REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY OF ALBERT LEA
July 13, 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: Deputy Chief of Police Darin Palmer and Community Development Director Megan Boeck

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

Nancy Carlson described ongoing parking challenges on Janson Street that have led to delayed garbage collection and mail delivery. She also noted the difficulty of navigating the street in her vehicle, particularly during winter months when the already crowded roadway becomes even more challenging to maneuver.

John Caucutt spoke of his opposition to the permit fee for a Pollinator Garden.

CONSENT AND APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A. Approve Minutes of the June 22, 2026 Regular Council Meeting
B. Approve Minutes of the June 22, 2026 Work Session
C. License & Permits
D. Resolution Accepting Wastewater Treatment Plant E-Bike Business Grant (2026 Misc. 58)
E. Resolution Approving Lawful Gambling Permit - AL Amateur Hockey Association

Motion made by Councilor Baker to approve the consent agenda as read, seconded by Councilor Anderson. 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 26-118 and 26-119
(Included with these minutes)

PETITIONS, REQUESTS, AND COMMUNICATIONS - None

UNFINISHED BUSINESS - None

NEW BUSINESS

A. **Public Hearing and Resolution 26-120 Declaring No Public Interest in Real Property (Portion of Morin Park) – Job 2612**

City Manager Rigg explained that the City does not currently, nor does it intend to use the City-owned portion at 222 St. Mary Avenue (Morin Park) for any public purpose other than MnDOT right-of-way. This resolution would authorize the sale of the sidewalk along West Main Street from St Mary Avenue to Euclid Avenue of Morin Park to the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT). This area is already subject to a permanent easement granted to MnDOT for the existing sidewalk, ADA-compliant facilities, and roadway purposes.

The proposed sale would transfer only the land currently covered by the permanent easement and already being used for state highway and sidewalk infrastructure. No additional park property beyond the existing easement area would be included.

This action supports MnDOT's planned sidewalk and ADA improvements along W. Main Street and S. Broadway Avenue (TH 13 and TH 65) as part of Job No. 2612. Staff recommends 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 26-120
(Included with these minutes)

B. **Public Hearing and Resolution 26-121 Related to Broadway Ridge Grant Project SWASH 232, LLC at 232 S. Washington Avenue in Albert Lea, MN – PID 34.001.2730**

SWASH 232 LLC at 232 S. Washington has submitted a Broadway Ridge Renewal Grant for reimbursement up to 50% of costs associated with new windows, garage doors, and tuckpointing. The total improvement was $106,453.58, which will provide a matching grant of $50,000.00. All improvements have been completed and reviewed by the City's Zoning and Building Official for compliance with application requirements. Staff recommends approval of the attached resolution.

Mayor Murray opened the public hearing. He called three times. No one spoke. He closed the public hearing.

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

(See Secretary's Original Resolution 26-121
(Included with these minutes)

C. **Resolution 26-122 Providing for the Sale of $4,902,000 General Obligation Bonds Series 2026A**

Per the City Charter, the City of Albert Lea has the authority to issue General Obligation Improvement Bonds. Staff recommends the sizing of the bond to be $4,902,000 to finance the bonding costs, assessments, water portion, and the levy-funded portions of the projects as summarized below. The term of the bond is 10 years. Schane Rudlang from Ehlers & Associates was in attendance and reviewed the bond sale and responded to council's questions.

Motion made by Councilor Christensen 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 26-122
(Included with these minutes)

D. **Resolution 26-123 Authorizing Execution of DNR Grant for a Portion of Songbird Trail in Cooperation with Freeborn County – Job 2411**

This spring, the City of Albert Lea applied for and was awarded a $250,000 MNDNR Local Trail grant. This grant pays towards the project acknowledged by the City Council on June 22nd and awarded by the County Board on July 7th. The DNR has prepared this grant (Project Number: C009-25-4D). The resolution authorizes the Mayor and City Manager to sign the agreement.

The first portions proposed to be constructed are from Fountain Street to Highway 13, a portion from Sunset Street to County Road 74, and four bridges. 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 26-123
(Included with these minutes)

E. **Resolution on Designating "No Parking" on North Side of Janson Street – 2026 Misc. 221 (this item has been moved to the July 27, 2026 council meeting agenda.**

Janson Street just west of 1st Ave. S. is a narrow street and currently has parking on both sides. Home Solutions has changed the configuration of its facilities and no longer has parking on site. This has forced more vehicles to park on the street. With employees from Home Solutions and residents from A-Lea Apartments now parking on both sides of the street, this has created a hazard. With parking on both sides of the street, only one vehicle can fit down the roadway. This will not work for emergency vehicles during an event. This also has been an issue for plowing snow in the winter, as far as it getting even narrower, because the cars can't get close to the curb due to the snow.

The proposed no parking will be along the north side of Janson Street from 1st Avenue going west approximately 270 feet to the property line of 1002 Janson Street E.

After extensive discussion during the work session that took place before this council meeting, council chose to move this item to the next scheduled council meeting to allow for public input.

F. **Resolution 26-124 Approving Conditional Use Permit for Building Addition and Remodel at 906 Front Street West**

Kwik Trip Inc applied for a conditional use permit for a 1,911 sq. ft. building addition and remodel of the existing retail/convenience store that will allow for expansion of existing services, including fueling systems, food preparation and service areas, and restrooms. The B-1 Neighborhood Business District states that all uses shall be permitted by a conditional use permit, and all elements of the site development shall be controlled within the conditional use permit.

The Planning Commission held a public hearing on Tuesday, June 9, 2026 and made the following findings:

1) The application is consistent with the 2040 Comprehensive Plan, which designates the property as commercial, including both large- and moderate-scale, local-serving commercial uses that are typically applied to areas with higher levels of accessibility and visibility from adjoining roadways.
2) The proposed project meets the conditions of the B-1 Neighborhood Business District related to building design, site layout, parking, and paving.
3) The proposed project is compatible with the surrounding uses and will not negatively impact the public health, safety, and welfare of the surrounding area.

Planning Commission recommends approval of the Conditional Use permit with the following conditions:

A property boundary survey and minor subdivision combining all three lots into one shall be completed before final inspection or a certificate of occupancy is issued.

1) A property boundary survey and minor subdivision combining all three lots into one shall be completed before final inspection or a certificate of occupancy is issued.
2) A landscape plan providing three-dimensional landscaping to the north and west sides of the property shall be submitted before a building permit may be issued.
3) Ground and/or rooftop equipment shall be screened.
4) Trash enclosures are to be constructed with like building materials

Motion made by Councilor Christensen to approve the CUP to include all conditions as set forth in the resolution. 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 26-124
(Included with these minutes)

G. **Resolution 26-125 Accepting Donations as Presented to the City of Albert Lea**

The City of Albert Lea is generally authorized to accept donations pursuant to Minnesota Statutes Section 465.03 for the benefit of its citizens. Staff recommends acceptance of the following donations as submitted for Council review and approval.

- Statewide Health Improvement Partnership – Youth Small & Medium Bike Helmets at $2,018.23

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 26-125
(Included with these minutes)

MAYOR AND COUNCIL REPORTS

First Ward, Councilor Christensen reported:

- Ward Items – None
- Committee Update – None
- Public Announcements – Mentioned the local activities and events she visited and/or participated in.

Second Ward, Councilor Baker reported:

- Ward Items – Presented one ward item to the City Manager
- Committee Update – None

Third Ward, Councilor Herman reported:

- Ward Items – Received complaints from residents and relayed them to the City Manager to direct as necessary.
- Committee Update – None
- Public Announcements – Mentioned the local activities and events he visited and/or participated in.

Fourth Ward, Councilor Olson reported:

- Ward Items – Had questions as to why the fountains are running 24/7
- Committee Update – None

Fifth Ward, Councilor Van Beek reported:

- Ward Items – Chief Hanson dealt with the one ward item
- Committee Update – None
- Public Announcements – Mentioned the local activities and events he visited and/or participated in.

Sixth Ward, Councilor Anderson reported:

- Ward Items – None
- Committee Update – None

- Public Announcements – Mentioned the local activities and events he visited and/or participated in.

MAYOR REPORT:
Provided an update on the many community events he attended or stopped in to visit.

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

CITY MANAGER REPORT
Participated in the interview process for the new Assistant Executive Director position. He highlighted several upcoming meetings with community partners. He extended appreciation to staff for supporting safe and well-coordinated July 4th activities, and recognized the Parks and Recreation staff for their ongoing dedication to keeping programs running while operating short-staffed.

He then presented a PowerPoint overview of the Strategic Plan, outlining the Vision and Mission statements, the five primary goals, and the planned next steps.

APPROVAL OF CLAIMS
A. Resolution 26-126 Approving Claims

(1) Presentation of Claims Over $25,000

The attached resolution directs the Mayor and City Treasurer to issue 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 Baker to approve as read, 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 26-126
(Included with these minutes)

CLOSED SESSION
A. Selling or Purchasing Property – 13D.05 subd. 3 (C)(3)

Councilor Baker motioned to move into closed session at 8:00 p.m.; Councilor Anderson seconded. On a voice call vote, all councilors voted in favor of said motion. Mayor Murray declared the motion passed

Councilor Anderson motioned at 9:03 p.m. to move out of closed session; Councilor Olson seconded. On a voice call vote, all councilors voted in favor of said motion. Mayor Murray declared the motion passed.

Mayor Murray provided direction to staff on proceeding with the proposed sale and/or purchase of property.

Councilor Christensen motioned for adjournment; Councilor Herman seconded. 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, July 27, 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: 9:04 PM

Mayor Rich Murray

Daphney Maras
Secretary of the Council