



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, FEBRUARY 11, 2026 @ 6:00 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, February 11, 2026

1. CALL TO ORDER

Acting Mayor Robert Canada called the City Council meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

The North Branch City Council Meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Acting Mayor Robert Canada led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. ROLL CALL

Present: Councilmember Jeff Goulet, Councilmember Jim Ibinger, Councilmember Patrick Meacham, Councilmember Robert Canada

Absent: Mayor Kevin Schieber

Remote:

Others Present:

Notes:

4. AGENDA APPROVAL

a. Approve Agenda

RESULT: Passed

MOVER: Jeff Goulet

ACTION

SECONDER: Jim Ibinger
AYES: Jeff Goulet, Jim Ibinger, Patrick Meacham, Robert Canada
ABSENT: Mayor Kevin Schieber
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.

John Wagner signed up for Public Comment to talk about a free event, Skills for Disagreeing Better. It will be on Thursday, February 26, 2026, from 5 pm-7 pm at the North Branch Area Library. This is brought to you by the Braver Angels, St. Croix Valley Alliance.

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.

7i (Approval of Resolution R-288-2026 to authorize the Sale of Equipment Bonds) has been removed from the consent agenda due to not having received adequate information for the City in time for the City Council meeting.

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

- | | | |
|----|--|--------|
| a. | Claims | ACTION |
| b. | Approval of Minutes - Regular Council Meeting - January 27, 2026, 7:00 PM | ACTION |
| c. | Approve Gambling LG220 Exempt Permit - NWTF Long Spurs of Sunrise River | ACTION |
| d. | Approval of Resolution R-287-2026 Authorizing Payment For Pay Request #8 for CoRd 30 Street Improvement Project | ACTION |
| e. | Approval of the Financing Agreement with KS State Bank for the Purchase and Upfitting of Four Squad Cars | ACTION |
| f. | Approval of Resolution R-286-2026 Accepting 2025 Donations to the City of North Branch | ACTION |
| g. | Approval of Resolution R-289-2026 to apply for a DNR Local Trail Connections grant for Flink Ave Phase II Trail | ACTION |
| h. | Approval of Resolution R-290-2026 to submit a capital funding request for the Circle of Honor Regional Veterans Memorial | ACTION |
| i. | Approval to utilize interfund loans for purchase of equipment | ACTION |

j. Receive Legal Report from City Attorney's office

INFO

8. PUBLIC HEARINGS

9. STAFF REPORTS

a. Consider approval of Ordinance 407-26 allowing the procurement of charitable gambling proceeds for park and trail additions and maintenance funding.

ACTION

City Administrator Matthew Hill presented the consideration of approval of Ordinance 407-26, allowing the procurement of charitable gambling proceeds for park and trail additions and maintenance funding. The City has been investigating revenue opportunities to enhance public service while being budget-neutral for the residents. One opportunity that has been implemented in many communities throughout the State is utilizing the ability of collecting 10% of the charitable gambling net income derived from local pull tabs. The City is proposing an ordinance that can ensure the long-term sustainability and enhancement of our city's public green spaces and recreational infrastructure. It establishes a necessary and dedicated funding mechanism by collecting 10% of the charitable gambling net income derived from local pull tabs.

This new revenue stream would be specifically earmarked to fund the following:

- Additions and Expansion: New development and expansion of parks and trails within the city.
- Maintenance: Essential ongoing maintenance and necessary repairs to our existing parks and trails network.

City Administrator Matthew Hill read a letter from Mayor Kevin Schieber regarding other surrounding cities utilizing the opportunity to collect charitable gambling proceeds to support community-wide initiatives. Mayor Schieber stated that he is in full support of the City of North Branch utilizing a percentage of charitable gambling proceeds, as the focus of this type of additional funding will benefit many facets of community interests and activities.

Commissioner Goulet asked if this would just be pull tabs and how we would track this, and City Administrator Hill answered that it would be all charitable gambling. Quarterly reports would be submitted with their financials to substantiate their findings. Commissioner Goulet asked Sharon Wright, the City's Finance Director, if she sees any concerns about tracking all this. She responded that she didn't foresee any issues. Commissioner Meacham asked when this would go into effect. City Administrator Hill responded that it would go into effect upon its passage and publication.

Motion to approve Ordinance 407-26, allowing the procurement of charitable gambling proceeds for park and trail additions and maintenance funding.

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

10. MAYOR/CITY COUNCIL

Fire Chief Pat Heinen and Firefighter Becca Ackermann presented that the Fire Department has partnered with the MN State Fire Marshal's office to hand out free carbon monoxide alarms to all homes in need in the City of North Branch, up to 100 that the Fire Department has received. If you would like to request one, please contact pheinen@northbranchmn.gov.

11. ADJOURNMENT

The City Council Meeting was adjourned at 6:26 PM.

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



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**CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR AGENDA
TUESDAY, JANUARY 27, 2026 @ 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, January 27, 2026

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Kevin Schieber called the North Branch City Council meeting to order at 7:00 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

- a. Chisago County presentation of the Roundabout at Hemingway Avenue and Lincoln Trail (CoRd 14) INFO

Chisago County Public Works Director Joe Triplett and Ben Holbert from Chisago County gave a presentation about the County Road 14 Roundabout Project at Hemingway Avenue and Lincoln Trail (County Road 14).

- b. North Branch Schools presents information about the February 10 vote to renew the Capital Projects Levy. INFO

North Branch Schools Superintendent Sara Paul presented information about the February 10th vote at Main Street Church to renew the Capital Projects Levy.

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.

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.

City Councilmember Jeff Goulet made a comment that he has no objections to Ordinance Amendment 406-25, to change the days and times of the City Council meetings to the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of each month at 6 PM, but that it will be a slightly tighter schedule-wise, and that there may be some conflicts in the future.

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. Approval of Minutes - Regular Council Meeting - January, 13, 2026, 7:00 PM ACTION
- c. Approve the LG240B Application to Conduct Excluded Bingo - St. Gregory Knights of Columbus Council 10016 ACTION
- d. Approve Gambling LG220 for Exempt Permit - Full Count ACTION
- e. Approve Gambling LG220 Permit - North Branch American Legion Riders Post 85 ACTION
- f. Approve 2026 Massage Therapists Licenses - Shauna Lopez and Tiffany Christian ACTION
- g. Approval of Road Maintenance Agreement with Stacy MN ACTION
- h. Approval of Ordinance Amendment #406-26 to change the days and times of the City Council meetings to the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of each month at 6:00pm. ACTION

- i. Approval of the Ordinance Amendment 408-26 to add low-potency hemp products ACTION to the list of required licensing fees to our fee schedule.
- j. Approval of Contract with BS&A Software for 2026 Implementation ACTION
- k. Approval of Resolution R-285-2026 approving a Conditional Use Permit for a Wireless Communications Tower at PID: 11.00223.00 ACTION

8. PUBLIC HEARINGS

9. STAFF REPORTS

- a. 2025 Police Department Activity Report INFO

Police Chief Dan Meyer presented the 2025 Police Department Activity Report. Our police department provides 24/7 police coverage and currently consists of 15 sworn officers, including the police chief, two patrol sergeants, one investigator, one school resource officer, and ten patrol officers. In addition to our sworn staff, we have an office manager and an administrative assistant, along with four volunteer police reserve officers.

During 2025, the police department handled a total of 16,030 incidents/calls for service. Our department issued 538 citations and made 162 arrests during the calendar year. Our police reserve unit also volunteered 911 hours last year, helping out at our community events and assisting our sworn staff on calls such as medicals, public assists, vehicle lockouts, motor vehicle crashes, and prisoner transport.

We continue to expand and build upon our community engagement initiatives. We were involved with several community events during 2025, which included:

- North Branch High School Career Fair (May)
- North Branch Area Schools Vehicle Fair (May)
- North Branch American Legion Annual Midsummer Days Celebration (June)
- Bike MS: MS150 MN 2025 (June)
- Annual "Walk and Roll to School" Events (May and October)
- Law Enforcement Special Olympics Torch Run (June)
- Coffee/Cone/Cocoa with a Cop Events (July and December)
- Night to Unite (August)
- North Branch Area Chamber's Fall Harvest Festival (September)
- NBHS Homecoming Parade and Events (September)
- Special Olympics Truck Convoy (October)
- Chisago County Operation Community Connect (October)
- North Branch Arts Fest 2025 (November)
- McDonald's McHero Night (November)
- Annual "Stuff the Squad" Event at County Market (November)
- Public Safety Parade and Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony (December)

- b. Consider Resolution R-284-2026 approving a variance from minimum lot depths ACTION for Lots 5-7, Block 2, Fairway Field

City Planner, Ryan Saltis, presented the consideration of Resolution R-284-2026 approving a variance from minimum lot depths for Lots 5-7, Block 2, Fairway Field. Larry Beach Construction, Inc. (Applicant) has submitted a request for a Variance and preliminary plat approval for a new residential subdivision known as Fairway Field, located generally at the intersection of 412th Street and Flink Avenue. The Subject Property is currently undeveloped and is guided and zoned for Rural-Residential.

The Preliminary Plat proposes the creation of 13 residential lots (each exceeding 1 acre in lot size), new public streets, stormwater facilities, and associated utilities. Access to the subdivision

is provided via 412th Street with two new internal public roadways, including Fairfax Lane and Fairway Court, as shown on the Preliminary Plat and Site Plans. The applicant has applied for a variance from the required minimum lot depths for lots 5-7 within Block 2 of the plat due to irregularity in lot dimensions/shapes, road configurations, and elevations of the site.

The applicant has submitted a complete application, including preliminary plat drawings, grading and erosion control plans, utility plans, landscaping, and tree preservation. Final Plat approval is subject to City Council action and completion of all required conditions.

The Planning Commission held a public hearing on Tuesday, January 6, 2026, and received general comments regarding access, lot size, density and groundwater impacts. The Planning Commission recommended approval (4-0) of the variance for a reduction in minimum lot depths for the Fairway Field development with the following conditions.

- The minimum lot depths for Block 2, Lots 5, 6, and 7 must be at least 200 feet.

Motion to approve Resolution R-284-2026 approving a variance from minimum lot depths for Lots 5-7, Block 2, Fairway Field.

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-283-2026 approving the Fairway Field Preliminary Plat ACTION

City Planner, Ryan Saltis, presented the consideration of approval of Resolution R-283-2026 approving the Fairway Field Preliminary Plat. Larry Beach Construction, Inc. (Applicant) has submitted a request for Preliminary Plat and Variance approval for a new residential subdivision known as Fairway Field, located generally at the intersection of 412th Street and Flink Avenue. The Subject Property is currently undeveloped and is guided and zoned for Rural-Residential.

The Preliminary Plat proposes the creation of 13 residential lots (each exceeding 1 acre in lot size), new public streets, stormwater facilities, and associated utilities. Access to the subdivision is provided via 412th Street with two new internal public roadways, including Fairfax Lane and Fairway Court, as shown on the Preliminary Plat and Site Plans. The applicant has also applied for a variance from the required lot depths for lots within Block 2 of the plat.

The applicant has submitted a complete application, including preliminary plat drawings, grading and erosion control plans, utility plans, landscaping, and tree preservation. Final Plat approval is subject to City Council action and completion of all required conditions.

The Planning Commission held a public hearing on Tuesday, January 6, 2026, and received general comments regarding access, lot size, and density. The Planning Commission recommended approval (4-0) of the preliminary plat for Fairway Field with the following conditions.

1. The Applicant shall address and comply with the City Engineer's memo dated December 2, 2025.
2. All public improvements shall be constructed in accordance with City of North Branch standards.

3. A Development Agreement shall be executed prior to Final Plat approval.

Motion to approve Resolution R-283-2026 approving the Fairway Field Preliminary Plat.

RESULT: Passed

MOVER: Jeff Goulet

SECONDER: Robert Canada

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

ABSENT:

NOTES:

d. Human Resource Report

INFO

The Human Resource Generalist gave the Human Resource Report. The last few months have been busy for Human Resources. We onboarded four new employees. Matt Fraley started as the Director of Public Works and Utilities in December. We also brought on board Jessica, Ella, and Ryan as Warming House Attendants. Two employees are currently on leave, and we are looking forward to their return this spring. Angela Tveit resigned from her position, and her last day was January 16th. We appreciate her three years of service to the City of North Branch.

The close of 2025 saw a change in our employees' insurance plan. I do want to recognize all the employees for their timely response and communication, which allowed us to be able to make this change in a short amount of time.

The fire department is currently interviewing applicants to join their team. We will be starting interviews for an Administrative Assistant in the next few weeks. Currently, we have postings for a Police Officer and a Building Official. I would also like to highlight the staff's ongoing commitment to learning through continuing education. In 2026, among all departments, we have a combined 30 classes that staff members signed up for. Courses range from maintaining the safety of drinking water to planning and emergency response. All these classes ensure the staff maintain their required certifications.

e. Consider Council Consensus on 2026 Equipment Bond

ACTION

Finance Director Sharon Wright presented the 2026 Equipment Bond. Over the past several months, the City has been evaluating the potential issuance of an Equipment Bond. Multiple structuring options are available, and City staff is requesting guidance regarding both the bond structure and the total amount to be issued.

Bond Structure

One option is to structure the Equipment Bond so that principal payments begin after the final payment on the 2022 Equipment Bond, which is scheduled to be completed in 2032. Under this approach, principal payments on the proposed 2026 Equipment Bond would be deferred until that time. While this structure would result in higher total interest costs over the life of the bond, it would maintain debt service payments at levels consistent with the City's current obligations. An alternative structure would require principal payments to begin immediately upon issuance of the bond. This option would reduce total interest costs but would increase near-term debt service payments, resulting in higher annual expenditures during the initial years of the bond.

Bond Amount

The total amount of Equipment Bonds to be issued will depend on which equipment is ultimately selected for funding through this financing method.

During the December 9, 2025 meeting, City Council directed staff to proceed with financing the Fire Department ladder truck and three (3) Public Works snow plows through the Equipment

Bond, for a total amount of \$2,050,000. This is the first option presented.

The second option includes additional equipment purchases consisting of a one-ton truck and a mini-excavator for the Water Fund; a Fire Department tanker truck; and, for the Public Works Department, a front-end loader and a one-ton four-wheel-drive plow truck. The total cost of these items is \$1,345,000. When combined with the first option, the total amount of Equipment Bonds issued would be \$3,395,000.

The final equipment option under consideration includes a half-ton four-wheel-drive pickup and a three-quarter-ton cargo van for the Public Works Department, as well as a three-quarter-ton pickup for the Sewer Fund. The total cost of these items is \$220,000. The two pickup trucks have an estimated useful life of ten (10) years, while the cargo van has an estimated useful life of fifteen (15) years.

Financing for these three items may be structured in one of two ways. First, the City could utilize an interfund loan from the Generation Fund to fund these purchases. An advantage of this approach is that interest payments would remain within the City, as interest paid by the borrowing funds would offset interest earnings otherwise forgone by the Generation Fund.

Alternatively, these items could be included in the Equipment Bond issuance, resulting in a total bond amount of \$3,615,000.

Consensus was for the total amount of the bond to be \$3,075,000.

10. MAYOR/CITY COUNCIL

- a. Notice of Local Board of Appeal and Equalization meeting - Thursday, April 16, 2026, 6:00pm at North Branch City Hall INFO

The Local Board of Appeal and Equalization meeting will be held on Thursday, April 16, 2026 at 6:00 PM at the North Branch City Hall. Two assessors from the County will be in attendance to support any questions that people might have in regards to their evaluations for 2027.

- b. Cannabis Ordinance Review

VERBAL
UPDATE

City Administrator Matthew Hill presented the Cannabis Ordinance Review. It was the consensus of the City Council to review City Ordinance No. 381-24 to address specific concerns raised during the recent license approval process and provide direction to staff on any necessary amendments or clarifications.

City Ordinance No. 381-24 was adopted on September 24, 2024. Discussion at the October 2025 Council meetings brought up questions regarding:

- Clarity on Buffer Zones: Potential ambiguity in the measurement or application of distance requirements from sensitive uses (e.g., schools, parks, and daycare facilities).

The purpose of this review is to provide an opportunity for the City Council to receive the existing Ordinance, address the specific items of concern identified in October 2025, and provide policy direction to staff. The outcome of this discussion may include a directive to the City Attorney to draft amendments to the Ordinance.

Consensus was for Councilmember Canada to come back to the Council with some recommended changes that they can discuss further.

c. Advisory Committee reports

VERBAL
UPDATE

Councilmember Canada gave a Public Safety update. The Fire Chief went to the Minnesota State Fire Chiefs Association, and different Fire Chiefs complimented the North Branch firefighters. A group of City of North Branch firefighters drove to Chicago to look at a ladder truck that is for sale. The Fire Department is looking at some new signage in front of the fire hall and is trying to incorporate the bell that has been currently used. The Chief and HR are exploring the possibility of offering counseling services to the Police and Fire Department.

Councilmember Goulet gave a Finance update regarding the liquor store, saying sales have been a little soft, but their cost management side has been keeping the profit coming in. For Public Works, 2026 projects are being discussed. The Old Town Street and utility project was pushed out until 2027. The Viking Meadows development utility extension will be postponed until 2027. There were also quite a few applicants for the Public Works Administrative Specialist position.

Councilmember Ibinger mentioned that we kind of discussed the Finance Advisory Committee information with the bonding. We haven't had an official liquor store advisory committee meeting since November, so it would be good to get one of those on the books.

City Administrator Matthew Hill discussed that the water and light building had a fire last Sunday evening. There is extensive damage to the roof and to the mechanical equipment within that facility. The inspectors are coming up to take a look at it, but they estimate that the ceiling caught fire from the exhaust system.

Mayor Kevin Schieber gave a quick Parks, Trails, and Open Spaces update. The Christmas lights look great, both on the trees and on the streets. The Commission talked about vendors coming in for Concerts in the Parks and hoping to get more vendors. The Parks, Trails, and Open Spaces Commission is in the process of receiving 40 acres from the Max Malmquist property and figuring out exactly what that's going to look like. Most of the mayors throughout Chisago County got together to meet. A large part of the discussion was on local control and the state trying to mandate some of the City requirements, such as zoning and high density. There is a 2nd meeting tomorrow with Senator Koran and Representative Rymer.

Councilmember Meacham gave an update regarding the Planning Commission. We're going to have a public hearing on cleaning up two areas of code. The requirement to have paved driveways, and currently looking back, it is written that the surfacing section only specifies paving requirements for residential properties that are 2 acres or smaller. There are some questions about whether it's required in commercial or industrial developments, and if they should be paved. In the Planning Commission, we're talking about it because 2 acres doesn't line up with residential minimums. The conversation got into allowing some side parking areas for your recreational vehicles. For the EDA, Nancy Hoffman said that the retail trade analysis is completed, and the presentation is going to be on February 19th at the Senior Center from 2-4 pm. Director Nathan Sondrol brought up during the EDA meeting is an initial drawing of the potential or the replanting proposal of the business park with LP coming in.

11. ADJOURNMENT

The City Council meeting adjourned at 8:51 PM.