WALKER CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
LOWER-LEVEL COMMUNITY ROOM
DALE AND HARRIET JONES WALKER PUBLIC LIBRARY
203 TOWER AVENUE, WALKER, MINNESOTA
MONDAY, DECEMBER 1, 2025

Call to Order – Acting Mayor Hansen

- Pledge of Allegiance.
- Councilmembers present: Erin Haefele, Mary Beth Hansen, Gary Wilkening, Jerecho Worth
- Councilmembers absent: none
- Staff members present: Hope Fairchild, City Administrator/Clerk-Treasurer; Peter Anderley, Police Chief; Dan Martin, Public Works Director; Jennie Meyer, Zoning Administrator; Susan Ostlund, Finance Specialist/Deputy Clerk; Chris Thorson, City Engineer

- Others present during portions of the meeting include:

Dean Morrill, Pilot Independent Newspaper
Brian Boeddeker, Walker American Legion
Ryan Pels, Walker American Legion
Tanya Baker, Self
Gene Granberg, Self

Consent Agenda – Acting Mayor Hansen

M/S Wilkening/Haefele to approve of consent agenda items 1 through 31 as follows, waiving the reading.

1. Approve of Walker City Council regular meeting minutes of November 3, 2025.
2. Review and file draft of Planning Commission/Board of Adjustments regular meeting minutes of November 24, 2025.
3. Review and file October 2025 Zoning Administrator Report.
4. Approve of Public Works Committee regular meeting minutes of November 18, 2025.
5. Review and file draft of Library Advisory Board regular meeting minutes of November 12, 2025.
6. No Park Advisory Board meeting was held in the month of November due to lack of business.
7. Review and file draft of Walker Area Joint Fire Department Board regular meeting minutes of November 13, 2025.
8. Review and file Walker Police Department Monthly Report.
9. Approve of the Cash Balance Report and related spreadsheets dated October 31, 2025.

10. Approve of claim no. 66125 to claim no. 66189 and bank drafts 1367-1379, including voided check numbers 66168-66169 in the amount of $333,516.56.
11. Review and file Sales Tax Receipts.
12. Review and file 2025 Mobile Food Units Schedule.
13. Review and file 2025 Temporary Liquor License Schedule.
14. Review and file 2025 Gambling Permits Schedule.
15. Approve of Library Advisory Board regular meeting minutes of October 14, 2025.
16. Approve of Planning Commission/Board of Adjustments regular meeting minutes of October 27, 2025.
17. Approve of change in police health care costs in accordance with the Police Union Agreement for calendar year 2026, from $1,611.00 to $1,633.00.
18. Approve of paying invoice number WK2025-2 in the amount of $9,362.50 to Kitchigami Regional Library System for 2nd half of 2025 levy.
19. Approve of paying statement number 15759 in the amount of $2,295.00 to Ramstad, Skoyles & Bakken, PA for monthly City Attorney services.
20. Review and file email from the League of Minnesota Cities Insurance Trust regarding premium rates and coverage changes.
21. Approve of paying invoice number 15308853 in the amount of $48,749.00, using a matching grant from Sourcewell, to ACME Tools for the purchase of a boom lift for the Public Works – Streets Department.
22. Approve of paying invoice number PJI-080625 in the amount of $3,096.25 to American Engineering Testing for material testing within the 2025 Downtown Street & Sidewalk Project.
23. Approve of paying Application for Payment #2 in the amount of $131,248.99 to Hy-Tec Construction for Walker Public Restrooms Construction materials and professional services through October 31, 2025.
24. Approve of paying invoice number 26063 in the amount of $2,313.00 to Microtech Computer Center for annual Microsoft 365 Business Basic and Standard Licenses, and applications.
25. Approve of paying invoice number 497620 in the amount of $5,940.00 to SEH, Inc. for work completed on the Walker Municipal Airport Obstruction Study.
26. Approve of paying invoice number 37042 in the amount of $18,845.60 to Southside Towing & Recovery for the purchase of brine system equipment to be installed on City vehicle to assist with minimizing the salt required on streets throughout the City of Walker.
27. Approve of paying invoice number ARIV1074523 in the amount of $13,990.90 to Ulteig Operations, LLC for work completed through October 17, 2025 on the 2025 Downtown Street & Sidewalk Project.
28. Approve of paying invoice number ARIV1074521 in the amount of $19,466.40 to Ulteig Operations, LLC for work completed through November 1, 2025 on the 2027 Tower Avenue Extension Project.
29. Approve of request to transfer $252,338.60 from the Local Sales Tax fund to the Downtown Project fund 519 to pay for the City of Walker's portion of the project special assessments.
30. Approve of paying invoice number 292 in the amount of $9,700.65 to Prime Truck Repair and Fabrication for purchase of brining equipment for public works road salting.

31. Approve of paying invoice number 179 in the amount of $18,728.96, which will be reimbursed by insurance, to Prime Truck Repair and Fabrication for repair to 2018 Western Star Dump Truck plow wing.
    Roll call: Ayes: Haefele, Hansen, Wilkening, Worth Nays:
    Motion passed (4-0)

Public Hearings – Acting Mayor Hansen

1. Truth-in-taxation hearing on proposed final 2026 budget and levy.

   Public meeting opened: 6:01 p.m.

   Finance Specialist/Deputy Clerk Ostlund provided an overview of the 2026 budget and levy. No public comments were heard.

   Public meeting closed: 6:03 p.m.

Scheduled Presentations – Acting Mayor Hansen

1. Presentation from Brian Boeddeker and Ryan Pels of the Walker American Legion – Veterans Memorial.
   Presentation: Mr. Pels of the Walker American Legion stated that they are interested in obtaining, through either a donation or a low payment cost, the South City Park property instead of leasing it. Members of the Legion are concerned regarding the terms of the agreement and the need for more accessibility to the property. The Legion has also reviewed its insurance policies and could add the veterans memorial to its own insurance policy rather than the City's for a lesser cost.

City Staff Comments – Administrator Fairchild

None.

Personnel, Budget & Administration – Councilmember Wilkening

1. **M/S Wilkening/Haefele** to approve of Resolution 47-2025, a Resolution Adopting the Final 2026 Budget.
   Roll call: Ayes: Haefele, Hansen, Wilkening, Worth Nays:
   Motion passed (4-0)
2. **M/S Wilkening/Haefele** to approve of Resolution 46-2025, a Resolution Approving and Adopting the Final 2025 Tax Levy, Collectable in 2026.
   Roll call: Ayes: Haefele, Hansen, Wilkening, Worth Nays:
   Motion passed (4-0)
3. **M/S Wilkening/Hansen** to approve of Resolution 45-2025, a Resolution Setting Regular and Alternative City Council Meeting Dates.
   Roll call: Ayes: Haefele, Hansen, Wilkening, Worth Nays:
   Motion passed (4-0)
4. **M/S Wilkening/Hansen** to approve of the closure of City Hall and the DMV at 1 p.m. on Wednesday, December 24, 2025 for Christmas Eve.
   Roll call: Ayes: Haefele, Hansen, Wilkening, Worth Nays:
   Motion passed (4-0)

5. **M/S Wilkening/Hansen** to approve of hiring full-time police officer Chad Ayshford at a starting wage of $29.78 and a start date of December 2, 2025.
   Roll call: Ayes: Haefele, Hansen, Wilkening, Worth Nays:
   Motion passed (5-0)
6. **M/S Wilkening/Haefele** to approve of the Memorandum of Understanding between the City of Walker and Teamsters Local No. 346, the Police Officer Union, regarding Minnesota Paid Family and Medical Leave (PFML).
   Roll call: Ayes: Haefele, Hansen, Wilkening, Worth Nays:
   Motion passed (4-0)
7. **M/S Wilkening/Haefele** to approve of the following 2026 employee wage increases:
   - Non-union employees: 3% wage increase
   - Public Works Director and Zoning Administrator: 7% wage increase
   - Union employees (set by contract): 7% wage increase

   Roll call: Ayes: Haefele, Hansen, Wilkening, Worth Nays:
   Motion passed (4-0)
8. **M/S Haefele/Wilkening** to approve of interviewing applicants for the open City Council seat at the December 18, 2025 City Council meeting at 5:00 p.m.
   Roll call: Ayes: Haefele, Hansen, Wilkening, Worth Nays:
   Motion passed (4-0)
9. **M/S Wilkening/Haefele** to approve of the 2026 off-sale intoxicating liquor license for Super One Liquor, located at 203 Minnesota Avenue West.
   Roll call: Ayes: Haefele, Hansen, Wilkening, Worth Nays:
   Motion passed (4-0)
10. **M/S Wilkening/Hansen** to table the discussion on a draft ordinance amending the Walker City Code to regulate the expenditure of gross profits from lawful gambling.
    Discussion: At the last City Council meeting, Mandatory Fun Outdoors received a gambling permit, and so the City Council decided to review the draft ordinance in one year.
    Roll call: Ayes: Haefele, Hansen, Wilkening, Worth Nays:
    Motion passed (4-0)

Planning and Zoning, Parks – Councilmember Haefele

1. **M/S Wilkening/Haefele** to table the Veterans Memorial property discussion requested by the Walker American Legion to the February 2, 2026 City Council meeting.
   Discussion: The City Council stated concerns with selling a piece of the City Park property. City Engineer Chris Thorson stated that through the Highway 371 reconstruction party, the State of Minnesota included an extension of the bike path that comes in through the South City Park property, which would increase the accessibility to the property. This is another reason why the City would not want to sell this property because we would have to get and pay for an easement to install the extension of the bike path. The City Council would like to work with engineers to understand the layout of the bike path extension and how the property layout would look.

Library, Cemetery & Airport – Councilmember Haefele

None.

Public Works – Councilmember Wilkening

1. **M/S Wilkening/Hansen** to approve of Resolution 48-2025, a Resolution Receiving the Feasibility Report on West Side Project Improvement and Calling for Hearing on Improvement.
   Roll call: Ayes: Haefele, Hansen, Wilkening, Worth Nays:
   Motion passed (4-0)
2. **M/S Wilkening/Worth** to approve of Resolution 49-2025, a Resolution in Support of Tower Avenue Local Road Improvement Program (LRIP) Grant Application.
   Roll call: Ayes: Haefele, Hansen, Wilkening, Worth Nays:
   Motion passed (4-0)
3. Discussion on draft Ordinance 2025-07, an Ordinance Amending the Walker City Code regarding irrigation and commercial water meters.
   Discussion: no discussion was held on the draft ordinance. It will come back for approval at the December 18, 2025 City Council meeting.

Announcements – Acting Mayor Hansen

- City Hall and the DMV will be closed at 1 p.m. on Wednesday, December 24, 2025.
- City Hall and the DMV will be closed on Thursday, December 25, 2025, and Friday, December 26, 2025.
- Upcoming meeting dates:
  - Library Advisory Board meeting: 1/13/2026 at 5:00 p.m. (Lower-Level Community Room within the Dale and Harriet Jones Walker Public Library)
  - Walker Area Joint Fire Department Board meeting: 12/11/2025 at 6:00 p.m. (Walker Fire Hall Meeting Room)
  - Public Works Committee meeting: 12/16/2025 at 7:00 a.m. (Lower-Level Community Room within the Dale and Harriet Jones Walker Public Library)
  - Park Advisory Board meeting: 12/23/2025 at 5:00 p.m. (Lower-Level Community Room within the Dale and Harriet Jones Walker Public Library)
  - Planning Commission/Board of Adjustments meeting: 12/29/2025 at 6:00 p.m. (Lower-Level Community Room within the Dale and Harriet Jones Walker Public Library)
  - City Council meeting: 12/18/2025 at 5:00 p.m. (Lower-Level Community Room within the Dale and Harriet Jones Walker Public Library)

Adjournment – Acting Mayor Hansen

Acting Mayor Hansen adjourned the meeting at 6:42 p.m.

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Mary Beth Hansen, Acting Mayor Hope Fairchild, City Administrator/Clerk-Trs.