NORTH BRANCH
——Minnesota——

Kevin Schieber
Mayor

Robert Canada
Councilmember/Acting Mayor

Jeff Goulet
Councilmember

Jim Ibinger
Councilmember

Patrick Meacham
Councilmember

CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR AGENDA
WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 12, 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

Wednesday, November 12, 2025

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Kevin Schieber called the North Branch 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

a. Approve Agenda ACTION

RESULT: **Passed**
MOVER: **Kevin Schieber**
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.

Kelly Neider signed up for 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: **Patrick Meacham**
SECONDER: **Robert Canada**
AYES: **Kevin Schieber, Jeff Goulet, Jim Ibinger, Patrick Meacham, Robert Canada**
ABSENT:
NOTES:

a.	Claims	ACTION
b.	Minutes - City Council Meeting - October 28th, 2025, 7:00 PM	ACTION
c.	Approval of Resolution R-228-2025 Releasing Letter of Credit and Developer Obligations for Meadows North 4th Addition	ACTION
d.	Cannabis and Hemp Ordinance Amendment #399-25 to include low potency hemp edible retailers and summary publication of said ordinance	ACTION
e.	Approval of Pay Request #3 (Final) for 2025 Pavement Improvement Project	ACTION
f.	Approval of Transient Merchant License - Renewal By Andersen	ACTION
g.	Approval of Resolution R-249-2025 Releasing Letter of Credit and Developer Obligations for Falcon Apartments	ACTION
h.	Recieve Monthly Legal Staff Report	INFO
i.	Approval of Resolution R-250-2025 Certifying Unpaid Utility Bills	ACTION
j.	Approval of Resolution # R-252-2025 authorizing payment #7 for CSAH 30 street improvement project	ACTION

8. PUBLIC HEARINGS

9. STAFF REPORTS

a. Consider approval of the hiring of Matt Fraley as the Director of Public Works and Utilities for the City of North Branch ACTION

Human Resources Director Travis Miles brought the consideration of approval of hiring Matt Fraley as the Director of Public Works and Utilities for the City of North Branch. Mr. Matt Fraley was selected as the top candidate for the position by the selection committee, based on having had the highest-scoring matrix, a certificate in Public Works, and having completed the Public Works Leadership Academy and Public Works Executive Fellowship through Hamilin University. Mr. Fraley has 19 years of experience in Public Works, the majority of that in leadership roles. He has experience with departmental budgeting, City Policies, Comprehensive Plans, SCADA, GIS, and has served as a Safety Committee member. Mr Fraley holds a Class A water Operator License and a Class B Wastewater License. He has the experience in Public Works and leadership that was being looked for.

Commissioner Jeff Goulet brought up the possibility of changing the hiring process in the future of Department Heads. Jeff requested getting more information about the pool of candidates and, sooner, having more involvement as a Councilmember in the hiring process.

The motion was to approve Matt Fraley as the Director of Public Works

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

b. Update Regarding Student/Pedestrian Safety Concerns on Grand Ave INFO

Police Chief Dan Meyer gave an update regarding student/pedestrian safety concerns on Grand Avenue. Our patrol officers continue to provide as much proactive patrol and extra enforcement in the area as they can, especially before and after school hours. Dan reached out to the Chisago County Sheriff's Office to let them know of the concerns that were discussed. Their patrol deputies are providing additional proactive patrol in the area when they are able. We also requested our volunteer reserve officers to provide extra patrols in that area when they are working. North Branch Area School Superintendent Sara Paul, advised that she had reached out to residents who expressed interest in assisting with the crossing guard program. It sounds like this program is going well, and crossing guards have been added at additional intersections, such as Grand Ave. and Maple St. near Kwik Trip. The City's Public Works department added in-street pedestrian crossing signs on Grand Ave. at 381st St. and 378th St. Unfortunately, these signs have to be removed over the winter due to snow plowing, but we plan on bringing them back out in the Spring. We discussed the option of adding permanent speed monitor signs on Grand Ave. The cost per sign is around $7000 ($14,000 if we added speed monitors covering both directions). We will continue to explore this option during the upcoming Safe Routes to School project.

We have also seen a decrease in traffic congestion since the completion of the County Road 30 project. We will continue to provide as much extra patrol/ traffic enforcement on Grand Ave., and we look forward to participating in the upcoming Safe Routes to Schools Project to help identify additional solutions moving forward.

Chief Meyer introduced the newly appointed SRO at the North Branch School District, Officer Kendra Rock. Superintendent Sara Paul spoke to the council, commenting that the SRO position is so critical for our school system, and it's a great partnership with the police department.

c. Approval of resolution R-253-2025 accepting bid for the Minnesota Paid Leave Private Plan and cost share between employee and employer. ACTION

Human Resources Generalist Travis Miles brought the new Minnesota Statute Chapter 26B, Family and Medical Leave Benefits program that will take effect on January 1, 2026, to the City Council.

Under the state program, employers are required to contribute 0.88% of employee wages to fund the program. Employers may choose to share this cost equally with employees, with each contributing up to 0.44%. The Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) will conduct an annual review each April to assess program revenue and expenditures. Based on that review, the contribution rate may be adjusted, up to a maximum of 1.1%. Based on cost projections and alignment with the preliminary 2026 budget, the staff recommends a 50/50 cost split between the City and employees. Under this arrangement, the City of North Branch would contribute 0.395% of wages, and employees would contribute 0.395% through payroll withholding.

Motion to approve the resolution authorizing the City of North Branch to use MetLife as the provider for Paid Family and Medical Leave coverage, effective January 1, 2026, with a 50/50 cost share between the City and employees.

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

d. NW Old Town Feasibility Study presentation and resolution to receive the feasibility and set the public improvement hearing ACTION

North Branch City's Engineer Justin Messner from WSB presented the Northwest Old Town Street and Utility Improvements project. The project involves the reconstruction of streets in the Old Town area along with drainage improvements, storm water detention, water main improvements, and sanitary sewer remediation. Sidewalks could be included in the project along Elm Street and Ninth Avenue, and street parking along Elm Street, at the Council's direction.

The proposed project schedule includes completing utilities and the first lift of bituminous pavement by October 31, 2026, and completion of the final lift of bituminous pavement and restoration by June 30, 2027. A neighborhood meeting to discuss the project is scheduled for November 17, 2025, and December 9, 2025, is the date proposed for a Public Hearing on the improvement.
The proposed improvement cost is estimated to be $5,547,400, which includes 10% contingency and 20% indirect costs. Funding for the project is proposed to be provided through Municipal State Aid (MSA) funds, assessment to the benefiting properties, Street Fund, Restricted Fund, Watermain Fund, Sanitary Sewer Fund, and Storm Fund. Heidi Hamilton, Senior Project Manager from WSB, gave a PowerPoint presentation regarding the improvement project. The PowerPoint presentation included the proposed improvements and the project schedule.

The project schedule is as follows if Resolution R-251-2025 is approved by the City Council.

City Council Receives Feasibility Study/Order Public Hearing November 12, 2025

1st Public Information Meeting November 19, 2025

Public Hearing/Authorize Preparation of Plans and Specifications December 9, 2025

2nd Public Information Meeting February 2026

Approve Plans and Specifications/Authorize Advertisement for Bid February 24, 2026

Receive Bids March 2026

Public Hearing/Award Contract April/May 2026

3rd Public Information Meeting May 2026

Begin Construction June 2026

Final Completion October 2026

The motion is to approve the resolution to receive the feasibility report and call a hearing on the improvement.

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

e. September Finance Update INFO

Finance Director Sharon Wright gave the September Finance Update.

f. Consider approval of Resolution R-248-2025 Concerning Bond Reimbursement Regulations ACTION

Finance Director Sharon Wright presented Resolution R-248-2025 concerning bond reimbursement regulations to the City Council. There has been discussion with the City Council about whether to utilize bonds to purchase equipment that has become obsolete. The Council discussed various financing options, including bank financing, leasing, and bonding, while expressing concerns about the long-term financial implications of bonding patrol vehicles and the need for a more fiscally responsible approach.

Motion to table Resolution R-248-2025 until November 25th, and have more discussions regarding the bond reimbursement next week at the City Council workshop.

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

10. MAYOR/CITY COUNCIL

a. Leaf Vacuum Trucks and Compost site schedule discussion VERBAL UPDATE

Mayor Kevin Schieber brought up the topic of leaf pickup and compost site hours of availability. Mayor Schieber discussed feedback from residents over the past few weeks regarding the dissatisfaction with the pickup services, as well as the hours of operation for the compost site. There was some discussion regarding the cost of having the leaf pickup service in the City of North Branch and how many residents

use this service. The feedback from this Fall's leaf pickup and compost site hours needs to be looked at for next year, and maybe some dates and times should be adjusted.

b. Discussion on potential Facebook archive policy INFO

Mayor Kevin Schieber brought up the City of North Branch's city Facebook account and the potential of purchasing an archiving solution for all of our social media. Mayor Schieber emphasized the importance of public comment and the need for a consistent policy across all city Facebook accounts and the involvement of staff in managing comments.

c. Community Volunteerism to assist with City Tasks or Projects VERBAL UPDATE

Mayor Schieber brought up the potential for community volunteers to assist with city projects, such as the warming house and parks, and trails. A suggestion was made to create a list of available projects for potential volunteers. There was some concern brought up regarding the City's liability if someone volunteering gets hurt, and also complying with labor laws.

d. Closed meeting for the evaluation of performance of City Administrator under Minn. Stat. Sec. 13D.05, subd. 3(a). INFO

The meeting went into closed session for the evaluation of the performance of City Administrator under Minn. Stat. Sec. 13D.05, subd. 3(a) at 9 PM.

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

11. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 10:18 PM.

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