

**REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING  
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY OF ALBERT LEA  
June 8, 2026 – 7:00 P.M.**

**PRESENT:** Mayor Rich Murray, Councilors Rachel Christensen, Larry Baker, Ted Herman, Reid Olson, Keith Van Beek, Brian Anderson, City Manager Ian Rigg, , City Attorney Joel Holstad of Lakes National Law LLP, and City Clerk Daphney Maras.

**ADDITIONAL STAFF PRESENT:** Chief of Police Darren Hanson, Lieutenant, City Planner Megan Boeck, Finance Director Kristi Brutlag

**CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL** - Mayor Murray called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. City Clerk Maras administered roll call.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE** - Mayor Murray asked all in attendance to stand and recite the Pledge of Allegiance.

**CEREMONIAL ITEMS** - None

**PUBLIC FORUM**

Todd Brackett – Inquired about purchasing the City-owned lot adjacent to his property, with the intent to have it split so that he and his neighbor would each acquire a portion.

Kim Hammer of the local Humane Society commented on the ordinance update, related to language that bars cats from running at large.

Brad Kirchner proposed implementing a demerit-based tracking system to address situations in which pet owners repeatedly violate the ordinance.

**CONSENT AND APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

- A. Approve Minutes of the May 26, 2026 Regular Council Meeting
- B. Approve Minutes of the May 26, 2026 Work Session
- C. License & Permits
- D. Resolution Approving Plans and Specifications and Ordering Advertisement – Airport Snow Removal Equipment Building Door – Job 2608

Motion made by Councilor Baker to approve the consent agenda as read, seconded by Councilor Herman. On voice call vote, the following councilors voted in favor of said motion: Christensen, Baker, Herman, Olson, Van Beek, Anderson, and Mayor Murray. Mayor Murray declared the motion passed.

(See Secretary's Original Resolution 26-097  
(Included with these minutes))

**PETITIONS, REQUESTS, AND COMMUNICATIONS** - None

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

**A. Ordinance 26-156 Amending Chapter 8 – Article II. – Animal Control (2<sup>nd</sup> Reading)**

The proposed amendments to the Animal Control ordinance update and modernize the city's approach to responsible pet ownership, public safety, and community expectations. Several sections of the existing ordinance were outdated or no longer aligned with current best practices, enforcement needs, or community concerns. The revisions aim to clarify definitions, strengthen nuisance and safety provisions, and ensure consistent, enforceable standards for both pet owners and animal control staff. Key amendments are outlined in the summary included in the council packet.

At Councilor Baker's request, Police Chief Hanson provided an overview of how the ordinance amendments will support enforcement efforts, with additional clarification offered by City Attorney Holstad. At Councilor Anderson's request, Hanson also described the feeding stations located in the community and the trap-and-neuter program operated by Camp Companion. Councilor Christensen encouraged residents to be good neighbors and responsible animal owners.

Motion made by Councilor Anderson to approve. Seconded by Councilor Herman. On roll call vote, the following councilors voted in favor of said motion: Christensen, Baker, Herman, Anderson, and Mayor Murray. Councilors Olson and Van Beek voted Nay. Mayor Murray declared the motion passed.

(See Secretary's Original Ordinance 26-156  
(Included with these minutes)

**B. Resolution 26-098 Permitting Publication of Ordinance 26-156 Summary - Chapter 8 - Animals Article II. - Animal Control**

Ordinance Summaries may be published if they reasonably inform the public of the effect and intent of the Ordinance. Summaries fulfill all legal requirements as if the entire summarized matter had been published, and also direct the public on how to obtain the complete Ordinance.

Motion made by Councilor Baker to approve. Seconded by Councilor Anderson. On roll call vote, the following councilors voted in favor of said motion: Christensen, Baker, Herman, Olson, Van Beek, Anderson, and Mayor Murray. Mayor Murray declared the motion passed.

(See Secretary's Original Resolution 26-098  
(Included with these minutes)

**NEW BUSINESS**

**A. Resolution 26-099 Approving Final Plat of Battleson Renchin Addition**

The Planning Commission held a public hearing on June 2, 2026 to review Preliminary Plat of Battleson Renchin Addition for compliance with Chapter 38 Subdivisions.

The purpose of the plat is to subdivide a smaller 4-acre parcel (outlot A) to facilitate the eventual sale to Vortex Cold Storage for a future expansion. The property is currently zoned R-1 or single-family residential; however, an application to rezone outlot A from residential to industrial was submitted in conjunction with the plat application.

The Planning Commission recommends approval of the final plat of Battleson Renchin Addition.

Motion made by Councilor Baker to approve. Seconded by Councilor Herman. On roll call vote, the following councilors voted in favor of said motion: Christensen, Baker, Herman, Olson, Van Beek, Anderson, and Mayor Murray. Mayor Murray declared the motion passed.

(See Secretary's Original Resolution 26-099  
(Included with these minutes)

**B. Ordinance 26-157 Amending Zoning and the Landuse Map from Single-Family Residence (R-1) to Industrial District (I-2) for Outlot A of Battleson Renchin Addition (1<sup>st</sup> Reading)**

Jon Battleson and Krissandra Renchin applied to re-zone outlot A of Battleson Renchin Addition from Single Family Residence (R-1) to Industrial District (I-2) in order to accommodate the eventual sale and future expansion with Vortex Cold Storage. The property directly abutting to the south (also owned by Vortex Cold Storage) and the remaining Port Authority No. 3 or the ALEDA Jobs Park is currently zoned Industrial District which eliminates the concern for spot zoning.

The 2040 Comprehensive Land Use Plan identifies this area as residential in nature. However, as the ALEDA Jobs Park has filled over time, the industrial users have continued to grow and expand, while housing in this area has not. Staff believes the market has demonstrated this area is better suited for industrial rather than housing, given its close proximity to other recent and successful industrial users, and as such, the Comprehensive Land Use Plan should be amended to reflect the actual development trends once the re-zoning is approved.

The Planning Commission held a public hearing on June 2, 2026, and after considering the staff report in addition to public testimony, the commission recommends approval based on the following:

1. Rezoning the property will not have an adverse effect on existing and adjacent properties as the area is largely industrial.
2. The use meets the general zoning requirements of the sounding Industrial District.

Motion made by Councilor Christensen to approve. Seconded by Councilor Anderson. On roll call vote, the following councilors voted in favor of said motion: Christensen, Baker, Herman, Olson, Van Beek, Anderson, and Mayor Murray. Mayor Murray declared the motion passed.

(See Secretary's Original Ordinance 26-157

(Included with these minutes)

**C. Resolution 26-100 Approving Conditional Use Permit for Bridge #R1144 Replacement (Songbird Trail)**

The City of Albert Lea in partnership with Freeborn County, applied for a conditional use permit for pedestrian bridge replacement in the F-1 Floodway district. The bridge is situated within the former Union Pacific Railroad Corridor, is part of the overall Songbird Trail development and needs replacement in order to correct safety issues.

The proposed bridge meets the conditions of the F-1 Floodway District by not impacting public waters or wetlands, having property erosion and sediment prevention plans, and by implementing a design that will not change the current flow characteristic of the channel from what exists. In addition, while the bridge itself is within the F-1 Floodway District, most of the staging and construction will take place within the UP Rail Corridor, which is outside of the F-1 Floodway District.

Lastly, the proposed bridge is consistent with the 2030 Comprehensive Plan which designates Songbird Trail as a future trail network.

Planning Commission recommends approval of the Conditional Use permit with conditions that a stormwater pollution prevention plan (SWPPP) be kept on file in part of the CUP approval.

Motion made by Councilor Baker to approve. Seconded by Councilor Herman. On roll call vote, the following councilors voted in favor of said motion: Christensen, Baker, Herman, Olson, Van Beek, Anderson, and Mayor Murray. Mayor Murray declared the motion passed.

(See Secretary's Original Resolution 26-100  
(Included with these minutes))

**D. Resolution 26-101 Approving the State of Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) Cleanup Grant Agreement No. 281697 for the Family Housing Development Project (Tapestry) – Job 2611**

Attached for Council review and approval is a resolution to execute the State of Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) Cleanup Grant Agreement for the Family Housing Development Project (Tapestry). The grant can fund approximately 75 percent of eligible work with a total reimbursement amount not to exceed \$267,487. The project involves excavation and disposal of contaminated soil, backfilling, and grading of onsite clean soil throughout the project area for development of a Family Housing Development Project (Tapestry). Engineering is recommending entering into the agreement.

Motion made by Councilor Baker to approve. Seconded by Councilor Christensen. On roll call vote, the following councilors voted in favor of said motion: Christensen, Baker, Herman, Olson, Van Beek, Anderson, and Mayor Murray. Mayor Murray declared the motion passed.

(See Secretary's Original Resolution 26-101  
(Included with these minutes)

**E. Resolution 26-102 Calling a Public Hearing for Declaring No Public Purpose and Waiving Planning Commission Review (Portion of Morin Park) – Job 2612**

This resolution would call a public hearing for July 13, 2026 at 7:00 p.m. for the purpose of authorizing the sale to the Minnesota Department of Transportation of a small piece of the southwest corner of Morin Park that is currently owned by the City of Albert Lea, but for which a permanent easement has been granted to the Minnesota Department of Transportation for existing sidewalk, Americans with Disabilities Act, and roadway. No additional property, aside from what has already been granted a permanent easement and is currently being used for state highway and sidewalk purposes, would be sold with this transfer.

This sale is in conjunction with sidewalk and ADA improvements that MnDOT will be performing along W. Main Street and S. Broadway Avenue (TH 13 and 65) as part of Job No. 2612.

Motion made by Councilor Baker to approve. Seconded by Councilor Herman. On roll call vote, the following councilors voted in favor of said motion: Christensen, Baker, Herman, Olson, Van Beek, Anderson, and Mayor Murray. Mayor Murray declared the motion passed.

(See Secretary's Original Resolution 26-102  
(Included with these minutes)

**F. Resolution 26-103 Authorizing Execution of MNDNR Myre-Big Island State Park Sewer Collection System Design & Service Cooperative Agreement – Job 2619**

Staff have been working with the DNR since 2017 to get Myre-Big Island State Park connected to the City sewer and abandon their current pond wastewater system. This project was delayed first because of funding, and then because of Indian burial grounds that required rerouting.

The project will involve the DNR constructing a collection system and a lift station at the park and then constructing a forcemain from the state park along the state park road (780<sup>th</sup> Avenue) to a City manhole located near the intersection of East Main Street and 780<sup>th</sup> Avenue.

Highlights include:

- A 25-year sewer cooperative agreement with 5-year renewals thereafter
- City agrees to accept their sewage and charge the rates shown in City fee schedule
- DNR base fee would be based on a 2-inch meter size
- DNR will be charged a consumption fee based on the lift station meter's monthly total.
- They would install a meter that the City meter reader can read electronically when completing the monthly meter readings.

- DNR will pay a one-time sewer connection fee of \$7,000. This is based on a \$1,000 sewer connection fee per building; there are 7 buildings on-site.

The resolution authorizes the Mayor and City Manager to sign the agreement. Engineering is recommending entering into the agreement.

Motion made by Councilor Anderson to approve. Seconded by Councilor Van Beek. On roll call vote, the following councilors voted in favor of said motion: Christensen, Baker, Herman, Olson, Van Beek, Anderson, and Mayor Murray. Mayor Murray declared the motion passed.

(See Secretary's Original Resolution 26-103  
(Included with these minutes))

**G. Resolution 26-104 Authorizing Execution of MNDNR Myre-Big Island State Park Sewer Collection System Joint Powers Agreement – Job 2619**

This item authorizes the Mayor and City Manager to sign a joint powers agreement with the MNDNR regarding one-call locates and emergency response services for the forcemain from the Myre-Big Island State Park to the City sanitary sewer system.

The project involves the DNR building a collection system and a lift station at the park and then constructing a forcemain from the state park along the state park road (780<sup>th</sup> Avenue) to a City manhole located near the intersection of East Main Street and 780<sup>th</sup> Avenue.

Highlights include:

- The City will provide locates on this forcemain for the MNDNR and will bill MNDNR monthly for this service. Rates will be based on the City fee schedule.
- If requested, the City would perform emergency repairs on the DNR system and bill them for those services. This would be for emergencies only and not include routine maintenance.

The resolution authorizes the Mayor and City Manager to sign the agreement. Engineering is recommending entering into the agreement.

Motion made by Councilor Baker to approve. Seconded by Councilor Anderson. On roll call vote, the following councilors voted in favor of said motion: Christensen, Baker, Herman, Olson, Van Beek, Anderson, and Mayor Murray. Mayor Murray declared the motion passed.

(See Secretary's Original Resolution 26-104  
(Included with these minutes))

**H. Resolution 26-105 Determining the Revenues Raised by the City's 0.5% Sales and Use Tax Will Meet or Exceed the Authorized Amount on or Before September 30, 2026, and the Tax Shall Expire on that Date**

The watershed will reach the \$30 million in sales tax received in July or August. This resolution will stop the additional .5% sales tax at the end of September as required by Minnesota sales tax provisions. Any funds received before September 30, 2026, over the \$30,000,000 will be retained by the City and placed in the City's General Fund.

Mayor Murray expressed his frustration that the legislature is preventing cities from making key decisions that would strengthen their communities.

Motion made by Councilor Anderson to approve. Seconded by Councilor Christensen. On roll call vote, the following councilors voted in favor of said motion: Christensen, Baker, Herman, Olson, Van Beek, Anderson, and Mayor Murray. Mayor Murray declared the motion passed.

(See Secretary's Original Resolution 26-105  
(Included with these minutes)

**I. Resolution 26-106 Providing for the Issuance and Sale of \$5,310,000 General Obligation Bonds, Series 2026A**

Per the City Charter, the City of Albert Lea has the authority to issue General Obligation Improvement Bonds to provide financing for public improvement projects undertaken by the City. Staff recommends the sizing of the bond to be \$5,310,000 to finance the bonding costs, assessments, water portion, and the levy-funded portions of the projects as estimated below. The term of the bond is 15 years. The bonds will be sold on July 13, 2026. The project amounts are summarized below. After lengthy discussion during the work session council concurred to change the term of this bond to 10 years.

	Assessments	Water Fund	Levy	Bonding Costs	Total
Job 2517 - Valley Avenue and Marshall Street	\$ 494,515	\$ 625,005	\$ 285,000	\$ 43,985	\$ 1,448,505
Job 2601 - 2026 Neighborhood Project	\$ 760,775	\$ -	\$ 892,204	\$ 51,766	\$ 1,704,745
Job 2602 - 2026 State Aid Street Overlay	\$ 51,671	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,618	\$ 53,289
Job 2603 - St Mary Avenue and 14th Strret	\$ 299,694	\$ 331,761	\$ 420,689	\$ 32,950	\$ 1,085,094
Job 2604 Sorensen Road Watermain Replacement	\$ -	\$ 987,443	\$ -	\$ 30,924	\$ 1,018,367
	\$ 1,606,655	\$ 1,944,209	\$ 1,597,893	\$ 161,243	\$ 5,310,000

Motion made by Councilor Christensen to amend the 15 years as the term of the bond to 10 years as the term of the bond. Seconded by Councilor Anderson to change the term to 10 years. On roll call vote, the following councilors voted in favor of said motion: Christensen, Baker, Herman, Olson, Van Beek, Anderson, and Mayor Murray. Mayor Murray declared the motion passed.

(See Secretary's Original Resolution 26-106  
(Included with these minutes)

**J. Resolution 26-107 Designating 2-Hour Parking on the South Side of College Street from S. Broadway Avenue (TH-65 to Newton Avenue – 2026 Misc. 181**

This resolution would (1) designate the on-street parking along the south side of College Street from South Broadway Avenue (TH-65) to Newton Avenue as two-hour parking from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., and (2) authorize a study of the intersection of E. College Street and Newton Avenue for the evaluation and possible implementation of pedestrian crossing safety improvements. Options proposed for consideration include a Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon (RRFB), additional enhanced markings and/or signage, and curb bumpouts.

The parking change is primarily at the request of Freeborn County to better serve the public utilizing the Courthouse and surrounding businesses. The pedestrian safety improvements are being proposed to address safety concerns for County employees who park in the municipal parking northeast of this intersection and cross here to access the Courthouse. A consultant will be hired to evaluate the intersection and provide alternatives and cost estimates.

Motion made by Councilor Van Beek to approve. Seconded by Councilor Olson. On roll call vote, the following councilors voted in favor of said motion: Christensen, Baker, Herman, Olson, Van Beek, Anderson, and Mayor Murray. Mayor Murray declared the motion passed.

(See Secretary's Original Resolution 26-107  
(Included with these minutes)

**K. Resolution 26-108 Accepting Donations – Friends of the Library**

The Friends of the Albert Lea Public Library raise non-profit funds for programs and equipment not covered by the general library budget. The Friends of the Albert Lea Public Library raise funds through the Fountain Lake Bookstore, two book sales throughout the year, membership fees, and general donations. From January through May 2026, the Friends of the Albert Lea Public Library donated a total of \$1,443.08 to the Albert Lea Public Library. The funds were used for the programs listed on the included sheet. Without the generous donations from the Friends of the Albert Lea Public Library, many of the library's programs would not be possible.

Motion made by Councilor Christensen to approve. Seconded by Councilor Baker. On roll call vote, the following councilors voted in favor of said motion: Christensen, Baker, Herman, Olson, Van Beek, Anderson, and Mayor Murray. Mayor Murray declared the motion passed.

(See Secretary's Original Resolution 26-  
(Included with these minutes)

**L. Resolution 26-109 Acknowledging the Establishment of the Albert Lea Port Authority Levy**

The Port Authority already has the legal authority to establish a levy without Council approval. This is just acknowledging they are setting up the levy and may potentially use the levy in their 2027 budget. The real goal is to establish funding for capital projects such as a new industrial park or warehousing. The amount they can levy is 0.01813% of the total valuation within their district (city boundaries). This is about \$300,000 annually, excluding eligible general obligation

debt payments. A \$250,000 valued residential house with a homestead would pay approximately \$35-40 annually for the full levy amount. Again, this is not expected without a significant project; the council should know the potential impact.

Motion made by Councilor Baker to approve. Seconded by Councilor Anderson. On roll call vote, the following councilors voted in favor of said motion: Christensen, Baker, Herman, Olson, Van Beek, Anderson, and Mayor Murray. Mayor Murray declared the motion passed.

(See Secretary's Original Resolution 26-109  
(Included with these minutes)

#### **M. Resolution 26-110 Approving Amendments to the Port Authority By-Laws**

The Port Authority wants to change its bylaws so that we can continue to have members who are connected to development, such as private utilities, banking, industrial management, and more. Sometimes those in positions of knowledge or interest in economic development do not reside in Albert Lea city limits. This change reflects that, and some of the changes made by the City Council.

Motion made by Councilor Baker to approve. Seconded by Councilor Anderson. On roll call vote, the following councilors voted in favor of said motion: Christensen, Baker, Herman, Olson, Van Beek, Anderson, and Mayor Murray. Mayor Murray declared the motion passed.

(See Secretary's Original Resolution 26-110  
(Included with these minutes)

#### **N. Resolution 26-111 Approving Increase in Building Maintenance Staff Hours of Employment**

The resolution would authorize the City Manager to change the status of one employee from part-time to full-time. There are needs that have to be met, and in one way or another, the city is going to be faced with costs to meet those needs. Changing the status of an existing employee at this time seems a better fit for the needs of certain city properties over the next 18 months. The cost is \$26,700 annually as of 2026 salary and benefits. However, the 2026 total budget impact is nonexistent, given that we are unable to hire a GIS Technician in 2026. The impact is on the departmental budget in 2026 and has a long-term impact starting in 2027.

Motion made by Councilor Herman to approve. Seconded by Councilor Van Beek. On roll call vote, the following councilors voted in favor of said motion: Christensen, Baker, Herman, Olson, Van Beek, Anderson, and Mayor Murray. Mayor Murray declared the motion passed.

(See Secretary's Original Resolution 26-111  
(Included with these minutes)

## **MAYOR AND COUNCIL REPORTS**

First Ward, Councilor Christensen reported:

- Ward Items – Working on one ward item with the Police Dept. regarding speeding on one residential street.
- Committee Update – Senior Center will be meeting on Wednesday and continue to move forward with a revision of plans at their new location. Blue Zones is getting ready for the July 4<sup>th</sup> parade.
- Public Announcements – None

Second Ward, Councilor Baker reported:

- Ward Items – None
- Committee Update – Attended an ALEDA/Port Authority meeting.
- Public Announcements – None

Third Ward, Councilor Herman reported:

- Ward Items – Received several grass complaints.
- Committee Update – None
- Public Announcements – None

Fourth Ward, Councilor Olson reported:

- Ward Items – Passed his ward items to the appropriate departments
- Committee Update – None
- Public Announcements – Attended the Albert Lea Express baseball game at Hayek Field.

Fifth Ward, Councilor Van Beek reported:

- Ward Items – City staff took care of his one ward item
- Committee Update – Will be attending the next Human Rights Committee meeting
- Public Announcements – He is looking forward to the Eddie Cochran festival this weekend.

Sixth Ward, Councilor Anderson reported:

- Ward Items – Ward items are wrapping up
- Committee Update – Relay for Life has wrapped up.
- Public Announcements – Wind Down Wednesday event is coming right up

## **MAYOR REPORT:**

Reported the following and provided details of each:

- On May 27<sup>th</sup>, he met with the Rotary Club out at Wedgewood Cove
- May 28<sup>th</sup>, attended the Thornecrest Car Show event
- May 30<sup>th</sup>, attended the boys and girls Track and Field event. Congratulated all the State qualifiers.
- ALEDA board meeting on June 3<sup>rd</sup>. Projects are moving to fruition
- Met with a Patriots group
- ALEDA updates from Director Philip Johnson
- Attended a Kiwanis 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary club meeting

- Met with Design Ready Controls and learned of their successful business growth
- Relay for Life. Congratulated Counselor Anderson on the fine job he did organizing that event
- On Saturday, he attended the Take A Kid Fishing event

Mentioned the upcoming events and said they are also listed on the City’s website.

**CITY MANAGER REPORT**

- Will be participating Wind Down Wednesday volunteering in the Dunk Tank
- Spoke regarding June Pride Month and the LGBTQ community

**APPROVAL OF CLAIMS**

**A. Resolution 26-112 Approving Claims**

- (1) Presentation of Claims Over \$25,000

The attached resolution directs the Mayor and City Treasurer to issue the payment of claims as presented in the Detail of Claims report. In addition, Maras displayed a list of claims over \$25,000 for the public’s viewing, transparency, and education.

Motion made by Councilor Anderson to approve as read, seconded by Councilor Baker. roll call vote, the following councilors voted in favor of said motion: Christensen, Baker, Herman, Olson, Van Beek, Anderson, and Mayor Murray. Mayor Murray declared the motion passed.

(See Secretary's Original Resolution 26-112  
(Included with these minutes)

Councilor motioned Christensen for adjournment; Councilor seconded Van Beek. That there being no further business, the Council meeting adjourns until the next regular meeting of the Albert Lea City Council at 7:00 p.m. on Monday, June 8, 2026. On a voice call vote, all councilors voted in favor of said motion.

Mayor Murray declared the motion passed, and the meeting adjourned.

**ADJOURNMENT: 8:09 PM**

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Mayor Rich Murray

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Daphney Maras  
Secretary of the Council