

How to make a laundry room a more functional space

Functionality is important when designing the interior spaces in a home. Homeowners who redesign their interior spaces can emphasize functionality to help reduce clutter and create a more efficient and even calming space.

Laundry rooms may not be the most glamorous rooms in a home, but they do get lots of usage, particularly in homes with children. Because laundry rooms tend to be well trafficked areas, it makes sense for homeowners to make them as functional and user-friendly as possible. With that in mind, homeowners can consider these tips to make laundry rooms more functional spaces.

- **Purchase laundry pedestals with storage capacity.** Laundry pedestals make useful additions to a laundry room. Many homeowners place their washing machines and dryers on top of pedestals with storage drawers, which can be used to store everything from dryer sheets to clothes irons to stain removal kits. Pedestals can be particularly useful in cramped laundry rooms where the only means to adding storage is to go up and not out.

- **Install a freestanding laundry sink.** A laundry sink also adds function to a laundry room by enabling homeowners to hand wash certain clothes and apply stain removal products in the same space where the rest of their clothes are being cleaned. Installing a laundry sink is a relatively inexpensive job, but the cost may go up if new plumbing, venting or electrical work is necessary.



- **Add a countertop work space.** If you already have ample storage and won't be placing the washer or dryer atop a laundry pedestal, then installing some countertop above the appliances can add function and aesthetic appeal. A countertop workspace above a dryer provides an accessible space to fold laundry the moment it dries, reducing the likelihood that clothes will become wrinkled and ensuring you won't put off folding.

- **Install floating shelves.** Floating shelves won't cost a lot of money, but they can be ideal in cramped laundry rooms. Shelves provide a space to store detergent and other items that may not fit inside laundry pedestals, including baskets.

- **Add hanging storage.** Some articles of clothing should not be dried in a dryer for fear of shrinking the fabric or destroying the item. In such instances, some readily accessible hanging storage capacity can make the laundry room more functional. Items can be hung on hangers or over a hanging rack suspended from the ceiling if space is minimal.

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Options to consider for exterior audio

Outdoor entertaining areas are increasingly coveted by homeowners looking to blend the comforts of indoors with the accessibility to nature backyards provide.

Homeowners do much to enhance the comfort and functionality of backyard spaces, and one way to elevate these spaces is through the installation of audio capabilities.

The ability to listen to an audio book while floating in the pool or stream a party playlist while hosting a barbecue enhances outdoor spaces. Individuals have various options to consider when seeking to upgrade their outdoor sound capabilities.

- **Portable Bluetooth speakers.** Bluetooth technology revolutionized the way various devices exchange data. Bluetooth utilizes short-range radio waves to connect and share information without a need for wires. That means it can connect devices like smartphones and computers to items like headphones and speakers. Homeowners who want a simple way to bring audio outdoors can look to portable speakers, which range in size from tabletop versions to larger, tailgate-style speakers. Many offer quality sound that is easily queued up when needed.

- **Wireless stationary speakers.** Similar to portable speakers, wireless stationary speakers designed for the outdoors employ Bluetooth technology through portable speakers or a networked computer Wi-Fi connection. Each are mounted to deck railings or are placed around the yard. Interference can affect these types of speakers, depending on placement and distance from the device that is playing the music. They may be sufficient for the casual listener.

- **Wired outdoor speakers.** Wired outdoor speakers need to be hooked up to an amplifier inside a home with wires. Although it sounds complicated, typically it's a job a do-it-yourselfer can handle; otherwise, qualified technicians can do it for homeowners. Wired systems may not come with the same hassles of connectivity dropping or even having to replace/recharge batteries, depending on the model chosen. Plus, once they are installed, homeowners have little to do other than utilize the speakers and enjoy their time spent outside with music, sports games, podcasts, and more.

- **Cone size and wattage matters.** Cone size and wattage of the speakers affects the ability of the speakers to provide quality audio, according to Outdoor Speaker Depot. Larger cone size will offer superior, low-frequency response, which helps in large backyards. The larger the cone, the more bass it will provide. A greater wattage range also enables a better volume increase and improved sound quality at lower volumes. For 300 to 500 square feet, wattage of 80 to 100 might suffice.



Larger areas will need wattage of 150, 175 or higher for clear, sharp sound.

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MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING MICHIGAN CITY COUNCIL March 11, 2025

Mayor Lauri Rysavy called March 11, 2025 regular city council meeting to order at 5 p.m. Council members present: Mayor L. Rysavy, Member T. Lagein, Member N. Flom, Superintendent S. Gilbertson. Member J. Vasicek and Member J. Gilbertson called in. Others present: Auditor D. Dalen.

A motion was made to approve February regular city council meeting minutes by Member T. Lagein and seconded by N. Flom.

Member N. Flom motioned to approve March bills, seconded by J. Vasicek. Motion carried.

Brager Disposal	\$2,000.25
Bank of ND	2,250.00
Elan Credit Card	2,568.53
First United Bank	1,704.93
GF Utility	26.00
Hamster Oil	146.71
Hardware Hank	
--Lakota	24.99
Lakota American	51.75
Michigan Hometown	
Foods	12.69
NC Sheriff's Dept.	1,315.00
One Call	3.85
Otter Tail	2,364.35
Otter Tail	44.95
Polar Communications ..	40.49
Polar Communications ..	181.11

Office of the State Auditor

Verizon (credit)

Total

Superintendent Report -- Water loss for this month is 2.6%. On 2/10/2025 the water tower froze. The freeze caused the water main below water tower to break, and residents lost water use. Naastad Brothers and H & H Coatings, Inc. were called out. Water was restored to residents several hours later.

Auditor Report -- Overdue water bills: Shut-off notices to be sent to M. Anderson, J. Eback, C. Haynes and a second shut-off notice to M. Terrazas.

Old Business -- Utility rate increase: Motion made by Member J. Gilbertson to increase water rate, seconded by Member J. Vasicek. Water rate to increase to \$34 per 2,000 gallons and \$5 for every 1,000 gallons over the 2,000-gallon minimum.

New Business -- A claim was submitted by NDIRF for the repair costs of the water main break that occurred on 2/10/2025. Motion made by Member N. Flom to use the emergency fund for any bills not covered by NDIRF, seconded by Member T. Lagein.

Change in sales tax distribution was discussed. Letters will be sent to ambulance department, park board, Duffers Club, Service Club and the JDA requesting a year-end financial report to review the distribution of sales tax.

The new annual agreement with West Shore Services (warning systems) for the city of Michigan siren increased to \$610 a year. Member T. Lagein motioned to approve; Member N. Flom seconded the motion.

A resident made a request to purchase Michigan school lots. Member J. Vasicek motioned to deny selling school lots. Member J. Gilbertson seconded the motion.

Michelle Linstad will be in Michigan on April 14, 2025 for the annual city equalization meeting.

New 457 deferred retirement



Three ways to get more use out of a garage

Even though no two homes are the same, rooms have a tendency to take on similar characteristics regardless of which property they're a part of. Kitchens tend to be popular gathering spaces, while basements have become go-to spots for game rooms and watch parties.

Garages also tend to share certain characteristics between homes, and one notable attribute is the tendency to become difficult-to-navigate dumping grounds for a wide range of items, including lawn and garden tools, children's toys, sporting goods, and seasonal home decor. Though there's nothing wrong with utilizing a garage as a storage space, the following are three simple ways homeowners can get more out of these spaces.

1. **Utilize the wall space.** The walls in a garage have lots of potential. Effective use of walls within a garage can ensure garden tools, small toys and other items do not accumulate on the floor. Such accumulations contribute much to the reputation of garages as dumping grounds for miscellaneous items. By clearing the floors of clutter, and utilizing wall spaces to store items, homeowners can open up the spaces to serve any number of functions, including home gyms, art studios or even parking spaces to protect vehicles from the elements. A storage organizer system with various hooks can be mounted on a garage wall to free up floor space, while shelving can be hung to store paint cans, power tool batteries and other items.

2. **Look upward.** If garage ceilings extend several feet above the height of homeowners' ve-

hicles, then the spaces above where cars might be parked can be converted into storage space for large recreational items, like canoes or kayaks, or seasonal decor that does not need to be accessed on a regular basis. A simple kayak hoist utilizing a pulley system clears floor space and allows kayaks to be stored overhead. Lifting storage racks work in similar fashion and make for great additions for anyone who needs to store containers full of seasonal decor but does not want to do so by stacking items on the floor. A hand crank system for a lifting storage rack makes for easy and safe access.

3. **Install new lighting.** Without ample lighting, garages may not be conducive to recreational pursuits like painting, crafting or even exercising. A lighting upgrade is a relatively affordable renovation that can make a big difference, illuminating spaces not exactly known for brightness, especially if there's no windows. If you want to spend time in the garage during winter and stay warm, then some new lighting can make that possible.

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MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING MICHIGAN CITY COUNCIL May 12, 2025

Mayor Lauri Rysavy called the meeting to order May 12, 2025 at 5 p.m. Council members present: N. Flom, Jay Gilbertson, Jay Vasicek, T. Lagein; City Auditor D. Dalen. Absent: City Superintendent Scott Gilbertson.

Jack Donaghy entered the meeting.

Additions to the Agenda -- Civic center, street cleaning, pet ordinance, road patch.

Jack Donaghy presented a building permit for an attached garage. J. Vasicek made a motion to accept building permit, J. Gilbertson seconded. All in favor, motion approved.

T. Lagein made a motion to approve the April minutes, J. Gilbertson seconded. All in favor, motion approved.

May bills were presented. J. Gilbertson made a motion to approve, seconded by N. Flom. Motion carried.

Lauri gave superintendent report. Clean area for roll off; roll off will arrive by end of week; gravel needed in alley behind apartments across from the Johnson Store; mosquito machine will be calibrated on Wednesday, May 14; no water report until Black Mountain can be corrected.

Auditor Dalen reported past-due water bills. Shut-off notices will be sent to: J. Severson, P. Nenow, S. Pederson, T. Rushton.

Sales tax distribution was reviewed; no changes in distribution. Sales tax distribution will be reviewed again in April 2026.

Cemetery fund adjustment needed for expenses of wages not taken out in 2023 and 2024. J. Gilbertson moved to transfer wage expenses in 2023 of \$11,479.50 from the cemetery fund into the general fund. Second by T. Lagein. All in favor, motion carried. N. Flom made a motion to transfer wage expenses in 2024 of \$9,946.50 from the cemetery fund into the general fund. Second by J. Vasicek. All in favor, motion carried.

Civic center was discussed, along with removal of the old chair storage. J. Vasicek made a motion to have a deep cleaning at the civic center, wash and wax floors. N. Flom seconded. All in favor, motion carried. Amy O'Brien will be contacted on deep cleaning and stripping and waxing the floor.

Scott will check with Lakota on street cleaning availability.

N. Flom expressed need for more street patch for streets. J. Vasicek made a motion to order three pallets of road patch, J. Gilbertson seconded. All in favor, motion carried.

Copies of pet ordinance were given to council members to review for June meeting.

Employee evaluation was completed.

Jay G. moved to adjourn, Jay V. seconded. Motion passed.

Dawn Dalen Auditor

June 9, 2025: Jay Vasicek made the motion to accept May meeting minutes as written. Brian Jay Gilbertson seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING MICHIGAN CITY COUNCIL May 14, 2025 - 5 p.m.

Mayor L. Rysavy called the meeting to order. Council members present: J. Vasicek, J. Gilbertson, N. Flom, T. Lagein.

T. Lagein was asked to record minutes.

Auditor position will be advertised through May 27, 2025. Résumés should be sent to L. Rysavy at icloud.com and contact number is 701-259-2548.

J. Vasicek made a motion to hire Jason Flom in the interim to handle office requirements. By roll call vote: J. Gilbertson--yea, T. Lagein--yea, N. Flom--abstain. By majority vote motion carried.

Next meeting will be May 28, 2025 at 5 p.m. to review any and all résumés submitted.

T. Lagein made a motion to adjourn, J. Vasicek seconded. Motion carried, meeting adjourned.

Tips to manage a family schedule with greater efficiency

The average twenty-first century family is quite busy, with each individual family member having their own responsibilities and social lives.

According to Aspen Institute's National State of Play 2024, nearly 40 percent of children in the United States between the ages of six and 17 regularly participated in a team sport, and the average child plays 1.6 sports. Recent data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics in May 2025 also indicates around 50 percent of all married-couple families are dual income. For all families, including those with children, 67 percent of married-couple families with children are dual income households.

Needless to say, with school, sports, work, and other responsibilities filling up families' days, staying organized becomes an important priority. Keeping schedules straight involves forethought. Efficient and effective time management that incorporates the following suggestions can help schedules feel a little more manageable.

Keep a family calendar

It is important to post schedules visibly so that everyone knows what is going on each day. The type of calendar used will vary depending on what families find most helpful. For some, it may be a traditional paper calendar hung in the kitchen or mudroom. Others may find that a shared digital calendar is most effective, particularly those who rely heavily on phones or other digital devices. No matter which type of calendar is used, color-code each family member so it is easy to identify immediately which dates are relevant to each family member.

Create routines

Consistent daily or weekly routines can help a family understand what is expected and



when. Providing structure can reduce decision-making fatigue, according to Becoming Minimalist. Dinner can occur at the same time each day, and homework time may be scheduled so kids know when they are expected to hit the books.

Use reminders

Reminder apps on phones or other devices can be very handy for keeping everyone in check. Alarms and reminders will alert the person as to when they are expected to be somewhere. Letting children set their own reminders can set them up for success by being responsible individuals.

Get kids involved

Again, looping children into the process of establishing schedules and an organizational system helps teach them responsibility. Plus, if they are more invested in the process, they may be more apt to follow along. Families can hold weekly chats or meetings about upcoming events and discuss how to delegate or who might be able to attend what and when. Children can weigh in on what is important to them and what can be passed up, such as if school is offering a special bonus extracurricular that is not mandatory to attend. All Pro Dad, a program of the national nonprofit educational and charitable organization Family First, says it is alright to say "no" to extra commitments and prioritize what's important to the family.

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MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING MICHIGAN CITY COUNCIL May 12, 2025

Mayor Lauri Rysavy called the meeting to order May 12, 2025 at 5 p.m. Council members present: N. Flom, Jay Gilbertson, Jay Vasicek, T. Lagein; City Auditor D. Dalen. Absent: City Superintendent Scott Gilbertson.

MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING MICHIGAN CITY COUNCIL May 28, 2025 - 5 p.m.

Meeting called to order by L. Rysavy.

Agenda -- Auditor interviews and former auditor business.

Council members present: J. Gilbertson, J. Vasicek, T. Lagein, N. Flom.

Interviews as follows: 5:30 p.m. Maria Nenow, 6 p.m. Jason Flom

Discussion held after the interviews. J. Gilbertson made a motion to hire Jason Flom for the auditor position, seconded by J. Vasicek. Roll call vote: T. Lagein--yea, J. Gilbertson--yea, N. Flom --abstained, J. Vasicek--yea. Motioned carried.

Auditor Business -- Job Service/unemployment contacted council as Dawn Dalen has applied for unemployment. J. Vasicek made a motion to approve unemployment. J. Gilbertson seconded the motion. Roll call vote: T. Lagein--abstained, J. Gilbertson--yea, N. Flom--yea, J. Vasicek--yea. Motion carried.

N. Flom made a motion for meeting to adjourn. T. Lagein seconded. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned.

MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING MICHIGAN CITY COUNCIL June 9, 2025 - 5 p.m.

Members present: Traci Lagein, Jay Vasicek, Jay Gilbertson, Nathan Flom, Lauri Rysavy. Others present: Jason Flom, auditor; Scott Gilbertson, city superintendent.

Lauri Rysavy, mayor, called a meeting to order at 5 p.m.

No others present.

L. Rysavy called for any additions to the agenda. Unkept properties were added to the new business. Deep cleaning of civic center and street sweeping were added to old business.

Minutes of May regular meeting were presented. J. Vasicek made a motion to approve as presented, J. Gilbertson seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Minutes of special meeting held on May 14, 2025 were presented. J. Vasicek made a motion to approve as presented, J. Gilbertson seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Minutes of the special meeting held on May 28, 2025 were presented. J. Gilbertson made a motion to approve as presented, T. Lagein seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Approval of bills was presented. J. Flom, auditor, stated that there was an additional bill to add of West Shore service for siren yearly contract and for a fuse they replaced when here: Brager Disposal

Credit Card

One Call

First United Bank

Team Lab

Hamster Oil

United Lab

Workforce Safety

West Shore Service

Nelson Co. Sheriff

Otter Tail Power

Otter Tail Power

Polar Communications ..

Verizon

Total

Motion was made by T. Lagein to accept bills as presented. Seconded by N. Flom. Motion passed unanimously.

City Superintendent Report -- Scott Gilbertson presented his report. Water issues with Black Mountain will be resolved within the next couple of weeks as Jason has talked to them. ND Sewer has completed inspection of pump lift. New chair racks are together. The lagoon has had chemical added to it to take care of the sludge that forms on the bottom. Weeds have been sprayed on all city

properties. Tegan Dahlen is working for the summer. Larvicide was added to any standing water within city limits. The cemetery has had several burials and grass mowed. Working with mayor to get insurance updated on several items for city. Working on replacing the old fluorescent lights in the civic center with new LED style.

Auditors Report -- Jason Flom presented an auditor's report. Water bills were late in coming out as there was correction that needed to be made within the Black Mountain accounting software. All of which are corrected and currently working on fixing some usage with Scott to correct reports. Black Mountain has been very easy to work with. Four overdue water accounts and letters will be sent. Shut-off date will be June 23 if no payment is made. Financials were discussed. New bank resolution and signature card were presented to be signed. The council was made aware of several websites that have had to have calls made to gain access to them. The city website will be updated.

Old Business -- Pet ordinance was discussed and various changes were made to it. These changes are coming due to numerous complaints on dogs chasing and/or cornering residents, non-leashed dogs running and getting into residents' garbage, of which there are videos of all. All changes will be rewritten and first reading of the proposed changes will take place at the next regular council meeting on July 14, 2025. Jason will be reviewing pet licenses and be sending letters on those.

The civic center deep clean was discussed regarding if Renew, LLC had been contacted. They had not and Jason will contact Amy Lulay about the deep clean and stripping and waxing the floor.

Old chair rack was discussed and Scott will be pulling it apart.

New Business -- Street patching was done by Nathan Flom. Discussion was held on getting another pallet of patch. Nathan agreed to do another round of patching. J. Gilbertson made motion to have N. Flom order another pallet of street patch, T. Lagein seconded. Motion passed unanimously. Street sweeping will also be scheduled. J. Vasicek will call Josh Ulland in Lakota to set up a date.

Building permit was presented from Chad and Shannah Lenz for a new garage on their property. J. Vasicek made the motion to approve the submitted building permit, N. Flom seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

The city was contacted by Dakota Prairie Schools on their revamped student cleanup/volunteer program. They will be running it a bit different throughout the school year and are asking each town to think of projects that need to be done. Council members will compile a list and will submit to DP at the next meeting.

A formal complaint was filed by Maria Vasicek on two properties, 316 States Ave. N and 216 2nd St. West. This was over the number of vehicles and items within the yards along with non-mowing. N. Flom reported that the 216 2nd St. W had been finally mowed. The council will go in and look and a letter will be sent to the owner of the properties. The same owner has both. The council also discussed other properties in Michigan that need to be cleaned up. Owners will be receiving a letter and a copy of ordinance 112 and 144 regarding keeping their property maintained. Discussion was held at looking to revise the ordinance 112 and 144. Research into what other cities had will be done by auditor and presented at the next meeting.

Motion was made by J. Vasicek to adjourn the meeting, seconded by J. Gilbertson. Motion passed unanimously.

Next regular city council meeting will be July 14, 2025 at 5 p.m.

Jason Flom Auditor

July 14, 2025: Motion made by Jay Gilbertson to accept minutes, seconded by N. Flom. Motion carried.