

**City of Pembina
Unofficial Special Council Meeting
Minutes for July 1, 2026 — 5:00pm
LJW Community Center**

Council Members Present: Mayor Fitzgerald, Snitker, Flores, Needham, Carattini, A Huttunen. Absent: Norby.

Guests: Koropatnicki, City Super; Stoiber, City Auditor; Fleming, City Attorney; Helland, Carpenter, T Steyn; NDDOT Derek Pfeifer, Matt Luger, Ed Pavlish, Jesse Kadrmaz; Dean & Grant Bolton & Menk.

5:01pm Special Council Meeting called to order by Mayor Fitzgerald.

• NDDOT discussion as to next steps: Bridge was closed for safety of public. NDDOT heard from the citizens about the importance of the bridge to the citizens and understands their concerns. NDDOT discussed concerns with the Federal Highway Director and came up with a potential option. On 7/2/26, the bridge could potentially be opened to Pedestrian Traffic only. Bolton & Menk would need to do an engineering analysis and forward that to NDDOT for review; there would need to be a monitoring plan in place to examine and document changes to the bridge every 6 months; and positive closure would have to be in place so only pedestrians can cross and only on the north side of the bridge.

• Confirmation of canvass of votes and passed duties on: new mayor is G Helland, new council members are T Steyn & C Carpenter.

• Mayor Helland: would like to appoint the following— Fleming, City Attorney; Stoiber, City Auditor; Hartje, City Assessor; Bolton & Menk, City Engineers. Motion by Snitker, 2nd by Needham to approve appointments, all ayes, motion carries.

• Carattini made motion to elect Snitker as Council President, 2nd by Flores; all ayes, motion carries.

• Carattini made motion to elect Needham as Council VP, 2nd by Snitker; all ayes, motion carries.

• Helland made the following recommendations to Committees:

> Library: Carattini, Flores.
> Cemetery: Carattini, Snitker, T Steyn.

> Rec Board: Flores, Snitker.

> Ice Rink: T Steyn, Carpenter.

> Daycare: Snitker, Needham, Flores.

> Building & Zoning: Snitker, Needham, Helland.

> Streets: Koropatnicki, Snitker (Supervisor), Needham, Helland.

> Fire Dept: Treasure— Stoiber.

> Community Center / Professional Building— Needham, Stoiber, Helland.

> Valley Landfill— Carpenter, Helland; at large, A Huttunen.

> Ambulance— Snitker, Flores.

- Motion by Snitker, 2nd by Carattini to approve the appointments as stated; all ayes; motion carries.

• Motion by Flores, 2nd by Snitker to approve Pembina Firefighters Association gaming permit; all ayes; motion carries.

• Council needs to decide what to do moving forward with Stutsman Bridge.

> Snitker— why was this inspection so different from prior inspections?

> Kruger (NDDOT Bridge Division)— can't speak to previous inspections. A new Standard was implemented in 2005; in 2020 there were more changes to the code, and in 2022 there was a new federal code implemented.

> Kruger: major damage is as follows: Abutment 1— bearing loss, pulled out, large amount of concrete that has fallen; West Abutment has moved 5.5-6"; piers and abutments are moving; Peir 5 has moved and truss was moved as well which caused fixed connection to pull onto the floor pedestals; Pedestal 3 has a large crack; Pedestals 1 & 2 have maintained consistency of damage; Pedestal 4 failure will cause catastrophic failure.

> Snitker— what is NDDOT's role? Kruger: enforcement of inspection.

> Snitker—who owns bridge and who's responsible for these expenses?

• Fleming— in 1979 it was removed from the State Highway's responsibility, then again in 1982, and the State abandoned it. The city is under no obligation to maintain the bridge, but Pembina wants to maintain it.

> Needham— any idea on how much it will cost to fix it?

> NDDOT: no idea, need city

engineering firm to provide an engineering scope and options of rehab or build new.

> Derek (NDDOT) working on a 3 ton limit but may not be feasible for immediate opening.

> Council is working on funding opportunities. This is not something that is done quickly.

> Needham— what about detour and signage along interstate? Need to coordinate with Grand Forks District— need permit and liability insurance.

> Fleming: Devin from County is working on this.

- There is no funding allocated from the county at this time.

> Helland— explain possible funding for the bridge?

• Federal Highway Administration will not fund for pedestrian usage, only for vehicle. The grant application period expires 9/15/2026. Since the bridge is not on a federal route, meaning it's an off system bridge, it's still eligible for some funding, about 80% feds, 20% local. Feds will work with NDDOT and prioritize.

> Snitker— we're under a time crunch with the 4th of July events coming up. How soon can the engineering inspection be done?

- Bolton & Menk— hopefully 7/2/26.

- NDDOT— if it's done tomorrow and submitted early enough in the day, the plan can be reviewed and things can continue to move forward.

> Needham— what are the stipulations on the detour? The road condition is very soft for 1 mile on 105th St. NE.

- NDDOT: can only approve signage— city or county has to maintain the road.

> Motion by Snitker, 2nd by Needham to authorize Bolton & Menk to do whatever is needed to get bridge open for pedestrians; all ayes; motion carries.

Motion to adjourn at 5:50pm by Snitker.

By: Mayor Helland

Attested to: Stoiber, City Auditor
The next regular city council meeting will be held on July 20, 2026 at 6pm in the Professional Building. (July 22, 2026)