



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, OCTOBER 14, 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, October 14, 2025

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Kevin Schieber called the City Council 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

Commissioner Robert Canada requested that 7f, the Approval of Resolution R-242-2025 approving the Cannabis Retail Registration Application for Wild River Cannabis LLC, be moved to 9a in Staff Reports.

RESULT: Passed

MOVER: Robert Canada

SECONDER: Jim Ibinger

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

a. Life Saving Award Presentation

INFO

Police Chief Dan Mayer presented the Life Saving Medal to Officer Adam Hanson in recognition of Officer Hanson's actions during an emergency that took place on August 30th, 2025. This award is presented to employees who displayed performance in his/her duty to save the life of a person who would have likely died if not for the actions of the officer. Employees who earn the Life Saving Medal will be presented with a plaque and a uniform bar that may be worn on the uniform. On August 30, 2025, approximately 3:15 in the afternoon, North Branch police officers were dispatched to a reported medical drug overdose, with the victim described as turning blue. Officer Adam Hansen was the first officer to arrive on the scene and immediately took control of the situation, providing critical, lifesaving care. When he entered the residence, Officer Hansen located the victim, who was unconscious and unresponsive. He administered two doses of Narcan and prepared to initiate CPR as additional officers arrived. Officer Hanson demonstrated co-leadership by delegating tasks, ensuring and ensuring an organized and effective response. He administered oxygen through a non-rebreather mask and provided assisted breathing for the victim. Officer Hansen continued to monitor and stimulate the victim through sternum rubs and verbal prompts, working tirelessly to restore signs of life. The victim was severely cyanotic with blue and purple discoloration in the face and remained unresponsive for a period of time. But because of Officer Hansen's advanced training, quick thinking, and decisive actions, the victim ultimately regained alertness and began breathing independently, and Officer Hansen's actions directly saved that life. His professionalism, medical expertise, and ability to lead under pressure exemplify the highest standards of our police department.

b. 2025 MSFDA Firefighter of the year presentation

**VERBAL
UPDATE**

Fire Chief Pat Heinen presented the 2025 MSFDA Firefighter of the year award to Training Captain Bobby Morelli for the Firefighter of the Year Award. He has an unmatched work ethic, demonstrated clearly by the fact that he has held the highest percentage of fire call responses in the department for the last three consecutive years. That level of consistency and commitment is rare—and it speaks volumes about his reliability and dedication to our mission and our community. In his role as Training Captain, Bobby goes above and beyond to ensure our members are not only trained, but confident and capable. He leads by example, fosters a positive learning environment, and always makes time to support the growth of others. Whether leading department-wide training sessions or mentoring recruits, his passion for this work is clear. Bobby also stands out for his flexibility and problem-solving mindset. He steps into any role as needed, switches between duties without conflict, and brings thoughtful solutions to every situation. He is a natural leader who encourages communication, asks insightful questions, and is never afraid to challenge himself in pursuit of a better outcome. He also serves as a trusted liaison between department leadership and members, advocating for others and maintaining open, respectful

communication across the board. Most importantly, Bobby consistently puts his fellow firefighters first—always looking out for their safety, well-being, and success.

c. A Proclamation Declaring October as Manufacturing Month

VERBAL
UPDATE

Mayor Kevin Schieber declared a Proclamation declaring the month of October 2025 as Manufacturing Month in the City of North Branch. Manufacturing is a dynamic and robust industry that is crucial to the health and sustainability of the City of North Branch, Chisago County, and the State of Minnesota's diverse economy, and is essential to the strength of our Community. Manufacturing Month is an incredible opportunity to recognize and thank our amazing North Branch manufacturing businesses.

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.

Connor Landry, Jerry McFarlane, Gloria Karsky, and Adam Grobove III 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.

Commissioner Robert Canada requested that 7f, the Approval of Resolution R-242-2025 approving the Cannabis Retail Registration Application for Wild River Cannabis LLC, be moved to 9a in Staff Reports.

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

- | | |
|---|--------|
| a. Claims | ACTION |
| b. Minutes - City Council Meeting - September 23, 2025, 7:00 PM | ACTION |
| c. Approval of Resolution R-234-2025 authorizing enhanced street sweeping funding grant | ACTION |
| d. Approval of Resolution R-236-2025 authorizing the low bid for water tower cleaning | ACTION |
| e. Receive Legal Staff Report | INFO |
| f. Approval of Resolution R-242-2025 approving the Cannabis Retail Registration Application for Wild River Cannabis LLC | ACTION |

RESULT: Passed
MOVER: Robert Canada

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

The motion is to table the registration application until October 28th at the next City Council meeting, not to approve Resolution R-242-2025.

Community Development Director Nate Sondrol introduced R-242-2025, which would be the approval of a Cannabis Retail Registration Application for Wild River Cannabis LLC. Wild River Cannabis submitted a Cannabis Retail Registration Application to open a Cannabis micro business at 4628 Isanti Trail, North Branch, MN 55056. This application is contingent upon the following:

- A copy of the lease agreement or other contract authorizing the applicant to occupy the retail location if the applicant is not the owner of the property.
- A copy of documentation showing compliance with zoning from the zoning authority and compliance with state fire and building codes.
- A certificate of liability insurance covering the license period.
- Completed Tennessee Warning form for each person referenced on the application
- Completed MN Workers Comp Law for business
- Complete the MN Tax Clearance Certificate form for business.
- A copy of a valid state license or a written notice of license pre-approval letter issued by the Minnesota Office of Cannabis Management.
- Initial Registration Fee \$500, Renewal Registration Fee \$1,000 due upon State approval.

Director Sondrol explained that they received approval from the state for a Cannabis retail site. There's a couple of things that, just to be clarifying what's in the packet, the location on there is different than the address businesses have, the ability to move the location one from the pre-approval they have. That's part of that process. The process is somewhat complicated, because when they submit, it doesn't have to have that specific business, because there are a lot of things that have changed. Essentially, the legislature has wanted the cannabis retail registration to be a very simplified process. There are requirements that they have that require to provide so with a pre-approval. Once they have that, they have 18 months to essentially find a location, and then they'll submit an application. They'll submit that go to the state, and once they were asking for the preliminary zoning approval, essentially, does the site meet zoning requirements here? And this location does its own B business. These are permanent uses cannabis retail is permitted in that zoning district. And then, once they receive that freedom under approval, they will submit to the state to apply for registration after they get their site, in accordance the one system is safer for the registration, they have 30 days to have. So the state requires the city that they receive registration. They have 30 days to comply with all the zoning regulations and all the building code regulations, and part of that includes significant safety security requirements by the state, such as in the alarm system, hidden surveillance, lighting, locks, immediate response protocol. So there are various significant controls that need to be met within that 30-day window. The city did adopt the cannabis code, we are required to provide one license for 12,500 people. And so with that, we adopted those rules and regulations. We discussed setbacks from schools, daycares, parks, playgrounds, and the council at that time made a recommendation to have the setbacks be 1000 feet from school and 1000 feet from another Cannabis retail store. The daycare component that was or the licensed facilities that state statute does talk about the ability of having to impose those setbacks, if you so choose, with this to see that North Branch also did not include those. So with that, the site does meet the zoning requirements for what they're requesting,

Commissioner Canada responded that he doesn't understand the location of the retail shop, and he believes that it's a safety concern. He explained that he is also worried about increased traffic that this retail shop will also bring to the area. Commissioner Canada mentioned that he is also worried about the crime statistics of this proposed business.

Commissioner Ibinger stated that he isn't against Cannabis in North Branch, he just believes that we need to do a little extra homework before a decision is made, and if there's another location available.

Mayor Kevin Schieber questioned the applicant if he would be growing Cannabis. The applicant had initially applied for 2 endorsements, and he dropped the cultivation endorsement. So he will not be cultivating it.

The City Council decided to table the approval of Resolution R-242-2025 until the October 28th City Council Meeting to get some more questions answered and some feedback from our police chief regarding the crime increase. The three items that the City Council would like more information about are:

1. Legal conformity with State Statute
2. Traffic Statistics/Impacts
3. Crime Statistics

- g. Approval of Resolution R-235-2025 authorizing a letter of support for Veteran's Memorial ACTION
- h. Approval of Resolution R-238-2025 providing for an irrevocable appropriation of funds ACTION
- i. Approval of Resolution R-239-2025 Approving Special Event Permit for the Space Race Disc Golf Tournament at Harder Park ACTION

8. PUBLIC HEARINGS

9. STAFF REPORTS

- a. Consider approval of Resolution # R-244-2025 authorizing the feasibility study for NW Old Town Street and Utility project ACTION

City Engineer Justin Messner brought a presentation in front of the City Council for the approval of Resolution R-244-2025, authorizing the feasibility study for the NW Old Town Street and Utility Project. Past studies were done in 1995 and 2005. The new assessment policy aligns with Minnesota statute 429, which allows the City to bond for improvements. The project area includes some portions of Cedar Street, Elm Street, 12th Avenue, 11th Avenue, and 10th Avenue, with proposed improvements such as roadway upgrades, sidewalk improvements, storm sewer improvements, and water main upgrades. The process that we're looking at here tonight is just to authorize preparation and a feasibility study. Justin listed out the nine major meetings that will be public meetings for this particular project. So the first meeting we have here tonight is for the council to consider authorizing the preparation of the feasibility study. Our staff would do that work, and we would bring the feasibility study back for your consideration at the November 11 meeting. Then, if that were to be accepted at that time, what you would do is we would hear that it's accepted, and then you decide to move forward with our first public

engagement to interact with the public, understand what their concerns are, and can incorporate that into the feasibility study, and that would take place sometime in November. We would come back in December, then, once we gathered all that information, made those final comments on the feasibility study, and then hold a public hearing. We'd have the public into to discuss with the council about the concerns or the desire to move forward with the project. And at that time, then you would accept the feasibility and choose whether or not you want to authorize the final design. We would bring those final plans to the City Council at the end of February, where you would then accept the design and authorize an advertisement that authorizes us to place a bid in the local paper to seek contractors and understand the construction cost of that project. So then we open bids on March 26, and we compute assessments, we bring that back to a council meeting to talk to you about the low bid that's been received and the assessment amount. And then we hold our third public information meeting. And that public information is needed. Really to talk to the residents about not so much about the design anymore, but to talk about the final project costs and those final assessment costs, and help them understand that, and help them understand their options following that. Then we do hold a public hearing where we hear the public, and then we decide to whether or not you want to award the construction contract, and that would be in the April, May timeframe of 2026 I do have on here, in May 2026 awarding sales of bonds. Construction will begin in June, 2026 with the final completion in October, November 2026

Commissioner Goulet mentioned two questions of concern on Elm. The sidewalks and parking, especially during busier downtown times. Commissioner Canada asked how communication would get to the effective owners. Justin answered the questions, saying that we do have a public improvement or a public engagement process that we have here with the city. So we do it a number of different ways. We mail postcards to all the residents who are within that area. On that postcard, there is a quick blurb about the potential project coming in. It has a QR code where they can scan it and visit the city's website to get additional information on the project. It would include all the historical information to date about how the project came to be and where it's required to read and post some of the Public Information presentations. If they were able to make those meetings, they can then view those virtually, an online recording of those. We also do social media posts. We could also use the Cities Facebook page. We utilized that in the past, letting residents know to attend an upcoming meeting about potential projects in their area, very similar to the process that we've used here in the past with our safe houses, safe houses, students.

The motion was not to exceed \$37,332 for the feasibility study and report.

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

- b. Consider approval of Resolution R-237-2025 authorization low bid for water tower ACTION #3 reconditioning service proposal for 2026

City Engineer Justin Messner asked the City Council to consider approval of Resolution R-237-2025, authorization low bid for water tower #3 reconditioning service proposal for 2026.

As background, Water Tower No. 3, located on Grant Avenue near the high school, is scheduled for reconditioning in 2026 as part of the City's capital improvement plan. This tower was originally constructed in 2004, and it is standard practice to recondition municipal water towers approximately every 20 years. Reconditioning typically involves removing corrosion from the interior of the tank,

repainting, and upgrading components to ensure compliance with current OSHA and state safety standards.

To initiate this process, City staff have obtained a proposal from KLM Engineering to perform a full pre-inspection of the tank—both inside and out—followed by the preparation of a condition report. Based on their findings, KLM will then develop detailed plans and specifications for the reconditioning project and provide construction administration services throughout the duration of the work. The total cost of these services is \$114,740.

The proposed timeline begins with Council authorization of the inspection, plans, and specifications this evening. KLM would begin their inspection work in November 2025, which includes draining the tank and conducting a full condition assessment. Plans and specifications would be prepared by early 2026, with the project going out to bid in February or March. Staff would then return to Council in March 2026 with a recommendation to award the construction contract. Reconditioning work is anticipated to begin in spring 2026.

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

c. Finance Update

INFO

Finance Director Sharon Wright gave the August Finance Update to the City Council, and Liquor Store Director Carla Golden gave the August Liquor Store Update. Included in the Finance Update are reports for Cash and Investments, the August Finance Update, and the August Liquor Store Update.

At the end of August 2025, the City held \$25,273,665.62 in cash and investments. Approximately \$7.8 million has been held in the checking accounts and money markets. This is higher than normal due to the property taxes that were received in July. The accounts are kept high at this time of year due to debt payments that occur in early August. The remaining balance is held in CDs, Treasuries, Agencies, and Bonds. Ideally, we try to invest no further out than 3 years.

Profits at the Liquor Stores are still operating at about 10%, way better than they've been in the past. Margins are holding for the gross margin between 29% and 30%

d. Consider approval of job description for Director of Public Works and Utilities ACTION

Human Resources Travis Miles asked the City Council to approve the job description for Director of Public Works and Utilities. Upon reviewing the current job description for the Director of Public Works and Utilities, it was noted that the original document was written in July 2004 and last amended in August 2014. Given the evolving scope and responsibilities of this role, a comprehensive re-evaluation was conducted to ensure it accurately reflects the leadership and operational needs of the department today.

The Director oversees five distinct divisions within Public Works: Maintenance, Water, Wastewater, Mechanical, and Electric Generation. The revised job description aims to encompass leadership responsibilities across all these areas while aligning with current organizational expectations and future needs. To support the revision process, an anonymous survey was distributed to staff within the Public

Works department to gather input on the qualities and competencies they value in a new leader. With a 50% response rate, employees indicated a strong preference for a leader who is approachable and open-minded, with key strengths in clear and consistent communication, project management, and decision-making. They also emphasized the importance of a balanced and supportive management style, one that encourages collaboration, trust, and professional growth.

A parallel survey was conducted with department heads, who echoed many of the same sentiments. They highlighted the need for a peer who fosters team-building, communicates clearly, leads collaboratively, and supports staff development within their respective teams. Feedback from City Council members aligned closely with that of staff and leadership. Council emphasized the importance of appointing a Director who demonstrates strong leadership and management capabilities, excels in conflict resolution, and maintains a safe and productive work environment. Additionally, there is a desire to see the role focus on talent development, with a goal of cultivating future leaders within the department, including future Leads and Directors of Public Works.

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

e. Consider Resolution R-240-2025 to deny a variance request from design standards ACTION at 39777 Flink Avenue

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

City Planner Ryan Saltis presented to the City Council three separate resolutions. Ryan started by giving background on the requests. This went to a special meeting with the planning commission on September 17th, first for the variance from design standards, next the text amendment to the city code to include outdoor storage equipment materials as a conditional use in the B business zoning district. And then with that, would be a conditional use permit for the outdoor storage equipment and materials. It's located on Flink Avenue, and then it's also visible from 35, and it's also guided B business in the comp plan. The applicant applied for the variance for building materials used on the garage portion of the building. The parcel is located in Zone One for design standards, which requires 65% of class one building materials and 35% of class two materials. Getting into those materials, class one is more durable materials, such as brick, stone, glass, and then class two. The top left picture is the front of the office portion of the building, and then the other angles are the shop portion. It is a heavy truck repair. And kind of trucking operation. The recommendation of the planning commission at the September 17th meeting was to deny it, and it passed 4-0. There were public comments, there was opposition from adjacent property owners for the use of the heavy truck operation, and there were access issues. The site is only accessible from an easement from that surrounding parcel to the west and then impact on property values. Some findings in fact from that meeting are listed. They're also listed in the resolution there. So, just going down the list of the locations subject to stricter design standards, basically due to the visibility from highly traveled roads. The variance request would set precedence for other properties

looking to avoid conforming to the higher design standards. Variance request is considered an economic consideration which does not constitute a practical difficulty. The variance has the potential to decrease surrounding property values by allowing less durable building materials. The applicant has not demonstrated that strict allocation of the design standards would result in an undue hardship that is unique to the property and not self-imposed. The subject properties do not possess unique physical characteristics, size, shapeography or location by deviation from the design standards, and granting a variance may negatively impact the public interest, neighborhood, character or the intent of the design standards.\

Mayor Kevin Schieber asked how granting the variance may negatively impact the public interest, neighborhood, character or intent of the design standards. City Planner Ryan Saltis answered that these findings are from the Planning Commissions and the neighboring parcel owners.

- f. Consider Resolution R-243-20025 to deny Ordinance 399-25 to allow outdoor storage as a conditional use within the (B) Business District ACTION

RESULT: Passed

MOVER: Jeff Goulet

SECONDER: Patrick Meacham

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

ABSENT:

NOTES:

City Planner Ryan Saltis explained that this text amendment to allow outdoor storage and the business district semi-trucks and operational business equipment and materials would be located outdoors on the site. Ryan showed on the screen that the out lot on the northern part of the office and shop areas where they proposed the outdoor storage. Basically what we hear is that it's just going to be storage of semi-trailers waiting to get work done, and then they will be brought into the shop to be repaired. So it is currently not permitted in the B business zoning district. It's only listed as a conditional use in the industrial zoning district. On this chart here, we're just showing that outdoor storage and equipment materials doesn't have any letters under the B business category. So the P means that it's a permitted use. C is a conditional use. It has neither so similar to the other item, the planning commission recommended denial for this. There were public comments. Opposition from adjacent property owners, same as the other one, access and impact the property values. The findings for this text amendment, in particular, the request for outdoor storage would apply to all parcels that are zoned be business within the city. So that was a big issue. The planning commission really thought about so the B business district is on all major roadways in the city. Outdoor storage doesn't particularly make sense to be located in those locations. Number two, that is potentially a decrease in property values. And then it is proposed for a single property, but this would kind of impact all parcels.

City Planner Ryan Saltis told the City Council that if they decide to table this for whatever reason, the 60 day rule puts itself to October 25th.

- g. Consider Resolution R-241-2025 for a Conditional Use Permit for Outdoor Storage at 39777 Flink Ave ACTION

RESULT: Failed

MOVER: Jeff Goulet

SECONDER: Patrick Meacham

AYES: None

ABSENT:

NOTES:

If you do decide to table this for whatever reason, the 60-day rule puts it to October 25, moving on to the

conditioning use permit. These are some bullet points that the planning commission took into consideration. So they considered existing surrounding uses of the outdoor storage, how businesses in the immediate area as part of the overall operation of the business, considered surrounding businesses approval previously zone b3 outdoor storage, as we discussed, they considered the impact of depreciation of surrounding properties, and then also asked some questions as far as the surfacing, and would this be sufficient for this use? The outdoor storage would be moving about the site, potentially causing dust to circulate around the area, in fact, any surrounding properties. So the findings for this one, it's pretty straightforward, just because you know that chart, it isn't listed as a permitted or conditional use, so we just put as the findings that it's currently not allowed. So, for this one to get approved, it would have to be passed first to do the text amendment before you know if you decided it.

10. MAYOR/CITY COUNCIL

- a. Advisory Committee member updates - Public Safety, Personnel, Public Works, Finance, Liquor Store VERBAL
UPDATE

Mayor Kevin Schieber made a motion to table the advisory committee updates until the next meeting on October 28th, 2025.

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

11. ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Kevin Schieber made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:12 PM.

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