

City of Gilbert
Minutes of Regular City Council Meeting
Tuesday, October 14, 2025
Council Chambers

Mayor Oberstar called the meeting to order at 6:05 P.M.

Quorum determined.

Present: Mayor Karl Oberstar, Jr., Councilor Rudy Vertachnik, Paul Skrbec and Bob Pontinen and Clerk Mike Skrbich and Police Chief Ty Techar.

Pledge of Allegiance

Additions to the Agenda: Adding under New Business: Item E: Fence Permit, Item F: IRRRB Grant Application, Item G: Council Directive and Item H: Miscellaneous.

Motion by Vertachnik, seconded by Skrbec to approve the Additions to the Agenda. MCU

Consent Agenda:

City Council Minutes

- September 23, 2025 City Council Regular Meeting Minutes
- September 23, 2025 City Council Working Session Minutes
- September 29, 2025 City Council Special Meeting Minutes

Invoices from Previously Approved Projects

Boards and Commissions Minutes

Payment of Bills and Payroll upon proper audit of Clerk and Mayor

- Check register 9/23/2025 – 9/30/2025
- Check register 10/10/2025 – 10/13/2025

Motion by Skrbec, seconded by Pontinen to approve the Consent Agenda with changes. MCU

Public Participation: None

Reports – Mayor & Council

Councilor Pontinen: Inquired about the police contract with Biwabik. Clerk Skrbich stated they hadn't heard anything yet. Councilor Skrbec stated it was on Biwabik's agenda to discuss at their meeting tonight.

Councilor Skrbec: Nothing at this time.

Councilor Vertachnik: Nothing at this time.

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Mayor Oberstar: Lights look nice at the cemetery. Oberstar has been in touch with Senator Hauschild on the PFA and a developer is planning to present at the next council meeting. Plans are moving ahead with IRRRB on the second parking lot. Oberstar stated he has been in touch with the highway department to put in some lighting by the Circle K. He's received some positive feedback and hopefully by spring we will know if they can assist.

Reports – Staff, Boards & Council:

Fire Chief Marc Kwiatkowski: Recognition was given to retired Fire Chief Scott Omersa. Omersa recently passed away.

Currently 21 members on the fire department with 2 resignations. The resignations are the latest hires. They have many life changes going on at the moment and are stepping down at this time. There have been approximately 49 calls this year with 19 trainings, including multi-agency training at the OHV Park.

Thank you for putting concrete in front of the firehall. There are some plans to make a display area listing past and current fire fighters and well as possibly a message area for the public. Some donations have come from the Omersa family, in memoriam of Scott.

Engine 2 needs some repairs with approximate cost of \$2000, which is in their repair budget for 2025.

Mayor Oberstar stepped off the chair to make a motion to approve the purchase of turnout gear, with Clerk Skrbich checking to make sure there's enough in the budget for the purchase.

Motion by Oberstar, seconded by Pontinen to approve the purchase of the previously budgeted 3 sets of turnout gear. MCU

Councilor Skrbec stated that it was adjusted in the charter and approved in November that once the City Council has set a budget for departments, as long as the expense occurs within their budget of items, there's not a need for that department head to come back and request for the council to approve purchases that are already approved in the budget, as long as the funds are there.

Motion by Vertachnik, seconded by Skrbec to approve the Gilbert Fire Department to apply for the 50/50 DNR Grant for 2026. MCU

Fire Chief Kwiatkowski discussed options for the old air packs that are out of date and very heavy. He is looking at possibly selling them. Kwiatkowski will look into the worth, etc. and will come back to the City with it. Clerk Skrbich will talk with the City Attorney to find out the proper procedure to sell them.

Police Chief Ty Techar: There are 5 properties in town that need condemning. Techar asked the council for permission to apply for the IRRRB residential redevelopment grant, to cover up to 75% of the cost to tear down. Techar discussed the qualifications for the grant. Four of the five

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properties are residential. Some discussion took place on redevelopment suggestions for the properties and the importance of doing the commercial building on the main street first.

Motion by Oberstar, stepped down from chair to make motion, seconded by Skrbec to approve the Gilbert Police Department applying for the IRRRB Residential Redevelopment Grant. MCU

Clerk Mike Skrbich: Read a thank you letter from some recent campground guests, thanking the great hosts and facility.

RAMS annual dinner is on Tuesday, December 9th if any council members are interested in attending, they should let the Mayor or the Clerk know.

Property and Casualty insurance is going down a little this year. Working on updating the equipment lists etc. Last year, Workers Comp went down a little and this year's health insurance is up 6.5%, so this will offset.

Clerk Skrbich has been talking to Public Works Director Sam Lautigar on locates. The City is spending quite a bit on locates. Some cities do their own locating. He is looking into other options to save the City some money.

Councilor Skrbec asked why we aren't matching the addresses with building permits. People call to have locates done when they are doing work. Clerk Skrbich replied that we don't have a Planning & Zoning committee at this time and he also stated that there have been homes remodeled in the community that pay \$230 a year in property taxes. There is no trigger mechanism in place to let the county know that these places have been updated. The County checks in to find out what properties have been updated. Clerk Skrbich mentioned having the new Planning & Zoning person maybe drive around town and see if there are places we think are due for appraisal. Discussion took place on options and steps the City will have to look in to, including adopting the Minnesota building code.

Motion by Oberstar, stepped down from chair to make motion, seconded by Skrbec to investigate the Minnesota Building Code and Councilors Vertachnik and Pontinen have the authority to research this to see how it would benefit the City. MCU

Old Business:

None

New Business:

Motion by Vertachnik, supported by Pontinen to approve Knights of Columbus Gambling Application for bingo at St. Joe's Catholic Church on January 19th, 2026. MCU

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Motion by Vertachnik, supported by Skrbec to approve the quote of \$4765, from Iron Range Plumbing & Heating to repair the leak in the boiler at the Library. MCU

Motion by Skrbec, supported Pontinen to approve the SC Electric LED shop lights for \$3,344. MCU

Motion by Skrbec, supported by Vertachnik to approve S.E.H. Engineering I&I overview for \$95,000. The NPCA Grant the City has is for \$90k and this motion is needed to proceed with the project. MCU

Counselor Skrbec abstaining from the next motion.

Motion by Vertachnik, supported by Pontinen to approve Paul Skrbec's fence permit. Approved 3 to 0.

Motion by Vertachnik, supported by Pontinen to approve Campground IRRRB grant application. MCU

Motion by Vertachnik, supported by Skrbec to adopt the Council Directive Policy. MCU

Motion by Oberstar, stepped down from chair to make motion, seconded by Pontinen to amend the Additions to the Agenda to include the councilor application for the council vacancy. MCU

Motion by Oberstar, stepped down from chair to make motion, supported by Skrbec to approve Ryan Redepenning to fill the vacant spot on the Gilbert City Council. MCU
Redepenning will be sworn in at the next meeting.

Motion by Skrbec, seconded by Pontinen to adjourn meeting at 7:54P.M. MCU.

**These minutes are paraphrased and are not written word for word.*

ATTEST:

Mike Skrbich, Interim Clerk/Administrator

Karl Oberstar Jr., Mayor