

CITY OF ST. FRANCIS
CITY COUNCIL AGENDA
St. Francis City Hall 3750 Bridge Street NW
June 15, 2026
6:00 p.m.

1. CALL TO ORDER/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The regular City Council meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Mayor Mark Vogel.

2. ROLL CALL

Members Present: Mayor Mark Vogel, Councilmembers Kevin Robinson, Sarah Udvig, Amy Faanes, and Joe Muehlbauer (via Zoom).

Also present: City Administrator Kate Thunstrom, Deputy Administrator-City Clerk Jenni Wida, Finance Director Natalie Santillo, Public Works Director Paul Carpenter, Assistant City Attorney Travis Lutz, Police Chief Todd Schwieger, and Community Development Director Jodie Steffes.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTION BY: UDVIG SECOND: ROBINSON APPROVING THE REGULAR CITY COUNCIL AGENDA

A roll call vote was performed:

Mayor Vogel	aye
Councilmember Muehlbauer	aye
Councilmember Faanes	aye
Councilmember Udvig	aye
Councilmember Robinson	aye

Motion carried: 5-0

4. CONSENT AGENDA

A. City Council Minutes, June 1, 2026

B. Winning With Cops Donation:

Resolution 2026-21 Approving the Acceptance of Winning with Cops Donation from Federal Premium Ammunition

C. Rivers Edge 8th Addition Financial Security Reduction

D. Approval of Pay Estimate No. 5 for the 2025 Street Reconstruction Project

E. Rental License Approvals

F. Site Improvement Performance Agreement, Willow Ridge Business Center

G. Approval of Change Order No. 1 for the 2026 Street Rehabilitation Project and the Woodbine Street Extension Project

H. Payment of Claims

MOTION BY: ROBINSON SECOND: MAYOR VOGEL APPROVING THE
REGULAR CITY COUNCIL CONSENT AGENDA

A roll call vote was performed:

Mayor Vogel	aye
Councilmember Muehlbauer	aye
Councilmember Faanes	aye
Councilmember Udvig	aye
Councilmember Robinson	aye

Motion carried: 5-0

5. MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Mayor Vogel addressed the Council and public regarding the format and expectations for public comment. He encouraged all residents to come forward and speak, while noting the importance of being respectful and mindful of time. Mayor Vogel stated that each person would have one opportunity to speak and that the meeting, open to the public, is not intended to be an ongoing debate or discussion with the City Council. He noted that residents are encouraged to follow up with Staff or individual Council members after the meeting to work toward the resolution of their concerns.

Derek Lind came forward. He stated he is from Ramsey and is a member of the Anoka County Election Integrity Team. Lind thanked the Council for passing the post-election review and for the flag move. He shared two recent developments related to poll pads: the Upper Midwest Law Center has filed suit against the State of Minnesota on behalf of the City of Oak Grove regarding poll pad autonomy, and a film titled "Minnesota Mao" has been released featuring his group discussing poll pads and related matters. Lind also referenced an unsigned letter from Anoka County, issued before the 2024 election, containing a felony threat directed at cities choosing to use paper poll pads, noting that the election manager later acknowledged the letter. He asked the Council to consider returning to paper poll pads and distributed an eight-page packet of supporting materials.

Mike Powell came forward and stated he is a resident of St. Francis. He asked how to become a member of the EDA and who controls the property across the street from his residence. City Administrator Kate Thunstrom explained that EDA membership is filled through an application and interview process, with a committee making a recommendation to the Council, and that the EDA president is appointed from within the EDA itself. Thunstrom confirmed that the EDA is responsible for the property in question.

Powell expressed concerns about what he described as inconsistent code enforcement, noting that he received citations for parking on the grass and working on his car in his driveway while a nearby property under EDA control remained in poor condition. He stated that his water bill increased by \$11 over the past twelve

months. Powell also raised concerns about statements made by the president of the EDA regarding the City and its residents, the direction of development in St. Francis, and the influence of EDA leadership on Council elections.

Ashley Rodger came forward and stated she is a resident of St. Francis. She asked the Council to consider installing public Level 2 EV chargers throughout the community, noting that many residents, including renters and those without adequate electrical service, are unable to install home charging stations. Roger stated that the nearest public fast charging locations are in Elk River, approximately 15 miles away, Rogers, approximately 25 miles away, Maple Grove, approximately 30 miles away, and Minneapolis, approximately 40 miles away. She noted that state and federal grant programs exist to help offset installation costs and suggested that the Highway 47 reconstruction presents an opportunity to install EV charging infrastructure.

Tina Carroll came forward and stated she is a resident of St. Francis. She asked the Council to consider amending the code enforcement complaint process to require complainants to provide their names, rather than allowing anonymous complaints. Carroll stated that residents should have the right to face their accuser in matters of code enforcement, as they would in a court of law. She shared that she and her household felt targeted by a complaint filed shortly after she announced her intention to run for City Council. Carroll asked the Council to examine whether repeated complaints from the same source directed at the same individual could constitute targeted enforcement.

No one else came forward to address the Council.

6. SPECIAL BUSINESS - NONE

7. PUBLIC HEARINGS - NONE

8. OLD BUSINESS

A. Ordinance Amendment, Chapter 6 Business Regulation, Section 5 Gambling, First Reading

Ordinance 358 amending City Code Chapter 6, Section 5, Subdivision 3 regarding business regulation and gambling

City Administrator Kate Thunstrom presented the first reading of an ordinance amendment to Chapter 6, Section 5 of the City Code relating to gambling regulations. She explained that the amendment proposes to delete the language requiring a contribution to the City fund and to correct the lettering system within that section accordingly. Thunstrom asked the Council to determine an effective date for the amendment, noting that the ordinance itself would become effective July 17 and suggesting August 1 as a logical next date, or January 1 as an alternative.

Mayor Vogel noted he had spoken with Thunstrom before the meeting and asked

Finance Director Natalie Santillo whether the effective date would impact the Finance Department. Santillo stated that the reporting requirement would remain the same as long as funds are held in the account and that the change would not significantly affect the Finance Department.

Council members were asked for their preferred effective date. Robinson stated he would support August 1, noting that the requirement was considered an overreach and that there was no reason to delay. Udvig agreed with August 1. Faanes supported August 1 as well, noting that many high school organizations conduct raffles in August and that resolving the matter prior to that time was the intent of the amendment. Muehlbauer also supported August 1. Mayor Vogel concurred, and August 1 was established as the effective date.

MOTION BY: FAANES SECOND: ROBINSON APPROVING THE FIRST READING OF ORDINANCE 358 AMENDING CITY CODE CHAPTER 6, SECTION 5, SUBDIVISION 3, REGARDING BUSINESS REGULATION AND GAMBLING

A roll call vote was performed:

Mayor Vogel	aye
Councilmember Muehlbauer	aye
Councilmember Faanes	aye
Councilmember Udvig	aye
Councilmember Robinson	aye

Motion carried: 5-0

9. NEW BUSINESS

A. NONE

10. MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC - NONE

11. REPORTS

A. City Administrator Report

City Administrator Kate Thunstrom reported that Staff is currently working on several code and policy updates, including an overall facility policy anticipated to be delivered to the Public Works Director within the next few weeks. She noted that Staff has also begun reviewing budgets, rates, and fee schedules, which will continue through the coming months, leading into the fall budget process. Thunstrom noted that the Highway 47 project and other infrastructure work remain in process with no new updates at this time.

Faanes asked whether the number of candidates in the upcoming election would trigger a primary. City Clerk Jenni Wida confirmed that a primary would be held. Wida stated that with three candidates for mayor, the field would be reduced to two, and with five candidates for council and two seats open, the field would be

reduced to four. Faanes asked whether sufficient election judges had been secured. Wida stated she is still working on recruiting judges but expects to have adequate coverage.

Faanes also asked whether the City had received any requests from residents regarding public EV charging infrastructure, referencing comments made during the Meeting Open to the Public. Thunstrom stated that EV charging had been discussed during the planning of the current City Hall building. Public Works Director Paul Carpenter clarified that while there had been discussion, no infrastructure was ultimately installed due to cost considerations. Thunstrom noted that EV charging could be explored in connection with the Highway 47 project, the utility project, the community park area, or through partnerships with local businesses, and that some funding may still be available.

Faanes thanked the Police Department and the Public Works Department for their quick response to a speeding concern on her street. She noted that she had contacted the non-emergency line, and within approximately ten minutes, a patrol car was on scene, followed shortly by a speed sign deployed by Public Works.

Faanes also raised the topic of data centers, noting that it has become a prominent issue in communities across the region, with some cities pursuing moratoriums and others welcoming them. She asked that Staff bring forward information on the City's current code and zoning as it relates to data centers at a future meeting, so that the Council could have a proactive conversation before any application is filed. She referenced the cell phone tower situation as an example of a time the Council felt constrained by existing code, and stated her preference to address policy questions in advance of an applicant coming forward.

Mayor Vogel agreed with the request. Thunstrom provided context, noting that the City currently does not allow data centers in any zoning district, so no process exists for receiving an application at this time. She explained the concept of the triangle of discretion in land use, noting that the Council holds the most discretion during the code-writing phase rather than at the point of an application. Thunstrom also noted that data center development raises concerns for St. Francis related to water and sewer capacity, though she acknowledged that newer facilities are being built with greater water reuse efficiency, which could reduce those concerns over time. She offered to compile information for a future Council discussion.

12. COUNCIL MEMBER REPORTS

The Council shared the meetings and events they attended in the past few weeks, as well as highlighting upcoming events.

Udvig reported that on June 4, she attended the Vista Prairie grand opening, which she described as a well-run event despite the heat. She then attended the bike rodeo, which was well attended, and noted that children were particularly excited about the fire truck on site. Udvig reported that half-court basketball courts are

being installed at Rum River Woods and Deer Creek 2nd Park. She noted that a contractor will complete the asphalt pads and that Public Works will handle the poles and painting. Udvig noted that the project originated from a request brought forward by a 10-year-old resident and expressed that she hoped it would encourage other residents, young and old, to engage with City staff and the Parks Department.

Robinson reported that he also attended the Vista Prairie grand opening, which he referred to as Eagle Point, and took a full tour of the facility from the parking garage to the third floor. He noted that the CEO provided a strong presentation and that the facility was the organization's first ground-up new construction among six total locations. Robinson stated that the fill rate is progressing as expected and that the organization is exploring the possibility of opening its bistro and restaurant to the public. Robinson also attended the bike rodeo and commended the Police Chief for his participation in grilling food at the event, citing it as an example of meaningful community involvement.

Robinson stated that he will be attending the Planning and Zoning meeting on Wednesday, noting that a proposal for a new ground-up auto repair facility may be coming forward. He also mentioned that Elevation Exteriors has purchased property south of Dollar General, offering it as an example of new commercial interest in St. Francis. Robinson asked Public Works Director Paul Carpenter for an update on the upcoming recycling event. Carpenter confirmed the event is scheduled for June 27 and will accept all common items except trash, consistent with the first event. Robinson asked when the next recycling event would be held. Carpenter stated he believed it would be in August but would follow up with a confirmed date. Robinson also asked for an update on the waste oil collection program. Carpenter reported that the collection bin is being emptied approximately once a month, which is more frequent than anticipated, and that the program is going very well. He noted that residents are welcome to drop off waste oil by appointment during the day.

Muehlbauer stated he had responded to several resident emails and thanked Staff for keeping the Council informed through email communications. He briefly addressed the topic of tax increment financing, noting that TIF and related abatements are intended to generate greater returns over time. Muehlbauer also addressed the water rate discussion that arose during public comment, noting that the City is planning a 15 percent water rate increase and a 20 percent sewer rate increase in the coming year. He stated that these increases are driven by rising costs and that without growth in the user base to spread those costs, rates will continue to climb. Muehlbauer acknowledged that no one wants to raise rates but encouraged residents to be aware that additional increases are planned.

Faanes stated she had no additional items to report beyond the questions she had raised earlier in the meeting.

Mayor Vogel reported that he attended the Vista Prairie grand opening and the bike rodeo and commended all involved in both events. He noted that the Chamber meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, where updates on Pioneer Days will be shared, and stated that excitement around the event remains high. Mayor Vogel also reported that he had held several meetings with City staff and residents regarding zoning and code enforcement issues. He stated that no system of enforcement, whether anonymous or complaint-based, is without its drawbacks, and noted that while he is sympathetic to residents who feel their property rights should not be regulated, some level of zoning is necessary to protect the community as a whole.

Robinson added that he wished to recognize Jackson Matthies, identifying him as a newer member of City staff. Robinson stated that Matthies is responsive, thorough, and communicates clearly, and that he had informed City Administrator Kate Thunstrom directly of his appreciation for Matthies's work. Mayor Vogel agreed with Robinson's assessment.

13. UPCOMING EVENTS

June 17 - Farmers Market - 3:00 pm - 7:00 pm
June 17 - Planning Commission Meeting - 7:00 pm
June 19 - City Offices Closed for Juneteenth
June 23 - Rum River Fire Board Meeting - 5:00 pm
June 24 - Farmers Market 3:00 pm - 7:00 pm
June 27 - Recycle Event - 8:00 am -12:00 pm

14. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION BY: FAANES SECOND: ROBINSON TO ADJOURN THE MEETING.

A roll call vote was performed:

Mayor Vogel	aye
Councilmember Muehlbauer	aye
Councilmember Faanes	aye
Councilmember Udvig	aye
Councilmember Robinson	aye

Motion carried: 5-0

There being no further business, Mayor Vogel adjourned the regular City Council at 6:38 p.m.



Jennifer Wida, City Clerk