

## **CITY OF MARINE ON ST. CROIX CITY COUNCIL MEETING**

Thursday, August 14, 2025

Mayor Nyenhuis called the meeting to order at 7:00pm. Nyenhuis, Goodfellow, Miller, Ward, and Willenbring present.

Citizens: Glen Mills, Patte Kraske, Kitsi Vadheim, Liz Kelly, Ross Higgins, Jeremy Chacich, Anne Reich, Julie Warren, Ryan Marsel, Mike Isensee, Patrick Broshar, Kristina Smitten, Bill Smitten, Addy Smitten. Remote: Charlie Anderson, Charlie Borden, Dorothy Deetz, Kelly Jeanetta, Jim Maher and Gayle Knutson (Marine Library Association), Matt Anderson (Country Messenger), Mike Hess, Roger Lyle, Todd Mestad, Mary Whitaker, Tom Warth, Matt Quast.

Approval of the Agenda – Nyenhuis requested moving the Brookside easement and storage agreements to right before Council Reports. Nyenhuis noted that going forward residents will be able to sign up to speak for up to three minutes under Citizens Considerations. *Miller moved and Nyenhuis seconded to accept the agenda as amended. All in favor, motion passed.*

### **Citizens Considerations –**

Charles Anderson – Regarding the July 28 storms, which caused extensive damage from fallen trees, power poles down and no electricity, Mr. Anderson asked why the mayor had not declared a local emergency, which would have enabled aid and assistance. He also asked why the mayor had not taken a stronger leadership role in coordinating response with local, county, and state officials, utility partners, and communication with residents. Mayor Nyenhuis said the City would consider sending a public letter in response.

Michael and Denise Hess Driveway Encroachment – City Attorney Dave Snyder said the agreement was standard, precedented, and would not prevent future development of the street. He noted that City Administrator Peterson recommended approval via the Administrator’s Report. Snyder also recommended approval subject to confirmation of the legal description. *Miller moved and Ward seconded to accept the encroachment agreement of Michael and Denise Hess, for the platted section of Chestnut St. All in favor, motion passed.*

**Planning Commission** – The July meeting was canceled due to storm recovery, no report.

**Brookside Easement and Storage Agreements** – Attorney Snyder noted that Administrator Peterson had recommended approval of the documents. Willenbring requested that a map be added to the agreement as an exhibit. *Willenbring moved, Miller seconded approval of the easement and storage arrangement. All in favor, motion passed.*

### **Public Safety –**

Monthly Report and Storm Recap – Fire Chief Glen Mills said the storm had tested the department, and Marine Fire and Rescue had gone above and beyond in responding to medical calls and gas-main hits. Responders had to cut their way through fallen trees to respond to calls, as almost every street was blocked. Council members commended Chief Mills and Marine Fire and Rescue for

their efforts. In terms of capital equipment needs for the future, Mills said they have adequate power generation, but the old siren will have to go someday. Councilman Miller noted that Administrator Peterson is compiling data for an after-incident review. Public Safety liaisons Miller and Willenbring will lead the review effort.

Update on Summer Public Safety Plan – Goodfellow asked what efforts had been made toward traffic calming and increased enforcement. He also noted the potential for expanding the plan to include roles for the community. Miller noted that speed evaluations take time and would require an ordinance change. Miller is researching costs for increased law enforcement options and will present those during budget talks. Regarding community roles in the safety plan, Miller asked where the City’s responsibility starts and ends when it comes to response at the neighborhood level. Nyenhuis asked the Public Safety liaisons to take the lead on making recommendations and scheduling additional workshops or meetings if needed.

**Roads** – Willenbring reviewed the engineering report, noting that City Engineer Isiah Bubany had asked whether Marine would like to widen 5<sup>th</sup> St. and Chestnut during summer 2026 road work. Roads liaisons Willenbring and Goodfellow felt the roads should be replaced in kind. Willenbring said if widened the roads could be considered “non-standard roadways” rather than bike trails. Goodfellow added that the City might then be required to build standard roadways, which is unnecessary based on usage. Nyenhuis asked whether emergency vehicles could access and pass one another on those roads. Other council members believe the roads are serviceable at this width.

*Willenbring moved, Goodfellow seconded, to approve the Contractor Pay Request #3 to Valley Paving for \$35,319.83. All in favor, motion carried.*

**Personnel** – Council offered high praise to Public Works for clearing roads of downed trees, handling wastewater issues, and leading recovery efforts after the storm. Several residents had also expressed thanks individually; Miller read a thank-you note from a resident aloud.

### **Parks & Recreation** –

Scope of work for 2025-2027 DNR CPL Grant Application – Goodfellow reported that a team is working on the grant application. The City’s commitment for a match would be an estimated \$3,000-3,500 per year for three years. Nyenhuis noted that the City’s goal with the grant is to set the stage for the most affordable management in the future. The City will budget for the match.

Damage assessment and restoring use of the JM Hollow and North Meadow trails – The trails are currently closed with roughly 63 fallen trees and additional hanging limbs. Goodfellow would like to create a damage assessment and plan to restore access. Nyenhuis noted that Public Works will lead planning, and that it might be necessary to wait until the ground freezes to do heavy work. Miller requested clearer policy on trees, defining whose responsibility it is to clear a fallen tree when more than one property is involved.

**Watershed** – Mike Isensee, administrator of the Carnelian-Marine-St. Croix Watershed District, was in attendance to discuss floodplain resiliency. A Flood Vulnerability Analysis was included in the Council packet, and Mr. Isensee will follow up with a technical report soon. High priorities

for the City include the Judd Street Creek at Highway 95 and the intersection of Elm and 5<sup>th</sup> streets. Miller noted that the report is a tool for the City to use for future engineering and planning. The sites are not currently emergencies but would benefit from improved design when the City is doing work in those areas. The watershed district will reach out to Marine residents with at-risk properties.

**Cemetery** – *Ward moved, Goodfellow seconded, to approve Ordinance 190, Resolution 081425-01 approving a new addition to Oakland Cemetery. All in favor; motion carried.*

**Water/Wastewater** – Miller reported that the 24-year-old P4 generator may need to be replaced. He will ask Council to consider cost estimates at the budget meeting.

**City Properties** – Willenbring confirmed that he is reviewing the condition assessment for the Stone House Museum. Miller noted that he had requested estimates for generators for Village Hall and the maintenance shop so Council can consider whether these would be worthy investments for future power outages.

**Community Events** – Based on positive feedback from residents who are happy with the dog park, Ward suggested extending the event through September or October. Resident Ryan Marsel expressed concern that the trial period could become semi-permanent without wrapping up and taking time to gather additional citizen input. Miller added that the City should consider whether there is a better place for a long-term dog park. *Goodfellow moved, Miller seconded, extending the park through September 30. Goodfellow, Miller, Ward, Nyenhuis in favor. Willenbring opposed. Motion carried.*

**EDA** – Nyenhuis noted there had been a meeting earlier that evening.

### **Citizen Committee Reports** –

**Forest Advisory: Tree Loss in Urban Forest** – Goodfellow reported that 133 significant trees were lost in the July storm. Combined with loss from emerald ash borer, Marine's urban forest has decreased by about 20% in nine years. Goodfellow would like to explore opportunities for assistance in replacing the lost trees.

**MVS Update on Grant Awards** – Goodfellow noted that the school has received two grants in the last three months, one of which could enable them to build a third gravel bed. He believes this would help replace lost trees faster. Ward questioned whether that many trees could be adequately watered and cared for after planting. Miller suggested education around planting the right tree in the right place. No consensus was reached.

**Mill Site Committee** – Nyenhuis noted that a white pine log from a 110-year-old fallen tree had been placed in the Mill Site after the storm. Julie Warren, a co-leader of the Mill Site Committee, said this had not been coordinated with the committee. They plan on working to showcase it with interpretive signage but would appreciate more proactive communication going forward.

**Multi-Generational Education District** – Willenbring noted that plans for the public input

session have been moved to late October.

**Consent Calendar** – *Nyenhuis moved, Goodfellow seconded approval of the Consent Calendar. Discussion: Goodfellow requested an amendment to the EDA minutes from July, reflecting his agreement that giving enrollment priority to Marine residents would benefit enrollment. All in favor as amended; motion carried.*

**Old/New Business** – Temporary Staging of Debris at Compost Site: Goodfellow asked whether the compost site could be used as a staging area, so that instead of paying a “tipping fee” to dispose of storm debris, the City could grind it for future use. Public Works Lead Tom Boesel said the site is not as large as it looks and estimated it will cost about \$10,000 to grind what is already there. Council members encouraged residents to pick up woodchips during open hours.

**Mayor Notes / Administrator Report** –

- Nyenhuis introduced the idea of moving the Lost 40 to City Properties rather than Parks & Recreation. Goodfellow asked whether this would set the stage for the parcel to be developed in the future. Nyenhuis believes that would be a wise stewardship of the resource. Nyenhuis will add the concept to a future agenda for discussion.
- Nyenhuis reminded Council of the budget workshop set for September 2 at 6pm.
- *Nyenhuis moved, Miller seconded, to set a public hearing to vacate the alley at 450 Chestnut for September 11, 7pm. All in favor; motion carried.*

**Adjournment** – *Nyenhuis adjourned the meeting through unanimous consent at 8:58pm.*

Minutes taken by Suzanne Lindgren, Treasurer and Assistant City Clerk.