

City of Gilbert  
Minutes of Regular City Council Meeting  
Monday, January 13, 2026  
Council Chambers

Mayor Oberstar called the meeting to order at 6:00 P.M.

Quorum determined.

Present: Mayor Karl Oberstar, Jr., Councilors Rudy Vertachnik, Ryan Redepenning, Paul Skrbec and Bob Pontinen, Police Chief Ty Techar.

Pledge of Allegiance

**Additions to the Agenda:** Under New Business: Item G. Resignation - Paul Starkovich; Item H. Post job position.

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

**Consent Agenda:**

City Council Minutes

- December 23, 2025 City Council Regular Meeting Minutes
- December 23, 2025 City Council Working Session Minutes

**Motion** by Skrbec, seconded by Pontinen to approve the Consent Agenda and per the last meeting's motion: move check registers to Old Business. MCU

**Public Participation:** Paul Peltier, Executive Director of RAMS, Range Association of Municipalities and Schools, thanked the Council for meeting with him during the Working Session to discuss matters that are important for Gilbert and what RAMS can do to be helpful.

**Reports – Mayor & Council**

**Councilor Vertachnik:** Asked Clerk Skrbich where the city is currently with the audits and was looking for assurance that the new Deputy Clerk has access to everything that Clerk Skrbich has access to. After lengthy discussion (which can be viewed on Mesabi TV), a motion was made by Vertachnik.

**Motion** by Vertachnik, seconded by Skrbec to allow the Mayor and the Deputy Clerk to have the same access and authority to everything the City Clerk has access to. MCU

Vertachnik brought up the idea with a template for a vacation calendar for Public Works to make sure there is enough coverage during projects or enough staff for plowing in the winter, for example. Also wanting it to be fair to everyone so they can use their time off. More specifics will be checked with the union and attorney. Councilor Skrbec suggested establishing a window, like the beginning of the year, for employees to schedule, the best they can, their time off for the year.

Police Chief Techar was able to find the contract language for the council.

City of Gilbert  
Minutes of Regular City Council Meeting  
Monday, January 13, 2026  
Council Chambers

**Motion** by Vertachnik, seconded by Redepenning to adopt and work on a vacation planner for city staff. MCU

**Councilor Redepenning:** Nothing at this time.

**Councilor Skrbec:** After serving on the Council for a year now and serving the citizens, Skrbec stated he likes to gather information first before making decisions. He's heard and witnessed a lot of things and believe this is the right time to request the council to allow the Personal Committee to conduct an investigation. A lot of things have been heard and witnessed during the negotiation sessions and the Personal Committee, with assistance from the City Attorney, need to gather testimony and witnesses regarding the current City Clerk. And to determine what the next step could be and what needs to be done.

**Motion** by Skrbec, seconded by Pontinen to request the personal committee to begin the process of conducting interviews and investigations regarding the current City Clerk Skrbich. MCU

**Councilor Pontinen:** Gathered information and spoke to staff at the Regional Landfill in Virginia regarding the letter that was received recently seeking support for approving a Canyon site for garbage. Duluth garbage will be coming to the Virginia dump until the Canyon site is developed. After some clarification from staff at the Regional landfill in Virginia, expressed there should be no problems temporarily taking on the garbage from Duluth until the Canyon site is completed. Pontinen noted the staff also informed him that with the expansion, the Regional Landfill has a life expectancy of 100 years. Mayor Oberstar suggested it get put on the agenda for the next meeting. Councilor Redepenning added the County is building another facility down from the weigh station to expand the current landfill and it is already in production (giving the 100 year life).

**Mayor Oberstar:** Rockridge is having a celebration for the 1951 Gilbert Basketball Championship team's 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. Members and relatives are invited on Saturday, February 14<sup>th</sup> at 2pm, in the Gymnasium at Rockridge before the Mt. Iron boys game.

Mayor Oberstar shared that in January 1986 was the first time, 40 years ago, to sit in the Mayor's chair for Gilbert. Noting he was 34 years old and is now starting his 18<sup>th</sup> year as Mayor Oberstar thanked the community for allowing him to serve Gilbert.

Oberstar shared they are still working with AFSCME on the new contract and hoping everything will be worked out soon.

**Police Chief Ty Techar:** Nothing at this time.

**City Clerk Skrbich:** Nothing at this time.

**Old Business:**

Payment of bills and payroll upon proper audit of Clerk and Mayor

- Check register 12/29/2025 – 12/30/2025

City of Gilbert  
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Council Chambers

- Check register 1/6/2026 – 1/7/2026

Discussion took place on the various Minnesota Power invoices and clarification on different charges and projects including rebates offered by Minnesota Power, clarifying it is the City's responsibility to pay the rebates. The council would like to share with Gilbert residents what rebates are offered and will work putting together a flyer, adding information to PSN and to the City website.

The council discussed locating services and the coding process on invoices. Vertachnik brought up the idea of scanning invoices into the system. Councilor Skrbec stated technology needs to be a priority in the City of Gilbert and using our current system to scan invoices into the system would make everything easier and quicker to access.

**Motion** by Skrbec, seconded by Vertachnik to approve Check Registers dated 12/29/2025 - 12/30/2025 and 1/6/2026 – 1/7/2026. MCU

**New Business:**

**Motion** by Skrbec, supported by Vertachnik to approve the MOU for LELS Safe & Sick. MCU

**Motion** by Skrbec, supported by Redepenning to approve the MOU for AFSCMES Safe & Sick. MCU

**Motion** by Skrbec, supported by Vertachnik to approve training for David Huppler from the wastewater treatment plant. MCU

**Motion** by Skrbec, supported by Redepenning to approve the Girl Scout use of the Community Center in February for cookie distribution and waive the fees. MCU

**Motion** by Redepenning, supported by Vertachnik to approve advertising for bids on the Enterprise Trail project. MCU

**Motion** by Pontinen, supported by Skrbec to approve the resignation of Paul Starkovich from the wastewater treatment plant. MCU

Thank you to Paul Starkovich for his service to Gilbert and best wishes on future plans.

**Motion** by Skrbec, supported by Redepenning to approve the posting water/wastewater operator position. MCU

**Motion** by Skrbec, supported by Vertachnik to approve Resolution 2026-01 to adopt official designations. MCU

**Motion** by Skrbec, seconded by Redepenning to adjourn meeting at 7:45 P.M. MCU.

City of Gilbert  
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*\*These minutes are paraphrased and are not written word for word.*

ATTEST:

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Mike Skrbich, Interim Clerk/Administrator

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Karl Oberstar Jr., Mayor