

CITY OF HERMANTOWN

City Council Meeting

Monday, July 6, 2026

6:30 PM Central

MEETING CONDUCTED IN PERSON

Mayor Wayne Boucher: Present for Closed Session, Absent for City Council Meeting

Councilor John Geissler: Present

Councilor Andy Hjelle: Present

Councilor Brian LeBlanc: Absent

Councilor Joseph Peterson: Present

CITY STAFF: John Mulder, City Administrator; Eric Johnson; Community Development Director; Joe Wicklund, Assistant City Administrator; Chad Ronchetti, Economic Development Director; Jim Crace, Director of Public Safety; Zach Graves, Fire Chief; David Bolf, City Engineer; Gunnar Johnson, City Attorney

VISITORS: 45

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

2. **CLOSED SESSION (4:30 p.m.)**

- A. Motion to close the meeting of the Hermantown City Council pursuant to Minnesota Statutes § Section 13D.05 Subd. 3 (b) per the attorney-client privilege for discussions regarding the lawsuits relative to the proposed data center. Following this closed session, the Hermantown City Council will reconvene in an open session.

(motion, roll call)

Motion to close the meeting of the Hermantown City Council at 4:30 p.m. pursuant to Minnesota Statutes § Section 13D.05 Subd. 3 (b) per the attorney-client privilege for discussions with the City's litigation team regarding the lawsuits relative to Hermantown Road Assessments. This motion, made by Councilor Peterson and seconded by Councilor Geissler, Carried.

Councilor John Geissler: Yea

Councilor Andy Hjelle: Yea

Councilor Brian LeBlanc: Absent

Councilor Joseph Peterson: Yea

Mayor Wayne Boucher: Yea

Yea: 4, Nay: 0, Absent: 1

Motion to reconvene into open sessions at 5:11 p.m. This motion, made by Councilor Hjelle and seconded by Councilor Geissler, Carried.

Councilor John Geissler: Yea

Councilor Andy Hjelle: Yea

Councilor Brian LeBlanc: Absent

Councilor Joseph Peterson: Yea

Mayor Wayne Boucher: Yea

Yea: 4, Nay: 0

3. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

4. **ROLL CALL**

5. **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Councilor Geissler congratulated Cirrus Aircraft on the opening of their new building, and thanked them for doing business in Hermantown.

6. **COMMUNICATIONS**

A. Correspondence 26-348 through 26-408 placed on file

7. **PUBLIC COMMENT**

John Munter, Warba, MN – Spoke in opposition of the proposed data center project. He shared his concerns regarding infrasound and asked for more research to be done.

Halston Sleets, St. Paul, MN – Spoke about involvement with Google regarding the proposed data center project. She spoke about her roll serving as a bridge between google and the communities they operate in.

JoAnne Bates, Hermantown, MN – Spoke in opposition of the proposed data center project. She read several pieces from the Pope's recent letters on AI and human dignity, leaving out religious references.

Jackie Dolentz, Hermantown, MN – Spoke in opposition of the proposed data center project. She spoke about the inadequacy of the AUAR, and the city's lack of involvement in the open house Google hosted. She spoke about previous work sessions regarding budget and spoke about city spending.

Derek Strom, Hermantown, MN – Spoke in opposition to the proposed data center project. He spoke about his experience at the open house hosted by Google and that he was not satisfied. He spoke about a proposed resolution he will be brining to Council.

Dan Gifford, Hermantown, MN – Spoke in opposition of the proposed data center project. He shared concerns about environment and community regarding closed loop systems.

Jill Dryke, Munger, MN – Spoke in opposition of the proposed data center project. She shared being frustrated at the lack of answers at the Google open house and her concerns about her agricultural business on Morris Thomas Road being 2 miles from the proposed data center.

Jeffrey Donahue, Midway Township, MN – Spoke in opposition of the proposed data center project. He emphasized to Council that they need to listen to the community and if they had been listening to them that this project would be over.

Robert Kohlmeier, Hermantown, MN – Spoke in opposition of the proposed data center project. He called for indefinite suspension of the current draft AUAR proceedings, referencing city ordinances, and Minnesota state laws.

Noel Donahue, Midway Township, MN – Spoke in opposition of the proposed data center project. She spoke about her experience at the Google open house being negative and still not having questions from Google answered.

Sarah Loflad, Hermantown, MN – Spoke in opposition of the proposed data center project. She expressed her frustration with the open house event not being hosted by the City and lack of questions answered.

Nate Rickard, Hermantown, MN – Spoke in support of the proposed data center project. He shared that to have it done right, opposition needs to be listened to and different view points need to be discussed together.

Tom Bates, Hermantown, MN – Spoke in opposition of the proposed data center project. He played a noise that is about 51dB for council. He spoke about moratoriums around the country and the need for a town hall held by the city.

Rick Davis, Hermantown, MN – Spoke in opposition of the proposed data center project. He expressed concern for how the hyperscale data center will affect the trout streams, trees, and other species.

Emma Richtman, Hermantown, MN – Spoke in opposition of the proposed data center project. She spoke about gaps in the AUAR and use of the light industrial facility subcategory for industrial land use. She spoke about the lack of daily worker numbers during peak construction activity. She asked Council to enact a one-year moratorium on data centers to pause expansion or new development.

Josh Westendorf, Canyon, MN – Spoke in opposition of the proposed data center project. He expressed concern about destroying the water and urged his community to act now.

Travis Drayna, Hermantown, MN – Spoke in opposition of the proposed data center project. He spoke about power usage of data centers, increased rates experienced by Minnesota Power customers, and how it can affect residents.

Julie Pierce, Duluth, MN – Spoke as an employee of Minnesota Power in support of the proposed data center project. She shared that equipment updates are not data center related and have been decided previously to last decades. She discussed Minnesota legislation that they have to follow to create more green energy and their dual fuel program.

8. **CONSENT AGENDA**

- A. **Minutes** - Approval or correction of June 15, 2026 City Council Continuation Minutes and the June 29, 2026 City Council Work Session Minutes
- B. **Accounts Payable** - Approve general city warrants from June 16, 2026 through June 30, 2026 in the amount of \$641,616.36

Motion to the approve the Consent Agenda. This motion, made by Councilor Hjelle and seconded by Councilor Peterson, Carried.

Councilor John Geissler:	Yea
Councilor Andy Hjelle:	Yea
Councilor Brian LeBlanc:	Absent
Councilor Joseph Peterson:	Yea
Mayor Wayne Boucher:	Absent

Yea: 3, Nay: 0, Absent: 2

9. **RESOLUTIONS**

- A. **2026-76 Resolution Appointing Election Judges For The 2026 State Primary And State General Elections**

(motion, roll call)

Motion to approve 2026-76 Resolution Appointing Election Judges For The 2026 State Primary And State General Elections. This motion, made by Councilor Peterson and seconded by Councilor Hjelle, Carried.

Councilor John Geissler:	Yea
Councilor Andy Hjelle:	Yea
Councilor Brian LeBlanc:	Absent
Councilor Joseph Peterson:	Yea

Mayor Wayne Boucher: Absent

Yea: 3, Nay: 0 Absent: 2

B. 2026-77 Resolution Authorizing The Director Of Public Safety To Apply For A Towards Zero Deaths (TZD) Enforcement Grant And Authorizing And Directing The Mayor And City Clerk To Execute And Deliver The Grant Agreement On Behalf Of The City Of Hermantown

(motion, roll call)

Motion to approve 2026-77 Resolution Authorizing The Director Of Public Safety To Apply For A Towards Zero Deaths (TZD) Enforcement Grant And Authorizing And Directing The Mayor And City Clerk To Execute And Deliver The Grant Agreement On Behalf Of The City Of Hermantown. This motion, made by Councilor Peterson and seconded by Councilor Hjelle, Carried.

Councilor John Geissler: Yea

Councilor Andy Hjelle: Yea

Councilor Brian LeBlanc: Absent

Councilor Joseph Peterson: Yea

Mayor Wayne Boucher: Absent

Yea: 3, Nay: 0, Absent: 2

C. 2026-78 Resolution Authorizing And Directing Mayor And City Clerk To Execute An Acceptance Of Easement Agreement To The City Of Hermantown From Rachel M. Cobb For The Hermantown Lightning Drive Improvements And Trail Project

(motion, roll call)

Motion to approve 2026-78 Resolution Authorizing And Directing Mayor And City Clerk To Execute An Acceptance Of Easement Agreement To The City Of Hermantown From Rachel M. Cobb For The Hermantown Lightning Drive Improvements And Trail Project. This motion, made by Councilor Hjelle and seconded by Councilor Peterson, Carried.

Councilor John Geissler: Yea

Councilor Andy Hjelle: Yea

Councilor Brian LeBlanc: Absent

Councilor Joseph Peterson: Yea

Mayor Wayne Boucher: Absent

Yea: 3, Nay: 0, Absent: 2

D. 2026-79 Resolution Approving A Special Use Permit For Greenhouse/Nursery, Sales And Production In A S-1, Suburban Zoning District

(motion, roll call)

Motion to approve 2026-79 Resolution Approving A Special Use Permit For Greenhouse/Nursery, Sales And Production In A S-1, Suburban Zoning District. This motion, made by Councilor Hjelle and seconded by Councilor Peterson, Carried.

Councilor John Geissler: Yea

Councilor Andy Hjelle: Yea

Councilor Brian LeBlanc: Absent

Councilor Joseph Peterson: Yea

Mayor Wayne Boucher: Absent

Yea: 3, Nay: 0, Absent: 2

E. 2026-80 Resolution Approving A Special Use Permit For A 103 Unit Apartment Building In A HM – Hermantown Marketplace Zoning District

(motion, roll call)

Sarah Lofald, Hermantown, MN – Spoke to Council about the need for units to be affordable, urged them to keep green spaces, and to not let the development close to the Stebner park affect the soccer fields.

Motion to approve 2026-80 Resolution Approving A Special Use Permit For A 103 Unit Apartment Building In A HM – Hermantown Marketplace Zoning District. This motion, made by Councilor Peterson and seconded by Councilor Hjelle, Carried.

Councilor John Geissler: Yea

Councilor Andy Hjelle: Yea

Councilor Brian LeBlanc: Absent

Councilor Joseph Peterson: Yea

Mayor Wayne Boucher: Absent

Yea: 3, Nay: 0, Absent: 2

F. **2026-81 Resolution Authorizing And Directing Mayor And City Clerk To Execute And Deliver Amendment No. 2 To Reimbursement Agreement With Mortenson Development, Inc.**

(motion, roll call)

Sarah Lofald, Hermantown, MN – Spoke in opposition of the proposed resolution. She explained to Council that if the community was involved from the start the City would not need more funds and to extend the process.

Motion to approve 2026-81 Resolution Authorizing And Directing Mayor And City Clerk To Execute And Deliver Amendment No. 2 To Reimbursement Agreement With Mortenson Development, Inc. This motion, made by Councilor Peterson and seconded by Councilor Hjelle, Carried.

Councilor John Geissler:	Yea
Councilor Andy Hjelle:	Yea
Councilor Brian LeBlanc:	Absent
Councilor Joseph Peterson:	Yea
Mayor Wayne Boucher:	Absent

Yea: 3, Nay: 0, Absent: 2

G. **2026-82 Resolution Authorizing And Directing The Mayor And City Clerk To Execute And Deliver A Reimbursement Agreement With Minnesota Power**

(motion, roll call)

Motion to approve 2026-82 Resolution Authorizing And Directing The Mayor And City Clerk To Execute And Deliver A Reimbursement Agreement With Minnesota Power. This motion, made by Councilor Peterson, and seconded by Councilor Hjelle, Carried.

Councilor John Geissler:	Yea
Councilor Andy Hjelle:	Yea
Councilor Brian LeBlanc:	Absent
Councilor Joseph Peterson:	Yea
Mayor Wayne Boucher:	Absent

Yea: 3, Nay: 0, Absent: 2

H. **2026-83 Resolution Authorizing And Directing The Mayor And City Clerk To Execute And Deliver An Agreement For Professional Services With Kimley-Horn And Associates, Inc. For Up To \$20,000.00**

(motion, roll call)

Motion to approve 2026-83 Resolution Authorizing And Directing The Mayor And City Clerk To Execute And Deliver An Agreement For Professional Services With Kimley-Horn And Associates, Inc. For Up To \$20,000.00. This motion, made by Councilor Hjelle and seconded by Councilor Peterson, Carried.

Councilor John Geissler: Yea

Councilor Andy Hjelle: Yea

Councilor Brian LeBlanc: Absent

Councilor Joseph Peterson: Yea

Mayor Wayne Boucher: Absent

Yea: 3, Nay: 0, Absent: 2

10. **RECESS**

Motion to recess at 8:04 p.m. This motion, made by Councilor Peterson and seconded by Councilor Hjelle, Carried.

Councilor John Geissler: Yea

Councilor Andy Hjelle: Yea

Councilor Brian LeBlanc: Absent

Councilor Joseph Peterson: Yea

Mayor Wayne Boucher: Absent

Yea: 3, Nay: 0, Absent: 2

ATTEST:

Mayor

City Clerk