

**SAUK CENTRE CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 18, 2026**

1. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Sauk Centre City Council met in a Regular Meeting on Wednesday, March 18, 2026 at 6:30 p.m. due notice being given thereof. Present were Mayor Warren Stone, Council Members Joe Fuechtmann, Heidi Leach, Brad Kirckof and Scott Kowski. Also present were City Administrator Vicki Willer, City Planner Sarah Morton, Police Chief Joe Jensen, City Engineer Keith Yapp and Public Works Director Ben Clink. Mayor Stone presided thereat.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A motion was made by Council Member Fuechtmann and was seconded by Council Member Kowski to approve the agenda as presented. A vote being recorded as follows: For: Council Members Fuechtmann, Kowski, Leach, Kirckof and Mayor Stone. Against: None. The motion passed.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

a. A motion was made by Council Member Kirckof and was seconded by Council Member Leach to approve the March 4, 2026 Regular Meeting Minutes as presented. A vote being recorded as follows: For: Council Members Kirckof, Leach, Kowski, Fuechtmann and Mayor Stone. Against: None. The motion passed.

4. PUBLIC OPEN FORUM (Comments Limited to 3 Minutes)

Kevin Thomes, 1021 Pleasant Street, Sauk Centre. Mr. Thomas stated he was present regarding agenda item 7b. This item was discussed at the March 11, 2026 Planning Commission Regular Meeting; however, he was unable to attend that meeting. He stated the following:

- Request the City to allow a 40x60 detached accessory structure where 1,200 square feet is allowed. The Planning Commission denied this request.
- He would now like the city to allow for the construction of a 40x48 detached accessory structure.

See 7b.

5. PUBLIC HEARINGS

6. REPORTS/PRESENTATIONS

a. Police Chief Jensen presented the February 2025 Police Report:

- 772 ICR's
- 5 assaults, where 4 out of the 5 to be charged out as felony assaults
- Leased squad cars have been returned
- New squads are complete and on the road

- Looking to educate the public on golf cart/UTV road rules, regulations and licensing
- b. Public Works Direction Clink updated the Council on the department's monthly activities:
- Hockey season wrapped up on March 1. The ice, boards and glass were removed to prep for dry floor events, with the first being the Fire Department Mini Golf Fundraiser on March 21.
 - Ice resurfacers have been serviced and put in storage for the season.
 - Completed on pass of pothole patching. As weather allows, the department will continue to patch holes as needed.
 - Completed airport hangar door maintenance.
 - Plowing and cleanup through the city/airport after snowstorms.
 - General equipment repairs to plow trucks, etc.
 - Completing building and garage door maintenance at Public Works Building.
 - Replaced broken water heater at campground park shed.
 - Completed testing on the stormwater pond near Industrial Park to obtain the depth of the settlement and the original soil in pond. More planning to take place, with this being slated for a fall/winter 2026 project
 - No parking signs near hospital have arrived and will be installed when frost is out.
 - Portable speed sign place on 10th Street. Data collected the first few days is as follows:
 - 99% of the cars going by were traveling under 30 miles per hour.
 - The few cars that were going faster were going no more than 35 miles per hour.
 - Average of 150 cars per day.
- c. The Planning Commission met on March 11 and discussed the following:
- Wenninger-Thornbloom Variance – See 7a.
 - Thomes Variance – See 7b.
 - In January 2026, 4 permits were issued for a total construction value of \$42,000.00.
 - In February 2026, 4 permits were issued for a total construction value of \$216,000.00.
- d. The Park Board met on March 18 and discussed the following:
- Recommend Council move forward with the Archery Range project – See 7h.
 - Obtaining estimates for transportable security cameras to be used in various city locations.
 - Agreed to extend the public use of the Community Garden for an additional year – See 9a.
 - 2027 Seasonal Camping Rate discussed.
- e. The Airport Board met on March 11 and discussed the following:
- Reviewed progress on Box Hangar project.

- Discussed repairs to hangar doors.
- Set fuel price per gallon.
- Discussed Fly-In Planning.
- Reviewed hangar rentals.
- Submitted grant and admin settlement request to FAA for Land Acquisition.

f. The Operations Committee met on March 12 with the following in attendance:

Committee Member Scott Kowski
 Committee Member Brad Kirckof
 Public Works Supervisor Ben Clink
 Water/Wastewater Supervisor Glenn Bauer
 City Engineer Keith Yapp
 City Administrator Vicki Willer

The committee reviewed each proposed street segment for Phase I of the T.H. 71 project, which is the city side street segments, along with the cost for that section. Each segment was evaluated for connection to the corridor, road, curb and storm, condition and sanitary and water condition. The Committee opted to remove 10th St. S. and 1st St. S. from the project.

A recommendation was made to the City Council to finalize the scope of the project and to take next steps. This is action item 7g.

7. ACTION ITEMS

- a. The Planning Commission, acting as the Board of Adjustment, conducted a public hearing on Wednesday, March 11, 2026 to consider an application for a variance submitted by Tyler D. and Brittany J. Wenninger-Thornbloom.

The property is located at 355 East River Circle and is zoned R-1 Residential.

The request was to allow an addition to an attached garage greater than allowed by Ordinance. The request was allow a 780 sf addition onto an existing 648 sf attached garage, resulting in a total of 1,368 sf, where 1,200 is allowed.



After deliberation, the Planning Commission recommended that the request be granted, with the condition that the existing detached storage building be removed, that all roof

water drainage be directed to the rear of the lot, and that no part of the garage may be used for human habitation.

A motion was made by Council Member Kowski and was seconded by Council Member Kirckof to approve Resolution No. 2026-15, Resolution Approving Request for a Variance for Tyler D. & Brittany J. Wenninger-Thornbloom. A vote being recorded as follows: For: Council Members Kowski, Kirckof, Fuechtmann, Leach and Mayor Stone. Against: None. The motion passed.

- b. The Planning Commission, acting as the Board of Adjustment, conducted a public hearing on Wednesday, March 11, 2026 to consider an application for a variance submitted by Kevin B. Thomes.

The property is located at 1021 Pleasant St. and is zoned R-1 Residential.

The request is to allow the construction of a 40' X 60' (2,400 sf) detached accessory building where 1,200 sf is allowed and for 3,000 cumulative sf where 1,800 sf is allowed when combined with existing attached garage.





After deliberation the Planning Commission recommends that the variance request be denied. The reason for the denial is due to the excessiveness of the request in comparison to other variances granted in the past.

In the past five years, eleven variances were granted to exceed the accessory structure maximum.

The average square footage approved over maximum of 1,200 sf feet for attached structures was 459 sf with one of those exceeding the total allowed of 1,800 sf by 312 sf. The median was 384 sf meaning half were more and half were less.

The average square footage approved over the cumulative maximum of 1,800 square feet was 666 sf with the median at 250 sf meaning half were more and half were less.

This request was for 1,200 sf over the maximum cumulative allowed. Two of the aforementioned variances exceeded this request, but were granted due to the nature of the property located on the edge of the city limits.

See 4a.

A motion was made by Council Member Fuechtmann and was seconded by Council Member Kirckof to send this request back to the Planning Commission to review the revised request. A vote being recorded as follows: For: Council Members Fuechtmann, Kirckof, Leach, Kowski and Mayor Stone. Against: None. The motion passed.

- c. The Final Plat for Authors 2nd Addition has been sent to Stearns County for review and approval.

The plat includes twenty lots and are under the existing Restrictive Covenants as the original Authors Addition.

Once Stearns County approves the plat, final documents will be prepared for signature and recording.

A motion was made by Council Member Leach and was seconded by Council Member Kowski to approve Resolution No. 2026-17. Resolution Approving the Final Plat of Authors 2nd Addition. A vote being recorded as follows: For: Council Members Leach, Kowski, Kirckof and Mayor Stone. Against: None. Abstain: Council Member Fuechtmann. The motion passed.

- d. At the February 4, 2026 City Council meeting, the Council authorized quotes/bids be obtained for crack filling various streets throughout the City.

Packets requesting quotes were sent to contractors known to perform this type of work and was also advertised and posted on the City Website.

Eight bids were opened on March 13, 2026 with the following results:

<u>Crack filling Bidder</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Allied Blacktop	\$92,250.00
Astech Corp.	\$61,810.00
Fahner Asphalt Sealers	\$96,650.00
Flow Seal Surface Maintenance	\$81,910.00
Lot Pros, Inc.	\$62,100.00
MP Asphalt Maintenance	\$34,780.00
Seal Pros	\$60,600.00
Seal Tech, Inc.	\$53,435.00

The low bidder is MP Asphalt Maintenance at \$34,780.00.

A motion was made by Council Member Fuechtmann and was seconded by Council Member Leach to approve Resolution No. 2026-18, A Resolution Accepting Bid and Authorizing Execution of Contract for Crack filling Project. A vote being recorded as follows: For: Council Members Fuechtmann, Leach, Kirckof, Kowski and Mayor Stone. Against: None. The motion passed.

- e. At the February 4, 2026 City Council meeting, the Council authorized quotes/bids be obtained for sealcoating various streets throughout the City.

Packets requesting quotes were sent to contractors known to perform this type of work and was also advertised and posted on the City Website.

Two bids were opened on March 13, 2026 with the following results:

Crack filling Bidder	Amount
Allied Blacktop	\$56,948.10
Astech	\$40,751.81

The low bid is Astech.

A motion was made by Council Member Kirckof and was seconded by Council Member Kowski to approve Resolution No. 2026-19, Resolution Accepting Bid and Authorizing Execution of Contract for Sealcoating Project. A vote being recorded as follows: For: Council Members Kirckof, Kowski, Fuechtmann, Leach and Mayor Stone. Against: None. The motion passed.

- f. At the February 4, 2026 City Council meeting, the Council authorized quotes/bids be obtained for the application of slurry seal to Ash Street.

Packets requesting quotes were sent to contractors known to perform this type of work and was also advertised and posted on the City Website.

One bid was opened on March 13, 2026 with the following results:

Crack filling Bidder	Amount
Astech	\$90,701.29

A motion was made by Council Member Leach and was seconded by Council Member Kowski to approve Resolution No. 2026-20, A Resolution Accepting Bid and Authorizing Execution of Contract for Slurryseal Project. A vote being recorded as follows: For: Council Members Leach, Kowski, Fuechtmann, Kirckof and Mayor Stone. Against: None. The motion passed.

- g. The T.H. 71 project has been split into two sub-projects. Phase I is the city side street connections, storm ponds, and bypass road. Phase II is the portion of the project within the T.H. 71 corridor.

Phase I is proposed to be completed in 2027 and Phase II in 2028.

The Operations Committee met on March 12, 2026, and reviewed the design sheets along with estimates costs for Phase I. Two streets were removed from the project, one block of 10th St. S. and one block of 1st St. S.

Phase I now includes:

- 9 ½ Street
- Cass Street
- 8th St. S (Main to Getty)
- 8th St. S (Ash to East end plus Storm to river)
- 7th St. S. (Main to Getty)
- 6th St. S. (Main to Getty)
- Alley between 6th & 7th

5th St. S. (Main to Pine)
 2nd St. S.(Oak to East end plus storm pond)
 2nd St. N.(Main to Pine and East to storm pond)
 Lake St. (Main west 100' to end of 2020 Project)
 Linden Lane
 Bypass Road

The City Engineer was previously tasked with completing a Feasibility Report for the project.

March 18, 2026	Define Final Scope of Phase I
_____	Receive Feasibility Report and Call Hearing on Imp.
_____	Conduct Public Hearing
_____	Order Improvement
_____	Approve Plans and Authorize Bids
_____	Accept Bids and Award Contract
_____	Call Hearing on Assessment
_____	Adopt Assessment

A motion was made by Council Member Fuechtmann and was seconded by Council Member Leach to approve the modification of Phase 1 of the T.H. 71 Side Street Project, to include listed streets. A vote being recorded as follows: For: Council Members Fuechtmann, Leach, Kowski, Kirckof and Mayor Stone. Against: None. The motion passed.

- h. The Park Board has been working on creating an Archery Range in the City. The Range would be outdoors and open to the public. The proposed location of the range is east of the Public Works shop and would be accessible from the bypass road once constructed.

The range would have benches/tables and targets at various distances. Broadheads would not be allowed. The Stearns County Park's range is shown below.



Public Works Supervisor Clink has met onsite to lay out a probable design. Donations have been offered to cover costs, if approved.

A motion was made by Council Member Kowski and was seconded by Mayor Stone to approve moving forward with the archery range project. A vote being recorded as follows: For: Council Member Kowski, Mayor Stone, Council Members Kirckof, Fuechtmann and Leach. Against: None. The motion passed.

- i. The Planning Commission has been operating with 4 members, where 5 is the normal operating procedure.

The Planning Commission shall consist of five (5) members of which are appointed by the City Council from among the residents of Sauk Centre, one (1) member will be appointed from the City Council and four (4) members shall be residents of the City. The term of Barry Johnson expired December 31, 2025.

The following submitted a nomination:

Christopher Klinkhammer

A motion was made by Council Member Fuechtmann and was seconded by Council Member Kirckof to approve the appointment of Christopher Klinkhammer to the Planning Commission, effective March 19, 2026 and expiring December 31, 2028. A vote being recorded as follows: For: Council Members Fuechtmann, Kirckof, Leach, Kowski and Mayor Stone. Against: None. The motion passed.

- j. The 2026 budget for the Fire Dept. includes funds for painting the interior block walls.

Two quotes were received for the project:

Lakeside Painting – Alexandria	\$14,500.00
Colorful Concepts – Sartell	\$19,400.00

The Department requested the City approve the project and accept the Lakeside Printing quote.

A motion was made by Council Member Kirckof and was seconded by Council Member Leach to approve Resolution No. 2026-21, Resolution Accepting Quote for Fire Hall Interior Painting. A vote being recorded as follows: For: Council Members Kirckof, Leach and Mayor Stone. Against: None. Abstain: Council Members Fuechtmann and Kowski. The motion passed.

8. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- a. The City’s involvement in the T.H. 71 project continues to move forward.

Staff continues to be in touch with MnDot weekly on cost participation updates and will also attend the webinar on MnDot’s new local participation guidelines.

The Design Team meets once per week which gives the City an opportunity to continue to provide input on underground utilities and layout and to flush out inconsistencies. City Engineer Yapp and Administrator Willer are part of this committee.

The Advisory Group meets monthly regarding the overall design and will be soon be recommending streets lights, trees, concrete, planters etc. This committee includes 11 local business owners, staff, council persons, etc.

Section 106 Review will start in the next month, which is the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation. The City is a part of this discussion.

The Sales Tax Bill has been jacketed and is being assigned a number and will go to the Tax Committee which will meet in April.

9. NEW BUSINESS

- a. The Park Board, at their March 18th meeting, discussed the future of the community garden.

The City has provided land, wood chips, water, and labor for the duration of the community garden.

The Park Board recommended the community garden remain for one more year, with the requirement that it is better maintained. The Park Board will review again in early 2027.

10. CONSENT AGENDA

The Council considered the following Consent Agenda Items:

- a. February Checks Paid Claims/Payroll \$505,224.40

A motion was made by Council Member Fuechtmann and was seconded by Council Member Leach to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. A vote being recorded as follows: For: Council Members Fuechtmann, Leach, Kowski, Kirckof and Mayor Stone. Against: None. The motion passed.

11. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

- a. T. H. 71 Open House – March 5, 2026 – Sauk Centre City Hall – 4:30-6:30 p.m.

12. ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Council Member Kirckof and was seconded by Council Member Kowski to adjourn the meeting. A vote being recorded as follows: For: Council Members Kirckof, Kowski, Fuechtmann, Leach and Mayor Stone. Against: None. The motion passed.

With no further business, Mayor Stone adjourned the meeting.

Respectfully submitted:

Mayor Warren Stone

City Administrator Vicki Willer