

CITY OF MANITOU SPRINGS
CITY COUNCIL
Regular Meeting Minutes
606 Manitou Avenue
February 17, 2026

The City Council of Manitou Springs met in Regular Session on Tuesday, February 17, 2026, at 606 Manitou Avenue, in the City of Manitou Springs, County of El Paso, and State of Colorado.

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT FOR ROLL CALL:

Mayor Natalie Johnson
Mayor Pro Tem Judith Chandler
Councilor John Shada
Councilor Julie Wolfe (Via Zoom)
Councilor Nate Nassif
Councilor Carey Storm
Councilor Gloria Latimer

A. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Johnson called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

B. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

C. ROLL CALL

All members of the City Council were present for the roll call.

D. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Councilor Storm moved to approve the agenda as presented. The motion was seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Chandler. The motion carried unanimously (7-0).

E. PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

There was no public comment.

F. CONSENT CALENDAR

1. Presentation of Warrants
2. February 3, 2026 City Council Regular Meeting Minutes
3. Consider Reappointing Barbara Winter to the Urban Renewal Authority Board
4. Contract Amendment with RockSol Consulting Group for Lover's Lane Retaining Wall Reconstruction
5. Requesting Approval of the Blinky USA LLC Quote for New Parking Kiosks

Councilor Latimer moved to approve the consent calendar as presented. The motion was seconded by Councilor Nassif. The motion carried unanimously (7-0).

G. PRESENTATION

1. Proclamation No. 0126, A Century of Black History Commemorations

Councilor Latimer read the proclamation into the record declaring February as Black History Month.

H. BUSINESS

1. Pool and Fitness Center Mural Proposal – Presented by CRANE

Farley McDonough, President of Creative Alliance Manitou Springs (CRANE), and Audrey Gray, CRANE Executive Director, presented the proposed mural for the Pool and Fitness Center. It was noted that the project was funded by the Manitou Springs Community Foundation. Executive Director Gray shared that CRANE unanimously approved the proposed mural and that there has been public support for the project on social media.

Mayor Pro Tem Chandler moved to approve the proposed mural for the Pool and Fitness Center. The motion was seconded by Councilor Storm. The motion carried unanimously (7-0).

2. Community Survey Direction

City Administrator Denise Howell noted that Council had directed her to contact Magellan Strategies LLC to conduct a community survey focused on budget concerns, priorities, and direction. She requested Council direction on any constraints to be reflected in the survey and on the desired outcomes.

There was a discussion about the timeline of circulation. Ryan Winger, Representative with Magellan Strategies, confirmed that the current expectation is to start circulating the survey in March after the election and receive results by the end of May.

Councilor Latimer expressed concern about the outcome of the survey, stating that she does not want to receive information that is too generalized.

There was a discussion about the length of the survey itself, during which Mr. Winger advised that the focus wouldn't be on the number of questions but types of questions, survey pace, and user-friendly qualities. He advised that the typical target time would be 12 to 15 minutes.

Mr. Winger explained the survey drafting process, noting that while there are certain required parameters, there is significant flexibility in developing the survey based on Council feedback. He emphasized that the process is collaborative, allowing Council to suggest revisions to question wording, order, or content.

There was a brief discussion regarding the accessibility of the survey and survey notification methods. Mr. Winger stated that text messages have been proven as an effective methodology for circulating community surveys. He added that a postcard with a Quick Response (QR) code could be sent out as well, to increase the reach of the survey, and noted that one downside of text message surveys is that the City would not have a cell phone number for every resident.

Councilor Storm expressed strong support for including post cards in the process.

Mayor Pro Tem Chandler expressed support for Magellan Strategies, emphasizing the positive and comprehensive results received through a past survey managed by the company. She commented that the City will not exclusively rely on the survey and stated that a Community Engagement process is coming.

Mr. Winger stated that Magellan Strategies would be able to provide a test link to the City Council before the survey is launched. He explained that this is a more effective way to test the process, allowing the Council to experience the order and flow of the survey.

Mayor Pro Tem Chandler acknowledged that the Council will have to identify what services can and can't be cut. She stated that abiding by the City Charter is essential, as well as providing for the health, safety and welfare of residents, visitors and business owners, including fire, police and infrastructure support.

Mr. Winger confirmed that receiving Council feedback in February or early March would support keeping the development of the survey on track. He clarified that the City would be responsible for designing the postcard, while Magellan Strategies would develop and administer the survey.

Councilor Nassif suggested that a small group of residents could test the survey, since they will ultimately be the ones receiving the survey.

Mr. Winger stated that they have never tested a survey on residents and typically the Council is considered the test group, however it could be done.

Councilor Wolfe emphasized that the goal of the survey is to allow residents to rank their priorities of services to support Council in deciding which services to cut to balance the budget for 2027. She suggested including a numerical ranking system and, if possible, dollar amounts for each service, noting that without cost information, selected reductions might not be sufficient to address the budget shortfall.

Mayor Johnson suggested that the survey ask both what services the residents want to consider cutting as well as services they want to keep. She added that it would be good if the survey told people how long it will take before starting. Mayor Johnson referred to a previous survey for the library that asked what services the library provides as an educational exercise to understand what services are known and suggested the City could consider something similar. She stated that she would like to get input from the community to consider tax revenue options and prioritized input for potential upcoming City projects. Mayor Johnson also suggested that the survey could provide next steps, directing the participant to an upcoming meeting.

Mr. Winger confirmed that Mayor Johnson's suggestions are all common practices, noting that at the end of a survey, while you have someone's attention, it is typical to include a call to action, such as directing them to a place for additional information.

Councilor Storm agreed with Councilor Wolfe's suggestion to include dollar amounts for each service in the survey and she suggested that the City could identify a total monetary amount to target.

There was a brief discussion about promoting the survey prior to launch, during which Mr. Winger stated that the plan could include a multifaceted approach with social media and emails, however the people who see those communications are not the most representative of the average. City Administrator Howell confirmed that she is working with the Finance Director on an informational meeting that is expected to take place in mid-March, and that she will coordinate with Magellan Strategies to try to have the meeting before the launch of the survey.

There was a general discussion about providing specific options for various ways of cutting the same service, as well as determining dollar amounts for those options. City Administrator Howell noted that cutting back on certain services could be more complex because the cut may also lead to a cut in revenue. She stated that dollar amounts for cut services would be rough estimates.

Councilor Wolfe agreed with Councilor Storm that it would be beneficial to have a total amount to target.

City Administrator Howell shared that she is working on obtaining quotes for community engagement meetings that would happen after the launch of the survey.

3. First Reading of Ordinance No. 0426, An Ordinance Repealing and Reenacting Title 15, Chapter 15.12 of the Manitou Springs Municipal Code and Adopting by Reference The 2021 Edition of the International Fire Code with Amendments Thereto

Fire Lieutenant Brad Dorris presented the ordinance to adopt the 2021 International Fire Code, noting that it is safer than the 2015 code currently in use. He shared that a Fire Marshal Committee was formed in El Paso County and explained that aligning with the County's fire code improves efficiency for builders and provides a broader pool of expertise for the Fire Department.

Councilor Storm moved to approve on first reading Ordinance 0426 An Ordinance Repealing and Reenacting Title 15, Chapter 15.12 of the Manitou Springs Municipal Code and Adopting by Reference The 2021 Edition of the International Fire Code with Amendments Thereto and set a public hearing for March 3, 2026. The motion was seconded by Councilor Latimer. The motion carried unanimously (7-0).

Note for the Record – Councilor Wolfe left the meeting at 6:53 PM.

4. First Reading of Ordinance No. 0326, An Ordinance of the City of Manitou Springs, Colorado, Amending Section 1.32.150 of the Manitou Springs Municipal Code by the Addition of a New Subsection (D) Concerning Municipal Penalties

City Attorney Jeff Parker explained that the proposed ordinance would amend the City Code to match State Statute, which says that when there is a State provision that covers generally the same conduct that's prohibited by City Code, the City cannot impose penalties higher than the State allows. He noted that the provision does not apply to traffic offenses.

Mayor Pro Tem Chandler moved to approve Ordinance 0326, An Ordinance of the City of Manitou Springs, Colorado, Amending Section 1.32.150 of the Manitou Springs Municipal Code by the Addition of a New Subsection (D) Concerning Municipal Penalties and set a public hearing for March 3, 2026. The motion was seconded by Councilor Storm. The motion carried unanimously (6-0).

I. RECEIVE OR ACT ON COUNCIL CORRESPONDENCE

Councilor Latimer shared that she completed the bicycle safety class from Pedestrian and Cycle Manitou Springs (PaCMAN). She added that completing the safety class helps support PaCMAN to move into a category that allows them to apply for higher level grants.

Mayor Johnson reminded Council that there is a Council Retreat scheduled for February 28, 2026 at 8:30 AM.

Councilor Latimer shared that people are reporting technical difficulties with downloading the Honk Mobile Application as needed for parking services, particularly Android devices.

Councilor Nassif stated that the Carnivale Festival was amazing and had a positive community turn out.

J. CITY ADMINISTRATOR REPORT

City Administrator Howell reported that there will be a Coffee with the City Administrator on February 18, 2026, and that the Project Manager for the Hiawatha Gardens project will be there to answer questions. She added that on Thursday, February 19, 2026 at 5:30 PM there will be a community meeting for the Hiawatha Gardens project to provide more details. She announced that on March 7, 2026 the City will be hosting a Community Connect event from 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM for citizens to have the opportunity to come to Memorial Hall to sign up for and obtain information about several City services, programs and amenities, such as 50 hours free parking for residents, peak alerts, adopt-a-park, adopt-a-waterway, and water meter replacement project. She added that the Police Department and Fire Department would be present as well.

K. EXECUTIVE SESSION

1. An Executive Session pursuant to Section 5.1(b) of the Manitou Springs Home Rule Charter to consider the purchase or sale of property for public purpose. The particular details of the property at issue cannot be provided without jeopardizing the purpose of the executive session.

Mayor Johnson read the purpose of the Executive Session into the record at 7:02 PM.


Mayor Pro Tem Chandler moved to enter the Executive Session for the stated purpose. The motion was seconded by Councilor Nassif. The motion carried unanimously (6-0).

The City Council moved back to Regular Session at 7:40 PM. Mayor Johnson confirmed the Executive Session was held solely for the stated purpose and that no formal decision was made.

ADJOURN

With no other items to discuss, Councilor Latimer moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Councilor Nassif. The motion carried unanimously (6-0). The meeting adjourned at 7:41 PM.

Attest:



Elena Krebs, City Clerk



Natalie Johnson, Mayor

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