MILROY CITY COUNCIL
Regular Meeting
September 28, 2026, 6:30 PM

CALL TO ORDER/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE/ROLL CALL
Mayor M. Sik called the meeting to order, and the pledge of allegiance was recited.
Present: Margaret Sik, Chris Schmitt, Renee Zwach, Mary Dahmes and Lanny Sik.
Staff: Clerk/Treasurer Snyder and Public Works Director Sando.
Guests: Megan Haken and Sharri VanDeWiele.

AGENDA CHANGES/ADDITIONS
Zwach/L. Sik unanimous to approve the agenda as presented.

CONSENT AGENDA
Schmitt/Dahmes unanimous to approve the following consent agenda items.
a. August 24, 2026, Regular Meeting Minutes & August 24, 2026, Work Session Minutes
b. Bills /ACH/Payroll

REPORTS
PUBLIC WORKS – Public Works Director Sando informed the Council of an upcoming wastewater certification test scheduled for October 27–29. The cost is $200 (reduced from $400 due to apprentice status), plus hotel accommodation and the State of Minnesota testing fee. **Zwach/L. Sik unanimous approve attendance and associated costs for the wastewater certification test.**

Public Works Director Sando noted that paint for the park shelter has been obtained, and Mayor M. Sik will make arrangements with the 4-H to complete the painting before winter. He is also obtaining three quotes from tree services for boulevard trees and park trees in advance of the city's 125th anniversary.

Public Works Director Sando requested approval to purchase a new brush for the John Deere sweeper from Kibble Equipment for a cost of $1,192.40. **Dahmes/Zwach unanimous to approve the purchase of the 60 "John Deere sweeper brush.**

Public Works Director Sando will be picking up supplies for the well houses the following morning and that the contractor would begin soon.

Council member L. Sik raised concern regarding the pavement near the light pole at the park, noting a low spot where water pools. The Public Works Director acknowledged the issue, explaining that the grade had to follow the existing slope near the stage, and that a raised transition would create a trip hazard.

MAYOR/COUNCIL – M. Sik offered condolences on behalf of the city to the family of Dave "Otis" Bergstrom, a local business owner who passed away the previous week. She also addressed comments circulating regarding the City's bid review process for building painting. She clarified that bidders have the right to be present when their bids are being discussed and encouraged future bidders to attend if they wish to provide additional context. Her evaluation was based solely on what was documented in each submitted bid.

Zwach raised a question from a resident who believed they heard a rooster in town. After brief discussion, it was generally agreed the sounds were likely pheasants, as several Council members noted pheasants are present in the area and can sound similar to roosters.

CLERK/TREASURER – Clerk/Treasurer Snyder noted that a workers' compensation claim from a firefighter is listed in the bills and has been submitted to the City's workers' compensation insurance for reimbursement. She also reported on follow-up regarding the SilverSneakers fitness program and will bring the matter forward at the October meeting.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS
The Council discussed annual employee reviews, cost-of-living adjustments (COLA), and raises for the two full-time City employees. A Council member raised the question of whether the significant health insurance rate increase—from $884 to $1,237 per month—should be factored into the overall compensation package when determining the COLA. Council members acknowledged that while factoring benefits into total compensation is standard practice in many workplaces, it had not been the City's historical approach. There was general agreement that when the insurance increase is considered alongside a wage

adjustment, the total package approaches the 3.5% COLA benchmark. **L. Sik/Schmitt unanimous to approve a $0.75/hour wage increase for the two full-time City employees, along with continuation of single-coverage health insurance and the $1,200 HSA contribution match. Zwach/Schmitt unanimous to approve a $0.50/hour wage increase for the part-time custodian.**

Clerk/Treasurer Snyder reported on her research into the health insurance renewal. She had spoken with the insurance provider, who described the City's current plan as a "rich plan design" with strong benefits, including a fourth quarter carryover provision. She noted that alternative policies with higher deductibles were explored but that monthly costs still exceeded $1,000 and the savings were not substantial enough to justify a change. **Schmitt/Dahmes unanimous to renew the existing health insurance plan.**

The Council briefly discussed council member compensation. A departing Council member noted that pay has not increased in a long time. **L. Sik/Schmitt unanimous to maintain the current council pay and structure.**

NEW BUSINESS

Clerk/Treasurer Snyder presented information on an LED lighting reimbursement program offered through Otter Tail Power, which reimburses 75% of the cost to convert buildings to LED lighting. She noted that the City shop was previously converted, but the City Hall/fitness center building and fire department have not been addressed. A quote from G&R Electric for the City Hall building and fitness center came in at approximately $5,300. The Council discussed the conversion process, including removing existing fluorescent ballasts and replacing them with LED tube bulbs using existing fixtures, as well as the need to properly dispose of fluorescent bulbs and ballasts.

M. Sik raised a safety concern regarding heaved sidewalks in the park, noting significant lips at several locations that present a tripping hazard. Discussion centered on both short-term and long-term solutions. For the short term, the Council discussed grinding or cutting a bevel into the raised sidewalk edges to eliminate the trip hazard. Options discussed included purchasing a concrete blade, renting a concrete saw, or borrowing equipment from a local contractor. For the long term, the Council acknowledged that the primary cause of the heaving is tree root growth, particularly from ash trees. Several Council members noted that the ash trees in the park are likely to be lost to emerald ash borer in coming years regardless, and that removing one or two of the most problematic trees—particularly near the park shelter—may be a cost-effective long-term solution compared to repeated grinding. It was suggested that any tree removal be coupled with new tree planting, with fence posts placed to protect young trees.

The Council discussed a memorial plaque currently located near one of the ash trees in the park. It was agreed to relocate the plaque to the area near the Legion memorial, where it would receive greater visibility and foot traffic.

Clerk/Treasurer Snyder reported that the City's certificate of deposit, currently valued at $350,000 and expected to mature at approximately $369,000, is due on October 24th. She presented two renewal options: a 2-year CD at 4.06% interest, or a 26-week CD at 3.85% interest. She expressed a preference for the shorter 26-week term given uncertainty around FEMA reimbursement timing and the fact that the City had drawn down approximately $157,000 from savings. The Council agreed that the flexibility of the shorter term outweighed the slightly higher rate of the longer option. **Schmitt/Dahmes unanimous to renew the CD for a 26-week term at 3.85% interest.**

MAYOR/COUNCIL ITEMS

- October 1 – City Office closed
- October 12 – Holiday Observed
- October 26 – City Council Meeting

ADJOURN

Zwach/Sik unanimous to adjourn the meeting at 7:05 p.m.

Approved October 26, 2026.

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Betsy Snyder, City Clerk/Treasurer