



City Council Meeting

February 9, 2026

7:00 PM

Fridley City Hall, 7071 University Avenue NE

Minutes

Call to Order

Mayor Ostwald called the City Council Meeting of February 9, 2026, to order at 7:00 p.m.

Present

Mayor Dave Ostwald
Councilmember Patrick Vescio
Councilmember Luke Cardona
Councilmember Ann Bolkcom

Absent

Councilmember Ryan Evanson

Others Present

Walter Wysopal, City Manager
Ryan George, Public Safety Director
Melissa Moore, Assistant City Manager

Pledge Of Allegiance

Proclamations/Presentations

Approval of Proposed Consent Agenda

Motion made by Councilmember Bolkcom to adopt the proposed Consent Agenda. Seconded by Councilmember Vescio.

Upon a voice vote, all voting aye, Mayor Ostwald declared the motion carried unanimously.

Approval/Receipt of Minutes

1. Approve the Minutes from the City Council Conference Meeting of January 26, 2026.
2. Receive the Minutes from the City Council Meeting of January 26, 2026.

New Business

3. Resolution No. 2026-08, Approving Storm Water Drainage, Utility, and Access Easement Agreements with River Edge BC Owner, LP for Rivers Edge Business Center.

Licenses

4. Resolution No 2026-16, Approving Springbrook Nature Center Foundation Temporary Lawful Gambling and Liquor Permits.

Claims

5. Resolution No. 2026-18, Approving Claims for the Period Ending February 4, 2026.

Open Forum, Visitors: (Consideration of Items not on Agenda – 15 minutes.)

Ryan George, Public Safety Director, appreciated the input that was provided by members of the public at the meeting two weeks ago. He introduced himself, providing information on the good governance and collaboration within the City and its departments. He referenced recent challenges to the integrity of the City and noted the immigration statement, which was drafted and adopted in 2017. After the recent statements that they were not following the law, there were discussions with multiple members of legal counsel who have all confirmed that the City is not violating laws or constitutional rights, and they provided a statement from the legal counsel. He noted that a letter requesting a response was sent to Fridley Public Schools and its School Board, and the City has not yet received a response. He addressed comments received from the public related to response tactics and noted that none of those instances mentioned two weeks ago were reported prior to the meeting. He commented that good governance includes transparency, which is why he shared this information tonight. He encouraged residents to call 911 if they need help or if they need the Police Department, and clarified the authority and role of the local police.

Sara Schriener, resident, commented on the ICE activity within the community for the past two months and the incidents that she has observed. She asked the City and Council to take action and provided examples she believed would help. She provided a list of demands to the City Clerk.

Jennifer Nelson, 6200 block of 5th Street, stated that one day ICE will be gone, leaving shattered public trust behind. She stated that the actions now will determine how difficult or easy it will be to rebuild that trust. She recognized that the City does not have control over state or federal actions, but believed that more could be done to serve the community. She used the example of Columbia Heights, which includes links to public rights and other helpful information. She recognized that the City cannot always provide the answer or support, but can direct residents to the appropriate resources, and encouraged the City to continue to collaborate with other communities.

Jennifer Tutor, 1359 Hillcrest Drive NE, commented on the damage that will be left behind when this is done and the impact on small businesses. She encouraged the City to join the coalition of cities to work collaboratively in an effort to have their voices heard.

Jackie Marin, Flannery Park resident, believed that ICE should be banned from staging or using any City property. She commented that Flannery Park is not being used by residents because ICE is staging in that area, noting that ICE is also following school buses. She noted that attendance at the schools is

down 20 percent as people are afraid to send their kids to school. She asked local law enforcement to do everything they can to protect community members and asked the City to take action as well.

Avonna Stark, 650 57th Avenue, commented that she is present as a resident and not speaking as a member of the School Board. She provided information on the Police Advisory Group, which has been a wonderful collaboration, and she is a member of. She commented on a past instance where there was disagreement and misunderstanding between the Police and School Board, and was upset that they are in this position again. She stated that they have been trying to work with the City and Police Department for months and are not at the point of exhaustion and frustration.

Amalia Gonzales, 6380 Madison Street, stated that as a daughter of an immigrant, this issue is near to her heart. She recognized the hurt in the eyes of children when she was patrolling the schools. She commented that kids should not be scared to attend school. She noted ICE activity in the parking lot of the daycare where she works, as well as local churches.

Emily Villanueva, 5980 6th Street NE, stated that in her profession, she sits with families in their darkest times while their children go through cancer treatment, and she is also trained in responding to mental health crises. She stated that the activity in the community is causing active and ongoing emotional harm that will have lasting impacts. She stated that her family feels supported by the School District and its staff and has not felt that support from the City. She asked the Council to publicly condemn the actions of ICE and to bolster the Police to take action. She recognized the statement that the City and Police are acting within their legal authority, but encouraged them to act on their ethics and morals.

Nathan Brovold, Flannery Park resident, stated that he has worked as a paramedic and EMT for the past ten years, servicing over 20 different cities, and is disappointed in himself and the other employees because of the lack of trust that people have in them. He stated that people are dying because they are afraid to call 911 and urged the City to issue a statement that they do not support ICE and are here to support the community.

Nick Kroger, resident of Otsego, introduced himself, noting that although he is not a resident, he is a Fridley graduate, runs the City parade, and is a member of the Lions Club. He thanked Mr. George for his update tonight and found that to be incredibly informative, and it also helped to provide information on current staffing levels. He stated that there needs to be a recognition that everyone is human, and this is an exhausting time for everyone. He stated that these orders are from the federal level, and there is an inability to take action on certain things. He believed there should be critical thinking involved, recognizing that it may not be feasible to ban only ICE from City property, but noting that perhaps a moratorium should be placed on public rental and use of City facilities. He recognized the increased demands on officers and asked if it would make sense to hire more officers because of the increased demand on the Police. He stated that he has friends on the City Council, in the Police Department, and on the School Board, and recognized the hard position everyone is in, noting that a solution will require critical thinking and collaboration.

Daniel Hartman, 5808 Tennison Drive, referenced an article related to flock data and the ability for that information to be shared even if the Police Department opts out.

Valerie Rolstad, Lindie Drive, commented on her experience raising children in the community and stated that people should not be afraid to leave their homes. She asked the City to look into becoming a sanctuary city.

Andrew, Benjamin Street, commented on his experience moving to Fridley, which he has found to be diverse and a true melting pot. He stated that most of the people who spoke tonight are women, and most of the people volunteering to help others in this situation are women. He stated that it is extremely important that those people in protected classes get out to protect others who are more vulnerable. He commented that this is a moral issue, and it is important that the Mayor is vocal about this. He recognized that ICE is still staging on park property in cities where it has been prohibited.

Chuck Farris, Rice Creek Way, stated that he would like to see the City oppose ICE staging on public property and asked if the Police can do something when ICE is breaking the law. He asked what the City Council would do if ICE attempted to purchase a property to create a detention center.

Jackie commented that she is a 911 dispatcher and attested that people are calling 911 who do not want to because they are afraid that ICE will show up rather than the first responders. She asked if something could be sent out in the mail with the water bill, stating the Police will not assist ICE.

Dave Votruba, resident, stated that he would be thrilled if ICE leaves in two weeks. He acknowledged that when ICE leaves, it will leave many gaps that need to be addressed. He recognized that this is a fight against the federal government, and the residents do not expect the City to succeed, but ask that they try.

John Brillhart, 8300 West Moore Lake Drive, commented that when this is over, people will not forget where others stood on this issue. He stated that he is the Anoka County DFL Chair, and they are seeing a lot of activation.

Curtis Pribula, 68th and East River Road, spoke about the fear in the community. He appreciated the report from Public Safety, which highlighted what can and cannot be done with their unlimited resources. He stated that he is supporting a family that stays in their home because they are fearful and unable to go to work. He stated that resident lost their job because they could not be there and recognized the impact that this will have going forward. He appreciated the opportunity for people to speak and share their concerns. He was unsure of the avenues available to the City and encouraged the City to take whatever actions it could to support its residents.

Mayor Ostwald thanked everyone who provided input tonight.

Adoption of Regular Agenda

Motion made by Councilmember Bolkcom to adopt the regular agenda. Seconded by Councilmember Cardona.

Upon a voice vote, all voting aye, Mayor Ostwald declared the motion carried unanimously.

Regular Agenda

New Business

6. Resolution No. 2026-17, Approving Fridley Lions Club Temporary Liquor Permit for Winter Warm Up Event

Melissa Moore, Assistant City Manager, presented a request from the Fridley Lions Club for a Temporary Liquor Permit for the Winter Warm Up Event. She provided background information, reviewed the findings, and recommended approval.

Joe Young, Fridley Lions Club, shared information about the annual event, which will raise funds to replace the fishing pier at Moore Lake. She stated that tickets are available for purchase online and provided that information.

Mayor Ostwald commented that his wife is the President of the Lions and therefore he will be recusing himself from the vote.

There was not a motion or a second, Mayor Ostwald called the question for a vote.

Upon a voice vote, all voting aye, Mayor Ostwald declared the motion carried unanimously. (Ostwald recused himself)

Informal Status Reports

Councilmember Vescio thanked the residents who spoke tonight for those who could not.

Councilmember Cardona expressed appreciation to those who spoke tonight. He stated that he is thankful for the things the School District has been doing for their staff and families, recognizing that they are living in a crisis right now. He wanted everyone to come together to do what is best for everyone. He understood his ability to serve his neighbors as best he could, which also opens him up to criticism. He stated that recently Ms. Karnopp reminded him that he represents all people of color in the community, and Ms. Schriener looked directly at him when referencing the story of five-year-old Liam, as if he did not have a four-year-old Latino son of his own. He stated that twice, residents have told him to speak with the Hispanic and Somali communities as if he were not a member of the Hispanic community himself. He stated that while people have good intentions, they should keep those good intentions when speaking to others. He encouraged residents to reach out and ask questions themselves. He spoke of the struggles to prove himself as a Latino and the work he has done to earn the privileges that he has now, and the situations he has experienced growing up. He stated that he will continue to do what he does personally for himself, his family, and his community. He spoke of the work that he has done professionally as well to help small businesses, recognizing that during this time, he is wearing many different hats. He recognized that the work everyone is doing is different from the work others are doing, and that is okay.

Councilmember Bolkcom thanked the residents who attended and spoke, the Police Department, and City staff. She agreed that this is something they need to work on together rather than allowing this to

create division. She recognized that things are being done in different ways during this time to help others.

Mayor Ostwald stated that the Council takes this seriously and does listen to the residents. He stated that when he accepted the position, he understood that there would be criticism, as you cannot make everyone happy all of the time. He commented on the amount of time he has spent at City Hall on this issue, which is most likely more than he has spent at his job or with his family recently. He did not appreciate the comments that the City is not doing anything or the negative comments directed at Public Safety, as those people put their lives on the line every day.

Adjourn

Motion made by Councilmember Bolkcom to adjourn. Seconded by Councilmember Vescio.

Upon a voice vote, all voting aye, Mayor Ostwald declared the motion carried unanimously, and the meeting adjourned at 8:31 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Melissa Moore
City Clerk

Dave Ostwald
Mayor

Date: February 9, 2026

To: Fridley City Council and City Manager

From: Sara Schreiner

Subject: Formal Request for Emergency Municipal Protections Against Unconstitutional Federal Actions

To the Members of the Fridley City Council,

Following my public testimony delivered on this date, I am officially submitting this list of actionable policy demands for the record. The presence of unidentified, masked federal agents in our residential neighborhoods, and their documented intimidation of residents and constitutional observers, requires an immediate and robust municipal response.

We request that the City of Fridley exercise its local authority to protect the safety and constitutional rights of all its residents by enacting the following:

1. Enact a Municipal Separation Agreement

Prohibit federal immigration agents from using city-owned property, including municipal buildings, parks, and parking lots, as staging areas or command centers for enforcement operations.

2. Information Privacy Protections

Enact a strict ordinance prohibiting city employees and departments from providing non-public information (such as home addresses or utility data) to federal immigration authorities, except where strictly required by a signed judicial warrant.

3. Designation of "Safe Zones"

Formally designate sensitive municipal locations (including public libraries, schools, parks, and health clinics) as "Safe Zones" where city resources will not be used to facilitate immigration enforcement activity.

4. Private Property Protection Resources

Develop and distribute legally-vetted signage and educational materials for private property owners. These resources should clearly state the legal requirements (such as judicial warrants) for federal agents to enter or use private property for surveillance or staging.

5. Emergency Rental & Subsistence Fund

Establish a contingency fund to provide rental assistance and emergency financial support for Fridley families who lose their primary income or face displacement due to federal enforcement actions within city limits.

6. Legal Action and Advocacy

Initiate or join existing litigation against federal agencies to challenge documented unconstitutional actions, including warrantless arrests, racial profiling, and the intimidation of constitutional observers.

In closing, the residents of Fridley are currently living in a state of fear due to the lack of clear boundaries between local governance and federal overreach. We expect the Council to move beyond "monitoring the situation" and implement these protections immediately.

I look forward to a formal response regarding the timeline for the discussion of these items.

Respectfully,

Sara Schreiner
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