

**- MINUTES -
CHASKA CITY COUNCIL
JANUARY 5, 2026**

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Hubbard at 7 p.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Roll Call

Roll call was taken. Present: Mayor Hubbard and Councilmembers Grau, Benesh, and Hatfield.

Absent: Councilmember Sheveland.

Also Present: Matt Podhradsky, City Administrator; Elise Durbin, Assistant City Administrator; Marshall Grange, Parks and Recreation Director; Krista Mark, Communications Coordinator; and Christophe Morschen, City Attorney.

4. Adopt the Agenda

Motion by Councilmember Hatfield, second by Councilmember Grau, to adopt the agenda as presented. Motion carried.

5. Visitor Presentation

5.A. David Rieke –Discuss Mt. Pleasant Cemetery

David Rieke of 1022 Morris Drive said he and his wife have lived in Chaska for two years now, he is a Vietnam veteran, and they moved from a farm where they had lived for 53 years. He noted that over the years, he has worked with three different cemeteries, two church-affiliated and one township cemetery, and all three had the same problem, which is long-term care. He said certain things in Mt. Pleasant need attention, such as gravestones, trees, and other issues. He noted that if there was interest in restoration, he and his wife wanted to make a proposal to pledge \$5,000 in a matching grant through funding, not City dollars. He said he would also be willing to serve on a fundraising or information board for the Mt. Pleasant project. Mr. Rieke showed pictures of some of the issues at Mr. Pleasant Cemetery for the Council to review.

Councilmember Hatfield said she would be curious to know who takes care of cemetery restorations. She told Mr. Rieke she appreciated him bringing this to the Council's attention, as cemeteries are often overlooked by residents.

Mr. Rieke noted that a few years ago, when he was Chairman of one of the church cemeteries, they hired a company called Gravestone Restoration, which raises all the gravestones and cleans them. He said the Mt. Pleasant project will need a lot of fundraising because a lot of trees need to be removed, and Parks and Recreation might be able to get involved, too. He added that with the benefit of social media, he thinks fundraising should not be a problem for this project. City Administrator Podhradsky asked Mr. Rieke if he would be willing to set a time to get together for coffee to discuss the project. Mr. Rieke agreed that it would be a good idea.

Mayor Hubbard thanked Mr. Rieke for his service and commitment to the community. She agreed that Mt. Pleasant is in rough shape and thanked Mr. Rieke for being a catalyst to get it fixed up.

5.B. Erik Hansen – SouthWest Transit 2025 Year in Review

Erik Hansen was not present for the meeting.

5.C. Marshall Grange – Update on SW Chaska Community Park Masterplan

Marshall Grange provided an update on the Community Park Masterplan and showed the Council three park concepts that were shared through an online survey and in-person outreach over the summer. Feedback identified the top 10 features people want in the future park, in addition to a universally designed playground and a Miracle League Baseball field.

Mr. Grange noted that the project has moved into the refinement phase, focusing on narrowing the three designs down to one preferred plan based on community input, site conditions, market analysis, and budget. Staff have held several meetings with the Parks and Recreation Commission, project consultants, and other City Departments for input, and the plan presented now reflects feedback from those discussions.

Mr. Grange explained that the draft plan has the universal playground near the parking lot for easy access, a large plaza that welcomes people into the park, and a Miracle League baseball field.

Mayor Hubbard asked what would be included in the plaza. Mr. Grange said the plaza would include seating elements and welcoming landscaping.

Councilmember Hatfield asked if the plaza would be similar to the pathway at Fireman's between the food stand and the building, with a pollinator area. Mr. Grange said it would be similar to that; the plaza would be quite a bit larger than the area she was referring to.

Mr. Grange said the Staff were also looking at incorporating a bump-out area in the plaza area where people could drop off kids for the playground, or food trucks could park there. He noted there is also a planned grassy, amphitheater space, a water feature or small splash pad, and a boulder area where older kids could hang out.

Mayor Hubbard asked if that would be a natural rock wall or a rock-climbing wall. Mr. Grange said it would probably be a manufactured horizontal boulder wall that would not require staffing to supervise. He said it could also just be a pile of large rocks that kids play on.

Mr. Grange said the park would also include a large grassy area where kids could run and play adjacent to the playground, a basketball court, and four pickleball courts. There would also be a nearby open area for gatherings that could be reserved for events, and a community garden and forested area.

City Administrator Podhradsky said one of the schools his child attends has a community garden where kids can pick fruits and vegetables and take them home. Mayor Hubbard said there was

a gardening club that formed through the library, which was really good for engagement with the community.

Mr. Grange said that to support a community garden space, there would need to be some type of shelter building and possible tool storage to maintain it. Not far from the community garden would be another nature play area with logs and stumps for kids to play on, and a trail area through the woods. He noted that the southeast portion of the park would be an 18-hole disc golf course and would consume a lot of the park, but would be a great amenity that would become a destination site. He is currently working with a disc golf course designer out of Des Moines to design the course.

City Administrator Podhradsky noted that if the disc golf course is done correctly, it would be a very popular amenity for the park and area. Councilmember Hatfield agreed and said that if it gets built, people will come, as it is very sought after.

Mayor Hubbard asked if the disc golf course would have tee times and check-ins. City Administrator Podhradsky answered that typically the courses are first-come, first-served, but there will be lines in the parking lot of people waiting to play the course. Mr. Grange said there would be a small parking lot that would serve the residents who wanted to play the disc golf course, and another park shelter building with year-round restrooms.

Mr. Grange said there would be a large portion of the park that would include prairie restoration, which would bring a lot of nature and plants. This area would also include a large sledding area in the winter. City Administrator Podhradsky suggested that in the winter, maybe one of the nearby shelter buildings could be used for concessions. Mr. Grange said the park building would be intended to be used as a warming house in the winter.

Mr. Grange continued that in the northeast corner would be another open lawn area, and a park shelter building that could be reserved for park gatherings. The northwest corner would include the intermediate baseball diamond that would serve both baseball and softball, and a full-sized soccer field. Mr. Grange noted that there are a lot of intentional trails around the park for residents to take in nature.

City Administrator Podhradsky said the City is also looking at turf opportunities at the park, and considering cost differentials and determining if there is a desire for turf at the fields there.

Mr. Grange said one of the themes brought forward for the park is to bring back plants to encourage pollinator species to come back to the area.

Mr. Grange noted there is a long list of things that he and Staff are still working on, including design of the park and playground, but he would like to bring a 30 percent design plan for the park with estimated costs back to the Council in March for approval. He stated that there is a nearby housing development plan that is coming to the Commission, which he would like to coordinate with to align access points for the park. Mr. Grange said he would be arranging meetings with the sports associations to discuss the athletic fields in the park.

Mayor Hubbard asked if the sports associations end up saying that turf is a viable option for the athletic fields, could the soccer fields also be used as baseball diamonds during tournaments. City Administrator Podhradsky answered that most communities go to multiple parks for tournaments.

Councilmember Grau asked about the flexibility of space that could be used for U12 and U16 baseball diamonds, and if that would still be part of the park plan so tournaments could all be in one place. City Administrator Podhradsky asked if he was referring to the concept plan that had one square space, versus a separate soccer field and baseball diamond. Councilmember Grau confirmed that that is what he was referring to, and he was attracted to that plan because it provided more flexibility for multiple sports to play there, and turf would add to that advantage.

Mayor Hubbard said she loved the diversity of all the plans for this park, which makes it a destination for people and sports. She asked if having one large space versus multiple fields makes sense or matters to the residents involved in sports, and if turf is a viable option from a financial perspective.

Councilmember Grau said that if there is a baseball tournament, having a group of fields and space for concessions is much better than having games at several different park fields around the City. Mayor Hubbard added that she was not suggesting the park have eight baseball fields next to each other, but having a multi-use space sounds like it would make sense.

City Administrator Podhradsky said that the feedback was great and helps them make sure that everyone is on the same page with the park plan, and the more flexible the corner of that park can be, the better. Mayor Hubbard said she thinks that lends to more of a buy-in from different organizations. Mr. Grange said there was discussion about this topic, and there were some logistics to it, with removing fencing, scheduling for different sports in the same area, and if there is commitment from the sports associations regarding turf, then there will be more discussion.

City Administrator Podhradsky added that the concern was that if the turf is only being put in for the sports associations, then there should be some contribution made by the associations. He said both plans should be brought to the associations to get feedback.

Councilmember Grau said he understands that the more associations that get involved with the planning, the harder it gets to come to a consensus. City Administrator Podhradsky added that it also comes down to equity among the associations, too, since some have more kids participating than others.

Mayor Hubbard said turf maintenance, setup, and scheduling all take labor and investment on the associations and Parks and Recreation, too. She said she does not want to put Parks and Recreation into a position where they are overworked, managing the park and fields. City Administrator Podhradsky said it is important to understand the labor of changing fences for Parks and Recreation, and building in that resource may be something that they have to do, or if the sports associations will manage it.

Councilmember Grau said to be clear that when referring to the association's setup, it would be the team coaches. He added that diversifying the space helps maintain future use of the space for several sports.

Mayor Hubbard asked about lighting the fields. City Administrator Podhradsky said that it will be part of the discussion with the sports associations. Councilmember Grau said he cannot speak on behalf of any of the associations, but in terms of turf used for baseball fields or lights, turf would be his preference, and lights can be done after the fact.

City Administrator Podhradsky asked if there were any other concerns about the park, so input can be considered before the 30 percent design plan gets finalized. Councilmember Hatfield asked if the plan could be emailed to the Council. City Administrator Podhradsky confirmed that he would email the current design plan to Councilmembers.

Councilmember Grau asked about how much parking would be available. Mr. Grange said there are almost 340 parking spots allotted for the park. Mr. Grange said there would also be water lines run to allow for watering a community garden.

Councilmember Hatfield asked if there are walking trails in the woods that are not part of the disc golf course. City Administrator Podhradsky confirmed that there were separate trails that would not interfere with the disc golf course. He said there is also some land in that area of the park that is undevelopable as wetlands, and he is working with the developer now to come up with the best use of those parcels. Mayor Hubbard added that the trail system would be a huge amenity for a lot of residents.

Councilmember Hatfield said the park design incorporated a lot of amenities for a lot of different age groups. Mayor Hubbard agreed and said Mr. Grange and Staff did a great job with the design.

Councilmember Grau commented that there are houses and a development near the park, and the pickleball courts are in a good area of the park to mitigate the noise from the residents. City Administrator Podhradsky said the City has received a lot of positive feedback about the current pickleball courts because they are so secluded.

Mayor Hubbard added that lighting in the park will have to consider the residences nearby and how that light would affect them, too.

City Administrator Podhradsky thanked everyone for their feedback. Mr. Grange thanked the Council for their feedback and the residents' feedback that helped him and the Staff develop this plan up to this point. He said they will aim to bring it back in March with more detailed plans.

6. Approve Previous Meeting Minutes

6.A. Approve the December 15, 2025, City Council Meeting Minutes

Motion by Councilmember Hatfield, second by Councilmember Benesh, to approve the minutes of the December 15, 2025, City Council meeting.

Motion carried.

7. Consent Agenda

Motion by Councilmember Grau, second by Councilmember Hatfield, to approve the Consent Agenda Items A through G:

A. Appointment of Acting Mayor (Mayor Pro Tem)

Motion to appoint Council Member Jon Grau as Acting Mayor for the City of Chaska for the calendar year 2026.

B. Appointment of City Attorney

Motion to appoint the law firm Melchert, Hubert, Sjodin, as the Chaska City Attorney for 2026.

C. Appointment of Official Newspaper

Motion to appoint the "Patriot" as the official newspaper of the City of Chaska for 2026.

D. Appoint Representative to the Southwest Transit Commission

Motion to appoint Councilmember Grau to serve as the second City of Chaska representative to the Southwest Transit Commission for a 3-year term of 2026-2028.

E. Designate Depositories and Investment Institutions for 2026

Motion to designate the following official depositories and investment institutions: Depositories: Bank Vista; Center National Bank; Chase Bank; Nicolet National Bank; Old National Bank; Security Bank, U.S. Bank, Wells Fargo Bank, and Wings Financial Credit Union.

Financial Institutions: Computershare Corporate Trust; League of Minnesota Cities and PMA Financial Network, Inc. (4M Fund); Northland Securities, Inc.; Oppenheimer & Co., Inc.; Pipe Sandler Companies; Public Financial Management (PFM); RBC Capital Markets, Inc.; UBS; Moreton Capital Markets, LLC; and U.S. Bank Investment Services, Inc.

F. Adopt Resolution 2026-1 Authorizing Account Signers and Electronic Funds Transfer

Motion to adopt Resolution 2026-1, authorizing bank account signers and authorizing electronic funds transfers.

G. Appointment of City Trustees to the Chaska Fire Department Relief Association Board for 2026

Motion to appoint _____ (Taylor Hubbard, Mayor) as a required elected-official Trustee and _____ (Noel Graczyk, Administrative Services Director) as a City Trustee to the Chaska Fire Department Relief Association Board for 2026.

Motion carried.

8. Action Items

9. Bills

9.A. Accounts Payable Claims Roster 05-01-2026

Motion by Councilmember Hatfield, second by Councilmember Benesh, to approve the bills as presented. Roll call was taken. Voting aye: Councilmembers Hatfield, Grau, and Mayor Hubbard. Voting nay: None
Motion carried.

10. Other Business

10.A. City Administrator's Report

10.A.i. Bi-Weekly Report 05-01-2026

Councilmember Grau:

- Wished everyone a Happy New Year.
- Reminded everyone of the Chaska Human Rights Commission event to celebrate Dr. Martin Luther King Day on Monday, January 19, at the Chaska Event Center from 7:45 a.m. to 9:30 a.m.
- Thanked Public Works for all their hard work keeping the roads clear and safe for the residents of Chaska.

Councilmember Benesh:

- Wished everyone a Happy New Year.

Councilmember Hatfield:

- Thanked Public Works snow plow drivers and Public Safety for keeping everyone safe.
- Recapped the Santa Parade and thanked all the City Staff who worked that event.
- Shared that River City Days is celebrating its 50th anniversary this year, and has a new website.
- Shared that the Community Center now has punch passes for use before signing up for a membership.
- Shared that the Swellness Expo Southwest Chamber is at the Community Center with wellness vendors on Saturday, January 10, at 9:00 a.m.
- Shared that the History Center has a few spots left for their Genealogy family history session, and residents can register directly on the History Center's website.

Assistant Administrator Elise Durbin:

- Shared that the City has received information back about a DEED award for Minnesota Investment Funds for Marotta Controls, and they were awarded \$220,000 for the creation of 29 new jobs.

Mayor Hubbard:

- Shared that the State of the City address for the community is at the Community Center on January 28 from 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. and stated she appreciates all the City Staff and Departments gearing up for this event.
- Shared that the Fishing Contest is happening on Valentine's Day at Fireman's Park from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. There are also raffle tickets that will be available for purchase for this event, too, that benefit the Fire Department.
- Added that the next Council meeting will be on January 26.

11. Adjourn

Motion by Councilmember Hatfield, second by Councilmember Grau, to adjourn the meeting at 8:30 p.m.

Motion carried.