

City of Gilbert
Minutes of Regular City Council Meeting
Wednesday, August 25, 2026
Council Chambers

Mayor Karl Oberstar, Jr. called the Regular City Council Meeting to order at 6:07PM
Quorum determined.

Present: Mayor Karl Oberstar, Jr., Councilor Bob Pontinen, Councilor Rudy Vertachnik, Councilor Paul Skrbec, Councilor Ryan Redepenning; Clerk/Treasurer Lynn Lorey, Administrative Assistant Marion DeLage; City Engineer Matt Reed and Police Chief Ty Techar.

Absent with Notice:

Pledge of Allegiance

Additions to the Agenda: Replace “D – Campground Host Pay” under New Business with Fayal Annexation discussion. Adding “F – Special Meetings to discuss the budget – September 1st, 15th and 29th at 6:00 PM” under New Business.

Motion by Councilor Paul Skrbec, seconded by Councilor Ryan Redepenning to approve the Additions to the Agenda. MCU

Consent Agenda:

City Council Minutes

- August 12, 2026 City Council Regular Meeting Minutes
- August 12, 2026 City Council Working Session Minutes

Boards and Commission Minutes

- August 3, 2026 Library Board Minutes

Motion by Councilor Paul Skrbec, seconded by Councilor Rudy Vertachnik to approve the Consent Agenda. MCU

Public Participation: Leo Skrbec from the Water & Light Board encouraged setting up a working session with Fayal and McKinley regarding the water usage because right now they are just paying the per gallon rate and not a base fee to the City of Gilbert, and with the City looking at the new water treatment plant, the City needs to make some changes. Skrbec reiterated the City needs to have a joint session or “get together” of how to handle that or at least notify them that the current contract will need to be rescinded and changed for McKinley and Fayal with the new water treatment plant coming.

Reports – Mayor & Council

Mayor Karl Oberstar, Jr.: would like to see the rest of the work done at the cemetery. Interim Clerk/Treasurer Lynn Lorey stated Public Works Director Sam Lautigar has spoken to Mesabi Bituminous, and the riprap will be completed, just not at this time, as all the contractors are busy wrapping up their big jobs. Councilor Bob Pontinen suggested seeing if KGM could come do it now. Mayor Karl Oberstar, Jr. directed Interim Clerk/Treasurer Lynn Lorey to have Public Works Director Sam Lautigar reach out to KGM.

City of Gilbert
Minutes of Regular City Council Meeting
Wednesday, August 25, 2026
Council Chambers

Budget talks are coming up and Mayor Karl Oberstar, Jr. has asked Police Chief Ty Teacher to come with answers by the September 1st meeting in regard to the shared police services with Biwabik.

Councilor Rudy Vertachnik: Inquired about an update on the project list the Public Works Director Sam Lautigar and Interim Clerk Lynn Lorey have come up with. She stated she didn't have a chance to update the physical list but did say two-thirds of the list is completed. Some things are on hold, like the rip rap, until the contractor can come finish the job. Councilor Rudy Vertachnik wanted to know why Lautigar is not updating the list himself. Interim Clerk Lynn Lorey stated she makes notes while meeting with Lautigar and updates the physical list as needed and when time allows. Councilor Rudy Vertachnik said that he thinks it is part of Lautigar's job description to update a physical list and the council and the beginning of the month. Interim Clerk Lynn Lorey decided to withhold response.

Councilor Paul Skrbec: Mayor Karl Oberstar, Jr and Councilor Paul Skrbec met with MNDOT on Saturday morning. MNDOT starts the project of tearing through Summit Street crossing in front of 135, meaning there was no drive-up access for off-road vehicles. Temporary access to get across Summitt will be made and the trail by Circle K will be significantly improved. Councilor Paul Skrbec urged citizens to please use caution and construction will be done soon. Mayor Karl Oberstar, Jr. apologized to anyone at the campground that couldn't get to Circle K without trailering their off-road vehicles to the gas station.

Councilor Ryan Redepenning: Stated that despite the good faith negotiations, the City has been unable to reach terms with their first applicant for City Clerk, Interim Clerk/Treasurer Lynn Lorey and he would like to make a motion to rescind the offer from her, stating he wasn't sure if this goes under new business or if the council should vote on it now or during the closed session. Mayor Karl Oberstar, Jr. stated it is for the closed session.

Councilor Bob Pontinen: Raised concern that after it rains, sand behind the new concrete slab at the Fire Department, washes up onto the concrete and it gets slippery when it's dry for older people that could slip on it. Councilor Bob Pontinen suggested instead of the gutter going behind the slab, to just place an extension on it and it will gutter onto the concrete slab and the water would run onto the street. Or they could put a pipe alongside the slab running and they could catch it all in a pipe and run it to the street. They could also place a "Y" or a "T" and let some of the water onto the grass, all a cheap fix. Mayor Karl Oberstar, Jr., agrees with Councilor Bob Pontinen and would like to see it done.

Reports – Staff, Boards & Council:

Police Chief Ty Techar: Found a contractor to help with some blight clean up at the end of September with properties on Differding Point and lower New Jersey Avenue East. Councilor Rudy Vertachnik inquired about a property on Minnesota with a camper in the front yard and plywood alongside. Police Chief Ty Techar said he would have to take a look.

City of Gilbert
Minutes of Regular City Council Meeting
Wednesday, August 25, 2026
Council Chambers

Mayor Karl Oberstar, Jr. asked if Police Chief Ty Techar has checked if there are some grants IRRRB to help fund the cleanup. Police Chief Ty Techar stated we do not have an inspector and had checked with Eveleth to see if we could use theirs, however he has retired. We would need someone licensed to go out for funding. There is a \$250,000 grant that is spread throughout the cities.

A list of surplus items the city owns will need to be put together so that it can go out for bids.

Mayor Karl Oberstar, Jr. stated he spoke to MNDOT about getting lights on Summit Street. There is a program for it but we would not qualify for the program until 2028 and then the lights would get set up in 2030, or they said they would work on a permit and allow wood poles if we did it on our own and we could get Minnesota Power to engineer that project to get it done, so that would be a costly consideration. Councilor Paul Skrbec stated he would like to see what the cost would be. Mayor Karl Oberstar, Jr. stated the lights could save a life, we could do it and still apply to have the other poles put up in 2030. He would like to see this put on the agenda for the utility budget.

City Engineer Matt Reed: Waiting on the audits to get done so the funding will come through. Councilor Bob Pontinen expressed concern that we may have to go out for rebids. Reed has spoken to City Attorney Bryan Lindsay and he indicated that the city is ok so far. Reed has also been in contact with the contractor, discussing any increases they have requested and looking at bringing some of those costs back down. After they meet, Reed will come back and update the city. If the costs go up, we may have a chance, it may raise the threshold of the grant we can apply for. Right now, we are at one threshold, they are finalizing the numbers first. Reed hopes to see construction started by spring.

Interim Clerk/Treasurer Lynn Lorey: A draft of the 2023 audit will be available, hopefully this week, for the city to review. She is waiting for the auditors to give her a projected timeline in completing the other 2 audits, so that an extension could be filed with the State.

Old Business:

Timesheets for Employees for 8/1/2026 – 8/15/2026 – Councilor Rudy Vertachnik inquired about a timesheet. Corrections were made after the council packets were done, therefore the timesheet in the packet was incorrect. Discussion took place explaining to Councilor Rudy Vertachnik how this employee's time is separated into the different departments. Councilor Rudy Vertachnik asked why an office timesheet does not show the accumulation for sick, vacation and personal time. Administrative Assistant Marion DeLage stated the past clerk did not have the hours accumulated correctly and Interim Clerk/Treasurer Lynn Lorey is working on getting them corrected. City Councilor Rudy Vertachnik asked why Administrative Assistant Marion DeLage took time off as unpaid, she replied it was due to not knowing what hours she had available and just chose to have it as unpaid time off. Councilor Rudy Vertachnik asked that a person would just take nonpaid time off, anytime they wanted? Interim Clerk/Treasurer Lynn Lorey stated DeLage did ask for permission to take it as unpaid time off. Councilor Rudy Vertachnik stated but that would be that

City of Gilbert
Minutes of Regular City Council Meeting
Wednesday, August 25, 2026
Council Chambers

they don't use their personal time, they don't use vacation time, they don't use sick time, they just take it as nonpaid so they can save their vacation. Interim Clerk/Treasurer Lynn Lorey stated we aren't sure where her time off is and if she wanted to take the day off, at this point, she would have to take it as unpaid. Councilor Paul Skrbec interrupted the discussion by reminding the council that they should not be discussing personnel in public forum. Councilor Rudy Vertchnik stated this isn't about personnel. Councilor Paul Skrbec replied and that this is talking about two individuals that are on the payroll. Mayor Karl Oberstar, Jr., used his gavel to get order back in the meeting while Councilor Rudy Vertchnik spoke over the mayor saying he would like to see the boxes filled in. Mayor Karl Oberstar, Jr., said that these are just questions and not discussion about poor work performance. Administrative Assistant Marion DeLage explained that everyone's accumulated time is being rechecked and corrected, that it just takes some time because not everyone with an AFSCME contract has the same percentage to figure out their times. Councilor Rudy Vertchnik said he would like to see it done by the next meeting. Councilor Paul Skrbec has met with Interim Clerk/Treasurer Lynn Lorey and this is why switching to an automatic system would have prevented some of this. Mayor Karl Oberstar, Jr. said he said this before, he would appreciate the councilors reach out to the office staff before the meeting to get the answers to the questions they seek and not using the council meeting time to do it.

Motion by Councilor Ryan Redepenning, seconded by Councilor Paul Skrbec, to approve the 8/1/2026 -8/15/2026 timesheets. MCU

Mayor Karl Oberstar Jr. would like to add the microphones as discussion during the budget talks.

Community center update – They are on track and a punch list will be made at the end of August/first week of September.

Motion by Paul Skrbec seconded by Councilor Ryan, to approve the fence permit for Steve Fenske. MCU

New Business:

Motion by Councilor Ryan Redepenning, seconded by Councilor Rudy Vertchnik to approve S.E.H. to go out for bids for the Ore Be Gone boat landing. MCU

Councilor Paul Skrbec would like to see a future project of making an area for a kayak launch.

Motion by Councilor Bob Pontinen, seconded by Councilor Rudy Vertchnik to allow the City Attorney to draft a resolution to annex Fayal for approximately 25 homes at the end of Differding Point. Mayor Karl Oberstar, Jr. stated it would benefit the City of Gilbert but he does think this is the right way to go about this and he is not in favor of any kind of annexation, especially hostile. Councilor Paul Skrbec stated he does not support spending the City's legal resources in this way, saying the tactic is wrong. He would support the attorney looking at the now expired utility services and developing a strategy to move forward. Reiterating an annexation is a waste of human resources. Roll call vote to be taken.

City of Gilbert
Minutes of Regular City Council Meeting
Wednesday, August 25, 2026
Council Chambers

Mayor Karl Oberstar, Jr. – No.
Councilor Paul Skrbec – No.
Councilor Rudy Vertachnik – Yes.
Councilor Bob Pontinen – Yes.
Councilor Ryan Redepenning – Yes.
The motion carries 3 to 2.

Discussion took place regarding the agreement with Duluth PD – RMS – Police Chief Ty Techar would like to hold off on this agreement as he is still paying for services through the end of the year and does not want to double pay.

Mayor Karl Oberstar, Jr. stepped off the chair to make a motion.

Motion by Karl Oberstar, Jr., seconded by Councilor Ryan Redepenning to approve Special Meeting dates for budget discussions and Biwabik PD contract negotiations on September 1st, 15th and 29th at 6:00 PM. MCU

Motion by Councilor Paul Skrbec seconded by Councilor Rudy Vertachnik, to recess meeting at 7:25 PM for Closed Session. MCU

Reconvene the Regular City Council meeting at 8:02PM

Roll call taken: All present, including city Attorney Bryan Lindsay, who arrived late.

Mayor Karl Oberstar, Jr., stepped off the chair to make a motion to accept the Interim Clerk/Treasurer Lynn Lorey's counter proposal for City Clerk, effective September 1st, 2026. No second was heard, motion failed.

Motion by Councilor Paul Skrbec, seconded by Councilor Ryan Redepenning to rescind the offer to the Interim Clerk/Treasurer Lynn Lorey for the position of City Clerk. Roll call vote taken.

Mayor Karl Oberstar, Jr. – No.
Councilor Paul Skrbec – Yes.
Councilor Rudy Vertachnik – Yes.
Councilor Bob Pontinen – Yes.
Councilor Ryan Redepenning – Yes.
The motion carries 4 to 1.

Motion by Councilor Paul Skrbec, seconded by Councilor Ryan Redepenning, to have the City Attorney gauge interest with the other candidate to continue vetting. Roll call vote taken.

Mayor Karl Oberstar, Jr. – No.
Councilor Paul Skrbec – Yes.
Councilor Rudy Vertachnik – Yes.
Councilor Bob Pontinen – Yes.

City of Gilbert
Minutes of Regular City Council Meeting
Wednesday, August 25, 2026
Council Chambers

Councilor Ryan Redepenning – Yes.
The motion carries 4 to 1.

Motion by Councilor Paul Skrbec seconded by Councilor Ryan Redepenning, to adjourn the meeting at 8:05PM. MCU

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

ATTEST:

Lynn Lorey, Interim Clerk/Treasurer

Karl Oberstar Jr., Mayor