



# CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Richfield, Minnesota

## Council Regular Meeting

January 27, 2026

<b>ITEM #1</b>	<b>CALL TO ORDER</b>
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The meeting was called to order by Mayor Supple at 7:00 p.m. on January 27, 2026, in the Council Chambers.

*Council Present:* Mary Supple, Mayor; Walter Burk, Sean Hayford Oleary, Rori A. Coleman-Woods

*Remote Access:* Council Member Christensen participated remotely via interactive technology for an excused medical reason.

*Staff Present:* Katie Rodriguez, City Manager; Jay Henthorne, Director of Public Safety; Joe Griffin, Deputy Director of Public Safety; Andrew Spear, IT Manager; Siobhan Tolar, Associate sitting in for Mary Tietjen, City Attorney; and Michelle Friedrich, City Clerk.

*Guests:* None

<b>ITEM #2</b>	<b>PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE</b>
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Mayor Supple led the Pledge of Allegiance. Mayor Supple noted there were many community members wishing to participate in Open Forum and reviewed acceptable meeting etiquette and requested that the audience listen respectfully, to not disrupt the speaker by clapping, cheering, or booing. Mayor Supple noted follow-up information from the last Council meeting in the City Manager’s report and invited residents to join the remainder of the meeting.

Mayor Supple asked for a moment of silence for Andrew Pretti.

<b>ITEM #3</b>	<b>APPROVAL OF AGENDA</b>
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**MOTION:** made by Council Member Hayford Oleary, seconded by Council Member Burk to add agenda item 11a, Resolution Ratifying Participation in Municipal Prosecutors’ Amicus Curiae Brief, and approve the agenda as amended.

Voting Aye: Mayor Supple, Council Member Burk, Council Member Hayford Oleary, Council Member Christensen (remote), and Council Member Coleman-Woods.

Motion carried: 5-0

<b>ITEM #4</b>	<b>APPROVAL OF MINUTES</b>
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**MOTION:** made by Council Member Coleman-Woods, seconded by Council Member Hayford Oleary to approve the minutes of the (1) City Council Work Session from January 13, 2026, and (2) City Council Regular Meeting from January 13, 2026, and (3) Council Special Meeting from January 15, 2026.

Voting Aye: Mayor Supple, Council Member Burk, Council Member Hayford Oleary, Council Member Christensen (remote), and Council Member Coleman-Woods.

Motion carried: 5-0

<b>ITEM #5</b>	<b>OPEN FORUM</b>
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Mayor Supple noted the number of individuals wishing to speak during Open Forum and extending the Open Forum period from 30 minutes to 50 minutes. Staff noted an ADA accommodation request for a time limit extension. Mayor Supple noted the request was included within the extended period to 50 minutes and reviewed the three-minute time limit for public comments and explained the use of time warning cards to alert the speaker when their time is almost expired. Attendees were reminded to listen respectfully to all speakers. Instructions were given for speakers to state their name and city of residence before speaking.

**MOTION:** made by Council Member Coleman-Woods, seconded by Council Member Burk to extend the Open Forum period from 30 minutes to 50 minutes, extending the Open Forum period until 8:47 p.m.; and extending the three-minute time limit to a four-minute time limit for an ADA accommodation request.

Voting Aye: Mayor Supple, Council Member Burk, Council Member Hayford Oleary, Council Member Christensen (remote), and Council Member Coleman-Woods.

Motion carried: 5-0

Seventeen residents addressed the Council during the Open Forum opportunity.

Besty Stark, Richfield resident, reflected on changes in the community over time, and identifies increased diversity as a positive development. Ms. Stark described immigrant families as contributing positively to neighborhood life and shared a personal example of neighborly assistance during a winter snowstorm. Ms. Stark expressed concern that some immigrant residents have recently limited their public presence due to fear related to immigration enforcement and noted community efforts to support affected neighbors, concluding with pride in the community’s collective response.

Debbie Nordmarken, Richfield resident, raised concerns about a criminal case involving the removal of a 14-year-old student from a classroom by a non-teacher, noting limited public information and a lack of detailed communication from school district leadership. Ms. Nordmarken referenced recent court proceedings in which the defendant waived a jury trial and received a sentence that did not include jail time or sex-offender registration and expressed concern about the judicial decision and its implications. Ms. Nordmarken questioned school and judicial accountability, requested greater transparency, and urged the city to voice concerns to both the school board and the judicial system regarding student safety and sentencing outcomes.

Alicia Tackes, Richfield resident, submitted documents electronically to the council prior to the meeting. Council received the documents electronically immediately prior to the start of the meeting. Ms. Tackes summarized public comments from the January 13 meeting regarding concerns about increased Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) activity in the city. Ms. Tackes noted all comments expressing opposition to the current enforcement presence and requests for city action related to law enforcement practices, data-sharing technology, and housing stability. Ms. Tackes submitted document(s) including comment feedback, relevant city code references, and actions taken by neighboring cities. Ms. Tackes thanked Council for their consideration of the materials submitted.

Coral Thacker, Richfield resident, referenced a poem, and expressed the need for hope, civic action, and change in response to current political, social, and environmental challenges. Ms. Thacker emphasized human equality, concerns about authoritarianism and profit-driven systems, and encouraged consideration of alternative governance ideas and referenced democratic socialism, and society that is humanitarian, and closer to democracy to promote equity and long-term sustainability. Ms. Thacker opined on countries that practice democratic socialism successfully.

Ashley Daniels, Richfield resident, thanked the council for recent funding allocated to VEAP for rent assistance and expressed concern about broader state and federal actions affecting housing security and immigration enforcement. Ms. Davis urged the Council to support a resolution calling for a statewide eviction moratorium, emergency measures to prevent mass displacement, and prioritization of community well-being, and asked the council to consider how it can use its authority to respond to current conditions and support residents during this period.

Birgit Johnson, Richfield resident, emphasized the importance of civic participation, including staying informed, voting, and speaking out when concerns arise, even when doing so feels uncomfortable. Ms. Johnson highlighted the role of public engagement in holding those in power accountable and protecting community safety. Ms. Johnson expressed concern about national political trends she characterized as authoritarian and warned that such developments could have long-term consequences beyond the local level. Ms. Johnson encouraged individuals to question authority, speak openly about perceived injustices, and remain engaged rather than disengaging for convenience.

Travis Mord, Richfield resident, addressed concerns regarding federal ICE activity and its effects on children in the community. Mr. Moore noted that children directly impacted by these events may experience lasting stress and trauma, which can affect development and resilience. Mr. Moore expressed appreciation for recent reductions in ICE presence in Minnesota and encouraged the Council to take active steps to support children's sense of safety and trust. Mr. Moore suggested creating community spaces, partnerships with local providers, family forums, and ongoing events to help children and families recover, and offered to assist in these efforts.

Brianna Darling, Richfield resident, shared personal reflections on living in Richfield, appreciation for Richfield's community, expressed concern about ICE activity and its impact on families, and highlighted the contributions of the city's immigrant community, urging the Council to continue supporting and protecting residents.

Nicole Cleland, Richfield resident, whose family has deep roots in the community, shared concerns about ICE and Border Patrol activity in local parks and residential areas, describing personal experiences as a legal observer and the broader impact on residents and businesses. Ms. Cleland highlighted the community's efforts to support one another and expressed appreciation for the Council's leadership. Ms. Cleland requested information on the economic impact of ICE activity on the city and asked the Council to clarify what authority and measures the city can use to prevent

federal agencies from staging on city property, emphasizing the need to protect families, businesses, and community safety.

Patrick Jones, Richfield resident, expressed support for the city's collaboration with other municipalities to address issues such as preventing federal staging in public parks. Mr. Jones noted the importance of documenting impacts, including economic effects and lost school days, to help ensure these events are remembered and lessons are learned. Mr. Jones also referenced the January 23 statewide general strike and suggested that the city consider closure or participation in future similar events.

Geoff R, Richfield resident, acknowledged recent city efforts, including funding for eviction assistance through VEAP, but expressed concern that federal activity continues to impact neighborhoods. Geoff R opined on local law enforcement's response to reckless driving and federal enforcement presence and questioned the current police funding. Geoff R suggested reallocating resources to support community needs, including housing and basic services, to improve safety and well-being in the city.

Michael Fulton, Richfield resident, spoke in support of continued community engagement on current issues. Mr. Fulton expressed support for city actions that could limit ICE access to public spaces and for the removal of surveillance technologies such as Flock and opined on law enforcement limitations with federal agencies. Mr. Fulton also voiced support for ongoing advocacy for a statewide eviction moratorium and thanked the Council for its responsiveness to public comments and for the recent funding for VEAP.

Landon McKay, Richfield resident, spoke in support of the city's efforts to limit cooperation with ICE, including reconsidering the use of Flock cameras in the community. Mr. McKay commended Council for taking actionable steps within their authority and expressed support for continued advocacy and advocating for a statewide eviction moratorium by the governor. Mr. McKay highlighted ongoing community efforts to provide food and rent assistance and noted that local resources are limited, and additional support is needed to prevent evictions and protect residents.

Ben Brown, Richfield resident, shared concerns about ICE presence near local schools and daycare centers, citing a recent incident in a school pickup line. Mr. Brown emphasized the need for measures to keep ICE agents away from school areas and suggested that increased police presence could help. Mr. Brown also commented on broader concerns about authoritarian practices and the protection of certain groups under the law, urging action to ensure community safety around educational facilities.

Alicia Waters, Richfield resident, noted support of city's engagement with neighboring cities regarding federal agency presence and asking for information to be shared with residents about those efforts. Ms. Waters raised concerns about fear of ICE activity, including door-knocking and how dispatch and police respond to related calls. Ms. Waters encouraged long-term support for vulnerable community members, reiterated that challenges remain, and noted the upcoming caucuses as an opportunity for civic participation.

John Grabow, Richfield resident, described a specific case involving an immigrant community member who was reportedly issued a notice to appear for an ICE meeting and subsequently transported out of state, noting that a court order indicated the individual should not have been moved. Mr. Grabow explained the person was later returned to Minnesota and remains in custody. Mr. Grabow shared this account to illustrate that not all immigration enforcement actions occur in public and to highlight ongoing community concern about federal enforcement activities affecting residents.

Teresa Guthrie, Richfield resident, shared a personal account of encountering federal immigration agents near their home and described feeling frightened when the agents photographed them on private property. They expressed concern about the impact of ICE activities on the community, including the use of public funds and police resources to support federal enforcement. The resident suggested reallocating those resources to support local community programs and assist affected residents. They emphasized the need for accountability for federal agents and expressed gratitude for the efforts of community members working to help and protect one another.

Mayor Supple thanked residents for participating in the Open Forum public comment opportunity.

<b>ITEM #6</b>	<b>PROCLAMATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS</b>
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- a. Proclamation recognizing January 26–30 as Winter Salt Week 2026.

Mayor Supple read the proclamation recognizing January 26-30 as Winter Salt Week and presented the proclamation to Deputy Public Works Director Chris Link.

- b. Richfield Foundation Presentation of Grants.

Lindsay Crye, Chair of the Richfield Foundation, presented the grants on behalf of the volunteer-led nonprofit and its board of trustees. Chair Crye highlighted the Foundation’s nearly 40-year history of supporting local nonprofits and neighborhood projects, with a mission to connect resources to community efforts and a vision of a vibrant, connected Richfield. Chair Crye noted the Foundation’s programs and announced the 2025 grant recipients.

<b>ITEM #7</b>	<b>CONSENT CALENDAR</b>
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City Manager Rodriguez presented the consent calendar.

- a. Approve Disbursements/Claims

<b>U.S. BANK</b>	<b>1-16-2026</b>
A/P Checks/ETF's: (1/3/2026 thru 1/16/2026)	\$1,637,722.23
Payroll (1/16/2026)	\$1,152,448.11
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$2,790,170.34</b>

- b. Second reading of an ordinance rezoning four parcels at approximately 76th Street and Morgan Avenue from R to MR-2 to facilitate construction of a new learning center for Minnesota Independence College & Community and related conditional use permit, variances, plat, and summary resolution.

**ORDINANCE NO. 2026-01  
 AN ORDINANCE RELATING TO ZONING; AMENDING APPENDIX I OF THE  
 RICHFIELD CITY CODE BY REZONING 2000, 2006 & 2018 - 76th STREET WEST AND  
 7532 MORGAN AVENUE SOUTH FROM LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL (R) TO  
 MULTIFAMILY RESIDENTIAL (MR-2)**

**RESOLUTION NO. 12403  
APPROVING SUMMARY PUBLICATION OF ORDINANCE 2026-01**

**RESOLUTION NO. 12405  
APPROVING A CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT AND VARIANCES FOR MINNESOTA  
INDEPENDENCE COLLEGE AND COMMUNITY AT 2000, 2006, 2018 - 76th STREET  
WEST AND 7532 MORGAN AVENUE SOUTH**

**RESOLUTION NO. 12406  
APPROVING A PRELIMINARY PLAT FOR MICC BULLDOG**

- c. Consider approval of the second reading and summary publication of an ordinance amending Section 300 and 310 of the Code of Ordinances to establish a Human Resources Department and create the position of Human Resources Director.

**ORDINANCE NO. 2026-02  
AN ORDINANCE AMENDING SECTION 300 AND SECTION 310  
OF THE CODE OF ORDINANCES RELATING TO THE CREATION OF  
THE HUMAN RESOURCES DEPARTMENT AND HUMAN RESOURCES DIRECTOR  
POSITION WITHIN THE CITY ORGANIZATION**

**RESOLUTION NO. 10404  
APPROVING SUMMARY PUBLICATION OF ORDINANCE 2026-02**

**MOTION:** made by Council Member Hayford Oleary, seconded by Council Member Burk to approve the consent calendar items 7a-c.

Voting Aye: Mayor Supple, Council Member Burk, Council Member Hayford Oleary, Council Member Christensen (remote), and Council Member Coleman-Woods.

Motion carried: 5-0

<b>ITEM #8</b>	<b>CONSIDERATION OF ITEMS, IF ANY, REMOVED FROM CONSENT CALENDAR</b>
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None.

<b>ITEM #9</b>	<b>PUBLIC HEARINGS</b>
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None.

<b>ITEM #10</b>	<b>PROPOSED ORDINANCES</b>
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- a. Adoption of an emergency ordinance limiting the use of city-owned property for civil immigration enforcement staging purposes.

Council Member Coleman-Woods presented the staff report recommending an emergency ordinance prohibiting the use of city-owned property for civil immigration enforcement activities, except as required by law or judicial warrant. The measure responds to recent federal enforcement activity in Richfield, aims to address public safety and access concerns, and provides clear

guidance for staff and residents. The ordinance does not limit federal enforcement or lawful judicial actions and would take effect immediately.

**ORDINANCE NO. 2026-03  
ADOPTION OF AN EMERGENCY ORDINANCE LIMITING THE USE OF CITY-OWNED PROPERTY FOR CIVIL IMMIGRATION ENFORCEMENT STAGING PURPOSES**

Council and staff reviewed and clarified the ordinance applies only to city-owned off-street properties, such as parking lots, and cannot restrict access to on-street parking or public areas inside city buildings. Staff further added private city-controlled spaces can be marked to indicate restrictions, but public lobbies and similar areas remain accessible.

**MOTION:** made by Council Member Coleman-Woods, seconded by Council Member Burk adopt Emergency Ordinance Limiting the Use of City-Owned Property for Civil Immigration Enforcement Staging Purposes.

Voting Aye: Mayor Supple, Council Member Burk, Council Member Hayford Oleary, Council Member Christensen (remote), and Council Member Coleman-Woods.

Motion carried: 5-0

<b>ITEM #11</b>	<b>RESOLUTIONS</b>
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- a. **ADDED ITEM:** Resolution Ratifying Participation in Municipal Prosecutors’ Amicus Curiae Brief.

Mayor Supple read the full Resolution Ratifying Participation in Municipal Prosecutors’ Amicus Curiae Brief.

**RESOLUTION 12407  
RATIFYING PARTICIPATION IN MUNICIPAL PROSECUTORS’ AMICUS CURIAE BRIEF**

City Manager Rodriguez thanked the Council, city staff, and prosecutors for their support. City Manager Rodriguez added that recent intercity meetings provided an opportunity that required quick vetting for the Council meeting and expressed gratitude for the Council’s prompt consideration and decision.

**MOTION:** made by Mayor Supple, seconded by Council Member Hayford Oleary to approve a resolution Ratifying Participation in Municipal Prosecutor’s Amicus Curiae Brief.

Voting Aye: Mayor Supple, Council Member Burk, Council Member Hayford Oleary, Council Member Christensen (remote), and Council Member Coleman-Woods.

Motion carried: 5-0

<b>ITEM #12</b>	<b>OTHER BUSINESS</b>
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- a. Consider City Council's approval of the Mayor's appointment of a Housing and Redevelopment Authority Commissioner.

Council Member Hayford Oleary presented the staff report considering the appointment of a Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA) commissioner. Council Member Hayford Oleary

added the HRA, established by resolution in 2011, consists of two council-appointed members and three mayor-appointed citizens, who also serve on the Economic Development Authority. Council Member Hayford Oleary noted applications were accepted from November 15 to December 15, 2025, and five residents were interviewed by three HRA/EDA members on January 20, 2026. Following the interviews, the members recommended Brett Stursa for the commissioner position.

Mayor Supple clarified that, according to the Economic Development Authority (EDA) bylaws, EDA members are the same members as Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA) members. Therefore, the appointment of the HRA commissioner also applies to the EDA, but the official appointment is made through the HRA.

**MOTION:** made by Council Member Hayford Oleary, seconded by Council Member Coleman-Woods to approve the appointment of Brett Stursa to the Housing and Redevelopment Authority commissioner for a 5-year term beginning Marcy 1, 2026, and expiring February 28, 2031. Voting Aye: Mayor Supple, Council Member Burk, Council Member Hayford Oleary, Council Member Christensen (remote), and Council Member Coleman-Woods.  
Motion carried: 5-0

Council thanked Chair Erin Vrieze Daniels for her service to the Housing and Redevelopment Authority for her time on the commission.

<b>ITEM #13</b>	<b>CITY MANAGER’S REPORT</b>
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City Manager Rodriguez provided a detailed update on responses to community concerns raised at recent open forums, emphasizing staff appreciation for resident engagement and acknowledging the challenges faced by both staff and residents regarding federal immigration enforcement activities.

Key actions completed included:

- Posting summaries of Council statements condemning ICE actions, both on the Richfield Recap and social media, with Mayor Supple issuing a separate statement over the weekend.
- Allocating \$50,000 in emergency rental assistance funding through VEP to support residents facing housing instability, with information shared with local landlords and staff monitoring potential future needs.
- Adoption of an emergency ordinance restricting the use of city-owned property, including parking lots and vacant lots, for ICE staging or operational activities, with public signage to be installed by Public Works. Staff clarified the ordinance does not apply to on-street parking or public areas inside city buildings.

Other initiatives and ongoing work:

- Sharing “know your rights” information and directing residents to ACLU Minnesota and the Attorney General’s office to report ICE activity, while noting the City cannot maintain its own database due to privacy and logistical concerns.
- Monitoring traffic stops involving ICE vehicles; officers follow standard protocols, including issuing warnings, and prioritize 911 calls over traffic enforcement.
- Filing a friend-of-the-court brief in a federal lawsuit regarding ICE activities; options to formally join the lawsuit are still under review.
- Legal review found an eviction moratorium is not permitted; the city is examining options to extend eviction notice requirements.

Regarding public safety and technology:

- Flock camera systems were reviewed and confirmed secure, with no federal data sharing, license plate data retained for 30 days (compared to the 60-day industry standard), and no Condor video-enabled cameras in use.
- Police are providing additional patrols at schools during drop-off and pick-up times, while the community has organized volunteers to observe and support students. Richfield Public Schools and Partnership Academy have temporarily adjusted programming, including online learning and suspension of certain field trips. Staff are exploring additional support for daycare providers through local networks.

City Manager Rodriguez highlighted ongoing collaboration across city departments, community organizations, and legal counsel to address public safety, housing, and community concerns while maintaining resident privacy and public trust.

Council and staff discussed potential options for addressing housing instability and evictions, particularly for residents affected by loss of income related to immigration enforcement. It was noted that the City’s legislative priorities already include requests for state law changes to extend the notice period for nonpayment-of-rent evictions from 14 to 30 days and to prohibit discrimination against tenants who receive Section 8 housing assistance. Council members suggested exploring adoption of similar tenant protections at the local level, as other cities have done. Additionally, the possibility of creating a city ordinance establishing an affirmative defense in nonpayment eviction cases was raised, allowing tenants to assert loss of income due to direct ICE involvement as a defense in court. Staff were encouraged to research the legal feasibility and implications of these options for further consideration.

<b>ITEM #14</b>	<b>COUNCIL DISCUSSION</b>
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a. Hats off to Hometown Hits.

Council Member Burk expressed appreciation for community members who are supporting one another during a time of crisis, noting strong local solidarity and willingness to help neighbors and others in need. Council Member Burk emphasized the importance of community response in addressing concerns related to federal actions and thanked those engaged in mutual support efforts.

Council Member Hayford Oleary reiterated Council Member Burk’s comments and encouraged community participation in the upcoming precinct caucuses.

Council Member Coleman-Woods offered positive community acknowledgment, highlighting the success of the Richfield High School boys’ and girls’ basketball teams, encouraging residents to attend games and support local students, and noting the role of sports in bringing the community together.

Mayor Supple thanked all speakers and community members for their engagement and support and provided an update on ongoing coordination among West Metro mayors, city managers, and police chiefs, including representatives from Richfield. Mayor Supple noted the group is collaborating to align objectives, strengthen regional advocacy, and engage with state and federal processes, including legislative hearings and meetings associated with the U.S. Conference of Mayors. Mayor Supple noted that collective action among multiple cities increases impact, and that work is ongoing to formalize governance and communication, with a more formal announcement anticipated soon.

b. Council Liaison Reports; No reports presented.

<b>ITEM #15</b>	<b>ADJOURNMENT</b>
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**MOTION:** made by Council Member Burk, seconded by Council Member Coleman-Woods to adjourn the meeting at 8:42 p.m.

Voting Aye: Mayor Supple, Council Member Burk, Council Member Hayford O'Leary, Council Member Christensen (remote), and Council Member Coleman-Woods.

Motion carried: 5-0

Date Approved: February 10, 2026

*Mary B. Supple*

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Mary Supple  
Mayor

*Katie Roary*

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Katie Rodriguez  
City Manager

*Michelle R. Friedrich*

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Michelle Friedrich  
City Clerk