



City of Duluth

411 West First Street
Duluth, Minnesota 55802

Minutes - Final

City Council

MISSION STATEMENT: *The mission of the Duluth City Council is to develop effective public policy rooted in citizen involvement that results in excellent municipal services and creates a thriving community prepared for the challenges of the future.*

TOOLS OF CIVILITY: *The Duluth City Council promotes the use and adherence of the tools of civility in conducting the business of the council. The tools of civility provide increased opportunities for civil discourse leading to positive resolutions for the issues that face our city. We know that when we have civility, we get civic engagement, and because we can't make each other civil and we can only work on ourselves, we state that today I will: pay attention, listen, be inclusive, not gossip, show respect, seek common ground, repair damaged relationships, use constructive language, and take responsibility. [Approved by the council on May 14, 2018]*

MN Statutes, 13D.02. *Members may participate by interactive technology*

Thursday, July 23, 2026

6:00 PM

Council Chambers

Special Meeting

ROLL CALL

Present: Clanaugh, Desotelle, Durrwachter, Tomanek, Johnson, Randorf, Kennedy, Nephew

Councilor Forsman arrived at 6:15.

During Closed Session, Forsman joined remotely via Teams.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

President Nephew motioned to suspend the rules to allow for a Public Comment Period of no more than 20 minutes, seconded by Councilor Tomanek. Motion to amend the suspension of the rules to allow for 45 minutes of Public Comment was made by President Nephew, seconded by Vice President Kennedy. The motion as amended carried unanimously by roll call vote (9-0).

President Nephew opened Public Comment stating the rules of Public Comment from Council will apply, directing the Deputy Clerk to allow for sign-ups. Director Ben Van Tassel was asked to provide an update on the Land Use Study for Lester

Park. Following the update from Director Van Tassel, the following spoke regarding the petitions for Lester Park: Michael Bernstein, Hadrian DeMaioribus, Corinne Freedman Ellis, Mikayla Haynes, Andrew St. Croix, David Sihaforth, Kristin Phillips, Jeff Cook-Lundgren, Laura Erickson, Tom Ruthe, Chris Rubesch, JT Haines, Brandon Parker, and Mabel Smebakken.

The following entitled resolutions are to be considered:

BY COUNCILOR JOHNSON (RECREATION, LIBRARIES & AUTHORITIES)

1. [26-0679R](#) RESOLUTION FINDING THAT THE SUBJECT OF TWO SEPARATE INITIATIVE PETITIONS CONTAINING PROPOSED ORDINANCES GOVERNING THE LAND USE AND ZONING OF TWO SPECIFIC PARCELS OF PROPERTY LOCATED IN OR NEAR THE FORMER LESTER PARK GOLF COURSE ARE PREEMPTED BY STATE LAW AND SHOULD NOT BE PLACED ON THE BALLOT.

Motion to approve made by Councilor Johnson, seconded by Councilor Forsman. During discussion, a 5-minute recess was called by President Nephew at 7:38 PM, meeting resumed at 7:43 PM. A motion to table the resolution was made by Councilor Forsman, seconded by Councilor Desotelle. The motion to table carried unanimously by roll call vote (9-0).

BY COUNCILOR DURRWACHTER (PURCHASING & LICENSING)

2. [26-0681R](#) RESOLUTION SUBMITTING THE LESTER PARK INITIATIVE ORDINANCES TO THE VOTERS AT A SPECIAL ELECTION TO BE HELD ON NOVEMBER 3, 2026, AND DIRECTING CERTIFICATION TO THE ST. LOUIS COUNTY AUDITOR

Motion to table was made by Councilor Durrwachter, seconded by Councilor Clanaugh. Motion to table carried unanimously by roll call vote (9-0).

The following entitled ordinances are to be read for the first time:

BY COUNCILOR JOHNSON (RECREATION, LIBRARIES & AUTHORITIES)

3. [26-033-O](#) AN ORDINANCE PROPOSED BY INITIATIVE PETITION THAT REQUIRES THE CITY TO REZONE AS PARK AND OPEN SPACE (P-1) THE 37.5-ACRE PARCEL KNOWN AS THE LAKE 9 PARCEL OF THE FORMER LESTER PARK GOLF COURSE, AND FURTHER PROHIBITING ANY REZONING OF THIS PARCEL THAT AUTHORIZES

PRIVATE RESIDENTIAL, COMMERCIAL, INDUSTRIAL, HOSPITALITY, OR MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT UNLESS APPROVED BY A MAJORITY OF THE VOTERS AT A CITY ELECTION.

This Ordinance was read for the first time.

4. [26-034-O](#) AN ORDINANCE PROPOSED BY INITIATIVE PETITION THAT WOULD PRECLUDE THE CITY OF DULUTH FROM REZONING THE 230-ACRE PARCEL LOCATED IN OR NEAR THE LESTER PARK GOLF COURSE FROM A PARK, OPEN SPACE, OR CONSERVATION DESIGNATION TO A CLASSIFICATION THAT AUTHORIZES PRIVATE RESIDENTIAL, COMMERCIAL, INDUSTRIAL, HOSPITALITY, OR MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT UNLESS THE REZONING IS APPROVED BY A MAJORITY OF THE VOTERS VOTING ON THE QUESTION AT A REGULAR OR SPECIAL CITY ELECTION.

This Ordinance was read for the first time.

After Ordinance 26-034-O was read in by the Deputy Clerk, President Nephew made a motion to enter into a Closed Session under MN Statute 13D.05, subd. 3b., Conferring with legal counsel in connection with litigation brought by M. Bernstein, seconded by Councilor Johnson. Motion to enter into Closed Session carried unanimously by roll call vote (9-0) at 8:12 PM. Closed Session began at 8:20 PM. Council returned to Open Session at 9:56 PM. No action was taken during Closed Session.

ADJOURN

Motion to adjourn made by Councilor Randorf, seconded by Councilor Tomanek. Motion to adjourn carried unanimously by roll call vote (9-0).