

Mercer City August Meeting Minutes

Minutes for August 13th, 2026, Regular Mercer City Meeting

Mercer City Hall at 7:00 pm CDT

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Thomsen at 7:00 pm CDT and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Mayor Thomsen took the roll call. Present: Mayor Thomsen, Council Members Gary Volochenko, Dan Gardiner, Erika Lorenz, Randy Zinke, Auditor Kathrin Volochenko. A quorum was established.

Additions to the Agenda: There were no new additions to the agenda.

Minutes: Mayor Thomsen read the minutes from July 9th 2026 regular meeting.

Council Member Lorenz made a motion to accept the minutes as read with the minor corrections, Council Member Volochenko seconded, "ayes" all, "nays" none M/C.

Financials & Bills List: (The current available (remaining)) "Municipal Infrastructure Fund Bill" ("Operation Prairie Dog") is \$17,345.20) Mayor Thomsen presented the completed YTD 2026 Balance Sheet Standard, YTD & MTD Profit & Loss (P&L) reports.

Mayor Thomsen presented the current bills list.

Council Member Lorenz moved to approve the financials and bills list as presented with the addition of the billing software invoice, Council Member Gardiner seconded, roll call vote results were; Council Member Gardiner "aye", Council Member Volochenko "aye", Council Member Lorenz "aye", Council member Zinke "aye" M/C.

Water/Wastewater Business:

Mayor Thomsen presented the July 2026 water usage & various account reports.

a. July Water Bacteriological (negative) & Chlorine Results (1.0)

b. August Water Bacteriological (negative) & Chlorine Results (1.2)

c. July 13th TTHM (Total Trihalomethanes)/(Haloacetic Acids (five)) HAA5 Stage 2 test results from Ed's Service Station. Auditor Volochenko stated that the results aren't back yet. Council Member Lorenz asked as to

what is the premise for a stage 2 testing site. Auditor Volochenko answered as she wasn't sure and that she will call ~~MR. DEO to find out~~ d. Halliday Products for two padlock lugs for lift station doors: Auditor Volochenko stated that she installed two new padlock lugs

e. Cells 1 & 2 Crossover Pipe Repairs: Wastewater Operator Volochenko stated that the crossover pipe work is complete and that the drawing that was prepared by KLJ Engineering shows two 45 degree elbows where actually the crossover pipes are joined by one 90 degree elbow, the new valve and pipe assembly are on the cell #2 section. Mayor Thomsen inquired that the city should pay Gary & Kathrin for their work, at the very least for the fuel. There was some discussion, Council member Gardiner moved to pay Volochenkos \$3,000.00 for their work on the cell crossover pipe project, Council Member Lorenz seconded and added that going forward that the council needs to know before the work begins. Mayor Thomsen mentioned that he will always do what's best for the city, however if they want a special meeting to discuss prior, or could the Mayor just okay to proceed based on the best information available. Roll call vote results were; Council Member Gardiner "aye", Council Member Volochenko "abstains", Council Member Lorenz "aye", Council member Zinke "aye" M/C.

f. Suggested list of water customers to be dropped: Council Member Zinke: Council Member Zinke stated that no list was compiled. Mayor Thomsen said that this needs to be settled, best to just leave it lay and to not tear this town apart. Garbage Report: Auditor Volochenko stated that she did talk to the account that had the tote overage and that they were okay with it; people are beginning to learn that they cannot leave the tote lids open or have garbage outside the tote. Auditor Volochenko continued in that she did talk to Waste Management customer service. Mayor Thomsen did add that he did talk to the driver and asked him to be realistic about the lids and not add extra charges that aren't warranted.

Park Report: Council Member Lorenz

stated that Scott Just is currently working on their sidewalk project.

New Community Center Project Report: Council Member Zinke, Committee Member Villa Murray stated that Karen was working on the Inspiritus Grant application, Council Member Zinke said that the application had been submitted as the deadline was August 15th. \$5,200.00 in donations was received since the last meeting.

Mercer Market: Mayor Thomsen said he had bought a few things at the last market.

Old Business:

1. Curb Stop & Meter Pit Installation: Mayor Thomsen said that Wild Prairie Solutions will be coming next week. Mayor Thomsen got the manhole riser and cover and that a seven foot deep meter pit will be installed to accommodate the manhole riser that Mayor Thomsen got from Turtle Lake free of charge. Council Member Volochenko will talk to Mitch to find out what he needs for his project. Discussion included two more locations that need curb stop work.

2. Old MCC Building Inspection Results: Council Member Lorenz stated that the building does qualify for demolition funds and that we are on the wait list for the second quarter of 2028. Council Member Lorenz stated that there is the option to sell discussion included that there would need to be some interest first.

3. Catalis Payment Platform Update: Auditor Volochenko stated that everything is in place to just follow the timeline. Target launch date is the 18th of August. A QR Code will be posted on the website and posters will be posted around town as well.

4. Possible purchase by city of a front wheel assist utility tractor (possibly a 2022 John Deere 5055) Mayor Thomsen said that the city has spent \$17,000.00 the last few years and have nothing to show for it. Discussion included talking to John Deere projected interest rate at 5.9%, Bravera Bank could maybe beat that. Thinking a 75hp minimum.

Looking at RDO and others, doesn't matter what color. Mayor Thomsen asked for a motion to be able to spend, Council Member Gardiner moved to set a budget for at least \$60,000.00 total

for a new tractor, Council Member Zinke seconded, roll call vote results were; Council Member Gardiner "aye", Council Member Volochenko "aye", Council Member Lorenz "aye", Council member Zinke "aye" M/C.

5. Diamond Maps: Auditor Volochenko talked about the benefits of the platform for \$60.00 per year. Discussion included the option of adding anything that the city owns on the map. Council Member Lorenz made a motion to subscribe to Diamond Maps, Council Member Volochenko seconded, roll call vote results were; Council Member Gardiner "aye", Council Member Volochenko "aye", Council Member Lorenz "aye", Council member Zinke "aye" M/C.

6. SLFRF (State & Local Fiscal Recovery Funds Program) Report Close-out: Auditor Volochenko stated that she had received an invite email about 10 days ago to close out the report, which she did that day. Auditor Volochenko added that the city had received \$15,810.88 some of which was spent on the concrete drain ditch.

New Business:

1. 2027 Mercer City Budget Introduction/First Reading: Mayor Thomsen, Auditor Volochenko. Auditor Volochenko talked about the formula used to forecast the remainder of 2026 and that the ARPA tabs will be dropped as those funds were spent in 2023 and 2024. Auditor Volochenko added two new tabs for the Municipal Infrastructure fund monies that have been spent and the remaining balance. Discussion included starting the meeting at 6:00 pm CDT

2. Chester's Tavern Liquor License Fee Adjustment: Council Member Volochenko, discussion included that city doesn't provide any services for Chester's Tavern, therefore there's no justification to raise the liquor license fee to \$800.00. Council Member Volochenko withdrew the topic.

3. 2026 ND League of Cities Fall Conference: Council Member Lorenz stated that the conference is in Grand Forks September the 16th-18th and that she would like to attend.

Registration is \$275.00 they have a block of rooms that's \$110.00 + taxes per night.

Council Member Gardiner made a motion for the city to pay for Council Member's registration and motel for the NDLC conference. Council Member Zinke seconded, roll call vote results were; Council Member Gardiner "aye", Council Member Volochenko "aye", Council Member Lorenz "abstains", Council member Zinke "aye" M/C.

Public Comment:

There was discussion about grass cutting on the county owned lots on the curve that used to be Co. Rd. #7, also there were compliments to Council Member Gardiner for cutting the grass. Don Rutschke asked that the city to just pile any snow on his driveway and not the grass on the corner of his lots.

With no further business to discuss Mayor Thomsen asked for a motion to adjourn, Council Member Lorenz made a motion to adjourn, Council Member Volochenko seconded, "ayes" all, "nays" none M/C meeting adjourned at 8:56 pm CDT.

(Oct. 15, 2026)