

**CITY OF AU GRES
REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 2026
7:00 P.M.**

PRESENT: Mayor Jon Sanford, Dan Heinrich, Jane Barbour, John Popovich
ABSENT: Joe Warr
ALSO PRESENT: City Manager Dale Wiltse, Sarah Dettloff, Arenac County Commissioner Bobbie Burke,
Rakash Agrwal

1). CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Jon Sanford called meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

2). PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor led City Council and audience into the Pledge of Allegiance.

3). ROLL CALL

Roll call noted Jaen Barbour and Joe Warr absent. Jane Barbour arrived at 7:15 pm.

4). MINUTES

MOTION (Popovich) to approve January 6, 2026 regular meeting minutes as presented; support (Heinrich). Motion carried.

MOTION (Heinrich) to approve January 6, 2026 Zoning Board of Appeals meeting minutes as presented; support (Popovich). Motion carried.

5). SET AGENDA

MOTION (Heinrich) to set agenda as presented; support (Popovich). Motion carried.

6). CITIZEN'S COMMENTS: None

7). AU GRES CITY POLICE CHIEF REPORT

Police Chief Charles Allen was present tonight and handed out stat sheet for the month of January. Wanted to clarify that Officer Daily Report is hours logged in for himself (Au Gres City Police Department). The report that says "Sheriff Calls in City" is when the Arenac County Sheriff Department responded to complaints when our police department isn't available. Just finished up all year end reporting for the Police Department and M-Coles training. City Manager wanted to let Chuck know that receiving complaints of vehicles running the red light at Court Street if he could keep an eye on.

8. OLD BUSINESS: None

9). NEW BUSINESS

9.1 MML CapCon

City Manager looked at agenda and is not planning on attending the MML CapCon conference in Lansing March 10-11, 2026. If any City Council member is interested in attending, please call City Hall and we will get you registered for the event.

9.2 Interview Board- Sewer/Water/DPW Position

Applications are due this Friday, February 6. Would like to set up an interview board. So far, Dale Wiltse and Heath Christie are on this board. Would like 1-2 city council members involved. Jon Sanford and John Popovich would like to sit on this board. Suggestion was also to have Randy Dittenbir sit on this board since he will be the one working with this new employee. Any family member conflict, he could excuse himself in the interview and/or voting.

MOTION (Popovich) to set up Interview Board for the DPW Position to include Dale Wiltse, Heath Christie, Randy Dittenbir, Jon Sanford and John Popovich; support (Heinrich). Motion carried.

9.3 Discussion: City ROW/Easements

City Manager went through all 10 river easements and their situations. City needs to determine where river crossings and/or utilities easements are and make sure there is nothing on these 10 city easements. If so, city will need to hang on to easements and not sell and/or give away. Suggest maybe inviting backlotter on Riverside Drive for the few easements along the river. All easements are marked and maybe make a note of all encroachments; once property sells, it will be up to new property owner to comply? Would like to invite all property owners on both sides of each easement to come to next City Council meeting and have a plan.

9.4 Heath Christie unused vacation time

The City's policy on vacation time is to "use it or loss it" by your anniversary date. Due to Heath's situation with his wife's health, he was unable to use all his vacation time this year and has a remaining balance of 89 hours. City Manager is suggesting to allow him to roll over his vacation hours; he will be retiring at the end of this year and at that time, any hours on the books will be paid out.

MOTION (Barbour) to allow roll over of unused vacation time for Heath Christie; support (Heinrich).
Motion carried.

10). CITY MANAGER REPORT

- Southcourt Housing: cold weather put a pause in progress; working with Consumer Energy on power and gas.
- Campground expansion: on hold until weather breaks.
- Road salt is no longer available for sale from the County Road Commission due to a salt shortage across the State. Alternative method they will sell to city is a sand/salt mixture for the remainder of the winter.
- Arena County Building Department is struggling with inspectors and no office help. City has unresolved issues with the County Building Department and maybe this might be the time to explore other option like Area Code Enforcement. City has received complaints from other builders how slow it takes to get inspectors out to do inspections and the City has their own projects going on right now.

11). COMMENTS

11.1 Citizens:

Sarah Dettloff: Small pavilion in the Michigan Avenue Park is dangerous and needs to be knocked down.

11.2 Mayor: Thanked DPW staff for a great job on maintaining roads this winter.

11.3 Council Members:

Heinrich: For the past several years, there has been mild winters and this year has been a true winter with more snowplowing than in years past.

Popovich: Interested to find out we have a County toxicology and reported 120 deaths this year.

Barbour: Been a busy couple month and impressed by DPW staff. Disappointed by comments since on facebook on the city housing project.

11). PAYMENT OF BILLS

MOTION (Heinrich) to approve payment of bills as submitted; support (Barbour). Motion carried.

12). APPROVAL OF FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

MOTION (Popovich) to approve December financial statements as submitted; support (Heinrich).
Motion carried.

13). ADJOURNMENT

MOTION (Heinrich) to adjourn meeting at 8:04 p.m.; support (Popovich). Motion carried.

Jon Sanford, Mayor

LaVonne Pritchard, City Clerk