

REGULAR IN PERSON COUNCIL “HYBRID/ZOOM” MEETING February 3, 2026

The Common Council of the City of Michigan City, Indiana, met in Regular session on Tuesday evening, February 3, 2026, at the hour of 6:30 p.m., Hosted by “Hybrid/Zoom” and streamed live on “My Michigan City” Facebook Page.

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by President Tillman.

Roll call was authorized, and the following were noted present and/or absent.

PRESENT: COUNCIL MEMBERS Tim Bietry, Greg Coulter, Bryant Dabney, Vidya Kora, Daisey Lee, Nancy Moldenhauer, Joseph Nelson, Don Przybylinski, and Tracie Tillman (9).

ABSENT: COUNCIL MEMBER None (0)

A QUORUM WAS NOTED PRESENT

ALSO, PRESENT: Council Attorney Jewel Harris, City Clerk Gale Neulieb, and City Deputy Clerk Amanda Pickens

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

President Tillman asked for a motion to approve the January 20, 2026, Regular Council (Hybrid/Zoom) meeting minutes.

Councilman Dr. Kora made a motion to approve the January 20, 2026, Regular Council (Hybrid/Zoom) meeting minutes, second by Councilman Przybylinski; the motion carried and was approved by the following vote: **AYES:** Council members Nelson, Przybylinski, Tillman, Bietry, Coulter, Dabney, Dr. Kora, Lee, and Moldenhauer, (9) **NAYS:** Council members None (0)

President Tillman stated the January 20, 2026, minutes has been approved.

REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES

President Tillman asked if there were any standing committee reports, there was no response.

FINANCE REPORT

Councilman Dabney stated the Finance Committee did meet this evening on February 3, 2026, and there was a quorum present; stating the February 3, 2026: Riverboat fund #2235 was \$14,107.86 paying LaPorte Chrysler Inc.; Riverboat EFT fund #2235 claims was zero (0); Rainy Day fund #2236 claims was \$3,950.00 paying Schneider Geomatics Inc.; and Boyd Development fund #2504 was zero (0) with the total claims being \$18,057.86

Councilman Dabney advised the cash position for February 3, 2026, Riverboat Fund #2235 was \$3,970,099.90 Rainy-Day Fund #2236 was \$1,321,810.42 with the fiscal grand total ending balance was \$5,291,910.32.

Councilman Dr. Kora made a motion to approve the February 3, 2026, Riverboat/Boyd Development Claim Docket in the total amount of \$18,057.86, second by Councilman Bietry, the motion carried and the February 3, 2026, Riverboat/Boyd Development Claim Docket in the total amount of \$18,057.86 was approved by the following vote: **AYES:** Council members Przybylinski, Tillman, Bietry, Coulter, Dabney, Dr. Kora, Lee, Moldenhauer, and Nelson (9) **NAYS:** Council members None (0)

REPORTS FROM BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

President Tillman asked if there were any reports from boards and commissions.

Shannon Eason, Michigan City Public Art Committee Secretary/ Treasurer, presented the "2025 Annual Michigan City Public Art Committee Report" with Art Committee members Matt Kubik, Janet Bloch, Dale Cooper, and Kathy Dennis.

(NOTE: This communication is filed in the Clerk's Office under Council Matters).

Discussion ensued between the Art Committee members, and Council members Przybylinski, Moldenhauer, and Lee thanking the committee for doing an excellent job placing art throughout the community as part of the "Sculp Fusion" project and honoring the history of Noami Anderson with the exhibit at Westcott Park that is an impactful addition, advising that public art stimulants economic activity and helps reduces crime by making our community more vibrant.

Councilwoman Moldenhauer, advised the public that the Northwest Indiana Green Drinks will be meeting on Thursday, February 5, 2026, at 6:30 p.m. and you can join on Save the Dune's Facebook Live, or a zoom link can be obtained em@savedunes.org; "Becoming an Environmental Champion: How to Influence Your Elected Officials", presented by Desi and Delaney of Indiana Conservation Voters.

President Tillman asked if there were any other Board and Commission reports, there was no response.

REPORTS OF SPECIAL or SELECT COMMITTEES

President Tillman asked if there were any reports from Special or Select Committee reports, there was no response.

REPORTS FROM THE MAYOR OR OTHER CITY OFFICERS AND DEPARTMENTS

President Tillman asked if there were any reports from the Mayor or other city officers and departments.

MCFD Chief Bear Taylor presented their January 2026 monthly stats and overtime amount.

Chief Taylor advised President Tillman that all fire hydrants are clear and that the department will handle any issues.

Councilwoman Lee sent her condolences to the Fire Department, Fire Merit Commission, and to the family of retired Fireman Steve Garner.

Chief Taylor advised that the administration are working on getting cancer screening included with their yearly physicals.

MCPD Chief Steve Forker presented their monthly January 2026 monthly stats and overtime amount.

Chief Forker advised Councilman Nelson that there are seven (7) police cars patrolling neighborhoods by district and one (1) shift commander.

Councilwoman Moldenhauer thanked Chief Forker for increasing the police presence in the Uptown Art District; advising the public that Michigan City MainStreet Association trailer was stolen that held their event properties.

President Tillman asked if there were any reports from the mayor or other city officers and departments, there was no response.

PETITIONS

President Tillman asked Clerk Neulieb if there were any petitions.

Clerk Neulieb advised that there were no petitions this evening.

COMMUNICATIONS

President Tillman asked if there was any correspondence received.

Clerk Neulieb read the following correspondence that was received:

Correspondence was received in the Clerk’s Office on January 15, 2026, from AIM inviting the council to their “Legislative Dinner”.

RESOLUTIONS

Clerk Neulieb read the following resolution by title only.

MICHIGAN CITY COMMON COUNCIL

RESOLUTION 4988

A RESOLUTION INCREASING AND DECREASING CERTAIN APPROPRIATIONS WITHIN THE BUDGET OF CENTRAL MAINTENANCE OF THE GENERAL FUND #1101 FOR THE YEAR 2026 IN MICHIGAN CITY, INDIANA

WHEREAS, there exist certain circumstances within the budget of Central Maintenance of the General Fund #1101 of Michigan City which require increasing and decreasing appropriations for certain line items in that Fund for the year 2026, more specifically, the Central Maintenance Department is in need of vehicle lift.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Common Council of the City of Michigan City, La Porte County, Indiana, that:

Section 1. Because it is deemed advisable and necessary, in order to meet the circumstances facing the budget of Central Maintenance of the General Fund of the City, the Common Council approves the following transfer of appropriations, as listed, to-wit:

CENTRAL MAINTENANCE GENERAL FUND #1101

DECREASE:	A/C #1101.108.436.020	\$84,000.00
	Repairs & Maintenance Equipment	
INCREASE:	A/C #1101.108.445.050	
	Other Machinery & Equipment	\$84,000.00

This Resolution shall be in full force and effect after passage by the Michigan City Common Council and the approval by the Mayor.

INTRODUCED BY: /s/ Don Przybylinski, Member

President Tillman asked if there were any comments from the authors.

Councilman Przybylinski read the following letter from Darrell Garcacik in its entirety.

Dear Member of the Michigan City Common Council

I am requesting approval to proceed with a Special Purchase under Emergency Conditions pursuant to I.C, 5-22-10-4. I anticipate that the Board of Works will approve

the purchase at its meeting on February 2, 2026, contingent upon the common council's approval of a transfer resolution to fund this capital purchase.

The six-post lift is critical due to an ongoing emergency caused by multiple failing hoists in the shop. Hoist failures began in April and have worsened significantly, with additional failures occurring on Saturday, January 24; Sunday, January 25; and Monday January 26, 2026.

Without this equipment, Central Maintenance will be unable to service plow trucks, fire trucks, transit buses, and garbage trucks. As a result, these vehicles would need to be sent to outside vendors on a full-time basis, leading to extended repair times and substantial cost increases.

I have obtained and attached three lift quotes and recommend proceeding with the lowest – cost option from SLE Technologies, Inc., for \$83,302.07. This quote includes Sourcewell pricing at a reduced cost. (Sourcewell is a government agency that assists government, education, and nonprofit entities in purchasing equipment, products, and services as discounted rates.) Two additional alternate quotes are also attached for reference.

Darrell Garbacik, Superintendent, Central Maintenance/ Central Services addressed the council stating the original lift is over 30 years old and is no longer in working condition and due to this city equipment may have to be sent out to be repaired unless we purchase a new lift; advising the council that the Board of Works approved this Special Purchase contingent of the Council approval tonight.

President Tillman asked if there were any questions or comments from the public, there was no response.

President Tillman asked if there were any comments from council.

Councilman Dr. Kora made a motion to approve the proposed resolution, second by Councilwoman Lee, the motion carried and the proposed resolution was approved by the following vote: **AYES:** Council members Tillman, Bietry, Coulter, Dabney, Kora, Lee, Moldenhauer, Nelson, and Przybylinski (9) **NAYS:** Council members None (0)

President Tillman stated this resolution has passed.

Clerk Neulieb read the following resolution by title only.

MICHIGAN CITY COMMON COUNCIL

RESOLUTION 4989

A RESOLUTION INCREASING AND DECREASING CERTAIN APPROPRIATIONS WITHIN THE BUDGET OF CEMETERY EXTENSION FUND #6607 FOR THE YEAR 2026 IN MICHIGAN CITY, INDIANA

WHEREAS, there exist certain circumstances within the budget of the Cemetery Extension Fund #6607 of Michigan City which require increasing and decreasing appropriations for certain line items in that Fund for the year 2026 for the purchase of a 2026 Ford F250 Truck for the Cemetery Department.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Common Council of the City of Michigan City, La Porte County, Indiana, that:

Section 1. Because it is deemed advisable and necessary, in order to meet the circumstances facing the budget of the Cemetery Extension Fund of the City, the Common Council approves the following transfer of appropriations, as listed, to-wit:

CEMETERY OPERATING OF CEMETERY FUND #6607

DECREASE:	A/C #6607.000.436.010	
	Repair and Maint Building	\$ 50,000.00
INCREASE:	A/C #6607.000.445.050	
	Other Machinery and Equipment	\$ 50,000.00

This Resolution shall be in full force and effect after passage by the Michigan City Common Council and the approval by the Mayor.

INTRODUCED BY: /s/ Don Przybylinski, Member

President Tillman asked if there were any comments from the authors.

Councilman Przybylinski stated this vehicle needs to be replaced as the current vehicle has reached its fixable limit, asking the council members to support this resolution.

Jeff Loniewski, Cemetery Superintendent, stated that in 2026, \$73,000.00 was appropriated out of the extension fund and this request is to transfer \$50,000 from that fund to purchase the 2026 Ford F250; advising that three (3) quotes were obtained and Graf Ford was the most responsive.

President Tillman asked if there were any questions or comments from the public, there was no response.

President Tillman asked if there were any comments from council.

Councilman Nelson made a motion to approve the proposed resolution, second by Councilman Przybylinski, the motion carried and the proposed resolution was approved by the following vote: **AYES:** Council members Bietry, Coulter, Dabney, Kora, Lee, Moldenhauer, Nelson, Przybylinski, and Tillman (9) **NAYS:** Council members None (0)

President Tillman stated this resolution has passed.

Councilman Dabney called a "Point of Order" stating that he attended the "Boards and Commission" Workshop advising that a discussion can occur after a vote has been held.

ORDINANCES

The Clerk read the following proposed ordinance on second reading by title only.

CREATING SEC. 78-7 IN THE MICHIGAN CITY MUNICIPAL CODE TO DESIGNATE MICHIGAN CITY GOVERNMENT OWNED BUILDINGS AS SMOKE FREE FACILITIES

Introduced by: Don Przybylinski
Greg Coulter

President Tillman asked if there were any comments from the authors.

Council Coulter advised that several individuals have reached out with ideas for amendments for this ordinance requesting to table this proposed ordinance on second reading until the first meeting in March to hold a future workshop, Councilman Przybylinski second the motion.

Council Coulter called a "Point of Order" advising this will be tabled until the February 17, 2026, Council meeting.

Attorney Harris advised Councilman Przybylinski there is no need to amend the motion as the vote was to have this proposed ordinance tabled on 2nd reading and the notice will include the department invite.

the motion carries and the proposed resolution was TABLED until the February 17, 2026, council meeting by the following vote: **AYES**: Council members Coulter, Dabney Kora, Lee, Przybylinski, Bietry (6) **NAYS**: Council members Moldenhauer, Nelson, Tillman (3).

President Tillman stated the proposed ordinance has been tabled on second reading until the February 17, 2026, council meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

President Tillman asked if there was any new business.

Clerk Neulieb advised that there was no further new business this evening.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

President Tillman asked if there was any unfinished business.

Clerk Neulieb advised that the council has two (2) appointments to the Michigan City Social Status of African American Males Commission representing the following and expire February 15, 2026

Michigan City Area Schools – Dwayne Hurt (2-year term)
Council Appointment – Stasi Benning (2-year term)

Present Tillman the following were nominated at the January 20, 2026, Council Meeting:

- Cordell Atkins
- Dannie Armstrong Jr.

Dannie Armstrong Jr was nominated to the Michigan City Social Status of African American Males by the Following Vote:

Cordell Atkins III (3)
Dannie Armstrong Jr. IIIII (6)

President Tillman congratulated Dannie Armstrong Jr on his appointment to the Michigan City Social Status of African American Males, advised him to reach out to the chair or to the City Clerk to receive any information on this commission.

Clerk Neulieb advised that the council has one (1) appointment to the Michigan City Tree Board representing a Neighborhood Association – Incumbent Laura Henderson (Elston Grove Neighborhood Association) Term expires February 15, 2026.

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

President Tillman asked if there were any other comments from the public.

Ernie Hollan, 602 Gladys Street, stated his concerns with ICE and that he reached out to the State of Indiana officials.

Dave DaRoss, 104 McClane Ave., stated his concerns with a situation involving the Michigan City Police Department.

President Tillman advised for Mr. DeRoss to deliver a copy of his concerns and timeline regarding his issue to the City Clerk's Office and she will disperse to the City Council.

Paul Przybylinski, 1716 Washington Street, stated his concerns regarding the Government entities with the NIPSCO rate increase and the city excise tax.

Michael Grace, 800, 212, lot 551N, stated his concerns with "Project Maize" regarding his injuries he sustained at the work site.

Tommy Kulavik, 1316 Ohio Street, wished the public a Happy Black History month and Happy Birthday to Councilman Dabney.

COMMENTS FROM THE COUNCIL

President Tillman asked if there were any comments from the Council at this time.

Councilwoman Moldenhauer read her letter in its entirety.

Michigan City Councilperson Nancy Moldenhauer: "Residents shouldn't have to decide between heating or cooling their home, buying groceries, or paying for medication"

Statement Regarding HB 1002- Electric Utility Affordability- and Statehouse Movement (Refereed from House to Senate on 1/29/2026: 1st Reading in Senate Committee on Utilities on 2/2/2026)

State Representative Randy Novak: "I'm voting in support if HB1002. It's doing something. We need to do more, We offered many amendments in an attempt to get some relief for our residents, but they were voted down. We are continuing to fight for a solution".

Senator Rodeny Pol: "I have been paying attention to HB 1002 as it was moving through the House of Representatives. I was keenly focused on the amendments brought forward by the House Democratic Caucus that would provide real and direct relief now to Hoosiers. Those amendments unfortunately did not pass. Our caucus has offered several bills focused on lowering utility costs, which we look forward to bringing as amendments to improve the bill. The overall bill is a step in the right direction to helping Hoosiers, and I will continue fighting to improve it even more."

House Bill 1002:

Amendment 11 to prevent consumers from paying for Utility lobbying, marketing, association dues, etc. was rejected.

Amendment to remove sales tax from utility charges like for groceries and medications-refused.

All Amendments on transparency and accountability were turned down.

Bill keeps assistance from utilities for poverty level families in place, yet provides no relief for middle income households, but each Utility – not a Committee for consistency-sets up their own program.

New incentives-based performance means Utilities would be punished for power outages which would save consumers changes yet rewards them for sustained service which means consumers are paying a reward for them doing their jobs.

All consumers are enrolled in their Utility's Budget Plan which averages out billing to prevent spikes during hot and cold months, yet customers have to opt out instead of voluntarily opting in which could lead to unexpected large amounts being due when renters move or homeowners find out they were overusing energy and could have raised or lowered their thermostats per month after receiving their true monthly charges.

Indiana Utility Regulatory Commission Rate Hearings would be held every three years instead of annually which could help prevent sharp utility increases, yet effectiveness would remain to be determined over time.

Governor now appoints all five members of the Indiana Utility Regulatory Commission with no appointments from the public or legislature making it a one-person controlled decision-making body.

View House Hearing on HB 1002:

<https://youtu.be/RxEmD4S1Zsg?si=EqMEPmFWWo0T6Ggw&sfnsn=mo>

TAKE ACTION NOW!

Since the State of Indiana controls and regulates Public Utilities, it is important to be in contact with your State Elected Officials since the City Councils and Mayors have no control over what a utility charges and how rates are determined:

Governor Braun, <https://www.in.gov/contact-mike>, 317-232-4567

Senator Rodney Pol, <https://indianasenatedemocrats.org/member/contact-pol> , 800-382-9467

Representative Randy Novak, <https://www.indianhousefrmocrates.org/share-an-opinion-with-rep-novak>, 800-382-9842

Send your concerns about utility costs and NIPSCO directly to the Indiana Utilities Regulatory Commission (IURC) with your personal experience and other hardship stories regarding high utility rates and include dollar amounts and/ or percentage increases:

1. Go to IURC Online Service Portal
<https://iurc.portal.in.gov/SignIn?RetirnURL=%2Fcomplaint%2F>
2. Select "Redeem invitation" then Sign up with an invitation code
3. Return to the above link and select "Sign In" to file your concern

For those without internet access, tell them to call the Indiana Attorney General Consumer Protection Division at 800-382-5516 and tell them NIPSCO is charging too much.

Sign the Petition to "Demand Indiana reduce utility rates and break NIPSCO's monopoly":

https://www.change.org/p/demand-indiana-reduce-utility-rates-andbreak-nipSCO-s-monopoly?fbclid=IwY2xjawPvX6JleHRuA2FibQlxMABicmlkETE1NzVlaDd6vDRFNEI2dlpnc3JOYxZhcHBfaWQQMjliMDM5MTc4ODlwMD5MGABHmfu0MABfeUTwxJ66gBFnyZ82jBdervKkkzaM2fqCGbihnSummqAUJ6tWsf_aem_j3M54IVcA16Pfi27gXqtBg

President Tillman advised the public that Councilwoman Moldenhauer was given additional time to read the letter in its entirety concerning the NIPSCO rate increase and the council understands the concerns from the public and is prepared to propose a resolution if needed and stated that a lobbyist has been hired to handle this issue at the state level in Indianapolis.

Councilman Przybylinski provided the council with updates from the Human Rights Commission regarding the Black History Month events; advising that "Drive Clean Indiana" and Ryan Lissick will be providing information regarding compressed natural gas (CNG) for the Street and Central Maintenance Department to use clean energy; thanked the Refuse Department for their hard work during the recent snow storm; thanked Councilwoman Moldenhauer for research regarding the NIPSCO rate increase and encouraged citizens to show up to the public hearings at the IRUC; encouraged the council members to attend the workshop regarding the proposed "Smoke Free" ordinance along with the Park Department.

Councilman Dr. Kora thanked Councilwoman Moldenhauer for her researching regarding the NIPSCO rate increase, requesting that Council Attorney Harris to draft a resolution outlining the concerns regarding the rate hikes.

Councilman Dabney, advised that the he is the liaison to the Park Board and that "No Smoking" has been brought before the Council and Park Board previously and supports holding a workshop regarding this matter; suggests including the NIPSCO board of directors when voicing complaints of the rate increase and encouraged the public to attend the "Public Hearings" as the council is not responsible for decreasing or increasing the rates.

Councilman Coulter stated the purpose of the proposed ordinance regarding "No Smoking" is to encourage individuals to quit smoking and to provide support for individuals seeking to quit; advised that he does not believe this will impact the revenue at the wedding venues.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion by Councilman Dr. Kora, second by Councilwoman Moldenhauer and there being no further business to transact, President Tillman declared the meeting **ADJOURNED** (approximately 8:10 p.m.)

These minutes are a summary of actions taken at the Michigan City Common Council meetings. The full video archive of the meeting is available for viewing at:

Michigan City Common Council February 3, 2026


Tracie Tillman, President


Gale A. Neulieb, City Clerk