

City of Hayward Council Meeting Minutes
Monday January 12, 2026
7:00 p.m. Hayward Community Hall

Mayor Anthony Cox called the regular meeting of the Hayward City Council to order at 7:00 p.m. on Monday, January 12, 2026.

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mayor: Anthony Cox

Councilors: Darwin Dolph, Gene Flaskerud, Derek Lerum, Mark Bangert

STAFF PRESENT:

City Clerk/Treasurer: Kathy Aase; Operations Director: Travis Reichl

The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Councilor Dolph motioned to approve January 12, 2026, Hayward City Council Meeting Agenda. Councilor Bangert seconded. The motion carried.

Councilor Lerum motioned to approve December 8, 2025, Hayward City Council Meeting Minutes. Councilor Dolph seconded. The motion carried.

FIRE DEPARTMENT UPDATE:

In Fire Chief Eric Knutson's provided the fire department updates. In 2025 the Hayward Fire Department/Rescue responded to the following 63 emergencies:

- 17 Vehicle Accidents
- 27 Medical Calls
- 13 Fir Calls
- 5 Hazmat Calls
- 1 Storm Watch

Knutson reported to council Albert Lea will be selling its 1999 Pumper Truck and are taking sealed bids through February 9, 2026 and the mayor and himself would need to sign the bid. He said fire department members will vote on whether they believe Hayward should submit a bid.

The tank is one half the size of the older pumper truck the city has now. After discussing the pros and cons, council decided they were not interested in the 1999 pumper truck that Albert Lea is selling.

The Hayward Fire Department will be meeting on Wednesday January 14th.

COMMUNITY FORUM:

Resident Mason Rafdal and his father inquired about the corner lot—the single parcel located off Candy Lane. A home of at least 1,200 square feet, not including a minimum two-stall garage, must be constructed on the property; it cannot be used solely for a shed. The Rafdals asked what types of homes would be permitted and presented an example of their intended design to the council.

County Commissioner Dawn Kaasa reported that residents will have an opportunity to attend a meeting at the Commissioners’ meeting space to discuss discrepancies in home valuations that may affect property taxes. Anyone who believes their valuation may need adjustment is encouraged to attend. **This will be the only opportunity to bring forth issues of concern you may have.** The meeting will be held on the first Thursday in June - June 4, 2026. Call the Freeborn County Courthouse to find out the specific time of this meeting.

Commissioner Kassa reported that a SHIP grant is available to support projects such as park benches or picnic areas. SHIP, a Minnesota Department of Health initiative, is designed to help communities improve overall health and wellness. The Southeast Minnesota Initiative Foundation (SMIF) also offers funding to assist municipalities with various projects and may be able to contribute to park improvements as well. The cities of Alden and Geneva each received \$10,000 in funding.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

The City received funds that were donated by the former Hayward Booster’s Club. These funds are currently in a savings account where they are not earning the level of interest they could be. Clerk Aase was directed to contact FDIC-insured banks and other financial institutions to determine which ones are offering the highest interest rates on both short- and long-term CDs. Mayor Cox stated that he will reach out to United Employees Credit Union.

The council agreed to allocate \$21,000 from these funds for the purchase of a new mower, with the current mower to be used as a trade-in. Maintaining lawns and grassy areas is a significant part of Hayward’s spring, summer, and fall upkeep and beautification efforts.

The council also asked Clerk Aase to contact residents who may be interested in serving on a city park improvement and beautification committee.

The remaining funds will be placed into a CD, and an oversight committee will be formed to manage this account. This committee will be separate from the park improvement/beautification group and will oversee the donated funds to ensure they are carefully and responsibly managed in accordance with the benefactor’s intent.

OPERATIONS UPDATE:

- Director of Public Works Travis Reichl reported that the soil boring has been completed.
- ISG Engineering is continuing surveying work on 2nd Street, Armstrong, and on water service areas along North CR 26 / 810th Avenue.
- Reichl provided ISG with the sewer plans.
- Councilor Bangert assisted Reichl with taking down the Christmas decorations.

NEW BUSINESS:

In discussing the cost estimates for the water filtration system and the associated street repairs. The council noted that the estimated cost of the water filtration system is \$3.9 million, and the necessary street repairs add an additional \$1.6 million, for a total projected cost of \$5.5 million. The council emphasized that both projects are interconnected and should be completed together, especially when there is (potentially) 80% grant funding available.

During this January Organizational Meeting, the city council voted on organizational matters for 2026.

MEETINGS: Regular meeting of the Hayward City Council shall be held at the Community Hall on the 2nd Monday of every month beginning at 7:00 p.m. Any regular meeting that falls upon a City recognized holiday shall be held on the 3rd Monday at the same time and place or unless specified differently by City Council. Pre-Agenda and Special meetings and workshops will be scheduled as needed. All meetings including adjourned meetings shall be held at the Community Center unless otherwise specified.

RECOGNIZED HOLIDAYS: The City of Hayward recognized holidays shall include New Year's Day, Martin Luther King Day, President's Day, Juneteenth, Memorial Day, 4th of July, Labor Day, Veteran's Day, Thanksgiving Day, and Christmas Day.

ACTING MAYOR: In the absence of the Mayor, the Acting Mayor for the Hayward City Council shall be Mark Bangert to preside at the meeting. Upon the Mayor and Acting Mayor being gone, the Clerk shall call the meeting to order and ask for a motion designating the Acting Mayor for that night's proceedings.

OFFICIAL NEWSPAPER: The official newspaper for the City of Hayward shall be the Albert Lea Tribune, whose main publication is in Albert Lea, Minnesota.

OFFICIAL DEPOSITORY: The official depository for the City of Hayward shall be Produce State Bank, Hollandale or Albert Lea, Minnesota. The official signatures for checks shall be Kathryn Aase, Anthony Cox, and Darwin Dolph, with all checks requiring two (2) signatures.

COUNCIL MEMBER LIAISONS: Council members shall serve as liaisons to these specific departments:

- Animal Control – Mark Bangert
- Ordinance Enforcement– Derek Lerum & Freeborn County Sheriff's Dept., if applicable
- Streets – Eugene Flaskerud

- Fire Department – Darwin Dolph and Derek Lerum
- Fire Relief Association Board of Trustees – Darwin Dolph; Derek Lerum, Mayor Cox
- Park and Recreation – Mayor Cox
- Water Department – Mayor Cox
- Sewer Departments – Mayor Cox
- Insurance – Gene Flaskerud
- Public Health and Safety – Mark Bangert

LEGAL ADVISOR: The Hayward City Council hereby retains Greta Bjerkness, an attorney with the law firm LeVander, Gillen, & Miller, P.A., Eagan Minnesota, as the primary attorney responsible for civil legal services and advice for the City of Hayward.

AUDIT SERVICES: The Hayward City Council hereby retains Hill, Benda, Skov & Bernau PA, of Albert Lea, Minnesota with Lance Skov being the contact person, as the firm to audit the financial reports of the City of Hayward.

ENGINEERING SERVICES: The Hayward City Council hereby retains I & S Group, Inc. (ISG) of Mankato, Rochester, and multiple locations; and, Jones, Haugh & Smith, of Albert Lea

BUILDING INSPECTOR: The Hayward City Council hereby appoints the Freeborn County Inspector as the agent responsible for building inspections for the City of Hayward.

FIRE MARSHALL: The Hayward City Council hereby appoints Fire Chief Eric Knutson as the Fire Marshall of the City of Hayward.

CITY CLERK/TREASURER: The Hayward City Council hereby appoints Kathryn Aase as the City Clerk/Treasurer of the City of Hayward.

MINUTES FOR ALL MEETINGS: Clerk/Treasurer shall take notes of all meetings held by the City Council; upon the absence of the City Clerk the Mayor shall appoint a Council Member to take the official notes for that meeting.

Councilor Flaskerud introduced **Resolution 2026-1**, approving the 2026 Organizational Structure as stated above; Councilor Dolph advanced and Resolution 2026-1 passed unanimously.

The City's Fee Structure:

- Community hall rental rates of \$75.00 per calendar day for residents of the City of Hayward and the township of Hayward and \$140.00 per calendar day for non-residents.
- Non-sufficient funds/returned checks at \$30.00 per instance.
- Utility late fees at \$25.00 per quarter, pro-rated for residents that have entered into alternative payment arrangements with the City Clerk.
- Annual liquor licenses include On-Sale, Off-Sale, and Sunday Sales, at a combined total of \$900.
- Residential and commercial water and sewer hook-up fees at \$300.00 each.
- Residential and commercial water and sewer reconnection fee of \$75.00 per instance.
- City construction authorization form, open burning recreational fire pits, use of park shelter and/or softball field shall have no fee.
- Mayor's compensation per Council Meeting attended at \$90.00.

- Council member compensation per Council Meeting attended at \$75.00; and
- Temporary commercial water usage - up-front user fee rate of \$100 for the first four thousand gallons of water used and \$4.50 per one thousand gallons used thereafter.
- Request for Ordinance Variance - \$25.00 paid at the time of application.
- City mowing private/commercial property to abate grass/weed nuisance ordinance violations - \$125.00/hour with a one hour minimum.

After review, Councilor Flaskerud introduced **Resolution 2026-2**, the Annual Fee Structure, as written; Councilor Dolph advanced. Resolution 2026-2 passed unanimously.

Council Dolph introduced **Resolution 2026-3**, accepting a donation from the Hayward Fire Relief Association in the amount of \$10,000 to be placed in the General Fire Fund to be used for the Tanker/Grass Rig. Councilor Lerum seconded. Resolution 2025-3 passed unanimously.

Councilor Bangert introduced **Resolution 2026-4**, accepting a donation from the Hayward Fire Relief Association in the amount of \$22,000 to be placed in the General Fire Fund to be used for the Tanker/Grass Rig. Councilor Dolph seconded. Resolution 2025-4 passed unanimously.

COUNCIL REPORTS:

There were no council reports.

FINANCIAL REPORTS:

Bill(s) exceeding \$500 for Council approval:

- A bill in the amount of \$500 payable to League of Minnesota Cities for Annual Membership;
- A bill in the amount of \$5,100 payable to Produce State Bank for the final principal and interest payment for the Water Revenue Bond, Series 2010A.

Councilor Bangert motioned to pay the above-stated bills each exceeding \$500. Councilor Dolph seconded. The motion was approved.

Councilor Dolph motioned to approve the December 2025 Deposit Detail, Check Detail, YTD Balance Sheet, and YTD Budget vs. Actual Report as prepared. Councilor Lerum seconded. The motion was approved.

Councilor Bangert motioned to adjourn the meeting. Councilor Dolph seconded. The motion was approved. Having no further business, Mayor Cox adjourned the meeting at 9:23 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kathy Aase, City Clerk/Treasurer