

May 13, 2026

CITY COMMISSION
SPECIAL MEETING
WATER RATE EVALUATION
THURSDAY, MAY 13, 2026
6:00 P.m.

AGENDA

- A. CALL TO ORDER THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE CITY COMMISSION, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE, ROLL CALL
- B. PRESENTATION WATER RATE EVALUATION
- C. PUBLIC COMMENTS (4 MINUTE LIMIT)
- D. ADJOURNMENT OF SPECIAL MEETING

CITY COMMISSION
Official Proceedings

- A. CALL TO ORDER THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE CITY COMMISSION, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE, ROLL CALL

The Special Meeting of the City Commission was duly called and held on Thursday, **May 13th, 2026** in the City Commission meeting room of City Hall. Mayor Berry called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

PRESENT: Commissioners: Wilkinson, Desjardins, Burge, Prunick and Mayor Berry
ABSENT: None

- B. PRESENTATION WATER RATE EVALUATION

Presentation provided by City Manager Michelle Harrison for the Water Rate Evaluation for the fiscal year 2026/2027 budget. Q & A by the public followed.

Joe Case 1427 Washington St. clarified the difference between the two upcoming projects and which parts are specifically water related. He also asked how the need for the project was assessed and if it was solely for the Washington St. water or if there are other aspects wrapped into the project. Ron Kleiman explained it is mostly because of aged water lines and the need to replace the booster station that feeds those water lines. He then questioned whether the City sought state Revolving Fund Financing for the Washington St. Project. Ron Kleiman and City Manager Harrison explained they are using USDA funding for this project due to the availability of funds and the City's ability to qualify for the funding.

Jean Hase 318 W Superior St. asked what they are doing on Superior St. upcoming since years ago when the 300 block of Superior was re-done. Commissioner Desjardins was able to clarify that it's the downtown area that was not replaced.

Cori Cearly a business owner within the City asked, if we have the increase how long it will last and when the next big one will happen. Commissioner Desjardins explained that this year would be a significant increase with next year anticipated to return to the regular CPI increase.

Ruth Ann Pokela from 1017 Foster St. asked for clarification on the numbers presented by City Manager Harrison for the increase and whether the service fee calculation included the increase or if it was only the water rate. Clarification was given by City Manager Harrison that yes, that included the increase already.

Melissa Morton from 314 Elm Ave. asked how the numbers for the customers vs residents was figured and whether it included commercial or seasonal customers. City Manager Harrison explained her reasoning for the numbers and the average she was able to provide.

Commissioner Burge followed the previous question and indicated he believes the number should have included seasonal residents and the peak months of residential use.

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Melissa Morton asked why the service fee list does not match the water bills she has access to. City Manager Harrison explained that water rates vary across different types of customers.

Blake Bosworth from 401 Onota St. asked how much actual debt the City has incurred. City Manager Harrison explained it costs roughly \$1.2 million to operate the water system along with replacement projects. Commissioner Desjardins explained the City has significant debt payments from the 2008 project. He also reiterated the water is about 2/5ths of the overall bill.

Jami Burton 112 Pine St. asked what the City's recommendation will be when people cannot pay their water bill. Commissioner Burge explained there are limitations placed on the Municipality and how policy should be more accessible. Commissioner Desjardins explained the Commission is obliged to provide water and sewer to the residents in this community and charge them only as much as they have to in order to provide that and only that much.

Stephanie Robare from 124 W Yarnum St. asked when something isn't done correct on a project how does that work for getting it fixed with the contractor. Ron Kleiman was able to explain how some projects are closed.

John Madigan from 1438 Washington St. questioned how the Water and Sewer funds are spread amongst worker fringes, retirement, and benefits. Fringe benefits making up 20% of the cost of operating the Water/Sewer system. Commissioner Desjardins explained that this is spread out amongst many employees and people working within that department and that the next budget meeting will be May 21st.

C. PUBLIC COMMENTS (4 MINUTE LIMIT)

Zach Eckert 931 W Munising Ave. commented on how being a City Commissioner is a full time job and wanted to commend the Commission on the work they are doing and how difficult it is and hopes the public can recognize that. He also suggested exploring ways to offset electrical costs.

Joe Case acknowledges this is a tough problem to deal with and asks that the City thoroughly looks over all of these projects to ensure the money is being well spent and accounted for.

Cori Cearly stated she respects all of the Commissioners and asks that the City is making sure that the numbers are being audited for accuracy of calculation.

Melissa Morton asked why the PowerPoint was not posted online and felt that people would have been better prepared for this meeting if it had been. She noted that the website is terrible and the transparency is horrible.

Cori Cearly reiterated that the website is horrible for navigating for information.

Commissioner Public Comment

Commissioner Desjardins thanked the public for coming.

Commissioner Burge expressed his displeasure with how this process has happened and the timeline for information.

D. ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Commissioner Desjardins to adjourn the Special Meeting.
Support by Commissioner Wilkinson.

Approved: Yeas: Commissioners: Wilkinson, Desjardins, Burge, Prunick
and Mayor Berry
Nays: None

The Special Meeting adjourned at 7:26 p.m.

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Chris Berry, Mayor

Mary Artress, Deputy Clerk

