

**MONTICELLO CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
Monday, January 26, 2026 – 6:30 p.m.
Mississippi Room, Monticello Community Center**

Present: Lloyd Hilgart, Kip Christianson, Charlotte Gabler, Tracy Hinz, and Lee Martie
Absent: None

1. General Business

A. Call to Order & Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Hilgart called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

B. Approval of Agenda

Councilmember Gabler requested that discussion on residential speed limits be added to the agenda.

Motion by Councilmember Hinz to approve the agenda with the addition of discussion on residential speed limits. Councilmember Christianson seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

C. Approval of Meeting Minutes

- Joint Workshop Minutes from December 15, 2025
- Special Meeting Minutes from January 12, 2026
- Regular Meeting Minutes from January 12, 2026

Motion by Councilmember Gabler to approve the meeting minutes. Councilmember Hinz seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

D. Citizen Comments

The following spoke under citizen comments:

Scott Custforth, 8634 Fairhill LN. Mr. Custforth requested that the City address a broken elevator at the Deep Haven Apartments (1255 Edmonson Avenue) and also expressed concern about potential legal and financial impacts of a proposed data center. He added that Councilmember Christianson stated that there was a risk of being sued or putting the City at risk of bankruptcy due to not allowing a data center.

Councilmember Christianson clarified that his previous comments were intended to highlight the importance of establishing clear rules for evaluating development

applications, noting that without such rules, the City could face legal challenges that limit flexibility and create long-term financial burdens.

Bill Saville, 873 97th Street NW. Mr. Saville, a retired mechanical engineer, shared his knowledge of data centers and raised concerns about the proposed location and timing, citing traffic, power and water usage, and public safety. He noted potential conflicts with Monticello's long-term infrastructure and suggested the City consider locally owned, employee-focused business models to support community growth.

Jenna Vandenboom 4414 87th St. NE. She expressed concern about litigation being used as a scare tactic to allow data centers and that the City is vulnerable to these large companies. She also questioned whether a moratorium on the ordinance was an option.

Holly Newman, 840 Powell Street, Big Lake. Ms. Newman noted that her mom lived in Monticello and asked whether proposed ordinance is primarily motivated by fear of a lawsuit and suggested allowing smaller data centers.

Mayor Hilgart responded he his support for the ordinance is based on principle, not fear of litigation.

Ty Weiss, 714 E. 7th Street. Ms. Weiss expressed concerns that a proposed data center could strain the local power supply, especially during extreme weather events, potentially causing outages for residents while the data center remains operational using backup power. She also raised concerns about increased electricity costs due to peak usage and questioned the ability to fully predict or mitigate these impacts.

E. Public Service Announcements

City Clerk Jennifer Schreiber provided the following public announcement:

- DMV Trailer and Motorcycle Registration due in February

F. Council Liaison Updates

- **Economic Development Authority (EDA)** – Councilmember Hinz reported that at the January 14 EDA meeting, a professional services contract for the downtown small area proposal was authorized, and a Homeowner Rehabilitation Loan Program using the State Aid Housing Assistance Fund was approved.
- **Monticello Orderly Annexation Board (MOAA Board)** – Community Development Director Angela Schumann reported that the group reviewed ordinance amendments that were presented at the January 26 City Council meeting. They will not take action on these amendments until a public hearing is held.

G. Department Updates

- **Wright County Sheriff's Office Quarterly Update** – Sergeant McMackins, WCSO, presented the quarterly update.
- **Building Department Update** – Chief Building Official Bob Ferguson presented the annual update of the Building Department.
- **Wright County Economic Development Partnership – Partner of the Year Award.** Jim Thares, Economic Development Manager, presented the Partner of the Year Award that Monticello was awarded from the Wright County Economic Development Partnership.

2. Consent Agenda:

Motion by Councilmember Gabler to approve the Consent Agenda. Councilmember Christianson seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

- A. Consideration of approving the payment of bills. **Action taken: Approved the bill and purchase card registers for a total of \$1,167,609.53.**
- B. Consideration of approving new hires and departures for City departments. **Action taken: Approved the hires for the Monticello Community Center (MCC) and Streets Department and departures for Hi-Way Liquor and MCC.**
- C. Consideration of approving the sale/disposal of surplus city property. **Action taken: No report.**
- D. Consideration of approving two applications for two temporary gambling permits for Parenting With Grace, Inc. for events on March 7, 2026, at the American Legion, 304 Elm Street, and October 3, 2026, at River City Extreme, 3875 School Blvd. **Action taken: Approved both applications.**
- E. Consideration of approving the appointment of Erin Stein to the Parks, Arts, and Recreation Commission for a term to expire December 31, 2026. **Action taken: Approved the appointment.**
- F. Consideration of approving a request for Conditional Use Permit for Auto Repair – Major and a variance to City Code Section 153.091 Use-Specific Standards for door opening to service area garage on street frontage, for a project in a B-3 (Highway Business) District. Applicant: Mohammad Awad. **Action taken: Approved the Conditional Use Permit.**
- G. Consideration of adopting Resolution 2026-03 accepting improvements and authorizing final payment of \$12,319 to Jacon, LLC, for the 2020 Stormwater

Project. **Action taken: Adopted Resolution 2026-03 accepting improvements and authorizing final payment.**

- H. Consideration of authorizing the purchase of a 2024 HAMM HD14iVV asphalt roller for \$65,833.83 and declaring the 2002 Stone Wold Pack 3100 roller as surplus. **Action taken: Authorized the purchase.**

3. Public Hearing:

4. Regular Agenda:

- A. Consideration of approving Resolution 2026-02 adopting the Monticello Industrial Alternative Urban Areawide Review and adopting the Monticello Industrial Alternative Urban Areawide Review Mitigation Plan for a 550-acre industrial development study area including a light industrial scenario and a technology campus scenario that could include a data center and appurtenant uses

Community Development Director Angela Schumann provided an overview of the Monticello Industrial Alternative Urban Areawide Review (AUAR) and Mitigation Plan, noting that it evaluates potential environmental impacts of a proposed technology campus and light industrial uses in the Monticello Orderly Annexation Area. She explained that the process included public and agency review and that adoption of the AUAR and Mitigation Plan will guide future planning, zoning, and environmental review. The AUAR is valid for five years and may be amended if development exceeds the scenarios analyzed.

Councilmember Gabler asked about the process if no development occurs within five years. Ms. Schumann stated the AUAR may be updated if conditions change or allowed to lapse, particularly if other development plans or significant changes occur.

Councilmember Hinz questioned the accountability related to the mitigation plan. Ms. Schumann noted that the AUAR identifies responsible parties for mitigation measures. As development proposals are reviewed, the City will ensure the mitigation plan is followed and that all environmental review requirements are addressed by the appropriate parties.

Motion by Councilmember Gabler to adopt Resolution 2026-02 adopting the Monticello Industrial Alternative Urban Areawide Review and adopt the Monticello Industrial Alternative Urban Areawide Review Mitigation Plan for a 550-acre industrial development study area including a light industrial scenario and a technology campus scenario that could include a data center and

appurtenant uses. Councilmember Christianson seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

5. Additional Items

Councilmember Gabler requested discussion on lowering residential speed limits, noting prior consideration in December 2020 and available engineering data for an updated review. The Council expressed no opposition, though Mayor Hilgart noted potential enforcement challenges. There was consensus of the City Council for staff to schedule a workshop to discuss residential speed limits.

6. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

Jennifer Schreiber _____

Attest: _____

City Administrator

