. The vote was all in favor, motion carried.

Phil appointed Bill Woods as City Attorney. Ethan moved to ratify the appointment, seconded by Bob. The vote was all in favor, motion carried.

CITY ASSESSOR

Phil said he'd spoken to Jackie Dwyer last week about filling the Tax Assessor position for $4800.00 for next year. Jackie introduced herself and provided information on her assessing background and experience.

Phil appointed Jackie Dwyer as Tax Assessor. Bob moved, seconded by Ethan to ratify the appointment. The vote was all in favor, motion carried.

Jason moved to adjourn the Organizational Meeting, seconded by Ethan. The vote was all in favor, motion carried.

Phil called the Regular Meeting to order at 7:16 p.m.

Darrell added the City Shop roof repairs to the agenda.

ATTORNEY REPORT

Bill discussed the new application form he drafted for a restaurant liquor license.

He also discussed the affidavit he'd drawn up for Ole Lynne to sign affirming the replacement of copper and lead water lines. Phil will obtain Ole's signature and submit for compliance with the new state law.

ENGINEER REPORT

Jason reported that the Street Improvements Project is making headway, how much of the work is complete and what they will do in the next week. He expects they will do the gravel tomorrow and finish the paving in time for Plaza Days.

Jason had two Pay Applications, one for patching and one for street improvements. Ethan moved, seconded by Bob, to approve $60,394.27 for the patching project. Voting in favor were Bob, Ethan, Darrell and Jason; with none opposing or abstaining, the motion carried.

Darrell moved, seconded by Bob, to approve $160,993.76 for the street improvements project. Voting in favor were Bob, Ethan, Darrell and Jason; with none opposing or abstaining, the motion carried.

SEWER LINE PROJECT

Jason said Sewer Solutions were wrapping up the sewer line project from last year.

Jason stated that he had spoken to Mark from the school and the School Board had not made a decision on improvements for the school street at that time.

PAYLOADER QUOTE

Ken Jaeger discussed the various options in price, capabilities, discounts and warranties available on the 524L, 524P, and 544G payloader models. He and the Council discussed all the options and compared them. They also discussed the options of leasing equipment vs purchasing it.

Darrell moved, seconded by Jason, to purchase the 2027 John Deere 524P model for $80,305.00, to be financed and paid off over five years. Voting in favor were Bob, Ethan, Darrell and Jason; with none opposing or abstaining, the motion carried.

BID TO PURCHASE PLOW IMPLEMENT

Bob moved, seconded by Ethan, to accept the bid for trade-in of the old snowplow at $5880.00. The vote was all in favor, motion carried.

MAINTENANCE SUPERVISOR REPORT

Mike gave a report on the work he's completed; in part, he installed a water meter, cleaned up the water leak at that curb stop, turned on water for a new home, oiled 1st Avenue for dust control, and other work completed or is coming up. Phil asked for a list of all completed work and Mike said he had it at home but would bring it in for Phil.

Phil said it would be two weeks to a month before he had more information on the lead and copper project. He also said that the school still wants to do the 8th Avenue school road project and that they will pay for the grading for water drainage. He said the School Board doesn't want to repave the bus parking area, they want to plant grass there instead and won't use it for bus parking, but they do want the City to vacate 8th Avenue so that it is no longer a through street.

Bill asked Bob to obtain the School Board's request to vacate in writing and then the City will hold a public hearing.

CITY LOTS ROBYN'S CIRCLE

The School also asked if they could

use the City's two northern lots at Robyn's Circle as a parking area. The City Council discussed whether the lots could be given, sold or leased to the school. Phil said when Darcy gave them to the City it was stipulated that the City could never sell them for commercial use. The Council thought they could allow parking but still own the lots. Phil said there's going to be more traffic through there. Jason said this parking lot will be next to the apartments and he didn't want a parking lot next to his back yard.

Bill said Bob would need to draw up a petition and obtain signatures of residents to see if there was public support of a parking lot. The Council decided to table the subject until the petition comes back.

Phil discussed the findings the City received from the Dept. of Environmental Quality, (a) obtain proper training for a system operator and (b) have the backflow prevention assemblies tested on a yearly basis. Phil said certification for a system operator can be obtained online now and we should have a backup person trained too and he would look into having the test conducted as soon as possible.

CITY SHOP ROOF REPAIR

Mike and Darrell discussed the problems with the City Shop's roof. Darrell presented a quote from Bruce Underdahl to repair the roof on the City Shop. The quote includes $14,800.00 for materials and $12,000.00 for labor, for a total of $26,800 to complete the repairs. Darrell moved, seconded by Jason, to accept the bid of Bruce Underdahl for $26,800.00 to repair the roof of the City Shop. Voting in favor were Bob, Ethan, Darrell and Jason; with none opposing or abstaining, the motion carried.

Phil said he's been driving around town to locate areas where street signs need to be updated or replaced. He will come back with some ideas for action next year.

L&C SCHOOL BUILDING PERMIT

Phil said the school needs to build a storage shed on their property. Bob moved, seconded by Darrell, to approve the shed building permit for the L&C School. The vote was all in favor, motion carried.

TEMPORARY LIQUOR LICENSE

Ethan moved, seconded by Bob, to approve a temporary liquor license for Tim Gray and the Backroads Bar & Grill for the Plaza Days celebration in the amount of $25.00. The vote was all in favor, motion carried.

AIRPORT AUTHORITY

The Council discussed how the Airport requires a FAA-compliant windsock and trespassing signage. The Airport Authority has their own funding to take care of these things. They also discussed how activity at the Authority needs to be maintained, land ownership, dealing with the tree pile, the conditions of the lease, and someday developing a landing area for helicopters. The Council also discussed appointing someone for Terry's seat on the Airport Authority and the two candidates for appointment, Chandra Wold and Aaron Salter.

Phil appointed Chandra Wold to the Airport Authority. Bob moved to ratify the appointment, seconded by Ethan. The vote was all in favor, motion carried. Phil said at the February meeting, we will have to re-appoint Greg Schoess' spot on the Authority, which should have 5 people, with one being replaced every year. Bill read the state rules for burying the tree pile.

NEW CITY HALL

Phil said we are close to having everything finished and moving the old City Office over here on August 1. He also said we will be submitting the next request for reimbursement to the JDA.

Wayne said he is still waiting on items for the kitchen to be delivered or installed. He said the bathrooms are complete and that Chris Huus wants to do a walk through before he submits his final bill. Phil reported on some other items that are finished and some other small items that need work, i.e., some of the windows are leaking and the storage room lock needs to be changed. He also said we have to set up an account with whoever is going to have the rugs done.

The next meeting will be on August 3 at 7 p.m. Phil said the Preliminary Budget will be on the agenda as it is due on August 10.

Bob moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:51 p.m.

Pemina Yellow Bird,
City Auditor

Phil Westgard,
Mayor

PLAZA CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES AUGUST 3, 2026

PRESENT: Mayor Phil Westgard; City Council members, Bob Blunck, Ethan Stein, Darrell Salter, Jason Yoder

OTHERS PRESENT: City Attorney Bill Woods; City Engineer Jason Strand; Dan and Trina Ruby, Circle Sanitation; Abby Ritz, AE2S (electronically)

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Ethan moved, seconded by Bob, to approve the agenda as amended. The vote was all in favor, motion carried.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Darrell moved, seconded by Jason, to approve the minutes of the July 9, 2026 meeting. The vote was all in favor, motion carried.

APPROVAL OF BILLS

Bob moved, seconded by Ethan, to approve the August 2026 bills as amended. Voting in favor were Darrell, Ethan, Jason and Bob, with none opposing or abstaining, the motion carried.

2027 PRELIMINARY BUDGET

Abby Ritz of AE2S was on the phone with the City Council to answer questions about City's 2027 Preliminary Budget. Abby shared some information she'd received regarding expectations of less state resources being available and advised that she'd accordingly made some small adjustments in the Preliminary Budget. She and the Council discussed other variables affecting the Budget, including the increased costs of wages and utility expenses like electricity. She warned that over the next biennium, the City will be operating with 70% less state resources.

She and the Council discussed the reasoning behind each adjustment Abby had made in each line item and Abby provided information on projected income and expenses.

Darrell moved, seconded by Bob, to approve the Preliminary 2027 Budget as presented. The vote was all in favor, motion carried.

ATTORNEY REPORT

Bill reported that he'd sent 10 letters regarding collection on past due utility bills. He reported that one resident had come in made payment arrangements. The next shut-off list will come out next week.

Bill stated that the date of vacation of the School street and/or alley will be set for today.

A question had arisen about the City's being billed for another water test and whether that test was part of the contract the City had with North Prairie. Bill stated the City would probably have to pay for it, but will check on it and get back to the Council. Bill also inquired as to whether the City had obtained a certified water operator and was told Mike Walsh is currently taking the required course.

Bill then discussed the contract he'd drafted to retain the services of Jackie Dwyer, the City's new Assessor, which sets out duties and is an annual contract. He and the Council discussed the terms of the new contract.

Ethan moved, seconded by Jason, to approve the 2026-2027 Assessor's Contract for Jackie Dwyer. The vote was all in favor, motion carried.

CIRCLE SANITATION

Dan Ruby and his daughter, Trina, owners of Circle Sanitation, were in attendance to present and discuss the new five-year contract the City has with them.

They and the Council discussed rate increases and how they would be spread out over the next five years. They also stated that they needed to change the pick up day in Plaza from Thursday to Wednesday, starting Sept. 1, 2026 and would help with notifying residents of the change.

Darrell moved, seconded by Ethan, to accept the new five year contract with Circle Sanitation. The vote was all in favor, motion carried.

Phil provided a number of updates on matters related to the Ahava Café, lots deeded to the City at Robyns Court and the potential sale of a City lot, which was tabled. He also stated he'd been conducting a survey of the City's hydrants.

ENGINEER REPORT

Jason provided updates to the Council on the Street Improvements Project and presented Change Order #2 from Minot Paving in the amount of $985.80.

Bob moved, seconded by Jason, to approve Change Order #2 to Minot Paving of the Street Improvements Project in the amount of $985.80. Voting in favor were Bob, Ethan, Darrell and Jason, with none opposing or abstaining, the motion carried.

Jason also presented and discussed Change Order #3, regarding 3rd Avenue and the valley gutters in front of the new Hall.

Jason moved, seconded by Darrell, to approve Change Order #3 to Minot Paving of the Street Improvements Project in the amount of $27193.47. Voting in favor were Bob, Ethan, Darrell and Jason, with none opposing or abstaining, the motion carried.

Jason presented and discussed the final Pay App (#2) to Minot Paving, except for the retainer amount for the Sidewalk Project. The retainer amount will be included in next month's pay app.

Ethan moved, seconded by Bob, to approve Pay App #2 to Minot Paving for $160,738.84. Voting in favor were Bob, Ethan, Darrell and Jason, with none opposing or abstaining, the motion carried.

Jason presented and discussed Pay App #1 to Minot Paving for $6710.47, which represents the retainer for the Street Patching Project.

He also gave updates on the Shield Coat, Sewer Lining and the Lewis & Clark School Projects. He and the council discussed the need for parking at the school, but the Council wanted to ensure it would be used for school parking and not public parking. They discussed estimated costs, including the construction of a drainage ditch or culvert for water drainage. Phil asked if anyone had watered the trees that were planted along the new sidewalk and said one of the trees is in poor shape. Jason said he would put together a cost estimate for the parking lot as discussed.

Jason and the Council next discussed lighting around the plaza and an estimate to install curb and gutter around the park as well. Jason Yoder reported that light poles around the park are pretty much shot now. They discussed completing this project in time for Plaza's 150th Anniversary five years from now.

Jason stated that he is working on a new City utility map for the Council, it will be 5' tall and will show all City infrastructure such as curbstops, etc. Phil also stated that he put in $150,000.00 in the budget to replace hydrants and that Mr. Heidbreton had come out and inspected them and completed a report. Darrell said one savings is that he could have some of them repaired and wouldn't have to replace them all. Darrell will collaborate with Mike to obtain a quote from Mr. Heidbreton to purchase 10 hydrants.

PUBLIC MEETING TO ADDRESS PETITION TO VACATE

Darrell moved, seconded by Bob, to adjourn the Regular meeting to go into the Public Meeting to hear comments on the proposed Petition to Vacate. The vote was all in favor, motion carried.

The Public Meeting was called to order at 8:38 p.m. No one appeared to provide comment. Jason moved, seconded by Darrell, to close the Public Meeting and to reconvene the Regular Meeting.

Darrell moved, seconded by Bob, to approve the petition for vacation of 8th Avenue between Covell and Main Street. The vote was all in favor, motion carried.

BANK REQUIREMENTS

Ethan moved, seconded by Bob, to remove former council members as signatories on bank accounts and to add new members who will need to go into the Bank and sign the appropriate documents. The vote was all in favor, motion carried.

Phil stated that we need to get organized to do a City-wide clean-up of City buildings and old equipment. The Fall roll-off dumpster provided by Circle Sanitation will be used in this effort. Jason said he knows a junk business and will give them a call to see if they are interested. Phil said they will take August to assess what they are dealing with and set the clean update for September 16.

Phil reminded everyone that Terry had asked everyone to volunteer for committee work, and that some of the sewer stuff and the street improvements need assistance.

The next meeting will be held September 10 at 7 p.m. and will include the 2027 Budget Hearing.

ADJOURNMENT

Bob moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:55 p.m.

Pemina Yellow Bird,
City Auditor

Phil Westgard,
Mayor

PLAZA CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES 2027 BUDGET HEARING AND REGULAR MEETING SEPTEMBER 10, 2026

PRESENT: Mayor Phil Westgard; City Council members, Darrell Salter, Ethan Stein, Bob Blunck and Jason Yoder

OTHERS PRESENT: Justin Lamping, Nico Soldana, Marc Ritterman, Aaron Salter, Wyatt Manuel, Wayne Olson, Bill Woods

2027 BUDGET HEARING

The 2027 Budget Hearing was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

Bob moved, seconded by Jason, to approve the 2027 City Budget. The vote was all in favor, motion carried.

REGULAR MEETING

The Regular Meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Darrell moved, seconded by Ethan, to approve the agenda as amended. The vote was all in favor, motion carried.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Bob moved, seconded by Ethan, to approve the minutes of the August 3, 2026 meeting. The vote was all in favor, motion carried.

APPROVAL OF BILLS

Darrell moved, seconded by Ethan, to approve the bills for September 2026. Voting in favor were Darrell, Ethan, Jason, and Bob. With none opposing or abstaining, the motion carried.

ENERBASE CONTRACT

Bob moved, seconded by Ethan, to approve the contract with Enerbase. The vote was all in favor, motion carried.

ATTORNEY REPORT

Bill confirmed that the new testing for lead and copper is required by the State.

ENGINEER REPORT

Jason said the work on the top hats is completed. We just need to get documents and have them inspected and the final payout will be next month.

Jason stated that the sidewalks in front of the Senior Center are still not fixed. Minot Paving will complete this work before their final payment.

CHIP SEALING PROJECT

Jason said Aztec will be coming on Monday and Tuesday of next week, there may be issues however as rain and cold temperatures are expected then.

Jason and the Council discussed proposed changes to the parking lot and to install angled parking to make ingress and egress easier. Jason said the price has gone down to $252,000, which would include excavation, road base fabric, and curb and gutter. It will be tied in to the existing parking lot so the sidewalk is the same elevation as the parking lot. The exit will change to the south. The total cost of the project will be $250,000 to $252,000.

Darrell moved, Jason seconded, to approve the amended version of the parking lot project for next year and Jason will put together a final task order for it. The vote was all in favor, motion carried.

The Council and Mr. Ritterman discussed calibrating shared costs for this project, and Jason will work with him to finalize this matter.

Jason asked about the light and the curb & gutter work at the park. This matter was tabled until next year, but the Council would like it ready in time for the 125th Plaza Anniversary.

AARON SALTER FENCE PERMIT

Jason moved, seconded by Bob, to approve Aaron Salter's fence building permit for a fence provided he has the area surveyed and he has a setback. The vote was all in favor, motion carried.

NICO SALDANA DECK PERMIT

Ethan moved, seconded by Darrell, to approve the deck building permit as presented. The vote was all in favor, motion carried.

JULIE REESE DECK PERMIT

Bob moved, Jason seconded, to approve the deck building permit as presented. The vote was all in favor, motion carried.

UNDERAGE DRIVING COMPLAINTS

Phil said he'd received complaints from residents about children driving recklessly on a mini-bike and a 4-wheeler in town. Ethan said to call the Sheriff's Department to speak to the parents, but reminded everyone that if they have to check on one child they'll have to check on everyone's child.

BALL PARK ELECTRIC BILL

Tim Gray asked if the City Council would cover electricity costs at the City's Ball Park. They've been trying to improve and grow the program for the kids, and Otter Tail has said they would install the service line.

Bob moved, seconded by Darrell, to approve the request that the City pay the power bill for the Ball Park. The vote was all in favor, motion carried.

CITY CLEANUP

The Council will check with Circle Sanitation to obtain a dumpster. Jason said he spoke to the scrap metal guy, who will get back to him. The matter is tabled for now until we get the dumpster. They also discussed pricing for the water truck and putting it out for bid, and selling an old tractor, street sweeper and obtained advice from Bill on how to develop bids for selling City property. Phil said they can work on it next week and Wayne said he'd help too. It would be good to have it listed and sold before the snow flies.

Darrell reported that Bruce Underdahl had not been able to begin work on the City Shop roof due to illness and surgery, but he has all the materials and when he recovers he will complete the job and his sons will help him.

HALL FINAL GRANT REIMBURSEMENT

Phil gave an update and said the process is nearly complete, just waiting on a few cancelled checks.

UPDATE ON THE NEW HALL

Wayne said the image that will be used for the new sign is on the playing cards and handed decks out to everyone. He said the Community Club would like to put on the rock and have it lighted. They would like to help pay for it.

Wayne said he spoke to the company that will make the counters for the kitchen; they will come tomorrow and take the final measurements. He said the Community Club has set aside funding for this.

Phil said now that everyone has keys they will start locking the doors. He also said he's done some more looking for street signs and estimates $35 per sign. He also asked Jason about putting something in front of the culvert by the Café to prevent someone driving or falling in there.

The Council discussed the continuing problems of a resident's parking cars in the ditch by his house and his garage is on the City's ROW. Bill advised that photos be taken, wait 48 hours, then have the vehicles towed. Another resident also needs to repair his collapsing garage. The Council and Bill also discussed another derelict house and Bill said to bring information to next month's meeting. Two other situations were discussed where residents built or tore down structures without obtaining City permits.

SPECIALS

Bills were sent to all residents who had special assessments for mowing.

The next meeting is scheduled for October 12, 2026 at 7 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

Jason moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:15 p.m.

Pemina Yellow Bird,
City Auditor

Phil Westgard,
Mayor