

**CITY OF CIRCLE PINES, MINNESOTA  
REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING  
Circle Pines City Hall**

**January 27, 2026  
7:00 P.M.**

**AGENDA**

**1. Call to Order**

**2. Roll Call**

*Matt Percy, Mayor*

*Steve McChesney, Council Member*

*Nici Dorner, Council Member*

*Meagan Bachmayer, Council Member*

*Patrick Antonen, City Administrator*

**3. Setting of Agenda**

**Note:** Consent Agenda items will be acted on with one motion unless a council member requests their placement on the regular agenda.

**4. COMMENTS**

**a. Taxpayer Comments**

**b. Council Member Comments**

**c. Mayor Comments**

**5. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**a. Fire Steering Committee**

**b. Utilities Commission**

**6. COUNCIL BUSINESS**

**a. Consent Agenda**

Items

1. Minutes - **January 13, 2026** (Enclosed)
2. General Disbursements (Enclosed)
3. Police Disbursements (Enclosed)
4. Fire Disbursements (Enclosed)
5. 2025 Q4 General Fund Summary (Enclosed)
6. Licenses (Enclosed)

Council Action \_\_\_\_\_

**b. Centennial Utilities Commission (Presentation)**

Council Action \_\_\_\_\_

**c. Gas Maintenance/Public Works Maintenance Worker Positions (Presented at Meeting)**

Council Action \_\_\_\_\_

**d.**

Council Action \_\_\_\_\_

**7. ADJOURNMENT**

**CITY OF CIRCLE PINES, MINNESOTA  
REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING**

**Tuesday, January 13, 2026  
Minutes**

**\*Swearing in of Elected Officials:**

Mayor Matt Percy  
Council Member Nicole Dorner  
Council Member Meagan Bachmayer

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Percy called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

**2. ROLL CALL**

Council Members Dorner and McChesney were also present. City Administrator Antonen represented the staff. Member Bachmayer was absent.

**3. SETTING OF AGENDA**

There were no changes to the agenda.

**4. COMMENTS**

**a. Taxpayer Comments**

Centennial High School seniors were in attendance as a government class requirement.

**b. Council Member Comments**

There were no Council Member comments.

**c. Mayor's Comments**

- Thanked everyone for the support over the last year with the election, and congratulated Nici Dorner and Meagan Bachmayer.
- He and Patrick Antonen attended the Centennial Schools legislative breakfast this morning.
- Alexandra House, which helps victims of domestic and sexual violence in Anoka County, is working on presenting a theater program called Exploration of Domestic Violence for awareness.
- Happy New Year to everyone.

## 5. COMMITTEE REPORTS

There were no committee reports.

## 6. COUNCIL BUSINESS

### a. **Consent Agenda Items:**

1. Minutes – December 09, 2026
2. General Fund Disbursements
3. Police Disbursements
4. Fire Disbursements
5. Licenses

**Motion:** McChesney moved, seconded by Dorner, to approve the Consent Agenda as presented.

**Motion carried 3-0.**

### b. **Resolution No. 2026-01 Accepting Resignation of Council Member Matt Percy and Declaring a Vacancy**

Antonen explained that resolution 2026-01 is in accordance with Member Matt Percy winning the mayor's position in the election, which has created an incompatible office because you can't hold a mayor's seat and a council seat at the same time. So, Matt must officially resign from the council seat to take the mayor's seat, which is happening tonight. At the work session before tonight's meeting, it was discussed to begin looking to appoint a new member to fill the remainder of Matt's term, which will be the end of December 2027.

**Motion:** Dorner moved, seconded by McChesney, to approve RES No. 2026-01 Accepting Resignation of Council Member Matt Percy and Declaring a Vacancy.

**Motion carried 3-0.**

### c. **Council Annual Appointments**

Antonen explained that the following annual appointments are made in January of each year, and went over the following appointments:

#### 1. Official Newspaper

**Motion:** McChesney moved, seconded by Dorner, to approve the *Quad Community Press* as the official newspaper for the City of Circle Pines. **Motion carried 3-0.**

#### 2. Official Depositories

**Motion:** McChesney moved, seconded by Dorner, to designate US Bank, Top Line Federal Credit Union (Anoka-Hennepin Federal Credit Union), Ehlers Financial, PFM Financial

Network, Inc., RBC Capital Markets, and Wells Fargo Bank as the Official Depositories for the City of Circle Pines.

Mayor Percy is employed at RBC and abstained from the vote.

**Motion carried 2-0.**

**3. Official Signatories**

The current official signatories are Mayor Dave Bartholomay, who will change to Mayor Matt Percy, and Council Member Nici Dorner, who will continue as an official signatory.

**Motion:** McChesney moved, seconded by Dorner, to designate as official signatories for the City of Circle Pines the following people: from Council, Mayor Matt Percy, and Member Nici Dorner; and Staff, City Administrator Patrick Antonen and Finance Director Kate Manson.

**Motion carried 3-0.**

**4. Electronic Funds Transfer Authorization**

Mayor Percy explained that each year, based on the city's Electronic Funds Transfer Policy as required by MN Statute 471.37, the council needs to appoint authorizers so transfers can occur via bank wire or online banking.

**Motion:** Dorner moved, seconded by McChesney, to approve Mayor Matt Percy, City Administrator Patrick Antonen, and Finance Director Kate Manson as Authorizers for Electronic Funds Transfers. **Motion carried 3-0.**

**5. Civil Attorney**

Mayor Percy noted that Hoff Barry, P.A., will continue as the civil attorney.

Antonen explained that Shelly Ryan recently left Hoff Barry, so Scott Landsman and Niklaus Svendsen will take over.

**6. Prosecution Attorney**

Joe Van Thomme from Eckberg Lammers, P.C., is the current prosecution attorney.

Antonen commented that both attorneys have provided excellent services and have been great to work with for many years, recommending that they both retain their positions.

**Motion:** McChesney moved, seconded by Dorner, to designate Scott Landsman and Niklaus Svendsen from Hoff Barry, P.A., as Civil Attorney for the City of Circle Pines, and Joe Van Thomme from Eckberg Lammers, P.C., as Prosecution Attorney for the City of Circle Pines.

**Motion carried 3-0.**

7. Engineer

Mayor Percy explained that Eric Eckman and WSB and Associates have been the city's engineers for several years, providing tremendous work when working with them on street projects.

**Motion:** Dorner moved, seconded by McChesney, to designate Eric Eckman and WSB and Associates as our city engineer and engineering group. **Motion carried 3-0.**

8. Mayor Pro Tem

Mayor Percy explained that the mayor's pro tem acts on behalf of the mayor when the mayor is unable to attend meetings. Currently, Matt Percy is Mayor Pro Tem, but as the new Mayor, that position will need to be filled. The council recommended appointing Meagan Bachmayer as Mayor Pro Tem for Circle Pines.

**Motion:** McChesney moved, seconded by Dorner, to appoint Council Member Meagan Bachmayer as Mayor Pro Tem for the City of Circle Pines. **Motion carried 3-0.**

**COUNCIL COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS**

9. Police Governing Board

Mayor Percy explained that the police governing board requires a mayor and one council member, in addition to one alternate member.

**Motion:** McChesney moved, seconded by Dorner, to appoint for a one-year term Mayor Matt Percy and Council Member Nici Dorner as representatives and Council Member Meagan Bachmayer as an alternate to the Police Governing Board. **Motion carried 3-0.**

10. Fire Steering Committee

Mayor Percy explained that the fire steering committee consists of two Council Members and one alternate.

**Motion:** McChesney moved, seconded by Dorner, to appoint for a one-year term, and Council Members McChesney and Bachmayer as representatives and Council Member Dorner as alternate to the Fire Steering Committee. **Motion carried 3-0.**

11. Anoka County Fire Protection Council

Mayor Percy explained that the Fire Protection Council consists of one elected official and one alternate; this council typically includes members from the Fire Steering Committee.

**Motion:** Dorner moved, seconded by McChesney, to appoint for a one-year term Council Member Steve McChesney as the representative and Mayor Matt Percy as the alternate on the Anoka County Fire Protection Council. **Motion carried 3-0.**

**12. Cable Commission**

Mayor Percy explained that the Cable Commission consists of one member of the council and one alternate.

**Motion:** McChesney moved, seconded by Dorner, to appoint for a one-year term Council Member Meagan Bachmayer as the representative and Council Member Nici Dorner as the alternate on the Cable Commission. **Motion carried 3-0.**

**13. Anoka County Airport Advisory Commission**

Mayor Percy explained that this appointment differs from the others, as this is a two-year appointment and requires two representatives. The current representatives are Council Members Percy and McChesney, whose 2-year term has expired, and are looking for two new people to appoint.

**Motion:** McChesney moved, seconded by Dorner, to appoint for a two-year term Council Member Steve McChesney and Member Nici Dorner as the representatives for the Anoka County Airport Advisory Commission. **Motion carried 3-0.**

**7. ADJOURNMENT**

**Motion:** McChesney moved, seconded by Dorner, to adjourn the meeting at 7:26 p.m.  
**Motion carried 3-0.**

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**Mayor**

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**City Administrator**

**2026 License for Approval**

*All licenses on this list have insurance, bond & worker's comp if applicable, and have paid fee.*

**Date for Council Approval: 01/27/2026**

	<b><u>Company</u></b>	<b><u>License type</u></b>
1	HVAC Doctor LLC	HVAC
2	Dockter-Lutz Chiropractic - Massage Services	MASSAGE5
3	Signs of Schuppe LLC dba Schad Tracy Signs	SIGN
4	Bramand Corporation dba N&D Liquor Barrel	CGR
5	Bramand Corporation dba N&D Liquor Barrel	OFSL
6	Char-Dell Company dba Fast Signs	SIGN
7	Ideal Air LLC dba Ideal Heating and Air MN	HVAC
8	C.W. Houle Inc. dba C.W. Houle	PIPELAYER
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# THE RESOURCE

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## Circle Pines gas utility sets the benchmark for Minnesota municipal systems

**The city of Circle Pines, Minnesota, stands out as the only municipality originally founded as a cooperative.**

At Circle Pines' founding in the 1940s, residents shared ownership of the city, and that spirit of collective responsibility laid the foundation for its municipal utilities. Although the cooperative governing model lasted only a few years, Circle Pines recently celebrated its 75th anniversary, and those founding ideals continue to shape its identity.

The new city was well established by 1959, so city leaders proposed the formation of a municipal gas utility. By the early 1960s, Circle Pines Gas was officially launched. Today Circle Pines is the only suburban city that operates its own natural gas



The city of Circle Pines recently celebrated 75 years as a city. The current public works crew is shown here.

distribution company, something the Anoka County Historical Society attributes to "its cooperative past." Residents had initially hoped to make all the Circle

Pines utilities city owned. While an electric utility was not in the cards, the gas utility endured and evolved. Today, it operates under the same department as

Circle Pines' water, sewer, refuse and recycling, and storm sewer services.

*Continued on page 2*

## Small City grants support Minnesota municipal towns

**The Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) announced more than \$20.7 million in grants through its Small City Development Program (SCDP), which will support economic development in 33 cities and counties across Minnesota.**

The grant is designed to help cities fund housing, public infrastructure, and commercial rehabilitation projects. The program primarily supports communities of fewer than 50,000 residents and low or moderate-income communities in eliminating slum and blight conditions or urgent threats to public health or safety. This year, 92 percent of SCDP grant recipients serve people with low and moderate incomes.

Three of the cities awarded SCDP grants are members of MMUA. Brainerd will receive \$600,000 for public facility improvements to the streetscape; Fairfax was awarded \$600,000 to be used for public facility improvements, including water main looping; and Fulda was

awarded \$1,155,654 for rehabilitation of 21 owner-occupied homes as well as streetscape improvements.

Grants like the SCDP are essential for towns throughout Minnesota that need infrastructure and housing improvements, as the smaller populations mean fewer people bear the burden compared to larger cities. While the grant primarily supports housing, it also contributes to community development.

### Brainerd

John Schommer, Maintenance and Rehab Director at Brainerd Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA), says this was a unique opportunity for small cities to apply for this round of grants, because they used the streetscape improvements part of the program in a way Brainerd hasn't before.

Schommer applied on the city's behalf and explains that Brainerd wanted to go after this grant because there were significant needs for funding. This is the first time Brainerd

*Continued on page 5*

## Ten defining energy stories of 2025

**The energy sector produced seismic headlines in 2025.**

Investors poured record sums into innovative technologies, courts decided the fate of giant offshore wind projects, geopolitics continued to rearrange gas markets, and local fights over transmission lines and private-equity deals shaped how cities and states plan their electric futures. This year's top 10 stories will likely impact what customers pay, which technologies scale, and how government and markets balance resilience, affordability, and decarbonization.

Here are the 10 energy stories of 2025, globally, in the United States, and in Minnesota.

**Record global energy investment: clean energy drives the surge**

Investors committed to energy at an unprecedented scale in 2025. International agencies and trade groups reported sharply higher capital flows into electricity networks, renewables, batteries, and other zero-carbon technologies. The International

Energy Agency (IEA) and allied analysts have reported global energy investment is climbing into the trillions as nations and corporations race to upgrade grids, expand renewables, and manufacture batteries at scale. Industry leaders confirmed that capital is essential to meet rapidly growing electricity demand while trying to curb emissions. That investment influx will accelerate deployment but will also create intense competition for skilled labor, critical minerals, and permitting bandwidth in many countries.

*Why it matters:* More money reduces the time to commercial scale for clean technologies, but it also concentrates influence in private capital and raises questions about who bears the risk when projects face regulatory or market setbacks.

**Offshore wind drama: the Revolution Wind ruling and political pushback in the US**

Offshore wind blew into the courtroom in 2025. Developers, states, and investors celebrated

### Inside Stories



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#### 19 Power, pixels, and promises: how utilities can tame AI data centers' energy appetite



#### 24 Safety corner



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## Circle Pines gas utility

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Turning on natural gas for Circle Pines in December 1959.

### Growth and expansion of the gas utility

Unlike most municipals, Circle Pines Utilities—which became known as Centennial Utilities in 2000—serves neighboring communities in addition to its own residents. The utility first expanded into Lino Lakes and then Blaine in the early 2000s. The utility says the name change occurred to “portray the expansion of service from Circle Pines further into the entire Centennial area.”

Today, Centennial’s gas service delivers between 358,000 and 440,000 MMBtu of gas annually. Residential customers are billed for 62.9 percent of the utility’s total gas revenue, commercial customers represent 26.9 percent, and interruptible service provides 6.1 percent. Franchise fees make up the remainder.

The utility is governed by a board composed of five commissioners who meet monthly.

### Constant renewal

Keeping the system running well requires planning, commitment, and allocation of resources. Centennial typically upgrades infrastructure beginning with gas-line replacements before tackling water and sewer mains.

To fully modernize the system, the utility has replaced all steel gas pipes, which corrosion and leaks had rendered increasingly vulnerable. City Administrator Pat Antonen explains that Centennial installed plastic pipelines, which will prolong the system’s life by another 100 years. This upgrade also creates a loop in the system, enhancing reliability and integrity. By running main gas lines on both sides of the street, a layout municipalities rarely adopt, Circle Pines achieves a safer and more efficient system.

### Leveraging technology and support

Centennial Utilities matches

the technological capabilities of major providers like Xcel Energy and CenterPoint Energy, employing similar locating and leak detection tools. Antonen mentions he envisions a future where AI and drones will be used to survey Centennial’s pipelines and identify leaks, similar to what Northern Natural Gas is currently doing.

The utility employs a laser leak detection device that enhances its ability to identify methane leaks in homes and buildings. Centennial takes pride in its use of advanced technology, directly benefiting customers.

An essential aspect of any utility is ensuring knowledge-sharing with new recruits. Circle Pines participates in the MMUA Gas Circuit Rider Program, led by Dennis Danielson, its natural gas circuit rider. “Having someone like Dennis helping out is going to be huge for all the natural gas utilities,” Antonen says.

Specialized support to assist municipal gas utilities is a must in Antonen’s opinion. “We need more of that,” he says. “We’ve had incredible staff tenure, and that’s coming to an end soon with a lot of retirements in the next couple of years. Having those programs is important to hopefully educate this next crop of natural gas employees. That’s gonna be key.”

### Embracing renewables

A significant development in the gas industry is the rise of renewable natural gas, particularly from capturing methane produced by farms and landfills. Antonen says Circle Pines cannot generate methane itself because it lacks a dedicated sewage-treatment facility; its sewage flows through a pipeline to St. Paul. Centennial’s supplying pipeline partner, Northern Natural Gas, plans to incorporate renewables into its system. Sewage waste

is a straightforward source for methane capture to feed back into the gas system.

Circle Pines stands ready to absorb those inputs from Northern Natural Gas. “We’re a green-step city. We do have that kind of goal to be as environmentally friendly as possible. This year we received a grant from the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency for an environmental-stewardship plan,” Antonen says.

### Looking back and ahead

Circle Pines recently marked its 75th anniversary with events highlighting community and continuity: a magic show at Centennial High School, a vintage-car show, recognition of long-standing community members, and a pancake breakfast hosted by the Centennial Fire Department.

The city’s gas utility represents a microcosm of municipal-utility evolution—born of cooperative ideals in the mid-20th century, adapting through infrastructure improvement, and now positioning itself for a sustainable future. From its humble beginnings serving a few square miles to now spanning multiple cities, the utility embodies resilience and forward thinking.

As it confronts upcoming challenges, such as staff retirements and advancing environmental mandates, Centennial Utilities remains committed to its core principles of community service, reliability, and environmental stewardship. Its journey offers more than a local infrastructure story: it reflects how small municipal utilities can innovate and remain relevant in a rapidly changing energy landscape, serving as a model for other municipal gas utilities across the state of Minnesota.