



# NORTH BRANCH

## —Minnesota—

Kevin Schieber  
Mayor

Robert Canada  
Councilmember/Acting Mayor

Jeff Goulet  
Councilmember

Jim Ibinger  
Councilmember

Patrick Meacham  
Councilmember

**CITY COUNCIL  
REGULAR AGENDA  
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 23, 2025 @ 7:00 PM  
CITY HALL, 6408 ELM STREET, NORTH  
BRANCH, MN 55056**

### **MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NORTH BRANCH IN THE COUNTY OF CHISAGO AND IN THE STATE OF MINNESOTA**

#### **REGULAR MEETING**

**Tuesday, September 23, 2025**

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

The North Branch City Council met in REGULAR, and Mayor Kevin Schieber called the meeting to order at 7 PM.

**2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Mayor Kevin Schieber led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**3. ROLL CALL**

**Present:** Mayor Kevin Schieber, Councilmember Jeff Goulet, Councilmember Jim Ibinger, Councilmember Patrick Meacham, Councilmember Robert Canada

**Absent:**

**Remote:**

**Others Present:**

**Notes:**

**4. AGENDA APPROVAL**

Mayor Kevin Schieber requested that 10c, Discussion of Student/Pedestrian Safety for Grand Avenue and other high traffic areas, be moved between 9a and 9c.

**RESULT:** Passed

**MOVER:** Kevin Schieber

**SECONDER:** Patrick Meacham

**AYES:** Kevin Schieber, Jeff Goulet, Jim Ibinger, Patrick Meacham, Robert Canada

**ABSENT:**

**NOTES:**

a. Approve Agenda

**ACTION**

**RESULT:** Passed

**MOVER:** Patrick Meacham

**SECONDER:** Robert Canada

**AYES:** Kevin Schieber, Jeff Goulet, Jim Ibinger, Patrick Meacham, Robert Canada

**ABSENT:**

**NOTES:**

5. PRESENTATION & PROCLAMATION

6. PUBLIC COMMENT

*Provides an opportunity for the public to address the Council on items that are not on the Agenda. Please raise your hand to be recognized. Please state your name and address for the record. This section is for the express purpose of addressing concerns of City services and operations. It shall not be used to clarify individual's views for political purposes.*

Jim Tholen, Tom Hefty, and Kelly Mauer gave Public Comment.

7. CONSENT AGENDA

*All matters listed under Consent Agenda are considered routine and/or non-controversial and will be approved by one motion. There will be no separate discussion of these items unless a Councilmember or citizen so requests, in which case the item will be removed from the Consent Agenda and considered in its normal sequence on the Agenda.*

**RESULT:** Passed

**MOVER:** Robert Canada

**SECONDER:** Jim Ibinger

**AYES:** Kevin Schieber, Jeff Goulet, Jim Ibinger, Patrick Meacham, Robert Canada

**ABSENT:**

**NOTES:**

a. Claims

**ACTION**

b. Minutes - City Council Meeting - September 9, 2025, 7:00 PM

**ACTION**

c. Approve Transient Merchant License - North Branch Area Chamber of Commerce **ACTION**

d. Approval of Resolution R-227-2025 approving the Development Agreement for Laborers Training Center **ACTION**

e. Approval of Resolution R-231-2025 accepting the offer of dedication and reducing the letter of credit for Meadows North Townhomes 1st Addition **ACTION**

f. Approval of Resolution R-230-2025 to reduce the letter of credit for Meadows North Townhomes 2nd Addition **ACTION**

g. Approval of Resolution R-225-2025 approving the Fireworks Display Permit for the North Branch High School Homecoming Fireworks Display on October 3, 2025 **ACTION**

h. Approval of Resolution R-229-2025 Authorizing Pay Voucher No. 5 for the CSAH 30 (Forest Blvd) & Safe Routes to School Trail Project. **ACTION**

- i. Approval of Resolution R-232-2025 authorizing Pay Request #2 for Pavement Improvement Project ACTION

8. PUBLIC HEARINGS

9. STAFF REPORTS

- a. Consider Approval Resolution #R-226-2025 authorizing an increase to Fire Relief Pension at \$6,000 per year of active service. ACTION

Chad VanDyke, treasurer of the Fire Relief Association, presented an overview from the Fire Department on how the pension works. A member of the fire department becomes partially vested - 60% - after 10 years of service. Each year the vesting increases 4% until 20 years of service, at which point the member is considered fully vested. A member may retire any time after they are partially or fully vested, but they cannot collect their retirement until they are at least the age of 50. If a member resigns before 10 years of service, they do not receive any pension. The North Branch Fire Department Relief Association is a 100% self-funded retirement fund. We have two separate investment accounts, one with the state of Minnesota and a second with a third party based in Minneapolis. We do not receive any funds directly from the City of North Branch, either required funds or non-required funds. Non-required funds are funds that the city could budget as an annual contribution to our retirement. Required funds from the city only occur if determined by our annual audit. If there is a significant deficiency between our assets and our accrued liability, there could be a required contribution. This amount would vary depending on what the deficiency is. Although the city does not directly contribute to our retirement, we are required to get council approval for a benefit increase. We are requesting a \$700/year benefit increase from \$5,300 to \$6,000 per year of service, effective January 1st, 2026.

**RESULT:** Passed

**MOVER:** Robert Canada

**SECONDER:** Kevin Schieber

**AYES:** Kevin Schieber, Jeff Goulet, Jim Ibinger, Patrick Meacham, Robert Canada

**ABSENT:**

**NOTES:**

- b. Consider Approval of Resolution R-222-2025 Adopting the Preliminary 2026 City of North Branch Operating and Debt Levy ACTION

Finance Director Sharon Wright presented the City Council with the Preliminary 2026 City of North Branch Operating and Debt Levy. General fund draft budget proposals and recommended tax levies have been discussed with City Council over the last few months. These discussions focused on debt requirements, staffing, and additional operating costs for the City of North Branch. At this time, a Preliminary Tax Levy of \$7,170,247 is proposed. This is a property tax revenue increase from the prior year of approximately 8.5%. This Preliminary Tax Levy must be certified to the County by September 30th of each year. The final levy may be the same or lower than the amount established at this time, but it cannot be more. That action, plus the budget adoption, will take place in December. There is a list of items for consideration that is currently proposed in the general fund budget that the Council has been asked to prioritize. After some discussion between the City Council and Department Heads, the board agreed to a Preliminary Tax Levy of \$7 million, with a property tax revenue increase of 5.93%.

**RESULT:** Passed

**MOVER:** Jeff Goulet

**SECONDER:** Robert Canada

**AYES:** Kevin Schieber, Jeff Goulet, Jim Ibinger, Patrick Meacham, Robert Canada  
**ABSENT:**  
**NOTES:**

- c. Consider Approval of Resolution R-223-2025 Adopting the Preliminary 2026 EDA Tax Levy for the City of North Branch ACTION

Finance Director Sharon Wright presented the City Council with the Preliminary 2026 EDA Tax Levy for the City of North Branch. The North Branch Economic Development Authority (EDA) discussed draft budget proposals and recommended tax levies. At the September meeting, the EDA recommended preliminary EDA and HRA levies in the amounts of \$ 309,510 and \$ 315,827, respectively. The combined projected revenue total is \$ 625,337. The majority of the revenue supports repayment of debt tied to the Business Park. The action sets both preliminary levies at the maximum allowed under the State Statute.

**RESULT:** Passed  
**MOVER:** Kevin Schieber  
**SECONDER:** Robert Canada  
**AYES:** Kevin Schieber, Jeff Goulet, Jim Ibinger, Patrick Meacham, Robert Canada  
**ABSENT:**  
**NOTES:**

- d. Consider Approval of Resolution R-224-2026 Adopting the Preliminary 2026 HRA Tax Levy for the City of North Branch ACTION

Finance Director Sharon Wright presented the City Council with the Preliminary 2026 HRA Tax Levy for the City of North Branch. The North Branch Economic Development Authority (EDA) discussed draft budget proposals and recommended tax levies. At the September meeting, the EDA recommended preliminary EDA and HRA levies in the amounts of \$ 309,510 and \$ 315,827, respectively. The combined projected revenue total is \$ 625,337. The majority of the revenue supports repayment of debt tied to the Business Park. The action sets both preliminary levies at the maximum allowed under State Statute.

**RESULT:** Passed  
**MOVER:** Kevin Schieber  
**SECONDER:** Robert Canada  
**AYES:** Kevin Schieber, Jeff Goulet, Jim Ibinger, Patrick Meacham, Robert Canada  
**ABSENT:**  
**NOTES:**

- e. Consider approval of Ordinance 397-25 Amending City Code Section 66-943 Design Standards for permitted building materials and amending the design overlay district map ACTION

City Administrator Matthew Hill presented the approval of Ordinance 397-25 amending City Code Section 66-943 Design Standards for permitted building materials and amending the design overlay district map. The EDA has been working on a variety of ways to encourage and entice new development in the Interstate Business Park. As part of that process, they have discussed modifications to the design standards based on feedback received from potential businesses and developers. The Planning

Commission has had several discussions relating to the existing code for design standards in the Interstate Business Park. The Planning Commission held a public hearing on September 2, 2025, relating to amendments to the design standards overlay map to modify the areas along I-35 from zone 1 to zone 2 and to modify the internal portions of the park from zone 2 to zone 3, as well as to add insulated metal panels as a permitted material in zone 2. Following the public hearing, the planning commission made a recommendation to approve both.

**RESULT:** Passed  
**MOVER:** Kevin Schieber  
**SECONDER:** Jeff Goulet  
**AYES:** Kevin Schieber, Jeff Goulet, Jim Ibinger, Patrick Meacham, Robert Canada  
**ABSENT:**  
**NOTES:**

- f. Consider Approval of Ordinance 398-25 Authorizing Summary Publication of Ordinance 397-25 Modifying Section 66-943 Design Standards in the Zoning Code ACTION

The City Council was asked to consider approval of Ordinance 398-25, authorizing summary publication of Ordinance 397-25, modifying section 66-943 design standards in the zoning code.

**RESULT:** Passed  
**MOVER:** Jeff Goulet  
**SECONDER:** Robert Canada  
**AYES:** Kevin Schieber, Jeff Goulet, Jim Ibinger, Patrick Meacham, Robert Canada  
**ABSENT:**  
**NOTES:**

#### 10. MAYOR/CITY COUNCIL

- a. EDA Commission Appointment ACTION

Mayor Kevin Schieber made a motion to appoint Cassie Kecher to the EDA commission. Community Development Director Nate Sondrol and Mayor Schieber interviewed three applicants for the opening. Mayor Schieber said that all three applicants did a great job and were very passionate about giving back to the community. Mayor Schieber commented that Cassie has a very proactive way of thinking, she really seems to understand all the different components of community members.

**RESULT:** Passed  
**MOVER:** Kevin Schieber  
**SECONDER:** Robert Canada  
**AYES:** Kevin Schieber, Jeff Goulet, Jim Ibinger, Patrick Meacham, Robert Canada  
**ABSENT:**  
**NOTES:**

- b. Liaison reports from Planning, Parks and EDA commission meetings. VERBAL UPDATE

Commissioner Meacham gave a brief EDA commission update. Walk and Roll is on Wednesday, October 8th, starting at 7:15 am at St. Gregory's Catholic Church. The Chisago HRA EDA has a bunch of training that is available to the community that you should check out. There will be a grocery market study that will take about 6-8 weeks. We should get the information by the end of this year.

Mayor Schieber gave a Parks and Trails commission update, with the biggest takeaway being that they approved applying for the grant for the concerts in the park for 2026.

Commissioner Meacham gave a Planning Commission update. There was a public hearing on September 17th for a request for a variance to the city code for design standards for permitted building materials, and then a zoning text amendment and a conditional use permit for outdoor storage. The planning commission did recommend denial of all three items.

Commissioner Canada gave a Fire Department update. The liquor store fundraiser raised about \$4,000 for the fire department. Fire Chief Pat Heinen said they will be using the \$4,000 to purchase gas meters, which will be used for when the fire department is called out for a gas leak of carbon dioxide.

- c. Discussion of Student/Pedestrian Safety for Grand Avenue and other high traffic areas. INFO

Mayor Kevin Schieber introduced the discussion of student/pedestrian safety for Grand Avenue and other high-traffic areas. The mayor explained that multiple residents have reported near misses involving vehicles and students walking or biking on Grand Avenue to and from school. The Council reviewed some of the public comments that were posted on the community social media page. The Mayor asked Police Chief Dan Meyer to go over some history of this traffic area.

Police Chief Dan Meyer provided an overview of past and current efforts to improve safety, including the use of speed trailers and increased patrols. The council and the public discussed various short-term and long-term solutions, such as additional law enforcement, volunteer crossing guards, and traffic-calming measures. The need for more staffing and the potential impact of the Highway 30 detour on traffic could also be a consideration. There were also suggestions of speed warning signs, traffic cameras, and possibly using reserve officers to address the aggressive driving. This discussion, along with implementing solutions to improve pedestrian safety on Grand Avenue, needs to continue by exploring and implementing solutions to improve pedestrian safety.

- d. Discussion and consideration about the City hosting town halls with elected officials representing the City of North Branch at the State and Federal levels. INFO

Mayor Kevin Schieber brought up the discussion about the City of North Branch hosting town halls with elected officials representing the City of North Branch at the State and Federal levels. There was a consensus with the City Council that it's a good idea. City Administrator Matthew Hill commented that every community should be engaging in it. If it's not the city, the chamber, or the school, or somebody hosting these events, there are a lot of benefits to the overall community: enhancing community engagement, promoting transparency and accountability, facilitating constructive dialogue, informing people on policy and decision-making, and empowering citizens to be part of the process and participate in those things and listen.

## 11. ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Kevin Schieber adjourned the City Council meeting at 9:30 pm.

**RESULT:** Passed  
**MOVER:** Kevin Schieber  
**SECONDER:** Robert Canada  
**AYES:** Kevin Schieber, Jeff Goulet, Jim Ibinger, Patrick Meacham, Robert Canada  
**ABSENT:**  
**NOTES:**

