

**WORTHINGTON CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING
JULY 28, 2025**

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m., in City Hall Council Chambers by Mayor Rick Von Holdt with the following Council Members present: Chris Kielblock, Dennis Weber, Mike Kuhle, Amy Ernst, Amy Woitalewicz.

Staff present: Steve Robinson, City Administrator; Matt Selof, Community Development Director; Todd Wietzema, Public Works Director; Hyunmyeong Goo, City Engineer; Cristina Adame, Community Relations & Communication; Mindy Eggers, City Clerk.

Others Present: Sam Martin, *The Globe*; Ryan McGaughey, *Radio Works*.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

AGENDA APPROVED WITH ADDITIONS/CHANGES

A motion was made by Council Member Kielblock, seconded by Council Member Weber and unanimously carried to approve the agenda as presented.

CONSENT AGENDA

A motion was made by Council Member Weber, seconded by Council Member Kuhle and unanimously carried to approve the consent agenda as presented.

- Special Joint City Council/Water & Light Commission Meeting Minutes of July 16, 2025
- Regular City Council Meeting Minutes of July 14, 2025
- Special Water & Light Commission Meeting Minutes of July 16, 2025
- Application for Exemption from Lawful Gambling Permit - Worthington Area Chamber of Commerce
- Bills Payable Totaling \$3,774,586.98

MEMORIAL AUDITORIUM PERFORMING ARTS CENTER UPDATE

Tammy Makram, Managing Director for the Memorial Auditorium, gave a recap of the 2024-2025 entertainment season. She highlighted a few of the shows that were held.

The Fly Dance Co. of Austin Texas worked with 1200 students in the area and held an almost sold out show of Hip Hop dance alongside the Worthington Symphony Orchestra. In August, a local JD Production Company will be bringing a live performance called “Moonglow” to the auditorium.

A video clip of the 2025-2026 upcoming events was shown highlighting each of the upcoming performances.

Council thanked Ms. Makram for the update.

**THIRD READING AND ORDINANCE NO. 1215 ADOPTED AMENDING TITLE XI OF
THE CITY CODE OF WORTHINGTON, NOBLES COUNTY, MINNESOTA - CHAPTER
117 - CANNABIS BUSINESS BUFFER**

Pursuant to published notice this is the time and date set for the third reading of a proposed ordinance to Amend Title XI of the City of Worthington, Nobles County, Minnesota. Chapter 117 Cannabis Business Buffer.

A complete copy of the ordinance was provided in your August 12, 2024 Council Agenda.

A motion was made by Council Member Kuhle, seconded by Council Member Weber and unanimously carried to give a third reading and subsequently adopt the following ordinance:

ORDINANCE NO. 1215

**AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND TITLE XXI OF THE CITY CODE OF THE CITY OF
WORTHINGTON, NOBLES COUNTY, MINNESOTA - CHAPTER 117 - CANNABIS
BUSINESS BUFFER**

(Refer to Ordinance File for complete copy of Ordinance)

PAID FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE PREMIUM SPLIT

Steve Robinson, City Administrator, said the Minnesota Legislature established a state-administered mandatory Paid Family and Medical Leave insurance program scheduled to begin January 1, 2026. The program will provide job protection and partial wage replacement for up to a maximum of 20 weeks per calendar year funded through a payroll tax applied to all employers. For each program leave type, broadly categorized as either family/caregiving leave or medical leave, an employee can take up to 12 weeks of leave up to a combined 20 weeks.

The following types of leave qualify:

- Bonding after birth, adoption or foster parenting,
- Need associated with a military members active duty service,
- Safety leave due to domestic abuse, sexual assault or stalking, and
- A serious health condition of the employee or family member.

A family member is defined as:

- A spouse or domestic partner,
- A child, including biological, adopted, stepchild, child of a domestic partner, or a child to whom the employee stands in loco parentis, legal guardian, or de facto custodian,
- A parent or legal guardian of the employee,
- A sibling,
- A grandchild,
- A grandparent or spouse's grandparent,
- A son-in-law or daughter-in-law,
- An individual who has a personal relationship with an applicant that creates an expectation and reliance that the employee care for the individual.

He explained the program will be funded by Employer and Employee premiums through payroll withholdings. The program mandates the Employer shall contribute a minimum of 50% of the total premium but may contribute more than the minimum as directed by the City Council.

The premium rate for 2026 is 0.88% of gross wages. Going forward, premium rate adjustments will be made by July 1, 2026 and then by July 31 each year thereafter. Staff estimates total gross wages paid to eligible employees in 2026 will be \$10.3 million resulting Paid Leave premiums of approximately \$90,640, which is the total amount not the city amount.

The law does not preclude Employers from bargaining with unions with respect to premium split between Employer and Employee. According to information received from the League of Minnesota Cities, many labor experts state there is a negotiation obligation to establish a 50% employer / 50% employee premium split for represented employees.

Mr. Robinson said that staff is having a hard time getting questions answered at this point but have found that if the City contributes any amount over 50% the employee would have to claim it as income.

Council Member Woitalewicz asked if this is something that would be revisited yearly. Mr. Robinson responded that whatever is decided would be in place until the Council would revisit it. He noted that there has already been changes in the amounts even before the programs inception. Staff is also working with the insurance broker to see what companies will be offering. Council Member Woitalewicz stated at this point the City does not know what the total liability could actually be. Mr. Robinson agreed.

The motion was made by Council Member Weber, seconded by Council Member Kuhle and unanimously carried to approve the 50/50 split with the employees.

RESOLUTION NO. 2025-07-49 ADOPTED AMENDING THE CITY'S INVESTMENT POLICY

Mr. Robinson said staff invests public funds in a manner that will provide the highest investment return with the maximum security while meeting the daily cash flow requirements.

The current investment policy was adopted by the Council on June 24, 2024. The current investment policy replaced the previous policy adopted on August 25, 1986 and subsequently amended on January 23, 1989, March 13, 1989 and December 10, 2012.

The policy as presented will conform to all state and local statutes governing the investment of public funds.

The motion was made by Council Member Weber, seconded by Council Member Woitalewicz and unanimously carried to adopt the following resolution:

RESOLUTION NO. 2025-07-049

A RESOLUTION AMENDING THE CITY'S INVESTMENT POLICY

(Refer to Resolution File for complete copy of Resolution)

**CENTENNIAL PARK BALLFIELD RESTROOM PROFESSIONAL SERVICES
PROPOSAL APPROVED**

Todd Wietzema, Public Works Director, said at the last school board meeting of the Independent School District 518, they approved a plan to build a new softball complex on the old West Elementary school site. This softball complex will include a new high school softball field, bleachers, dugouts, announcing stand, and batting cages. In collaboration with the new complex the City of Worthington, has agreed to build a new restroom, concession, and storage building. The building is planned to sit on city property near the new recreational area. Some of the future improvement's include updated parking areas, new lighting, and improvements to the city owned field.

Staff requested a proposal from Brian Bergstrom of Short Elliott Hendrickson Inc. for design and construction services for the proposed new restroom at the Centennial Softball complex.

The proposal from SEH, Inc. for the design and construction services calls for a lump sum fee of \$28,500.00 plus some reimbursable expenses.

Mr. Robinson showed the drawing of the planned complex. It is planned to be bid in three separate projects, with construction planned in 2026.

Council Member Kuhle said it is the perfect partnership between the School District and the City.

Council Member Kielblock asked if there will be a hearing on the proposed street closure. Mr. Robinson said at this time nothing has been scheduled. Council Member Ernst said it would be a change of habit for people but would be safer for children when there are games.

The motion was made by Council Member Weber, seconded by Council Member Ernst and unanimously carried to approve the proposal with Short Elliott Hendrickson Inc.

RESOLUTION NO. 2025-07-48 ADOPTED AUTHORIZING EXECUTION OF MINNESOTA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION GRANT AGREEMENT FOR AIRPORT IMPROVEMENT EXCLUDING LAND ACQUISITION

Todd Wietzema, Public Works Director, said at the February 10, 2025 City Council the bid submitted by Everstrong Construction, to build a new 150'x 50' three bay hangar at the Worthington Municipal Airport was approved. The bid was accepted contingent on receiving the FAA grants to provide any eligible funding. The Airport has since been awarded two FAA grants towards this hangar project.

As standard procedure MNDOT has authorized a companion grant to fund a portion of the associated cost of this airport improvement. The cost breakdown is as follows:

FAA Eligible project cost	\$585,000.00
State DOT cost	\$44,226.94
City cost	\$27,751.63

Total project cost for this FAA grant \$656,978.57

The motion was made by Council Member Ernst, seconded by Council Member Kielblock and unanimously carried to accept the MnDOT grant and adopt the following resolution:

RESOLUTION NO. 2025-07-48

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZATION TO EXECUTE MINNESOTA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION GRANT AGREEMENT FOR AIRPORT IMPROVEMENT EXCLUDING LAND ACQUISITION

(Refer to Resolution File for complete copy of Resolution)

APPROVED BOLTON & MENK TASK ORDER #32

Mr. Wietzema said the Worthington Municipal Airport is a MPCA Industrial Stormwater permit holder and one of the requirements for the permit is that we need to have an updated Stormwater

Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP). The current SWPPP was developed in 2012 and there have been numerous changes at the airport since that time. Staff has reached out to our airport consultants at Bolton & Menk, for a proposal to update our current SWPPP document. The City will be receiving a grant from the MN DOT to fund 70% of the update. This scope of services would include:

- Review our current SWPPP
- Update any needed changes to adhere to permit regulations
- Provide any needed copies of updated SWPPP

Mr. Wietzema noted the proposed fee for the services should not exceed \$7,100.00.

The motion was made by Council Member Weber, seconded by Council Member Woitalewicz and unanimously carried to approve the Bolton & Menk Task Order # 32.

EAST NINTH AVENUE PROJECT UPDATE

Hyunmyeong Goo, City Engineer, provided an update on the East Ninth Avenue project that was awarded on March 24, 2025. He explained the original scope of the project included the installation of a new water main and sanitary sewer main followed by street paving this year. Although the curb and gutter replacement was not part of the initial plan it became necessary due to the width of the trenches required for the utility installation.

The total project was budgeted at \$293,810.50. The low bid came in at \$156,175.50, which was significantly under budget. Mr. Goo explained given the extent of the excavation and the need to ensure long term road quality, it was determined that the best course of action would be to install temporary curb, gutter and pavement for the winter and then finish the permanent curb, gutter, and paving in the spring. The approach allows for a full freeze-thaw cycle, which promotes proper subgrade compaction, enhances ride quality, and extends the overall lifespan of the roadway.

He noted the additional cost for completing the project in this manner would be approximately \$45,000. The added addition still remains well within the original budgeted amount.

BUDGET AMENDMENT FOR AN ADDITIONAL VEHICLE APPROVED

Mr. Goo said the Engineering Department currently has four full-time staff members and operates with two vehicles. Due to the limited number of vehicles, staff uses their personal vehicles to travel to construction sites. The Equipment Revolving Schedule (ERS) includes \$45,000 for an additional vehicle, scheduled for purchase in 2035. Staff is requesting a budget amendment to move this allocation forward from 2035 to 2025 to enable the purchase of a third vehicle this year.

The motion was made by Council Member Weber, seconded by Council Member Kuhle and unanimously carried to approve budget amendment for an additional vehicle.

AWARDED CONTRACT - ZONING ORDINANCE UPDATE

Matt Selof, Community Development Director, said as one of the implementation actions of the 2045 Comprehensive plan, a complete update of the City's zoning and land use ordinances has been identified as a need. Review, updates, consolidation, and additions to City Code Chapters 99, 151, 153, 154, and 155 are planned as the initial scope of the project.

The City released a request for proposals (RFP) and 5 qualified firms submitted proposals. After review and interviews, staff has elected to move forward with MSA Professional Services, Inc.

The proposal from MSA includes the contract along with an optional addendum to include City Code Chapter 152, flood plain management. The chapter was initially left out due to the complexity but staff feels that including it would be beneficial.

The fee including the addendum is \$122,200 and Mr. Selof said a significant amount has already been budgeted and the remainder will be requested in the 2026 budget.

The motion was made by Council Member Kielblock, seconded by Council Member Weber and unanimously carried to approve the contract and amendment to the contract in the amount of \$122,200.

INFORMATIONAL ITEM GRANT AWARD ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ASSISTANCE GRANT

Mr. Selof said the City of Worthington has been awarded an active transportation planning assistance grant from MnDOT. The grant program provides planning assistance for cities by contracting with and paying for a consultant to work with the City.

He explained the scope of the project is a trail plan/update to the City's 2015 active living plan. Additional focus is given to coordinating future trails with Nobles County and the connections into Worthington. Other provisions will include pedestrian infrastructure plans, goals, and other identified needs. There are many benefits to this type of planning process ranging from simply identifying future trail and pedestrian infrastructure needs, to the increased opportunity for infrastructure grants based on plans.

More information will be presented as the project progresses.

COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORTS

Mayor Rick Von Holdt - Attended the GOP Governor Forum.

Council Member Ernst - Attended Capital Conversations event at the Fire Hall.

Council Member Weber - No report.

Council Member Woitalewicz - No report.

Council Member Kuhle - No report.

Council Member Kielblock - Attended Capital Conversations event at the Fire Hall and also attended the CGMC Conference in Duluth, MN.

CITY ADMINISTRATOR REPORT

Mr. Robinson said the CGMC will be holding a Regional Meeting in Windom on Thursday, August 14, 2025 from 5:00 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

The motion was made by Council Member Kielblock, seconded by Council Member Weber and unanimously carried to adjourn the meeting at 6:38 p.m.

Mindy Eggers, MCMC
City Clerk