



Richfield City Council Minutes

July 14, 2026

Richfield Municipal Center
Bartholomew Conference Room
6700 Portland Avenue South

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Mary Supple at 5:16 p.m. in the Bartholomew Conference Room.

Council Members Present: Mary Supple; Sean Hayford O'leary; Sharon Christensen; Rori Coleman-Woods

Council Members Excused: Walter Burk

Staff Present: Kristin Asher, Public Works Director; Mattias Oddsson, Water Resources Engineer; Joe Powers, City Engineer; Katie Rodriguez, City Manager; Sack Thongvanh, Assistant City Manager; Kate Aitchison, Communications Manager; Brianna Darling, Communications Specialist; Karl Huemiller, Recreation Services Director; Paul Smithson, Wood Lake Nature Center Manager; Michelle Friedrich, City Clerk

Guest Presenters: Evie Morgan, Great River Greening; Becca Tucker, Great River Greening

2. Item Discussion

a. Multi-Community Wellhead Protection Plan and Source Water Sustainability Updates

Water Resources Engineer Oddsson presented updates on the Multi-Community Wellhead Protection Plan and Drinking Water Supply Management Area (DWSMA), noting the airport's exclusion from the updated map reduces regulatory complexity, and outlined separate timelines for Part 1 and Part 2 of the plan; Part 2 will require a public hearing and Council adoption before submission. Council members asked how vulnerability ratings for highly vulnerable areas are determined and how they could shift with long-term water use; Water Resources Engineer Oddsson explained the evaluation process and the City's approach to prioritizing work in those areas. Council Member Hayford O'leary confirmed with Water Resources Engineer Oddsson that revised vulnerable zones could allow boulevard rain gardens in some areas.

Water Resources Engineer Oddsson also presented the Groundwater Supply Plan update, highlighting usage trends and Richfield's position at the bottom of the Prairie du Chien-Jordan aquifer, which means later exposure to depletion than other communities drawing from the same source. City Council discussed long-term sustainability, including whether undeveloped areas remain that could affect aquifer usage and how new development's impact is measured and factored into planning. City Manager Rodriguez summarized the discussion.

b. Social Media Comments Discussion

Communications Manager Aitchison presented an analysis of the City's social media presence, policy, and strategy, recommending that comments continue to be allowed on posts across all platforms. Mayor Supple reiterated that the City has no authority over the Richfield Community Facebook page, as it is not City-run. Council Member Coleman-Woods noted that most of her feedback comes from the community page and asked how staff plan to use social media to gather input on upcoming city plans.

City Council discussed current limits on comments, including the existing profanity filter, and shared concerns about trolling and repeat commenters across platforms; Council Members noted staff had observed select users commenting frequently across multiple community pages. City Manager Rodriguez noted that disabling comments would not resolve the underlying issue and that staff still find value in the feedback received. Mayor Supple raised concern about staff self-censoring based on anticipated feedback and asked staff to explore ways to avoid this. City Manager Rodriguez summarized that Council directed staff to continue allowing comments across all social media platforms.

c. Natural Resources Management Plan

Recreation Director Huemiller presented the Natural Resources Management Plan, with Becca Tucker of Great River Greening outlining the organization's history, its approach to plan creation, and how costs and phasing will be addressed. Funding is anticipated in the 2027 budget/future budgets. City Council asked about cost breakdowns by park and whether costs would reflect new work versus replacement of existing infrastructure; Recreation Director Huemiller confirmed each park will have its own cost summary, with Evie Morgan of Great River Greening noting the summary is intended as a guideline that will be reassessed as projects begin. Great River Greening's involvement concludes with this plan; Council Member Hayford Oleary asked how much future work could be completed by staff versus contracted out, which Recreation Director Huemiller said would be evaluated once the plan is complete.

Recreation Director Huemiller reviewed management objectives for Richfield Lake, Taft Park, and Veterans Memorial Park. Wood Lake Nature Center Manager Paul Smithson reviewed objectives for Wood Lake Nature Center. Council Member Hayford Oleary shared resident concerns about vegetation levels and visibility at Richfield Lake, which Recreation Director Huemiller confirmed is a top objective of the plan, and raised the need for pruning newly planted trees to maintain visibility windows. Council Member Christensen noted increased visitation to Richfield Lake following Wood Lake's closure, and Mayor Supple agreed the lake generates more resident feedback than any other park. Mayor Supple also noted that rebuilding the Donaldson Bridge remains a priority given resident use of that entrance to the park. City Manager Rodriguez concluded with a summary of the presentation and discussion.

3. Adjournment

Mayor Supple adjourned the meeting with unanimous consent.

Date Approved: July 28, 2026



Michelle Friedrich
City Clerk



Mary Supple
Mayor



Katie Rodriguez
City Manager