

**CITY OF HOUSTON REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING
AGENDA**

**6:00 P.M., MONDAY, AUGUST 11, 2025
HOUSTON CITY HALL, COUNCIL CHAMBERS
105 West Maple Street**

Pledge of Allegiance

Regular Meeting

Public Comment Period

Section 1. Business before the Council

- A. Matt Mohs - Cedar Street Improvements**
 - a. CSAH 13/Spruce Street Improvements**
- B. SMIF Presentation/Aaron Johnson**
- C. July 29th Storm Recovery**
- D. Small Equipment Request**
- E. Fire Department Overhead Door Repairs**
- F. Designation of Certified Building Official**
- G. City Hall Roof**

Section 2. Action Items:

- A. Minutes from July 14, 2025, meeting**
- B. Bills**

Section 3. Consent Agenda Items to Be Placed on File

- A. Library minutes, reports, statistics, and policies**
- B. Correspondence from League of Minnesota Cities Regarding Legislator of Distinction**

Section 4. Department Reports

Adjournment

7:00 Rural Fire Board Meeting



Real People. Real Solutions.

2900 43rd Street NW
Suite 100
Rochester, MN 55901

Ph: (507) 208-4332
Bolton-Menk.com

ENGINEERING MEMORANDUM for the 8/11/25 COUNCIL MEETING

Date: August 7, 2025
To: Honorable Mayor and City Council Members
From: Matt Mohs, P.E., City Engineer
Subject: Current Project Update & Miscellaneous Business
City of Houston

Cedar Street (TH 16) Improvements – Cooperative Agreement with MnDOT

Staff and City Council liaisons met with the MnDOT project manager on July 22, 2025, to kick-off the planning discussions for planned improvements along TH 16 / Cedar Street. Some meeting takeaways include:

- The project will bid in October 2030 with construction occurring in 2031.
- The project scope includes a mill and overlay between Poppe Road and Washington Street and between Henderson Street and the twin box culverts.
- The project scope includes a full reconstruction between Washington Street and Henderson Street.
- The group spent the majority of the meeting discussing City priorities:
 - Proposed drainage improvements
 - Boulevard tree replacement
 - Lighting
 - Trail routing and improvements
 - Parking north of TH 16 on TH 76
 - Visibility at the intersection of TH 16 and TH 76

MnDOT will solicit private consultants to perform the engineering services. This will occur in late Fall 2025. They hope to have a consultant on board by mid-January.

Bolton & Menk will continue to serve as the City Engineer and represent the City related to non-MnDOT items. We would also like to submit a proposal to MnDOT for engineering services which would essentially mean Bolton & Menk could work for both the City of Houston and MnDOT. We will only submit a proposal to MnDOT if the City Council is supportive of this pursuit. I would like to talk to the Council about this as part of my update.

CSAH 13 Improvements / 2025 Street & Utility Improvements (Project No. 0H1.132714)

The project continues to be on hold. We expect that planning will resume and scheduling discussions will occur this fall in preparation for bidding and 2026 construction.

MEMORANDUM FOR HOUSTON CITY COUNCIL

Council Date: August 11, 2025

Agenda Item: Storm Recovery

From: Michelle Quinn

The July 29th wind event resulted in damage to the city tree canopy. The resulting cleanup cost several thousand dollars. Overall, Houston County sustained significant damage which has prompted the county to apply for state disaster funding. The City of Houston believes it will exceed the minimum expense for debris cleanup in order to join with Houston County in seeking State Disaster Public Assistance.

In addition to the tree damage, the west side of the bandshell roof sustained damage. It has been temporarily repaired to mitigate further damage. A claim has been filed with the City's insurance company and staff are working to secure bids for a more permanent repair.

I will be representing the City at a meeting on Wednesday, August 20th with damage estimates, maps of where damage occurred, and photos.

There are multiple points for the council to consider as we navigate the recovery and potential state disaster public assistance.

Action Requested: Authorize staff to work with representatives from the state and county seeking State Disaster Public Assistance.

Authorize deviation from City Ordinance 239, authorize staff to coordinate boulevard stump removal for trees removed as a result of the July 29th storm, accept State Disaster Public Assistance for this removal, and share any uncovered percentage of expense 50/50 with resident's contingent upon being awarded state funds.

This mirrors action taken in 2022 when the city received funding to recover from a high wind event.

One additional item for the council to consider as the recovery continues is a reforestation plan for the boulevard trees which have been lost as a result of this event. Once invoices, and any state funding have been received, consider purchasing trees for grant to residents to replace those lost on their boulevard. Consider no replacement of Cedar Street trees due to the upcoming 2030 project and the potential that any trees being replaced could be removed as a result of the project in the short term. This is an initiative that the tree board is discussing and would be an integral part of.

MEMORANDUM FOR HOUSTON CITY COUNCIL

Council Date: August 11, 2025

Agenda Item: Public Works Small Equipment Purchase

From: Public Works/Michelle Quinn

Last year a salesperson came in and demonstrated a Hydrant Buddy. This is a tool to open and close hydrant valves safely. (Safe for the staff members it can safeguard against shoulder injuries, safe for the mains/distribution system pipes by preventing water hammering). The piece of equipment was approximately \$4,675.

DSG demonstrated a similar piece of equipment recently. Public Works Staff indicated the design of their equipment was favored over the previously demonstrated hydrant buddy. This equipment will also be used to open and close valves in the event of a main break to isolate the impacted areas. In addition, the cost was significantly less.

A quote for this equipment and required components is attached. The budget has been reviewed and there are funds within the small equipment line item to cover the cost. It was something the department was planning for financially.

Action Requested: Respectfully requesting authorization to accept the quotation for the Milwaukee M18 Pipe Threader Kit, OMS Exerciser Insert and Adjustable Box Key in an amount of \$2,798.99 submitted by DSG.

MEMORANDUM FOR HOUSTON CITY COUNCIL

Council Date: August 11, 2025

Agenda Item: Overhead Doors on Fire Department Building

From: Fire Chief Steve Skifton/Michelle Quinn

During the power outage triggered by the July 28/29th high wind event the fire department was called out to respond to a call. They had difficulty manually opening the overhead doors. They discovered the reason for the doors not opening easily was due to the deterioration of the lower panels which resulted in water saturating the insulation causing excess weight. Chief Skifton has discussed recommendations for abatement with the overhead door company. The recommendation from Overhead Door Company is to replace deteriorated panels at a cost of approximately \$3,000. This is not a shared expense with Rural Fire Board.

Action Requested: Authorize appropriate repairs of the overhead doors.

MEMORANDUM FOR HOUSTON CITY COUNCIL

Council Date: August 11, 2025

Agenda Item: Designation of Certified Building Official

From: Michelle Quinn

The city contracts with CMS for building official services. They have been undergoing changes, they were bought out and most recently, Jay Kruger announced his retirement. Moving forward, Tanner Young will be taking on Mr. Kruger's duties as the Certified Building Official. In order to ensure continuity of operations and make this official, CMS has requested each contracted jurisdiction approve the designation of Tanner Young as its Certified Building Official.

Action Requested: Designate Tanner J Young as the City of Houston Certified Building Official and approve the submission of the required notice to the Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry.

Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry
 Construction Codes and Licensing
 Code Services, Attention: Scott Wheeler
 443 Lafayette Road N., St. Paul, MN
 55155-4341 Phone: (651) 284-5876 Fax:
 (651) 284-5749 <http://www.dli.mn.gov/>
 PRINT in INK or TYPE your responses.



Notice of Designation or Vacancy of Certified Building Official

To the Commissioner of Labor and Industry:

According to [M.S. §326B.133, Subd. 1](#),

Each municipality shall designate a building official to administer the code. A municipality may designate no more than one building official responsible for code administration defined by *each* form of certification established in [Minnesota Rules, 1301.0200](#) and further, according to [M.S. §326B.133, Subd. 7](#),

In the event that a designated building official position is vacant within a municipality, that municipality shall designate a certified building official to fill the vacancy *as soon as possible*. The commissioner must be notified of any vacancy or designation in writing within 15 days.

The administrative authority for the municipality of HOUSTON

Hereby notifies the Commissioner, pursuant to [M.S. §326B.133](#), that it has made one of the following designations (**A or B selected**):

A. <input type="checkbox"/> The municipality has designated:	TANNER J YOUNG <small style="text-align: center;">NAME (INCLUDE MIDDLE INITIAL)</small>	as a:	<input type="checkbox"/> Certified Building Official Limited <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Certified Building Official
Effective Date:	SEPT 1 2025	Certification Number: <small>(Include Letters of Cert. #)</small>	BO806795
<p>According to M.S. §326B.133, Subd. 3a(c) the "Certified Building Official Limited" may perform code administration only for one- and two-family dwellings, their accessory structures, and "exempt classes of buildings" as provided in Minnesota Rules, 1800.5900. The municipality shall also designate a "Certified Building Official" with a separate Notice of Designation form, for the code administration for all other structures when a Certified Building Official Limited is designated as the municipality's building official.</p>			

MUNICIPALITY CONTACT INFORMATION

MUNICIPALITY STREET ADDRESS (do not provide a PO Box) 105 W. Maple St			
CITY Houston	STATE MN	ZIP 55943	
PHONE 507-896-4033	FAX 507-896-3643	E-MAIL city@houstonmn.us	

MUNICIPALITY BUILDING OFFICIAL CONTACT INFORMATION

BUILDING OFFICIAL STREET ADDRESS (do not provide a PO Box) 338 EAST VETERANS MEMORIAL HIGHWAY			
CITY KASSON	STATE MN	ZIP 55944	
WORK PHONE NUMBER (507) 282-8206	MOBILE PHONE NUMBER	E-MAIL tanner@cmsroch.com	

OR B. <input type="checkbox"/> Municipality has a vacancy in the building official position.	Effective Date:
--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----------------

The statutory definitions of **Designate** and **Administrative Authority** are established in [M.S. §326B.103, Subd. 6](#). Please have the appointed administrative authority of the municipality sign this form. (Usually known as the Administrator or Manager)

NAME OF ADMINISTRATIVE AUTHORITY (Type or Print)	SIGNATURE OF ADMINISTRATIVE AUTHORITY	
TITLE	DATE 8/11/2025	

MEMORANDUM FOR HOUSTON CITY COUNCIL

Council Date: August 11, 2025

Agenda Item: City Hall Roof

From: Michelle Quinn

City Hall Roof: The City Hall roof experienced significant leaking during a recent driving rain event. Affordable Roofing made temporary patches to mitigate future leaks until experienced flat roofing contractors could view the roof, make recommendations and provide estimates for appropriate repair. McCabe Roofing was onsite Friday, August 8th and will be submitting an estimate for replacement. A request for quote is also being solicited from Winona Heat and Vent.

*Repair/replacement quotes not available at time of packet preparation.

Mayor Scott Wallace called the City Council meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. July 14, 2025, with the Pledge of Allegiance. Council present: Mayor Scott Wallace, Zeb Baumann, Emily Krage, Danny Todd, and Steve Westby. Staff present: Michelle Quinn, Curtis Chapel, Josh Hongerholt, Brett Hurley, Steve Skifton, and Randy Thesing. A list of public members present is on file.

Public Comment: Hearing no public comment, the Mayor moved to the agenda items.

Swearing in Officer: At this time, Mayor Wallace administered the Oath of Office to Curtis Chapel. Charles Chapel, grandfather to Officer Chapel was invited to pin Officer Chapel. Once pinned, Charles Chapel shared that he was a sworn officer 66 years ago. He was sworn in by Paul Anderson who had worked a year without a day off and wanted to go fishing. He served on a part-time basis for three years.

Fireworks Permit: DLC, Inc. presented their plan and request for approval of a permit to provide a fireworks display in conjunction with Houston Hoedown Days. Motion by Krage, seconded by Baumann to approve the Application/Permit for Display of Fireworks on July 25th. Motion carried unanimously.

Fire Chief Progression Plan and Appointment: Interviews for Fire Chief were held on Monday, June 23rd. Members of the Personnel Committee were joined by Chuck Beckman, representing the Rural Fire Board. Byron Frauenkron has been recommended to fulfill the unexpired term of Steve Skifton. Motion by Krage, seconded by Westby to appoint Byron Frauenkron to the position of Fire Chief effective 1/1/2026 and to instruct Fire Chief Skifton and Mr. Frauenkron to work side by side from this point until the appointment becomes effective. Motion carried unanimously.

Nature Center Lead: Interviews were held Thursday, July 3rd for this position. The interview committee included one member of the personnel committee, a public works staff person and the clerk/administrator. Reference checks are being conducted for the unanimously recommended candidate. Motion by Krage, seconded by Westby to extend an offer of employment to the recommended candidate for the position of Nature Center Lead, contingent upon favorable references. Motion carried unanimously.

Law Enforcement: The City is unique in the fact that law enforcement are not represented by a labor union. This is a testament to how the council works with staff to provide competitive wages and benefits. It is common for covered groups to receive a benefit providing legal defense for officers. I am asking the council to consider extending reimbursement to sworn officers employed by the city for legal defense coverage as it is an inexpensive opportunity to continue to offer sworn officers a competitive and comprehensive benefits package. The cost for this would not exceed \$500 annually. The estimated cost for legal defense coverage in 2025 would be \$290 for both officers. Motion by Todd, seconded by Westby to authorize reimbursement beginning in 2026 for sworn officers who have purchased legal defense coverage from either PLEA or MPPOA in an amount not to exceed \$250 per officer with no reimbursement authorized for the purchase of interdepartmental coverage from the same entities. Motion carried unanimously.

Summer Recreation Director: The stipend for this position has been unchanged in at least 14 years. The current director is in attendance or present to get activities and student staff started at nearly every activity. For this reason. I am advocating for the council to consider an increase in this year's stipend.

The summer recreation fund is healthy, and funds are available to cover this request if granted. Motion by Todd, seconded by Westby to increase the annual stipend for summer recreation director by \$1,000 annually effective for the current season. Motion carried with Krage abstaining.

Carport for Equipment Storage at Fire Station: Motion by Westby, seconded by Todd to approve of the placement of a carport at the Fire Station paid for by the Fire Relief Fund and to authorize the submission of the Building Permit Application for the same. Motion carried unanimously.

Fire Fighter: On the recommendation of Fire Chief Skifton, motion by Krage, seconded by Baumann to hire Jude Fernando as a probationary firefighter. Motion carried unanimously.

Advertising for Firefighters: Additional openings in the fire department are anticipated. The department has requested authorization to advertise in the Fillmore County Journal. Motion by Westby, seconded by Todd to authorize advertising for firefighters. Motion carried unanimously.

Minutes and Bills: Motion by Krage, seconded by Baumann to approve the minutes of June 9, 2025, regular meeting with one correction as noted, and bills as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Items to be Placed on File: Motion by Baumann, seconded by Westby to place the following items on file. Motion carried unanimously.

Library minutes, reports, and statistics
Correspondence from SMIF
Correspondence from Robert Cary/MN DNR
Correspondence from MN Dept of Health/Plan Review Approval
Correspondence from Board of Peace Officer Standards and Training

Department Head Updates:

Fire: Chief Skifton shared the roof of the fire department was cleaned and treated to inhibit regrowth of algae. He has before and after photos for anyone interested as it is a stark contrast. He expressed appreciation for the work completed by Public Works Staff.

West End Welcome Sign: Councilperson Todd commented on how greatly the appearance of the west end welcome sign improved following cleaning and painting. He inquired whether any black paint remained. It is likely there is black paint from the project. He volunteered to paint on the back side of the sign where it has not been painted since it was erected.

Public Works: Randy Thesing reported staff is busy performing annual maintenance work that is typically completed prior to the town celebration. Approximately 50 water meters have been replaced. Replacement is ongoing as time permits. Street signs have been completed by Wild Exhibit, locates are being requested and the new posts and street signs are being installed. This will be an ongoing project when time permits. The John Deere zero turn mower has had an ongoing issue which technicians have been working to resolve. The unit remains under warranty. John Deere will be picking up the mower on Wednesday for additional service work and returning it on Thursday. It was noted the roof on City Hall needs replacement. It has been temporarily patched. Quotes will be solicited for this work which is expected to take approximately 3 days to complete. Public Works staff are considering crack filling on both Plum and Maple Streets. They are gathering information in order to solicit pricing.

Adjourn: Motion by Krage, seconded by Baumann to adjourn the meeting at 6:33 p.m. Motion carried unanimously. The next regular meeting of the Council is scheduled for Monday, August 11, 2025.

By: _____
Scott Wallace, Mayor

Attest: _____
Michelle Quinn, Clerk/Administrator

Library Report

August 2025

1. We received our quarterly ACH Payment from Houston County on July 28 in the amount of \$16,331.97.
2. Our Interlibrary Loan dividend for 2024: \$422.00.
3. The five Houston County library directors, along with Selco's executive director, met with two of the county commissioners on July 15 to discuss our funding contract proposal. There has been no further information from them yet.
4. We have a temporary display on climate change in Minnesota in the library for roughly four weeks. It is on loan through Minitex and will be here until approximately August 23. It's been very popular with elementary-aged kids and sparked a lot of discussion.
5. Our State Park pass program has been active since July 7. It has been checked out once and multiple people have expressed interest in checking it out in the future.
6. Recent programs:
 - Jim Jayes' Circus on Strings was on July 9, about 100 people attended.
 - We had reading dogs at storytime on July 12 (Roxy) and July 19 (Gunther). They came to us through Touching Moments Animal Assisted Activities in LaCrescent. About 10 people were there on each of those days.
 - Doug Ohman's presentation on Minnesota State Parks was on July 14, about 10 people attended.
 - Buddy the Blue-Crowned Conure, July 16: 110 in attendance.
 - We held Artist's Workshops for kids on July 18 and August 1: 5 each day.
 - Books and Bites with the Friends of the Library was held in the greenspace on July 22. Friends members and others prepared and served samples of food that tied in to books. About 40 people attended (including family of the Friends members) on a very warm evening.
 - Eagle Bluff Environmental Learning Center presented a program on raptors featuring a live hawk and kestrel on July 23; 120 people attended.
 - Hoedown Kids Talent expo: about 10 kids participated.
 - Fish Printing with Whitewater State Park, held inside the library on July 30: about 50 people attended. It was quite crowded but we made it work.
 - Bird watching/bird games with Friends of the Nature Center on August 6: 40 attended.
7. Coming up:
 - Aloha storytime on August 13
 - Pet Portrait Painting on August 19
 - Bike rodeo and safety fair with Owl City Cycles on August 20
 - Tiny Art Show artists' reception on August 26.

- End of summer bash will be on August 27.
 - Adult book club continues to meet monthly
 - We'll start Builders Club again after school starts, probably late September and probably on Tuesday afternoons after school.
 - Other after-school activities are being considered.
8. We'll be closed for Labor Day on September 1.

**HOUSTON
PUBLIC
LIBRARY**
2025 Circulation Statistics

GENERAL CIRCULATION (not including ebooks)

	CAL	HOK	HOU	LCR	SG	TOTAL
Jan	1,131	422	1,852	3,430	696	7,531
Feb	992	474	1,895	3,163	768	7,292
Mar	1,225	495	2,041	3,635	818	8,214
April	1,195	486	1,934	3,132	797	7,544
May			2,372			2,372
June			2,025			2,025
July			2,553			2,553
Aug						0
Sept						0
Oct						0
Nov						0
Dec						0
TOTAL	4,543	1,877	14,672	13,360	3,079	37,531
%	15.02%	5.60%	24.59%	45.55%	9.24%	100%

HOUSTON COUNTY RURAL USAGE

	CAL	HOK	HOU	LCR	SG	TOTAL
Jan:	519	171	1,055	906	243	2,894
Feb:	495	234	997	767	320	2,813
Mar:	594	208	1,124	902	276	3,104
April:	632	257	1,088	661	299	2,937
May:			1,593			1,593
June:			1,328			1,328
July			1,594			1,594
Aug:						0
Sept:						0
Oct:						0
Nov:						0
Dec:						0
TOTAL	2,240	870	8,779	3,236	1,138	16,263
%	17.93%	5.91%	36.45%	31.31%	8.40%	100.00%

Overdrive: All ebooks + all audiobooks = 277



August 1, 2025

Mayor Scott Wallace
PO Box 667
Houston, MN 55943-0667

Senator Jeremy Miller, who represents your city at the state legislature, has been selected as a League of Minnesota Cities Legislator of Distinction for 2025. The League's Board of Directors recognized a total of 28 legislators this year, including 16 House members and 12 Senate members, for their actions and leadership on a wide variety of legislative issues of importance to cities across our state. **The enclosed letter describes the specific reasons your legislator was chosen for this recognition.** A copy of this letter, and printed certificate, has been sent to your legislator as well.

Please share this recognition with your city council and the public at your next council meeting. We also encourage you to share this information with your local newspaper. Publicly acknowledging legislators for their support of city-friendly legislation helps to continue strengthening the partnership between state and local government officials in Minnesota.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Ted Bengtson, IGR Coordinator at the League of Minnesota Cities at tbengtson@lmc.org, (651) 281-1242. To read the complete list of all 28 legislators who received this designation, see the *Cities Bulletin* article online at www.lmc.org/lod.

Thank you, in advance, for your consideration and your support of the League's Legislators of Distinction recognition program.

Enclosure



August 1, 2025
Senator Jeremy Miller
2215 Minnesota Senate Bldg.
95 University Avenue W.
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Senator Miller,

On behalf of the League's 842 member cities, I want to thank you for your efforts this past legislative session and to recognize you as a League of Minnesota Cities 2025 Legislator of Distinction.

League staff and member city officials appreciate your accessibility and your consultation with us on legislation impacting cities. Specifically, the League appreciates you working with staff and the cities in which you represent, demonstrating a keen understanding of when a legislative proposal was not workable or viable for local governments and being responsive to achieving a balance between local decision-making authority with zoning and land use reform. League staff appreciates your work on behalf of cities and look forward to working with you in the future on issues impacting local units of government.

Our members know that to be successful in serving our common constituents, state and city officials must work together as partners to reach solutions that meet the unique needs of rural, suburban, and urban communities across Minnesota. City leaders also understand that without the support of legislative leaders like you, this state-local partnership would not be possible.

To acknowledge your contributions last session, mayors of each city in your legislative district will receive notification of your recognition. A press release will also be issued to media in your area. While the League does not endorse candidates in political races, this award serves as a recognition of your work on behalf of cities in your district and throughout Minnesota.

City officials and League staff look forward to continuing to work with you in the future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Wendy Berry", is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Wendy Berry
Council Member, West St. Paul
President, League of Minnesota Cities