

August 11, 2025

The City Council met for a regular rescheduled council meeting at the Walnut Grove City offices on Monday, August 11, 2025 at 6:00PM.

Present: Ron Stubbe, Dylan Albertson and Sue West

Absent: Dale Shannon & Yeng Yang

Also Present: Beth Bjorklund, David Graham, Kristy Baker, Andy Foster, Tyler Hansen, David Bender, Sheriff Jason Jacobson, Dillon Robinson, David Hoyt, Justin Knakmuhs, Adrienne Kletscher, Shalayna Knapper, Rick and Lori Wakefield, Randy & Darla Larson, Allan Anderson, Wes Hafner, Robyn Hansen, Mark Johnson, Carol & Joey Johnson, Greg Lund & Leonard McLaughlin.

Mayor Ron Stubbe called the meeting to order at 6:00PM.

Several of the residents were present to express their disappointment with police chief Grahams upcoming resignation. Randy & Darla Larson, Joey & Carol Johnson, Allan Anderson & Wes Hafner all stated that they believed Graham did a great job as police chief and they were unhappy with the council that they did not do more to try to convince him to stay on. The council responded that Grahams reasons for leaving were personal and it was up to him whether or not he wanted to share his reason for leaving with the residents. Because of the reason Graham stated he was leaving, the council did not believe they could change his mind.

On July 23, 2025 Chief Graham had responded to a call from the resident stating there was an RV across the street from their house with a family that appeared to be staying there for the night and they wanted the RV to move. Graham talked to the owners of the RV who were eating supper and having a cocktail and they told him they were planning to move on the next morning. Graham told them they were not violating any ordinance and they could stay where they were. However, the residents weren't happy with this so they contacted a council member, who then contacted the mayor and he said he would go talk to the RV owners. Mayor Stubbe stated that he went over and sat down in the RV to talk to them. He stated that he did not demand that they move, he simply asked if they would be willing to move their camper to the community center parking lot to make everyone happy. The family agreed that they would move and Stubbe stated they were very understanding about it. Several of the residents at the council meeting stated they did not believe the mayor acted appropriately by not supporting the police chief's decision. The fact is that these people would be in violation of the City Code Chapter 7.4. In November 2024 the council passed ordinance 190 amending Chapter 7 of the city code authorizing the city council to by resolution, pass rules for all city parks and city property. On January 13, 2025, the council passed Resolution 2025-0113, Rule 5 stating that there will be no overnight camping in the city parks or on city property.

Anderson, Johnsons, & Larsons also stated that they did not believe the council offered up enough help to the Police Chief by expecting him to cover calls 24/7. The council responded that they never asked him to cover calls or expected him to be on call 24/7 but if he was available to respond when called he could. Graham never brought it to the council that he needed or wanted to hire a part-time officer to assist him or bring it up at budget time to include hiring a part time officer. In fact, Chief Graham is paid a minimum of 2 hours for any call out he responds to even if it only takes 20 minutes. To date he has only responded to 7 call outs so far in 2025 and about 10 of them in 2024.

Most of the residents in attendance commented that they felt it was important to have a police chief on staff for Walnut Grove. The council responded that the decision to discuss the replacement of the police chief or contract with the county was on the agenda to discuss in the meeting and that at this point, there has not been any discussion on whether or not the city will try to hire a replacement. The council believes that it will not be fast process to do so and that is why they scheduled a meeting with Sheriff Jacobson to discuss contract options for law enforcement coverage at least for the interim.

Tyler Hansen was present from the EDA was present to discuss and offer that the EDA received for the city lot on 3rd Street. The person making the offer is looking to build a shop with living quarters and a slab to park his RV with hookups to live in while his family is in town and while

they are building the shop/ house. The council explained that they would need to apply for a variance for a special permit to do this but first would need to have signatures in support from the neighboring properties. The council will discuss this more at the next meeting if the person would like to move forward with his offer.

Sheriff Jason Jacobson attended the meeting to discuss the option of contracting with Redwood County Sheriff's department for law enforcement services. Jacobson explained that there were a couple of options for contracting with the county. The city could contract with the Sheriff's department at a rate of \$75.00/ hour. They could choose to contract for the deputies to patrol a minimum of 15 hours per week. These hours would include all report time and any hours the deputies were in court for a Walnut Grove case. The cost to do so would be \$4875 per month. The other option would be to contract with the department to only cover any Walnut Grove calls. The council determined they would like to review the contract and they will get back to Sheriff Jacobson after the next meeting.

Adrienne Kletscher and Shalayna Knapper were present to discuss the 2025 Village Fair. The city contributed \$2000 for the kids activities and helpers and the City was the fiscal agent. They received generous contributions from Highwater Ethanol, the Wilder Museum, the Loggers, and Meadowlands and are expecting a contribution from the Pageant. With this contribution, all expenses associated with the Village Fair will be covered. Adrienne asked the council to consider a \$5000 contribution to the Village for in 2026. The council will take this into consideration. Also, they asked if the council could check into updating the electrical in the city park to offer more 50-amp services for food trucks. The council agreed that they would see what could be done about the electrical.

David Hoyt and Justin Knakmuhs were present to discuss the possibility of the city working with the Loggers to replace sidewalks on Main Street and repair the electrical necessary for new street lights. The council had talked about this with Owen from Bolton & Menk in the past. The council determined they would like to meet with Owen again with a couple of the council members and Dave & Justin to look at options and determine if this would be a project the city could make work. The clerk will let the council know when the meeting will take place and see which two members would like to attend.

Fire Chief Andy Foster was present to discuss the department. Foster reported that the department is planning an open house event on September 13 with many kids activities along with a band in the evening.

The fire department received notification that they will be receiving a \$10,000 grant for turn out gear. Foster reported he isn't allowed to share any more information about the grant until they make a public notification on this first.

Kristy Baker, Ambulance director was present to discuss the departments plans to see about getting a permanent prescription drop box and sharps container drop container. She will keep the council informed at the next meeting.

Bar & Grill manager, David Bender was present to discuss his plans for the Bar & Grill. The first event he plans to focus on will be Monday night football on Monday, September 8. He reported that his focus right now will be on learning the POS system.

Discussion was held on the 2026 budget worksheet and 2026 wages, rates & fee schedule. The council will make any final revisions at the September meeting. Motion by Dylan Albertson, seconded by Sue West to approve the Dec. 8, 2025, 7PM Truth in Taxation Public Hearing date & time. All voted in favor, motion carried.

Discussion was held on the September regular council meeting night. The clerk will be on vacation and asked if it could be rescheduled to Tuesday night instead. The council approved changing the date for the September regular council meeting to Tuesday, September 9, 2025 at 6PM.

Motion by Sue West, seconded by Dylan Albertson to approve claims 45303-45353. All voted in favor, motion carried.

Motion by Dylan Albertson, seconded by Sue West to approve the Minutes for July 21, 2025 regular meeting and July 24, 2025 & July 28, 2025 Special Meetings. All voted in favor, motion carried.

Motion by Dylan Albertson, seconded by Sue West to adjourn. All voted in favor, motion carried.

Paula McGarvey
Clerk-Treasurer