



**Regular City Council Minutes
Tuesday, September 8, 2026**

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Comprising a quorum of the City Council, the meeting was called to order at 5:00 pm with the following council members present: Mayor George Deiss, Council Members Duke Harrison, Mark Lunde, and Mac Nelson. Wade Miller was absent.

Staff present: City Administrator Kim Schroeder, WDA Director Dean Uselman, Public Works Director Dan Kovar, Utilities Director Dave Evans, Liquor Store Manager Tim Booth, Wellness Director Lisa Anderson, and Bolton & Menk Engineers Phil Martin and Mac Groutman.

CONSENT CALENDAR

Motion approving the consent calendar items as presented.

- A. Claims Register Summary
- B. Monthly Financial Reports
- C. City Council Meeting Minutes:
 - a. August 11, 2026, Regular Meeting
- D. Resolution 2026-31: WDA Mandatory Tax Levy
- E. Resolution 2026-32: WDA Discretionary Tax Levy
- F. Resolution 2026-33: HRA Tax Levy
- G. Resolution 2026-34: Approving Wadena Fire Department Relief Association Application to Conduct Off-Site Gambling
- H. Resolution 2026-35: Confirming the Mayor's Appointment of Bob Zosel to the Park Board
- I. Resolution 2026-36: Termination of TIF 1-10 and Directing Decertification Thereof by the County Auditor
- J. Resolution 2026-37: Sourcewell Impact Funds Public Safety Grant, Fire Turnout Gear
- K. Resolution 2026-38: Sourcewell Impact Funds Local Government Grant, Softball Complex Playset
- L. Resolution 2026-39: Accepting Donations and Grants Through August 31, 2026
- M. Action 26-69: Temporary On-Sale Liquor License, Wadena Elks, September 12
- N. Action 26-70: Temporary On-Sale Liquor License, Friends of the Wadena Library, February 13, 2027

Moved by:	Nelson	Seconded by:	Lunde
Roll call vote:	Deiss, Harrison, Lunde, Nelson		

PUBLIC HEARING

Consider vacating parts of streets to the City of Wadena, West Sunnybrook Road (old CSAH 4).

Council opened a public hearing on vacating a portion of Sunnybrook Road (old CSAH 4) segment, which the city recently received official ownership of following MnDOT commissioners release from the county state aid road system. The City has not historically maintained or plowed the road and doesn't see public need to continue ownership. Staff recommend vacating and splitting down the middle transferring to adjoining owners at no cost.

Property owners Jon Korpfe and David Folkestad were present and raised concerns about continued access from 2nd Street and that traffic and customers continue to use the road. Both individuals have been plowing and maintaining the road and willing to continue.

Staff expressed and discouraged to council the city's liability to allow private plowing of city owned roads. The council discussed alternatives, specifically keeping a 22-foot alley for commerce and transfer the remaining land to adjacent owners. All utility easements will remain. City engineer Phil Martin cautioned that the water and sewer lines are deep and close to center, so setbacks and easements need to be firmed up so future building construction doesn't interfere'; recommending a survey by Bolton & Menk.

Jonathan Korfe, building the new DMV, is working with a November 1st deadline to open, needing to pave his lot and patch the water service work into the road. He's asked to pave up to and around the storm drain to the east. Staff noted that paving city owned land before a final decision is not ideal, since he could be asked to undo it. Also, that the city will not share in the cost since it's not a city need. Korfe ultimately agreed to pave at zero cost to the city and to work with Public Works director Dan Kovar for final approval.

Motion to close the public hearing at 5:41pm

Moved by:	Harrison	Seconded by:	Nelson
Vote in Favor:	Deiss, Harrison, Lunde, Nelson		

OLD BUSINESS

Action 26-58: Motion approving to remove Social Media Facebook comment capabilities.

After reviewing the question again with the League of Minnesota Cities and city attorney Grant Skoog, recommendation is to either leave comments on or remove for all posts rather than deciding case by case.

Concerns were raised that with growing AI and public data requests, along with staff accountability and business hour work time, limiting comments reduces legal and costly exposure for a small office and budget. Noting residents can continue input by attending meetings or using contact information on the city website. Further that the pages are meant for communication and announcements.

Councilmember Nelson explained his mixed feelings and opposition yet understands why communities are moving in this direction.

Moved by:	Lunde	Seconded by:	Harrison
Vote in Favor:	Deiss, Harrison, Lunde		
Vote Opposed:	Nelson		

NEW BUSINESS

First Reading of Ordinance 264: Interim ordinance authorizing study and imposing a moratorium on Data Centers and high impact utility consumers.

Resolution 2026-40: Motion to vacate parts of West Sunnybrook Road (old CSAH 4) with the exception of the city to keep and maintain a 22 foot alley.

City staff has not historically maintained the road and sees no continued public use. Following direction from the public hearing, at this meeting, the city will complete surveys and descriptions for a 22 foot alley before moving forward with vacating the remaining property to adjacent property owners.

Guidance was given to Mr. Korfe to communicate with city staff regarding his tarring project. Any and all easements currently in place will remain.

Moved by:	Harrison	Seconded by:	Nelson
Vote in Favor:	Deiss, Harrison, Lunde, Nelson		

Action 26-71: Motion to approve moving forward with the Bolton & Menk engineering for the Wastewater Facility Plan with a preliminary estimate at \$72,276.

The wastewater facility plan will be submitted to MPCA for possible Public Facilities Association (PFA) funding. The engineering proposal is estimated at \$72,276. Public Works Director Dan Kovar recommends a cost split at 65% wastewater, 15% water, and 20% general fund. It was clarified that this proposal covers the facility plan only to get the project through the PFA application; does not include the design work.

Moved by:	Harrison	Seconded by:	Lunde
Vote in Favor:	Deiss, Harrison, Lunde, Nelson		

Action 26-72: Motion to approve purchasing a 2011 International 7400 snowplow truck for \$68,500.

One of the current trucks needs serious repairs and a replacement. This truck is ideal as the city needs the wing mounted at the front by the plow, whereas most counties and the state use mid-mounted wings, not ideal for city streets since the snow dumps between the plow and wing when turning corners. Mechanic Michael Kleinke inspected the truck in person with everything checking out. It has low mileage, approx. 40,000 miles. Public works capital outlay has \$50,000 in the 2026 budget, with the reimaging balance due using the 2027 budget. The unit is only available until tomorrow morning. In comparison, replacing with a new plow would cost roughly \$380,000 to \$400,000.

Moved by:	Harrison	Seconded by:	Nelson
Vote in Favor:	Deiss, Harrison, Lunde, Nelson		

Action 26-73: Motion to approve and move forward with Bolton & Menk engineering for Quiet Zone project with a preliminary estimate at \$23,995.

To qualify, a concrete median on 1st Street and a pedestrian safety improvement at all three crossings is necessary. Phil Martin from Bolton and Menk proposes the low-cost pedestrian mazes; a fenced sidewalk that forces pedestrians to turn through the maze looking both ways. Rather than costly gates tied into the railroad's signal system, which could expose the city to ongoing rail maintenance requirements.

Estimated construction is \$417,000, including a 20% contingency. The city has approx. \$250,000 earmarked for the project, leaving a shortfall of approx. \$170,000 providing there is no cost participation from the county or state. Cost risks include a possible \$130,000 crossing-surface upgrade the railroad could require on 1st Street. The county does not have formal easements from BNSF at the 1st and 2nd Street crossings; required before project could start. The county does not have the project in its 5-year capital plan. Schroeder has spoken with Commission Ron Noon and Engineer Anthony Maule, both recommending the city bring to the county for consideration to include in the plan.

The proposed next step is a \$7,725 preliminary engineering scope effort to start talks with the county and state, followed by updating the notice of intent with the railroad and pursuing funding and easement costs. The project timeline is estimated at 12 to 18 months with council members supporting to continue efforts.

Moved by:	Lunde	Seconded by:	Nelson
Vote in Favor:	Deiss, Harrison, Lunde, Nelson		

MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC: 6:26pm No one present

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Public Works, Dan Kovar

- Roots and Wings schools reached out for an update from the Park Board

Utilities, David Evans – Not Present

WDA and PZ, Dean Uselman – Nothing to report

Police, Naomi Plautz – Not present

Fire Department – Cody Yglesias Fire Chief – Not present

Liquor Store, Tim Booth – Nothing to report

Maslowski Center, Lisa Anderson – Nothing to report

Golf Course, Kevin Ross – Not present

Engineer Update, Bolton & Menk

City Administrator, Kim Schroeder

- Milling and overlay on Hwy 71 will occur within the next couple weeks.
- Reminder of the comprehensive planning meeting September 15 with draft of final plan.

COUNCIL REPORTS

Duke Harrison: nothing to add

Mark Lunde: nothing to add

Wade Miller: Not Present

Mac Nelson: nothing to add

Mayor George Deiss:

- Received a letter from Wadena Hockey regarding potential solar panel concept.
- Updated and encouraged council about upcoming meetings and community events.

Action Motion: Motion to close the meeting at 6:32 pm pursuant to MN Statute 13D.05, Subd. 3(d) for the purpose of attorney-client privilege.

Moved by:	Nelson	Seconded by:	Lunde
Vote in favor:	Deiss, Harrison, Lunde, Nelson		

Action Motion: Motion to reopen the meeting at 6:53 pm.

Moved by:	Nelson	Seconded by:	Lunde
Vote in favor:	Deiss, Harrison, Lunde, Nelson		

Action Motion: Motion to adjourn at 6:53 pm.

Moved by:	Lunde	Seconded by:	Nelson
Vote in favor:	Deiss, Harrison, Lunde, Nelson		

George Deiss, Mayor

Attest: _____
Kim Schroeder, City Administrator