



Goodhue City Council Work Meeting Minutes
City Hall ~ August 13, 2025 ~ 6:00 p.m.

Members Present: Mayor Ernie Valenzuela, Council Members Michael Brunkhorst, Chris Schmit, Jeannine Nagel
Staff: Lisa Redepenning, Lori Luhman
Absent: Joe Benda
Guests: McCrae Olson

Call to Order

Mayor Valenzuela called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Approve or amend Agenda

The agenda was amended to add the “Restated Joint Powers Board Agreement” to the beginning of new business and “Appointing Two Fire Representatives And One Alternative to The Fire Board” at the end of new business. Motion to approve the amended agenda was made by Schmit, seconded by Brunkhorst, motion carried 4-0-0.

Approval of Minutes

Motioned to approve the July 23, 2025, city council meeting minutes, was made by Nagel, seconded by Schmit, motion carried 4-0-0.

Motioned to approve the August 6, 2025, special city council meeting minutes, was made by Nagel, seconded by Brunkhorst, motion carried 4-0-0.

Approval of Bills

Motioned to approve the bills was made by Nagel, seconded by Brunkhorst, motion carried 4-0-0.

New Business

Restated Joint Powers Board Agreement

The Fire Truck Association held a meeting with the members on Monday, August 11, 2025, to review the Joint Powers Agreement. Those present from the City of Goodhue were Mayor Valenzuela, Council Member Brunkhorst and City Administrator Redepenning. Mayor Valenzuela felt it was a very productive meeting but there was no vote. There was a show of hands from the members who would accept the proposed agreement that was presented that night as good enough to move forward with the changes. There was no formal vote on the agreement at this meeting.

Since the August 11, 2025, Fire Truck Association meeting, the City of Goodhue received an updated version of the agreement and forwarded on to Attorney Vose for review. There were still the original grammar and clerical errors in the agreement. What the city council agreed to at its special meeting held on August 6, 2025, was not what was presented in this updated version. Attorney Vose made it clear that he does not recommend the council to agree to the wording in 6.1 of the agreement as presented because of how it could affect the city financially. Mayor Valenzuela believes council should continue to revisit this more. Council, with the advice of Attorney Vose and staff, made a diligent effort to find and make necessary corrections and decide who would be responsible for making those corrections. Council members Brunkhorst and Nagel offered to stay after the meeting to make those corrections. Then they will send the revised agreement to the Joint Powers Board. If these changes are accepted by the Community Fire Truck Association and its members, then council agrees to place this agreement on the consent agenda for the next council meeting to vote on it.

Potential Telecommunications Tower City of Goodhue

A telecommunications tower company is expressing interest in placing a tower in Goodhue. Options for placement of more cell tower equipment located on either the water tower or bare ground were discussed. Council agreed to have staff reach out to the company and bring back more information for them to review.

Communication Regarding City Issues Outside of Official Meetings

Mayor Valenzuela brought up the issue of council members discussing council issues in inappropriate areas outside of meetings with other council members or the public. Members tried to establish why this was an issue as meetings are on record, voice and video recorded. Mayor again reminded Council to be careful about certain topics that may include residents and talking about them or their situation in the community and your awareness of this is appreciated.

Reaffirming City Administrator's Duties

Mayor Valenzuela mentioned he was talking to Lisa about not only trying to learn her responsibilities from a Mayor's perspective, but also to understand the volume of how much actually needs to come through the city administrator from the public. Mayor suggested to council is to try to keep complaints or questions from the public more streamlined, instead of council members handling it, first direct it to the City Administrator to let staff handle it, then if it is too much, then council can help.

Gas Commission/City Work Agreement

Council members were given the Gas Commission and City Work Agreement that was compiled from notes that were put together by staff. This agreement was needed because everything was verbal up to this point. This agreement is to show the coordination of job duties, who does what and who helps who and why. This will also help to explain how the labor and equipment expenses are all accounted for between the two entities. This agreement will be a helpful tool for future staff. The Gas Commission agreement was approved to be on the consent agenda for the next meeting.

Merit pay increases for P.W. Staff from 2024

The merit pay increases for Public Works staff were delayed last year because the city's newly hired administrator did not know where the budget was yet at that time. This was explained to the staff who were very understanding and were told it will be reviewed again in 2025. Administrator Redepenning confirmed there is room in the payroll budget and with their performance evaluations, staff is deserving of a 5% increase. Council agreed and since this agenda item was delayed one month, the council agreed to back pay both employees from July 2025 for the 5% increase. Council agreed to add the merit pay increase to the consent agenda for approval at the next meeting.

2026 Preliminary Budget/Discuss Levy

The preliminary budget and levy report was shared for council to have and review for future budget meetings.

Council member Nagel left the meeting at 8:33 p.m. and returned at 8:34.

2nd Street Pub Façade Application

Council member Nagel confirmed that the façade also refers to the side facing the alley, if the applicant was a commercial business. The City's grant contribution of the facade will be \$2,000. Council agreed that the 2nd Street Pub façade application will be added to the consent agenda for approval at the next council meeting.

Property Insurance Renewal

Council was informed the insurance rates will decrease once the sale of the property with the school is complete. That will remove coverage for the field, dug outs, and sheds. Council agreed to add the insurance renewal to the consent agenda to be approved at the next meeting.

Appointing 2 fire representatives and 1 alternative to Fire Board

Council was encouraged to appoint an additional member, so there would be two voting members and an alternate for the City's representation for the Goodhue Community Fire Truck Association Board. Currently Council Member Benda is the only board member appointed. A motion was made by Council member Schmit to appoint Brunkhorst as the second Fire Board representative and Mayor Valenzuela as an alternate to the Fire Board, seconded by Nagel, motion carried, 4-0-0.

Public Works Report

Public Works Director Mandelkow reported that the water tower work begins tomorrow, August 14th. The tower is being drained to make repairs and overcoat. The fire departments were notified. The pickleball court cracks are not bad enough to take a crack filler so they gave us a glue type sealant to apply with a squeegee. Staff will be taking care of that maintenance. The poles are also bending in for the nets and need to see what the company decides to do. If they do nothing, staff will replace poles differently or go with portable system so they can be removed off season. The fence ordinance should be updated to reflect how the homeowners of twin homes can proceed with plans when they have a shared midline. Having a 5' setback from the midline leaves a 10' unused section in the middle and is unusable. Language should be changed to address the mutual agreement between neighbors with common middle fence or privacy fences. The alley repair behind the bar is done and still working on potholes in city parking lot, bike trail and 4th Avenue. The alley behind the Habitat for Humanity home will be done next week.

Public Works staff found a used dump truck, discussed this with council, and are going to look at it and will report back at the next meeting.

Mandelkow was invited to present at the Region 5 EPA partner meeting to do a presentation for the impressive work done with Goodhue County Soil and Water on the City's nitrate level mitigation. People commented on how well the City of Goodhue worked in partnership with Goodhue County Soil and Water to implement nitrate reducing practices with landowners farming within the Drinking Water Supply Management Area. The City's goal was to get 80% of the acres in the DWSMA but unlike any other city, they got 97% enrolled.

The Soil and Water Conservation is having a barbeque and is inviting landowners. They are asking for a council member to speak. Council Member Brunkhorst volunteered and will speak on Jason's behalf.

Administrator Status Report

Administrator Redepinning advised council that our representative has sent a letter to the Lions Club requesting a donation to match an EDA grant for implementing a disc golf course.

Redepinning requested an update on the Thomforde property from Council Member Schmit from his verbal violation discussion with Thomforde's. Schmit replied that everything we asked them to do was done.

Council Comments

Council Member Schmit asked about the status of the Short-term rental mentioned in administrator status report. Redepinning commented that no building permit has been applied for at this time and the ordinance would need to be changed if short-term rental was going to be allowed.

Mayor Comments

None

Other

Administrative Assistant Luhman informed the council that the donation letter for Community Express and Courier Services is a request for donations. This organization is working on getting their paperwork back for their 501(c)3 status. They are currently looking for donations and want to work with city on SMIF Small City grants and will be given our EDA contact information.

Council Member Brunkhorst elaborated on the Community Express and Courier Services operations of the organization and gave some examples of how they have helped members of our community.

Adjournment

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made at 9:30 pm by Council Member Brunkhorst, seconded by Nagel, motion carried 4-0-0.

Respectfully submitted,
Lori Luhman, Administrative Assistant/City Clerk