

CITY OF HERMANTOWN

City Council Meeting

Monday, August 3, 2026

6:30 PM Central

MEETING CONDUCTED IN PERSON

Mayor Wayne Boucher: Present

Councilor John Geissler: Present

Councilor Andy Hjelle: Present

Councilor Brian LeBlanc: Present

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; David Bolf, City Engineer; Mark Gunderson, Deputy Chief

VISITORS: 80

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

2. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

3. **ROLL CALL**

4. **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

5. **COMMUNICATIONS**

A. Correspondence 26-494 through 26-581 placed on file

6. **PRESENTATIONS**

A. **St. Louis County Overpass Planning**

Vic Lund – Traffic Engineer, St. Louis County

Jim Foldesi – Public Works Director, St. Louis County

B. **School Financing and Commercial Development**

Candace Neilis – Director of Business Services, ISD 700

Wayne Whitwam – Superintendent, ISD 700

7. **PUBLIC COMMENT**

John Munter, Warba, MN – Spoke about the proposed data center project agreements. He suggested that Google should be bonded to cover decommissioning the data center.

David Chura, Duluth, MN – Spoke in support of proposed data center project. He shared that Minnesota is well suited for this project due to strong environmental protections and high standards for development.

Dawn Lapointe, Hermantown, MN – Spoke in opposition of the proposed data center project. She highlighted numbers from the updated draft AUAR regarding concerns for the environment and resources.

Candi Mock, Hermantown, MN – Spoke in opposition of the proposed data center project. She addressed city staff and council about the lack of risk assessment throughout the process of this project and AUAR.

Chris Aepelbacher, Hermantown, MN – Spoke in support of the proposed data center project. He expressed that this project gives the city the opportunity to grow and still preserve what makes Hermantown special.

Rick Davis, Hermantown, MN – Spoke in opposition of the proposed data center project. He expressed concerns regarding monitoring and drilling of wells, traffic congestion during construction, and data centers causing heat islands.

Cliff Davis, Hermantown, MN – Spoke in opposition of the proposed data center project. He expressed concerns about effects on the environment, giving examples of other places data centers projects have had negative impacts.

Michael Koppy, Hermantown, MN – Spoke in opposition of the proposed data center project. He expressed to Council that the community is unhappy with the process that has unfolded and urged them to listen and make changes.

Frank Frederickson, Hermantown, MN – Spoke about electric services impact from the proposed data center on behalf of Minnesota Power. He shared customer and economic benefits that would come from Googles use of electricity in Hermantown.

Laura Krollman, Hermantown, MN – Spoke in support of the proposed data center project. She expressed that this project can build a better future and opportunity for the next generation in Hermantown.

Ashley Anderson, Duluth, MN – Spoke in opposition of the proposed data center project. She asked for a moratorium on hyperscale data centers and spoke about the time community members have spent on researching and understanding this project.

Tom Bates, Hermantown, MN – Spoke in opposition of the proposed data center project. He addressed Councilors individually to share his reflections on how they have handled the project. He urged Council to slow things down and enact a moratorium.

Eric Enberg, Hermantown, MN – Spoke in opposition of the proposed data center project. He expressed concerns regarding the financial loss in the AI and hyperscale data center industry.

Eric Palmer, Hermantown, MN – Spoke in support of the proposed data center project. He shared insight on large businesses in the area as a MN Power long term planning employee and discussed benefits project can bring to the community.

Sarah Lofald, Hermantown, MN – Spoke in opposition of the proposed data center project. She shared examples of Council and city staffs lack of answering questions and transparency throughout this process. She expressed that it has become clear to the community that Council will not stop the project.

Emma Richtman, Hermantown, MN – Spoke in opposition of the proposed data center project. She expressed that the fast evolving hyperscale data center industry is not regulated enough for a local council to ethically and responsibly approve this project. She asked Council how this time will be measured and when will the communities voice make an impact on the decision.

Sarah Winter, Hermantown, MN – Spoke in opposition of the proposed data center project. She shared that this project is not the opportunity it seems to be. She spoke about the need for regulatory frameworks in underdeveloped technology and industries to protect individuals not companies.

Liz Schwab, Nashua, NH – Spoke about proposed data center project as an employee of Google. She addressed questions and comments from previous council meeting and public comment, including decommissioning, careers, tree removal, well monitoring, and wetlands.

Motion to recess at 8:25 p.m. for a 5-minute personal privilege. This motion, made by Councilor Hjelle and seconded by Councilor Peterson, Carried.

Councilor John Geissler: Yea

Councilor Andy Hjelle: Yea

Councilor Brian LeBlanc: Yea

Councilor Joseph Peterson: Yea

Mayor Wayne Boucher: Yea

Yea: 5, Nay: 0

8. **CONSENT AGENDA**

A. **Minutes** - Approval or correction of July 20, 2026 City Council Continuation Minutes and the July 27, 2026 City Council Work Session Minutes

B. **Accounts Payable** - Approve general city warrants from July 16, 2026 through July 31, 2026 in the amount of \$1,402,436.88

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

Councilor John Geissler: Yea

Councilor Andy Hjelle: Yea

Councilor Brian LeBlanc: Yea

Councilor Joseph Peterson: Yea

Mayor Wayne Boucher: Yea

Yea: 5, Nay: 0

9. **ORDINANCES**

A. **2026-01 An Ordinance Amending Chapter 9, Of The Hermantown Code Of Ordinances By Amending Chapter 9, Utilities And Services**

(first reading)

RESOLUTIONS

A. **2026-88 Resolution Approving Wetland Replacement Plan For Arrowhead Substation**

(motion, roll call)

Paul Fish, Solway, MN – Questioned what happened the wetlands in the area as he lives a mile from the proposed site.

Motion to approve 2026-88 Resolution Approving Wetland Replacement Plan For Arrowhead Substation. This motion, made by Councilor Hjelle and seconded by Councilor Peterson, Carried.

Councilor John Geissler: Yea

Councilor Andy Hjelle: Yea

Councilor Brian LeBlanc: Yea

Councilor Joseph Peterson: Yea

Mayor Wayne Boucher: Yea

Yea: 5, Nay: 0

B. **2026-89 Resolution Approving Amendments To Planned Unit Development Stebner Road Development**

(motion, roll call)

Jonathon Thornton, Hermantown, MN – Expressed concern of the difference in discussion regarding the resolution in the Pre-Agenda meeting and the City Council meeting.

Motion to approve 2026-89 Resolution Approving Amendments To Planned Unit Development Stebner Road Development. This motion, made by Councilor Geissler and seconded by Councilor Peterson, Carried.

Councilor John Geissler: Yea

Councilor Andy Hjelle: Yea

Councilor Brian LeBlanc: Yea

Councilor Joseph Peterson: Yea

Mayor Wayne Boucher: Yea

Yea: 5, Nay: 0

C. **2026-90 Resolution Approving Final Plans And Specifications And Ordering Advertisement For Bids For The 2026 Construction Of Hawkline Utilities In Section 4 District No. 553**

(motion, roll call)

Motion to approve 2026-90 Resolution Approving Final Plans And Specifications And Ordering Advertisement For Bids For The 2026 Construction Of Hawkline Utilities In Section 4 District No. 553. This motion, made by Councilor LeBlanc and seconded by Councilor Geissler, Carried.

Councilor John Geissler: Yea

Councilor Andy Hjelle: Yea

Councilor Brian LeBlanc: Yea

Councilor Joseph Peterson: Yea

Mayor Wayne Boucher: Yea

Yea: 5, Nay: 0

D. **2026-91 Resolution Accepting A Proposal For Engineering Services For Dewatering Related Environmental Consulting Services With A Total Not To Exceed Contract Amount Of \$23,475 For The Hawkline Utility Extension At The Intersection Of Ugstad Road And U.S. Highway 53**

(motion, roll call)

Motion to approve 2026-91 Resolution Accepting A Proposal For Engineering Services For Dewatering Related Environmental Consulting Services With A Total Not To Exceed Contract Amount Of \$23,475 For The Hawkline Utility Extension At The Intersection Of Ugstad Road And U.S. Highway 53. This motion, made by Councilor Peterson and seconded by Councilor Hjelle, Carried.

Councilor John Geissler: Yea

Councilor Andy Hjelle: Yea

Councilor Brian LeBlanc: Yea

Councilor Joseph Peterson: Yea

Mayor Wayne Boucher: Yea

Yea: 5, Nay: 0

E. **2026-92 Resolution Approving Pay Request No. 1 For Improvement District No. 323 Water System Connection And Booster Station Project To Lakehead Constructors Inc., In The Amount Of \$107,972.95**

(motion, roll call)

Motion to approve 2026-92 Resolution Approving Pay Request No. 1 For Improvement District No. 323 Water System Connection And Booster Station Project To Lakehead Constructors Inc., In The Amount Of \$107,972.95. This motion, made by Councilor LeBlanc and seconded by Councilor Geissler, Carried.

Councilor John Geissler: Yea

Councilor Andy Hjelle: Yea

Councilor Brian LeBlanc: Yea

Councilor Joseph Peterson: Yea

Mayor Wayne Boucher: Yea

Yea: 5, Nay: 0

F. **2026-93 Resolution Approving Pay Request No. 1 For The Hermantown City Hall HVAC Upgrades To Gartner Refrigeration Co. In The Amount Of \$30,000.00**

(motion, roll call)

Motion to approve 2026-93 Resolution Approving Pay Request No. 1 For The Hermantown City Hall HVAC Upgrades To Gartner Refrigeration Co. In The Amount

Of \$30,000.00. This motion, made by Councilor Geissler and seconded by Councilor LeBlanc, Carried.

Councilor John Geissler: Yea

Councilor Andy Hjelle: Yea

Councilor Brian LeBlanc: Yea

Councilor Joseph Peterson: Yea

Mayor Wayne Boucher: Yea

Yea: 5, Nay: 0

G. 2026-94 Resolution Approving Change Order Number 4 For The Construction Of Keene Creek Trail Segment 4 To Veit & Company Resulting In A Decrease In The Amount Of \$485,767.52

(motion, roll call)

Motion to approve 2026-94 Resolution Approving Change Order Number 4 For The Construction Of Keene Creek Trail Segment 4 To Veit & Company Resulting In A Decrease In The Amount Of \$485,767.52. This motion, made by Councilor Hjelle and seconded by Councilor LeBlanc, Carried.

Councilor John Geissler: Yea

Councilor Andy Hjelle: Yea

Councilor Brian LeBlanc: Yea

Councilor Joseph Peterson: Yea

Mayor Wayne Boucher: Yea

Yea: 5, Nay: 0

H. 2026-95 Resolution Approving Change Order Number 5 For The Construction Of Keene Creek Trail Segment 4 To Veit & Company In The Amount Of \$15,928

(motion, roll call)

Motion to approve 2026-95 Resolution Approving Change Order Number 5 For The Construction Of Keene Creek Trail Segment 4 To Veit & Company In The Amount Of \$15,928. This motion, made by Councilor Peterson and seconded by Councilor Hjelle, Carried.

Councilor John Geissler: Yea

Councilor Andy Hjelle: Yea

Councilor Brian LeBlanc: Yea

Councilor Joseph Peterson: Yea

Mayor Wayne Boucher: Yea

Yea: 5, Nay: 0

10. **RECESS**

Motion to recess at 9:00 p.m. This motion, made by Councilor LeBlanc and seconded by Councilor Geissler, Carried.

Councilor John Geissler: Yea

Councilor Andy Hjelle: Yea

Councilor Brian LeBlanc: Yea

Councilor Joseph Peterson: Yea

Mayor Wayne Boucher: Yea

Yea: 5, Nay: 0

ATTEST:

Mayor

City Clerk