

City Council Meets:

City Reviews Final Budget, Sets Special Meeting To Approve

By Mary Kilen

Stanley City Council held their budget hearing and regular council meeting on Tuesday, Sept. 9. Highlights of the meeting included discussion on the final budget for 2026, discussion on the street by the high school, visitors' committee funding recommendations and updates on city projects.

Budget Hearing

The meeting started with the budget hearing for the 2026 final budget. When the council approved their preliminary budget, there were a number of things they wanted further clarification on before approving the final budget.

The preliminary budget included a compensation increase for the mayor and council members, as well as several other entities. The council asked for figures from area cities to compare before making a decision. The mayor is currently compensated at \$1200 per quarter and council members at \$700. That figure is low compared to many cities. Some of those also compensate per meeting rather than on a monthly or quarterly basis. The council moved to approve the preliminary budget increase to \$1200 per quarter for council members and \$2100 for the mayor.

Based on the study of other cities, the council moved to keep the compensation at the same for planning and zoning and special assessment committee members. They moved to increase the judge's salary from \$700 to \$750 per month.

They are leaving the potential contribution to the MCMC building project in the budget to be allocated as street repair.

They are asking for more information regarding the wage increase for the librarian and substitute librarian.

They have reduced the anticipated oil and gas revenue to \$3.8 million.

The park district submitted a request for \$572,000 for their budget to cover equipment replacement, a storage building at the cemetery, cement work, replacement of the pavilion in Wilson park and pool equipment. This request is submitted based on the repayment requirements using the district's sales tax collection for the loan for the new pool. The council moved to leave these requests in the park budget as submitted.

The council also discussed the funding and city/owner cost shares for Districts 57, 58, 59 and 60. The city needs to decide if they will be funding through SRF funds or city loans. They also need to decide on the special assessment shares. That includes the potential ability to not special assess the streets in Districts 59 and 60, rather using city funds. The council believes they may have that ability.

The council also discussed transferring funds from the water operating and sewer operating accounts, noting that the amount transferred has little impact on project cost assistance and causes the account to run in the negative. They will need to clarify this process before taking action.

There was a payment received for 2009 water sales adjustment from the water well sales. They are looking for clarification if this is a one time payment or if there will be payments for other years coming before deciding what to do with that income.

The expenditures are exceeding revenues in the garbage operating account. This account includes the compactor, landfill and disposal costs. Usage at the landfill has been high, with PW Director Brown saying that the red roll-off they offer does not usually last a week. The city has zero fees at the landfill for residents and it has been very busy. The council said they may need to look at fees for using the garage dumps or encourage residents to use more than one tote.

With the number of items undecided and the changes recommended for the budget, the council set a special meeting for Tuesday, Sept. 23 at 6:30 p.m. They will also make a final determination on the levy information at that time.

Planning & Zoning Recommendations

Planning and Zoning committee chairman Todd Heidbreder reported on the committee's meeting the previous evening. They had a variance request from Chad Neff of Memory Fireworks, requesting an extension on the requirement for a hard surfaced parking lot on their location by Dollar General. The original permit required that work be done by April 7, 2026. He was requesting a one year extension, but the committee moved to grant a 120-day extension for the paving with the installation of a concrete apron and approach into the business before June 26.

The council discussed the original terms of the variance and felt those should still apply. As a result, they moved to deny the variance extension.

The second item on their agenda was a replat of city-owned lots in the Rian Addition. The replat would realign property lines between Lots 28 and 29 with the apartment building, lining up with the existing concrete and driveway. The city owns Lots 27 and 28. The council also discussed squaring up the property line between 27 and 28. They moved to make that change, meaning that the plat will need to be redone and

sent back to the county for review before final action is taken on this replat.

Heidbreder also discussed the issues with mailboxes, saying he returned to the post office for clarification on their rules. He has asked for a map of the routes, saying those are being redrawn. He said the committee will look at potential ordinances and enforcement regarding where and how mailboxes are placed along the routes in town. The council thanked him for following up on this issue. The committee will continue to review this through the winter.

Heidbreder also reported on concerns about a gravel pit located within the city's extraterritorial area. They had received a call about noxious weeds. With the city being under 3,000 population they fall under the county weed board. That board has a list of rules, including inspections and treatment of noxious weeds. Heidbreder said they met with the owner, who provided them with the receipt and description of work done with summer spraying. He also has the fall spraying scheduled. That provides compliance with the current ordinances. Heidbreder said the committee is looking at ways to incorporate the county documentation regarding noxious weeds into their ordinances. The county is also currently working on their ordinances, so they will likely wait until that is complete.

Planning and Zoning Administrator Amanda Dennis presented the council with a list of permits for approval. The council moved to approve the following building permits: 601 Frontier Lane, detached garage; 912 2nd St. SE, driveway extension; 715 S. Main St., patio and hot tub deck; 615 Frontier Lane, new deck; 403 4th St. SE, extend driveway apron; and 403 6th Ave. SE, new front deck.

Dennis reported she will be at continuing education in Fargo from September 17-19 and in Bismarck for assessor training from September 29 through October 1.

Dakota Dust-Tex Quote

At last month's meeting, City Auditor Ada Arneson had provided the council with information on costs regarding their current rug service and supplies contract for both city hall and the public works building. Last year, the city spent \$17,873.70 for those buildings with Vestis and \$14,494.37 this year to date. Arneson said that the agreement with Vestis has expired.

She reached out to Bryan Jones with Dakota Dust-Tex for a quote for service on the buildings. His company is based in Bismarck, but services customers in the New Town area currently. The only service currently provided that they do not offer is first aid cabinet service. He provided cost saving estimates of \$400/month for city hall and \$500 month for the public works building.

The council moved to accept the price sheets provided from Dakota Dust-Tex with no long-term contract for the services.

Special Assessment Items

The council moved to approve the loan resolutions for the Country Estates Sewer and Water Districts.

The council reviewed the proposed payback to owners for Special Assessment Districts 38, 39, 42 and 43. Joan Hollekim reported that working with the city attorneys, they have compiled information regarding the final bond payments for these districts. That has resulted in property owners paying special assessments that they will now be refunded. The refunds will come with a letter from the city explaining these payments. They will be refunding \$27,616.29 for District 38, \$22,992.18 for District 39, \$48,906.09 for District 42 and \$143,225.42 for District 43.

Hollekim explained that they have the funding available to pay off Districts 45 and 46. As a result, the council moved to cancel the 2026 and 2027 specials that have not yet been levied for those districts, contingent on the delinquent taxes being paid into District 46.

They also looked at the SRF draw request for District 56 in CIP2. The first draw needs to be taken one year from the date the funds are secured, meaning January of 2026. By taking that first draw it secures the remaining funds if needed for the project. The council moved to approve making the first draw on the funding.

Comstock Construction

At previous meetings, the council has discussed the condition of the street on the east side of the school's new addition. Councilman Chad Hysjulien and PW Director Dave Brown met with a representative from Comstock Construction, Superintendent Tim Holte and school board member Robby Nichols to discuss the damage to the street with wheel ruts and additional damage left behind.

The city agrees the road was not in great shape. They had recommended replacement from the drive behind the school to the new driveway for the new addition, suggesting that if the school paid for it then everyone in the district helps cover the cost. The district is asking for cost share on the project.

The school secured a cost estimate from Knife River at just under \$60,000 for the work. The council noted that the street was not new and they wanted to find a way to work together with the school. They

also noted that if they had plans to replace that street in the near future, maintenance would have been sufficient.

The council moved to offer to split the costs with the city's share covered from the infrastructure fund.

Visitors' Fund Requests

The council moved to concur with the visitors' fund committee and approved funding in the amount of \$1,000 for the Stanley Commercial Club for the Grapes and Grains on September 13, and \$5,000 for the ND Equine Association for the Cowboy Fall Festival on September 27 and 28 at the South Complex.

Gaming Permits

At the request of the Stanley Wrestling Club, the council moved to rescind the gaming permit for SWC that was approved at the previous meeting.

Special Event Liquor License

The council moved to approve the special event liquor license for the 5 Spot Bar for the Grapes and Grains on September 13. Chief Kevin Litten asked that based on the new ordinance that anything related to special event licenses be referred to his office. The council had reviewed this application because it involved closing part of the alley for the dance at the end of the walk.

R&T Appointment

The council moved to reappoint Jesse Weyrauch to the R&T board.

Bid Forms For Rian Lots

The council was presented with a revised bid form for the sale of city lots in the John Rian Addition. This was drafted to address council concerns regarding sale prices, substantial improvement and special assessments the city has paid on those lots. The council tabled this to the October meeting to give members time to read through the options presented.

Engineering Updates

Patrick Carabello of Brosz Engineering updated the council on current projects.

The 5th St. SE commercial reconstruction project by the post office is now completed. Things to complete include seeding restoration. Carabello also discussed the costs incurred by the contractor to redo the one section in an intersection. The council discussed the issues that may have led to that being insufficient and moved to deny the request to cover any of the additional costs.

Work on capital improvement project phase three continues. Concrete work began on Tuesday. Subgrade was checked and there were some issues regarding needed sub-cuts.

Carabello also discussed the water line splices on 3rd Ave., saying that they found that some had already been spliced. The contractor may ask about cost sharing on this work that was required by the city.

Carabello said they should be on pace to get the area paved soon.

The council moved to approve pay application number three in the amount of \$534,731.91 for this project.

Contractors had returned to put the second lift of pavement in the John Rian Addition. There was an issue on Prairie Drive that had to be excavated and prepared for paving. Paving is planned for completion with concrete to follow. Contractors have also begun site clean up and other items to prepare for substantial completion walkthroughs.

The council discussed the issues that happened with paving in that area, including compaction reports. Carabello said that they use the DOT specifications with projects and that does not require that. The council discussed adding that provision in future projects to help eliminate some of the issues they have found in recent projects. The council moved to wait for the contractor to sign the pay application request before taking action on that request. With the substantial completion expected before the next meeting, council members Chad Hysjulien and Jesse Weyrauch will be contacted when they schedule the walkthrough.

Contractors returned to try to repair the hill on 3rd Street that was insufficient after the multi-community chip seal. They were concerned they would damage it more so suggested waiting until after winter to look at it again. They also apologized for the condition of the work and offered to take a pay deduction. The council felt the work needs to be made right and acceptable before they make final payment on the project.

Second Reading On Ordinance

The council held second reading and adoption of the change to the ordinance on rules and order of business. The change addresses adding the public comment section to the agenda.

Auditor Bond Limit

The council approved the annual resolution setting the auditor's bond limit.

Library Request

The library board submitted a request for compensation of library board of directors. They were asking for \$150 per quarter. The board meets quarterly. They are currently compensated at \$100 per quarter. The council moved to change their compensation to \$125 per meeting to make it consistent with the planning and zoning and special assessment committee compensation.

Audit Report

The council moved to accept the 2024 audit report.

Police Report

Chief Kevin Litten reported the department has received the Back the Blue Grant in the amount of \$16,917.30 which will be divided between the officers in the amount of \$2,819.55.

He reported on calls for service, saying the department has completed 1,075 case reports and have had almost 5,000 calls for service.

He also reported on recent activity, including a call for an intoxicated driver on August 25. Officer Salinas arrested the driver for DUI and suspended license. The same driver was found on August 29, operating the same vehicle. The driver fled and was finally stopped near Ross. That stop resulted in charges of DUI refusal, suspended license and seventeen other minor offenses. The vehicle was also impounded.

Officer Pesik stopped a vehicle the previous evening. That resulted in a probable cause search, finding a firearm, eight pounds of marijuana, one half ounce of cocaine, and other charges.

Litten said the officers are doing a fantastic job to keep the community safe.

Public Works

Public Works director Dave Brown presented the council with bids for HDPE double walled pipe for the lagoon erosion repairs. The pipe takes four to six weeks to be delivered. The council moved to accept the low bid of Core & Main in the amount of \$61,962.00 delivered. He will also be securing bids to install the pipe.

Brown presented the council with a bid of \$18,500 from Kemper Construction to change out a bad hydrant by the old lumberyard. The city has the materials on hand. The bid will cover the hydrant and gate valve replacement as well as patching the street and repairing the curb. The council moved to approve the quote.

Auditor Updates

City Auditor Ada Arneson informed the council their November meeting regular date will be November 11, Veterans Day. The offices will be closed that day. The council moved to hold their November meeting on Monday, Nov. 10 at 7:00 p.m.

Council Concerns

Councilman Chad Hysjulien reported he met with Brandi Larson on EDC items. They discussed for clear verbiage on application deadlines. Hysjulien also discussed their meetings, which are currently held in a private business. He recommended the city suggest they set a day and time and then use the council chambers for their meetings. The city would be able to help them set up the meetings and also give them access to using Teams for those that need to attend virtually. The council also discussed the application process and payback responsibilities if the recipient does not meet the required guidelines. They discussed that the forms need to be more understandable. Hysjulien will forward the information from the meeting to the city attorneys to look at as they have been working on the application.

Hysjulien also reported the city fire department is waiting on delivery of a new city pumper truck, replacing a 1991 truck with an estimated \$20,000 value if they were to sell it. Hysjulien suggested the city could retain the truck for the public works department to repurpose it. PW Director Brown said the truck's usage could include when they are working on the lift stations to provide pressure for the maintenance work. The council moved to retain the truck and turn it over to public works after the delivery of the new fire department pump truck.

Memorials Received By Mountrail Community Food Pantry

The Mountrail Community Food Pantry received a donation in memory of George Chambers and Mickey Bures from Kenny and Cleo Bykonen.

Donations are very appreciated and may be mailed to 6989 84th Ave NW, Stanley 58784.

Card of Thanks

The Mountrail Community Food Pantry would like to thank The Five Spot Bar, The Riv, and The Hilltop/ City of Ross for choosing our pantry for some of their gaming funds! How wonderful! Thank you to the patrons who support these games. Gaming funds help so much with our food purchases.

Thank you and God bless you, c Mary Dennis, Director



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A Community Of Possibilities

City leaders from across the state will gather for the North Dakota League of Cities (NDLC) 2025 Annual Conference. The event will bring together municipal officials, staff, and partner members for training sessions, networking opportunities, and sharing best practices. The conference offers a diverse educational experience for city leaders with tailored sessions on topics such as grants and funding resources, housing challenges, rural food access, and the future of artificial intelligence.

Keynote speaker Matt Lehrman will deliver a message on Community of Possibilities, offering insights on how municipal leaders can unite residents, spark opportunities, and build consensus to strengthen their cities. Lehrman is a civic facilitator and leadership coach who helps municipal governments lead more effectively amid division and dysfunction. Learn more: mattlehrman.com.

Secretary Howe Launches “I Voted” Sticker Design Contest

North Dakota Secretary of State Michael Howe is excited to announce the launch of the “I Voted - More Than Just a Sticker” statewide design contest that invites North Dakotans of all ages to create the next official “I Voted” sticker. The contest is part of the Office of the Secretary of State's efforts to encourage North Dakotans to become more civically involved in decisions that impact them, their families, and neighbors. The winning sticker will make its debut at polling locations across the state during the June 9, 2026, Primary Election.

“This contest represents more than just designing a sticker, it's an opportunity for North Dakotans to become part of our state's election history,” said Secretary Howe. “This is a unique opportunity for artists to contribute their talents and ideas to North Dakota's electoral process, and I am looking forward to seeing the incredible creativity that North Dakotans will bring to this contest.” Submissions will be accepted online or by mail from September

All Breeds Cattle Tour To Feature Twelve Breeders

Twelve seedstock producers will be featured on the North Dakota Stockmen's Association's (NDSA) 38th annual All Breeds Cattle Tour October 6-7 in the Steele, ND, area. “We are excited to welcome everyone to attend the 38th annual tour,” said Tour Chairman Jaxon Deckert of Arena. “This year's All Breeds Cattle Tour will feature an impressive lineup of diverse cattle breeds and be hosted by dedicated producers who are focused on delivering high-quality livestock genetics for both seedstock and commercial operations.”

Monday, Oct. 6

Registration begins at 7:30 a.m., Monday, October 6, at the tour headquarters, the Steele Inn and Suites in Steele, ND. The bus will depart from there at 8:15 a.m. for a stop at Koester Red Angus of Steele, ND, where guest Thompson Angus of Kintyre, ND, will also be on display and breakfast will be served. From there, the tour will make stops at C Diamond Inc. of Dawson, ND, and Weigel Angus Ranch of Kintyre, ND.

Following lunch and a visit to Lazy C Diamond Ranch of Kintyre, ND, the tour will travel to TLC Vetsch Angus Ranch of Hazelton, ND, Kalberer Ranch of Hazelton, ND, and, finally, Bichler Simmentals of Linton, ND.

A 5:30 p.m. social and 6 p.m. supper at Bichler Simmentals' sale facility will conclude the day.

Tuesday, Oct. 7

The tour will resume October 7 with a 7:30 a.m. registration and an 8:15 a.m. departure from the Steele Inn and Suites for a stop at H7 Angus Ranch of Driscoll, ND, where breakfast will be served. From H7 Angus, the tour will make stops

“The Annual Conference is a where city leaders come together to share ideas, strengthen networks, and access training that helps them lead more effectively,” said Matt Gardner, Executive Director of the North Dakota League of Cities. “It's an opportunity to learn from one another and gain the tools needed to tackle the unique challenges facing their communities.”

The conference will culminate in a celebration of excellence by honoring outstanding communities and individuals. A highlight of the ceremony will be the announcement of the City of the Year, along with the Leadership Excellence Award and the Lifetime Achievement Award.

The event will be held September 17-19 at the Bismarck Event Center, with the awards ceremony taking place on Friday, September 19, at 12:30 p.m. Media partners are invited to attend. Learn more: ndlc.org/2025annualconference.

15 through November 15, 2025. A panel will select the top designs, and the public will be able to vote for the winning sticker, which will be announced in March 2026. In addition to having their sticker on display statewide when worn by North Dakota voters, the winner will receive a professionally framed copy of their winning design and recognition from Secretary Howe during the official sticker unveiling ceremony that will take place in Bismarck.

For complete contest rules, submission guidelines and to access the official entry form, visit www.sos.nd.gov/civicingagement.

View a video contest invitation from Secretary Howe on the North Dakota Secretary of State YouTube channel.

The last statewide voting sticker design contest was sponsored by the North Dakota County Auditors Association. Fourth graders were invited to submit designs, and the winning sticker was revealed for the 2020 election cycle.

at Vollmer Angus Ranch of Wing, ND, and then Koski Land & Cattle of Wing, ND.

The tour will conclude with lunch and a visit at Deckert Simmental Ranch of Arena, ND.

The Deckert operation is also where the grand door prize, a drive-through, all-terrain and utility-terrain vehicle gate, will be given away. Participants must be present to win.

A block of rooms has been reserved at the Steele Inn and Suites. To make reservations and receive a discounted room rate, call (701) 475-4478 and mention the All Breeds Cattle Tour.

There is no cost to attend. Pre-registration is not required, but is encouraged for meal and bus planning purposes. To ensure a spot on the bus and to be entered in a special incentive drawing for a \$250 cash prize, call Jade Koski, NDSA special projects director, at (701) 223-2522 or e-mail jkoski@ndstockmen.org by September 22.

The All Breeds Cattle Tour is an annual project of the NDSA Seedstock Council. The original tour began in the same area where the 2025 event will be held.

Big Bend Township Meeting Notice

Big Bend Township
Board of Supervisors will
hold the Budget and Hearing
Meeting at 9:00 a.m. on
Friday, October 3, 2005
at the New Town City
Council meeting room.

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Date: **Monday, September 22**
Next Month: *Monday, Oct. 27*

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