

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
OAKDALE CITY COUNCIL
January 27, 2026

CALL TO ORDER

A regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Oakdale was held on January 27, 2026 at Oakdale City Hall, 1584 Hadley Avenue North, Oakdale, Minnesota. The meeting was called to order by Mayor Kevin Zabel at 7:00 PM.

ROLL CALL

On a call of roll, the following were present:

Mayor Kevin Zabel

Council Members: Kari Moore
Andy Morcombs
Gary Severson
Katie Wrich

Staff Present:

Christina Volkers, City Administrator
Sara Ludwig, City Clerk
Jim Thomson, City Attorney
Brian Bachmeier, Consulting City Engineer
Joe Carpentier, Assistant Fire Chief
Hannah Dunn, Community Development Specialist
Jake Foster, Assistant City Administrator
Andy Gitzlaff, Community Development Director
Luke McClanahan, City Planner
Nick Newton, Police Chief
Lori Pulkabek, Communications Manager
Ivan Stepanov, Finance Director
Ryan Stuart, Police Captain
Cory Tietz, Public Works Director

Others Present: David Olson, Low Voltage Integrators, Inc.
Alan Stroschein, Oakdale Resident
Brad Swanson, Project Manager, SEH
Don Theisen, Owner's Representative
Patrick Thibaudeau, Oakdale Resident

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

OATH OF OFFICE

- a) Swearing in – Daniel Adam Concha as Firefighter/Paramedic
- b) Swearing in – Liz Belisle as Firefighter/Paramedic
- c) Swearing in – Onnay Pomeroy as Police Officer
- d) Swearing in – Kevin Richardson as Police Officer

Mayor Zabel noted that all four individuals being sworn in tonight have successfully completed their probationary period. Mayor Zabel administered the Oath of Office to Firefighter/Paramedic Concha, Firefighter/Paramedic Belisle, Officer Pomeroy, and Officer Richardson.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER MORCOMB, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER SEVERSON TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AS AMENDED FOR THE MEETING OF JANUARY 27, 2026.

5 AYES

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES: Workshop, January 13, 2026
Regular Meeting, January 13, 2026

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER MOORE, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER WRICH TO APPROVE THE WORKSHOP MEETING MINUTES OF JANUARY 13, 2026.

5 AYES

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER MORCOMB, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER WRICH TO APPROVE THE REGULAR MEETING MINUTES OF JANUARY 13, 2026.

5 AYES

PUBLIC HEARINGS

a) Improvement and Assessment Hearings for City Project R2026-01 (2026 Street Reconstruction)

Consulting City Engineer Brian Bachmeier explained that there will be two public hearings. The first is the public improvement hearing to discuss the why, what, and when of the project. The second is the public assessment hearing to describe project financing.

Mayor Zabel provided information and ground rules for the public hearings.

City Attorney Jim Thomson explained the public improvement and assessment hearing processes. He noted that anyone who would like to appeal the special assessment must submit a written assessment appeal form to the City Clerk before the end of the public assessment hearing. Attorney Thomson added that anyone wanting to appeal the assessment once it is passed by Council must file an appeal in court within 30 days of that decision.

Mr. Bachmeier laid out the objectives of the improvements which include increased safety, the containment of maintenance expenditures, and elimination of unreasonable load limits. Mr. Bachmeier went on to review several graphics highlighting the road conditions, street improvement history, and current load limits.

SEH (Short Elliott Hendrickson, Inc) Project Manager Brad Swanson presented various photos of the condition of the streets that will be part of the 2026 Street Reconstruction project. He then went through a detailed list of the proposed improvements for all the streets affected by this project. Mr. Swanson also explained the detailed construction process, and reviewed site maps for the designated street improvements.

Mayor Zabel opened the public improvement hearing and welcomed comments from the audience. No comments were heard. Mayor Zabel closed the public improvement hearing.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER MOORE, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER WRICH TO WAIVE READING AND ADOPT RESOLUTION 2026-08, ORDERING CITY PROJECT R2026-01 (2026 STREET RECONSTRUCTION).

5 AYES

Mr. Bachmeier explained the different assessment rates used by the City and how the entirety of the project is being financed. He went over how special assessments are like a 10-year loan with the ability to prepay without interest before October 15, 2026. If payments are not made by October 15, 2026, the assessment is added to property taxes starting in May 2027. Mr. Bachmeier indicated that financial hardship deferrals are available through a process within the Finance Department.

In response to Mayor Zabel's question about a deadline to complete the hardship deferral application, City staff stated they will look into it and follow up.

Mayor Zabel opened the public assessment hearing and welcomed comments from the audience.

Alan Stroschein, 19 Greenway Ave N, noted that due to the Gold Line BRT project, much of the infrastructure work has already been completed. He requested an adjustment to his assessment given the completion of these improvements.

David Olson, on behalf of Low Voltage Integrators, Inc., 6592 Hudson Blvd N, echoed Mr. Stroschein's sentiment related to the assessment adjustment.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER MORCOMB, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER SEVERSON TO WAIVE READING AND ADOPT RESOLUTION 2026-09, ADOPTING THE ASSESSMENT ROLL FOR CITY PROJECT R2026-01 (2026 STREET RECONSTRUCTION) IN THE AMOUNT OF \$910,315.00.

5 AYES

OPEN FORUM

a) Proclamation: Commitment to Volunteerism in the City of Oakdale

Mayor Zabel proclaimed that the City of Oakdale commits to promoting volunteerism, leveraging JustServe.org to make it easier for residents to find and engage in volunteer opportunities, and will regularly acknowledge and celebrate the contributions of volunteers.

Mayor Zabel invited comments from the audience.

Patrick Thibaudeau, 6293 25th St N, thanked the Council for adopting the Commitment to Volunteerism proclamation and expressed appreciation for the opportunity to partner with the City.

CONSENSUS MOTIONS

a) Request per City of Oakdale Code of Ordinances, Chapter 2, Article IV, Sec.2-36 (c) and per City Personnel Policy PE-031, Section 5.0, that the City Council appoint Dallas Dosch as a part-time

temporary Customer Service Specialist effective on or after January 28, 2026, at a rate of pay consistent with the City base pay schedule, conditioned on passing all background requirements.

- b) Request per City of Oakdale Code of Ordinances, Chapter 2, Article IV, Sec.2-36 (c) and per City Personnel Policy PE-031, Section 5.0, that the City Council appoint Donovan Barr as full-time probationary Police Officer effective on or after January 28, 2026, at a rate of pay consistent with the City base pay schedule conditioned on passing all background requirements.
- c) ~~Request that the City Council waive reading and adopt Ordinance No. 959, Amending the Code of Ordinances for the City of Oakdale, Chapter 25 Relating to Allowed Uses in the R-2 and B-2 Zoning Districts, Criteria for Electronic Signage and Accessory Structures, Exterior Design Standards for the B-2 Zoning District, and a Correction to the Application Review Procedures.~~

~~Request that the City Council waive reading and adopt Resolution 2026-10, Authorizing Publication of Ordinance No. 959 by Title and Summary. (Motion requires a 4/5 majority vote).~~

- c) Request that the City Council approve the Pay Equity Implementation Report and Compliance Report, authorize the Mayor to sign the Report, and authorize staff to submit to the State of Minnesota.
- d) Request that the City Council authorize the Mayor and City Administrator to sign and execute the Assignment and Third Amendment of Ground Lease Agreement between Oak Marsh LLC, Oak Marsh Holdings LLC, and the City of Oakdale.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER MOORE, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER MORCOMB TO APPROVE CONSENSUS MOTIONS A-D, AS PRESENTED.

5 AYES

ADVISORY BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

Environmental Management Commission (no meeting, Council Liaison Zabel)

Planning Commission (no meeting, Council Liaison Severson)

Parks and Recreation Commission (no meeting, Council Liaison Morcomb)

Tree Board (met on 1/20/26, Council Liaison Moore)

Council Member Moore reported that the Tree Board reviewed their 2026 Work Plan, and elected a new Chair and Vice Chair for 2026.

AWARD OF BIDS

None

STAFF REPORTS

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

- a) Site Plan Amendment – Police Expansion and City Hall Remodel

City Planner Luke McClanahan explained that the project includes expanding the existing 17,000-square-foot Police Department and City Hall building by approximately 27,000 square feet, for a total of about 44,000 square feet, requiring a formal site plan amendment. Mr. McClanahan then went over the expanded building footprint, proposed building accesses, and parking for the site. Staff determined that the project meets zoning standards for building height, materials, lighting, landscaping, stormwater management, and tree replacement, with careful attention to minimizing impacts on neighboring properties. Mr. McClanahan noted that two public open houses were held to solicit public feedback. The Planning Commission recommended approval at their January 8, 2026 meeting, and staff also supports approval subject to four conditions included in the attached resolution.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER SEVERSON, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER MOORE TO WAIVE READING AND ADOPT RESOLUTION 2026-07, APPROVING A SITE PLAN AMENDMENT FOR 1584 HADLEY AVENUE NORTH, WITH CONDITIONS INCLUDED IN THE ATTACHED RESOLUTION.

5 AYES

b) Approval of Contract for Final Design and Construction Administration Services for City Projects P2026-01 (Tanners Lake Park), P2026-02 (Tower Park), and P2026-05 (Golfview Park)

Community Development Director Andy Gitzlaff explained that the project includes 2026 park improvements at Tanners Lake Park, Tower Park, and Golfview Park, which stem from the recently completed Park System Plan outlining priorities for the next 20 years. He went over the planned park improvements for each and staff's intent to hire a single consultant for all three projects. Additional public engagement will be conducted prior to the creation and approval of final design and plans by the City Council. Mr. Gitzlaff noted that pending grant funding could offset costs and may require future contract amendments that could affect project timing. Tower Park and Golfview Park are expected to be completed in 2026, while Tanners Lake Park would extend into 2027. Mr. Gitzlaff concluded, following a competitive selection process, staff recommends LHB, Inc. as the design consultant due to qualifications, experience, and cost competitiveness, with a proposed cost of \$274,000, well within the project design budget.

Public Works Director Cory Tietz explained that the City is shifting how park improvement projects are planned and delivered, moving to a more structured, engagement-driven process guided by the recently adopted Park System Plan. In response to Council feedback, the selected consultant has proposed robust public involvement in a variety of forms.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER MORCOMB, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER MOORE TO AUTHORIZE THE MAYOR AND CITY ADMINISTRATOR TO ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT FOR FINAL DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION ADMINISTRATION SERVICES BETWEEN THE CITY OF OAKDALE AND LHB, INC. FOR AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$274,000 FOR CITY PROJECTS P2026-01 (TANNERS LAKE PARK), P2026-02 (TOWER PARK), AND P2026-05 (GOLFVIEW PARK).

Council Member Morcomb expressed his excitement about how far the City has come restoring and improving its parks. He thanked all those that helped develop the Parks System Plan and brought the City to this point. Council Member Moore echoed the sentiment.

4 AYES

1 NAY - ZABEL

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER MORCOMB, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER WRICH TO AUTHORIZE THE CITY ADMINISTRATOR TO APPROVE AMENDMENTS, SUCH AS TERM EXTENSIONS, TO THE CONTRACT WITH LHB, INC. FOR CITY PROJECTS P2026-01 (TANNERS LAKE PARK), P2026-02 (TOWER PARK), AND P2026-05 (GOLFVIEW PARK), PROVIDED THAT THEY DO NOT EXCEED THE CONTRACT DOLLAR AMOUNT.

In response to Mayor Zabel's question, City Administrator Chris Volkers confirmed that she will remain the authorized representative for the City to sign contracts.

5 AYES

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER MORCOMB, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER MOORE TO AUTHORIZE THE CITY ADMINISTRATOR TO APPROVE INDIVIDUAL CHANGE ORDERS AND PURCHASE ORDERS UP TO \$100,000 FOR CITY PROJECTS P2026-01 (TANNERS LAKE PARK), P2026-02 (TOWER PARK), AND P2026-05 (GOLFVIEW PARK), PROVIDED THAT THEY ARE WITHIN THE APPROVED CIP BUDGET.

5 AYES

c) Amendments to the Zoning Ordinance

Mr. McClanahan explained that following the adoption of a comprehensive update to the City of Oakdale's Zoning Ordinance on July 8, 2025, several corrections and additional updates to the ordinance are needed. The amendments include removing townhomes and courtyard cottages as allowed uses in the R-2 zoning district, allowing light manufacturing as a principal use in the B-2 zoning district, adding specific review criteria for electronic signage in non-residential zoning districts, correcting a reference in the zoning map amendment section, adding specific setback requirements for accessory structures, requiring certain exterior design standards for structures in the B-2 zoning district, and including specific review criteria for oversized accessory structures / secondary garages. Mr. McClanahan noted that the Planning Commission held a public hearing and recommended approval at their January 8, 2026 meeting, and staff also supports approval of the proposed updates.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER SEVERSON, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER MOORE TO WAIVE READING AND ADOPT ORDINANCE NO. 959, AMENDING THE CODE OF ORDINANCES FOR THE CITY OF OAKDALE, CHAPTER 25 RELATING TO ALLOWED USES IN THE R-2 AND B-2 ZONING DISTRICTS, CRITERIA FOR ELECTRONIC SIGNAGE AND ACCESSORY STRUCTURES, EXTERIOR DESIGN STANDARDS FOR THE B-2 ZONING DISTRICT, AND A CORRECTION TO THE APPLICATION REVIEW PROCEDURES.

Mayor Zabel proposed an amendment to strike out the language in Section 25-09-201(d)(3)(G), relating to the requirement of a paved driveway to access a private garage, noting that this requirement could create practical challenges and discourage property owners from making improvements.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY MAYOR ZABEL, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER MORCOMB TO AMEND ORDINANCE NO. 959, TO STRIKE OUT SECTION 25-09-201(D)(3)(G) FROM THE PROPOSED LANGUAGE, AND RE-LETTERING CURRENT (H) TO (G).

Council Member Morcomb clarified that removing the driveway requirement would not eliminate oversight, as applications for oversized accessory buildings would still be reviewed by the Planning Commission and City Council and require a public hearing.

5 AYES

Mayor Zabel brought back to the forefront the original motion to adopt Ordinance No. 959 noting that it has been amended, but that there has already been a motion and a second. He asked if there are any other amendments or final comments. No amendments or comments were raised. He then asked for a vote.

5 AYES

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER SEVERSON, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER WRICH TO WAIVE READING AND ADOPT RESOLUTION 2026-10, AUTHORIZING PUBLICATION OF ORDINANCE NO. 959 BY TITLE AND SUMMARY.

5 AYES

CITY ATTORNEY

No report.

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

a) Approval of Pre-Qualified Subcontractors for the Police Expansion and City Hall Remodel Bid Package 1 and Authorization to Proceed to Bid for Bid Package 1

Owner's Representative Don Theisen provided an update on the Police Expansion and City Hall Remodel, noting that over the past year, the design team has worked closely with City leadership and the Council, and the project is now ready to begin the bidding phase using a Construction Manager at Risk delivery method, with Kraus-Anderson serving in that role. Mr. Theisen reported that the prequalification process for the first bid package has been completed, and staff recommends approving 52 contractors across seven work scopes and authorizing a solicitation for bids for that package. An additional bid package will follow for remaining project work, with final approvals occurring later this spring. With Council approval, the project is expected to break ground in early June.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER MORCOMB, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER SEVERSON TO APPROVE THE POLICE EXPANSION AND CITY HALL REMODEL PROJECT PRE-QUALIFIED SUBCONTRACTOR LIST FOR BID PACKAGE 1 PER THE LETTER FROM KRAUS-ANDERSON DATED JANUARY 21, 2026 AND AUTHORIZE KRAUS-ANDERSON TO SOLICIT BIDS FOR BID PACKAGE 1.

5 AYES

COUNCIL PRESENTATIONS

Council Member Morcomb expressed enthusiasm for the City's commitment to volunteerism and emphasized that the program is open to everyone in the community. Council Member Severson echoed the sentiment.

Council Member Wrich shared that she recently spent time with the Fire Department and was extremely impressed by the work they do behind the scenes for the community.

Council Member Moore stated that things are going well in the community and she is glad to be a part of it.

Mayor Zabel made announcements about the following:

- Outdoor ice rinks and warming houses at Eastside and Walton Parks have reopened for regular hours as of Sunday, January 25th. Please check the City website, www.oakdalemn.gov, for the latest updates.
- Public Works is still disposing of natural Christmas trees for residents through January 30th. The disposal cost is just \$3 per tree. Drop off hours are Monday through Friday from 7 AM to 3:30 PM at 1900 Hadley Avenue N.
- Rentals for Oakdale picnic shelters for the 2026 season, which runs April through October, can be made online through the City website. Reservations are first-come, first-served, and Oakdale residents receive a discounted rate. See www.oakdalemn.gov for shelter locations, sizes, and availability.
- A reminder that Oakdale City Hall offers free disposal of unused and expired household medications for Washington County residents. Two drop boxes are located on the first floor near the Police Department and are available Monday through Friday from 8 AM to 4:30 PM.

CLAIMS

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER SEVERSON, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER MOORE TO APPROVE CLAIMS FOR THE PERIOD JANUARY 14, 2026, 2025 TO JANUARY 27, 2026 IN THE AMOUNT OF \$3,188,366.02.

5 AYES

ADJOURNMENT

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER MOORE, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER MORCOMB TO ADJOURN THE REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING OF JANUARY 27, 2026, AT 8:27 PM.

5 AYES

Respectfully submitted,

Sara Ludwig, City Clerk