

**CHISHOLM CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING– FEBRUARY 11, 2026**

Mayor Adam Lantz called the Regular Meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

Present: Councilors Jim Varda, April Fountain, Travis Vake, Jed Holewa, Marty Halverson, and Mayor Adam Lantz

Absent: None

Also Present: Clerk-Treasurer Devin Ceglar, Ambulance Director Tiffany Larson, Police Chief James Vukad, Consultant Engineer Jim Johnson, Building Official Mandy Galli, Public Works Supervisor Larry Folstad, Parks/Trails/Recreation Director Collin Luke, Attorney Bryan Lindsay, Confidential Administrative Assistant Susan Trunk, and Mesabi Community TV.

ADOPT THE AGENDA

Moved by Councilor Vake and supported by Councilor Fountain to adopt the agenda with additions: 1) Updated information for HRA Loan forgiveness 2) Updated Precious Paws Contract.

Voting Aye: Councilors Varda, Fountain, Vake, Holewa, Halverson, and Mayor Lantz

Voting Nay: None

Absent: None

Motion Carried

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no Public Participation.

REPORTS

Councilor Varda reported that he attended his first Police Commission Meeting on the 3rd, there were 5 to 6 people who showed up to talk about ICE. On the 4th he had a Fire Department Meeting, there was anniversaries; Billy Temple with 13 years and Justin Olson with 10 years. There were 15 calls in January, there are two resignations/retirements Billy Temple and Justin Olson. He attended the working session with the school board and Balkan and talked about the brewery, annexation of land. The ribbon cutting for the brewery is scheduled for the 30th of May, with a soft opening on the 29th of May. He also met with the Ambulance Director today for 7 ½ hours.

Councilor Fountain did not have a formal report but wished Councilor Varda a Happy Birthday. She also wished everyone a Happy African American Heritage Month.

Councilor Vake wished Councilor Varda a Happy Birthday. Blue Streak Bingo is tonight at 7:00 pm at Jim's, come support the Blue Streaks.

Councilor Holewa reported that he attended the EDA Meeting last Wednesday and the Working Session on the 4th.

Councilor Halverson reported that he attended the Working Session last week, the Working Session with the School Board and Balkan Township regarding Vaughan-Steffensrud school, and one Red Head Committee meeting.

Mayor Lantz did not have a report.

Ambulance Director Larson did not have a report.

Interim Fire Chief Worlie was absent.

Police Chief Vukad reported that they had their Police Commission Meeting and 5-6 people attended to talk about ICE. It was good to see some public participation at the meeting. The various citizens informed us of their concerns with the current climate in the State and in the Country with ICE operations. He acknowledges that and let the citizens of the community know what the role of the Police Department is with ICE. This is a new thing for law enforcement in Minnesota and Nationwide. The Police's role is purely public safety. They do not have the ability to enforce Federal Immigration Laws, they will not be enforcing Federal Immigration Laws, their role is to enforce Minnesota Statutes and local ordinances. If community members do not feel safe, or have questions, he definitely wants them to call, call 911, they will respond as a mediator/mediation to the issue at hand and to calm things. Being local law enforcement, they have relationships with their community members, they know who we are and how we dress, and he believes it can ease tension if these things arise. Their other role, as they are obligated to do it, is to enforce laws. If people start to get disruptive or breaking the law, then of course they are obligated to address those issues as well. We are all about peaceful protesting and voicing your opinions and first amendment rights, but we also have the obligation to keep things safe and we will do that. He hopes it informs people on the process. There were concerns of what if we see ICE breaking the law, we have an obligation to enforce the law, every situation is different, if actions and arrest are warranted, we will do that.

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There was a resignation from the department, Lieutenant Aaron Musburger has put in his resignation letter. He is moving on to another department in Southern Minnesota for all of the right reasons. We hate to lose him, he was a great asset to the department, and we wish him the best of luck in his future endeavors. City of Chisholm Police is hiring, we are 3 short, which is a common theme throughout the state and nation. Everyone is competing with each other to get people; people are signing on for sign on bonuses and more money. It's been really difficult for agencies to hire people. There is not enough in the applicant pool, and not as good incentives as people would hope. When asked by Mayor Lantz, if ICE were in town, are they required, or should they be enforcing warrants not randomly walking through, Chief Vukad responded that Chisholm Police does not have any bearing on what ICE can and cannot do. They have their own rules and procedures and their federal authority to enforce immigration laws. How they do that is up to them, reasonable suspicion and probable cause, they are doing targeted enforcement. They likely have a list of who they are looking for. They do have the authority to go into a town and enforce the federal law. How they do it is up to them; he has no bearing on it. They are in rural Minnesota. The communication between the agencies has not been the greatest, but is getting better. Mr. Homan has reached out to several agencies within Minnesota mostly in the metro area, but now working its way outward.

Building Official Galli reported that the Planning Commission had their reorganization meeting on Monday, February 2nd. At that meeting they called for a public hearing to hear the conditional use permit for the Moonlyte Brewing Company on Monday, March 2nd at 4:00 pm in the council chambers. It was published today in the Mesabi Daily Tribune and legal notice were sent out to all adjoining property owners.

City Consultant Engineer Johnson did not have a report.

Public Works Supervisor Folstad reported they have had a run of winter water breaks, they had a great winter except if you want to train the two new employees in the water/sewer department then they had 5 breaks in 5 days. We've been working until dark. The public has been amazing. We continue to work on projects and we will be wiping off the streets. We still have limited staff, and a couple customers on temporary water, but they will continue to work on the water breaks, working in alleys, and some intersections. It will be 45 degrees and sunny on Saturday, mother nature is going to help. They are also prepping for Polar Bear Days. The fishing contest will be amazing.

Parks/Trails/Recreation Director Luke reported that the Youth Center Valentines Day party is after school tomorrow from 4:00 to 6:00 pm. With the warm temperatures, the skating warming house and rink will be closed for the weekend. Skating on the ice can cause damage. Councilor Holewa asked about hours for the skating rink warming house. Director Luke has them on the Facebook page and will put them on the website. They are also listed on the door of the warming shack. People can skate when the warming shack is closed, but skate rental is not available when it is closed.

Library Supervisor Christenson was absent.

Attorney Bryan Lindsay did not have a report.

Clerk-Treasurer Ceglár did not have a report.

Administrator Skraba was absent.

APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA

Moved by Councilor Holewa and supported by Councilor Varda to Approve the Consent Agenda including the List of Bills, Communications, payroll, January 21, 2026 working Session Meeting Minutes, January 28, 2026 Regular Meeting Minutes, and Resignations and Retirements.

Voting Aye: Councilors Varda, Fountain, Vake, Holewa, Halverson, and Mayor Lantz

Voting Nay: None

Absent: None

Motion Carried

**RESOLUTION NUMBER 0226-18 APPLICATION TO THE CLEVELAND-CLIFFS
FOUNDATION GRANT**

Moved by Councilor Varda and supported by Councilor Fountain to adopt Resolution Number 0206-18 Application to the Cleveland-Cliffs Foundation Grant in the amount of \$19,714.77 for a Lucas 3, v3.1 Chest Compression System for Chisholm Ambulance.

Voting Aye: Councilors Varda, Fountain, Vake, Holewa, Halverson, and Mayor Lantz

Voting Nay: None

Absent: None

Motion Carried

RAFFLES

Police Chief Vukad provided an update of approved upcoming raffles: May 13, 2026 United Way of Northeastern Minnesota will hold a raffle at Valentini's Supper Club.

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**RESOLUTION NUMBER 0226-19 ACCEPTING FEASIBILITY REPORT AND CALLING
FOR HEARING ON 2026 6TH STREET/4TH AVENUE NE (HERITAGE MANOR AREA)
INFRASTRUCTURE REPLACEMENT PROJECT**

Moved by Councilor Holewa and supported by Councilor Vake to adopt Resolution number 0226-19 Accepting Feasibility Report and Calling for hearing on 2026 6th Street/4th Avenue NE (Heritage Manor Area) Infrastructure Replacement Project.

Voting Aye: Councilors Varda, Fountain, Vake, Holewa, Halverson, and Mayor Lantz

Voting Nay: None

Absent: None

Motion Carried

**RESOLUTION NUMBER 0226-20 ACCEPTING FEASIBILITY REPORT AND CALLING
FOR HEARING ON 2026 1ST AVENUE SW SIDEWALK REPLACEMENT PROJECT**

Moved by Councilor Holewa and supported by Councilor Varda to adopt Resolution Number 0226-20 Accepting Feasibility Report and Calling for Hearing on 2026 1st Avenue SW Sidewalk Replacement Project

Voting Aye: Councilors Varda, Fountain, Vake, Holewa, and Mayor Lantz

Voting Nay: Councilor Halverson

Absent: None

Motion Carried

**RESOLUTION NUMBER 0226-21 PFA LOAN FROM DRINKING WATER REVOLVING
FUND FOR 2025 5TH STREET SOUTHWEST INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENT
PROJECT**

Moved by Councilor Fountain and supported by Councilor Halverson to adopt Resolution Number 0226-21 PFA Loan from Drinking Water Revolving Fund for 2025 5th Street Southwest Infrastructure Improvement Project

Voting Aye: Councilors Varda, Fountain, Vake, Holewa, Halverson, and Mayor Lantz

Voting Nay: None

Absent: None

Motion Carried

COOPERATIVE MAINTENANCE AGREEMENT WITH ST. LOUIS COUNTY

Moved by Councilor Vake and supported by Councilor Varda to approve the Cooperative Maintenance Agreement with St. Louis County.

Voting Aye: Councilors Varda, Fountain, Vake, Holewa, Halverson, and Mayor Lantz

Voting Nay: None

Absent: None

Motion Carried

POST AND HIRE SEASONAL PARKS, TRAILS, AND RECREATION COORDINATOR

Moved by Councilor Varda and supported by Councilor Vake to approve the Posting and Hiring of a Seasonal Parks, Trails, and Recreation Coordinator

Voting Aye: Councilors Varda, Fountain, Vake, Holewa, Halverson, and Mayor Lantz

Voting Nay: None

Absent: None

Motion Carried

POST AND HIRE SEASONAL MAINTENANCE AND GROUNDS WORKERS

Moved by Councilor Varda and supported by Councilor Holewa to approve the Posting and Hiring of up to 20 Seasonal Maintenance and Ground Workers.

Voting Aye: Councilors Varda, Fountain, Vake, Holewa, Halverson, and Mayor Lantz

Voting Nay: None

Absent: None

Motion Carried

**APPROVE THE CHISHOLM SUMMER RECREATION PROGRAM SPECIALIST JOB
DESCRIPTION**

Moved by Councilor Holewa and supported by Councilor Halverson to approve the Chisholm Summer Recreation Program (CSRP) Specialist Job Description.

Voting Aye: Councilors Varda, Fountain, Vake, Holewa, Halverson, and Mayor Lantz

Voting Nay: None

Absent: None

Motion Carried

POST AND HIRE CHISHOLM SUMMER RECREATION PROGRAM SPECIALIST

Moved by Councilor Halverson and supported by Councilor Varda to approve the post and hiring of up to 13 Chisholm Recreation Program Specialist.

Voting Aye: Councilors Varda, Fountain, Vake, Holewa, Halverson, and Mayor Lantz

Voting Nay: None

Absent: None

Motion Carried

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POST AND HIRE FOR SEASONAL CAMPGROUND AND TRAILS COORDINATOR

Moved by Councilor Varda and supported by Councilor Holewa to approve the post and hiring of a Seasonal Campground and Trails Coordinator.

Voting Aye: Councilors Varda, Fountain, Vake, Holewa, Halverson, and Mayor Lantz

Voting Nay: None

Absent: None

Motion Carried

PRECIOUS PAW CONTRACT

Moved by Councilor Fountain and supported by Councilor Holewa to approve the Precious Paws Humane Society of Chisholm Contract.

Voting Aye: Councilors Varda, Fountain, Vake, Holewa, Halverson, and Mayor Lantz

Voting Nay: None

Absent: None

Motion Carried

HRA LOAN FORGIVENESS INFORMATION

Clerk Treasurer Ceglar presented the City Council with a timeline of events for the HRA Loan Forgiveness. This was informational only.

MARTIN MOTORS CAR SHOW

Moved by Councilor Vake and supported by Councilor Holewa to approve the annual Martin Motors Car Show and City-Wide Festival on June 27, 2026.

Voting Aye: Councilors Varda, Fountain, Vake, Holewa, Halverson, and Mayor Lantz

Voting Nay: None

Absent: None

Motion Carried

POLAR BEAR FESTIVAL REQUEST

Moved by Councilor Fountain and supported by Councilor Varda to approve the Polar Bear Festival request.

Voting Aye: Councilors Varda, Fountain, Vake, Holewa, Halverson, and Mayor Lantz

Voting Nay: None

Absent: None

Motion Carried

REQUEST FOR DONATION TO IRON RANGE BARN DANCES

Moved by Councilor Fountain and supported by Councilor Holewa to donate \$100.00 to the Iron Range Barn Dances from the gambling fund.

Voting Aye: Councilors Fountain, Holewa, Halverson, and Mayor Lantz

Voting Nay: Councilors Varda and Vake

Absent: None

Motion Carried

REQUEST FOR DONATION TO THE CHISHOLM SKATING CLUB

Moved by Councilor Vake and supported by Councilor Halverson to donate \$250.00 to the Chisholm Skating Club from the gambling fund.

Voting Aye: Councilors Varda, Fountain, Vake, Holewa, Halverson, and Mayor Lantz

Voting Nay: None

Absent: None

Motion Carried

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION APPOINTMENT

Moved by Councilor Halverson and supported by Councilor Fountain to appoint William Klebs to the Public Utilities commission for a two-year term ending January 31, 2028.

Voting Aye: Councilors Varda, Fountain, Vake, Holewa, Halverson, and Mayor Lantz

Voting Nay: None

Absent: None

Motion Carried

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION APPOINTMENT

Moved by Councilor Halverson and supported by Councilor Varda to appoint Scott Oberstar to the Public Utilities commission for a two-year term ending January 31, 2028.

Voting Aye: Councilors Varda, Fountain, Vake, Holewa, Halverson, and Mayor Lantz

Voting Nay: None

Absent: None

Motion Carried

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LAKE STREET MARKET

Moved by Councilor Varda and supported by Councilor Vake to approve the Lake Street Market events and city-wide festival on June 16th, July 21st, August 18th, and an optional September 15th, 2026.

Voting Aye: Councilors Varda, Fountain, Vake, Holewa, Halverson, and Mayor Lantz

Voting Nay: None

Absent: None

Motion Carried

RECESS TO CLOSED SESSION

Moved by Councilor Varda and supported by Councilor Holewa to recess to a closed session at 6:45 pm in compliance with Statute 13D.03 Subd 1, AFSCME Labor Contract Discussion.

Voting Aye: Councilors Varda, Fountain, Vake, Holewa, Halverson, and Mayor Lantz

Voting Nay: None

Absent: None

Motion Carried

Closed session was called to order at 6:51 PM.

ADJOURN CLOSED SESSION

Moved by Councilor Holewa and supported by Halverson to adjourned the Closed Session at 7:05pm.

Voting Aye: Councilors Varda, Fountain, Vake, Holewa, Halverson, and Mayor Lantz

Voting Nay: None

Absent: None

Motion Carried

The Regular Meeting was Reconvened at 7:05 pm.

AFSCME LABOR AGREEMENT

Moved by Councilor Varda and supported by Holewa to approve the AFSCME Labor Agreement contingent on the approval of the AFSCME Local Union No. 536.

Voting Aye: Councilors Varda, Fountain, Vake, Holewa, Halverson, and Mayor Lantz

Voting Nay: None

Absent: None

Motion Carried

ADJOURN REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING

Moved by Councilor Vake and supported by Fountain to adjourned the regular meeting at 7:06pm.

Voting Aye: Councilors Varda, Fountain, Vake, Holewa, Halverson, and Mayor Lantz

Voting Nay: None

Absent: None

Motion Carried

Attest:

/s/ Adam Lantz, Mayor

/s/ Stephanie Skraba, Administrator