

Minutes
Woodbury City Council
Wednesday, January 28, 2026

Pursuant to the due call and notice thereof, a regular meeting was duly held virtually and at the Woodbury City Hall, 8301 Valley Creek Road, on the 28th day of January 2026.

Call to Order

Mayor Anne Burt called the meeting to order at 8:09 p.m., and she welcomed those attending the meeting both in person and virtually.

Mayor Burt explained that members of the public may attend the meeting in person and may also join the meeting using a computer, tablet, or smartphone. She stated public comments will be accepted during the meeting both in person and virtually. Virtual questions should be submitted via the online Q&A feature within the virtual meeting link. Questions regarding the meeting will also be taken between the hours of 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. via email at council@woodburymn.gov or at 651-714-3524. Questions received after 4:30 p.m. will be responded to in the next three to seven business days.

Mayor Burt stated that meetings are recorded through True Lens Community Media and are broadcast live and replayed on cable channel 799. Meetings are also available on the City of Woodbury's YouTube channel. Members of the public are welcome to join and have an opportunity to speak in person, or can watch virtually. Virtual questions can be submitted online, and the City Clerk will monitor them throughout the meeting.

Pledge to Flag

Audience, staff, and Council pledged allegiance to the flag of the United States of America.

Roll Call

Upon roll call the following were present: Mayor Anne Burt, Councilmembers: Kim Wilson, Donna Stafford, Steve Morris, and Jennifer Santini.
Absent: None

Others Present: Ashleigh Sullivan, Assistant City Administrator/City Clerk; Kevin Sandstrom, City Attorney; Jeffrey Dahl, City Administrator; and Janelle Schmitz, Community Development Director

Mayor Burt read a statement in response to the previous Council meeting. She addressed the current situation regarding immigration enforcement and activities in Minnesota. She recognized that the increase in immigration enforcement efforts in the region is creating fear and anxiety for many in the community. The events of the weekend have impacted community members in different ways. She explained that it is important to acknowledge what has happened and lean on each other for support. The City and its leaders have a long commitment in fostering a welcome, inclusive, and safe community. Local law enforcement has done a phenomenal job in keeping the community safe and building trust and relationships with all residents. She encouraged the community to take care of themselves and each other. On January 14th, staff verbally confirmed that the property located at 11435 Hudson Road is not being sold or leased to the federal government or agents acting on their behalf. Since that time, staff have received written confirmation from both the building's representatives and the federal government agents that the building will no longer be considered for a detention facility. The City does not have any other large warehouse spaces to meet the purposes that have been reported by the federal government. The City continues to work with all of its partners, County, State, and federal officials to advocate for the rights of the valued immigrant communities during this challenging time. She added that the City would continue to communicate any additional information that is obtained. She encouraged community members to follow the FAQ page for more information at woodburymn.gov/ICE.

Special Order of Business

No items scheduled

Open Forum

This item was addressed after Consent Agenda, per request of Mayor Burt.

Consent Agenda

Item A 1. Approval of Council Workshop Minutes— January 14, 2026
 2. Approval of Council Minutes – January 14, 2026

Item B To adopt a motion to renew nineteen (19) interim conditional use permits as listed in Council Letter 26-13.

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Item C To adopt a motion to approve the Woodbury Leadership Academy Addition; Site and Building Plan, Project No. 04-2025-00590, subject to the conditions listed in Council Letter 26-14.

Item D Approval of a Budget Amendment; Addition of a Construction Administration Coordinator and Construction Administration Specialist to the Engineering Division. **This item was removed from the Consent Agenda and moved to the Discussion portion of the meeting.**

Item E To adopt the following resolution **Resolution 26-08**

Resolution of the City of Woodbury, Washington County, Minnesota, approving the reconciliation of trunk funds for the South Washington Watershed District Lake Management Plan.

Item F To adopt the following resolution **Resolution 26-09**

Resolution of the City of Woodbury, Washington County, Minnesota approving the 2025 State of Minnesota Pay Equity Report

Item G To adopt the following resolution **Resolution 26-10**

Resolution of the City of Woodbury, Washington County, Minnesota amending Council Directive CD-ADMIN-1.1 Authorizations and Procedures for Personnel Management.

Item H The abstract of bills includes payments made from the operating or project budgets for expenses of the city. The expenditures are from all funds of the city. Any purchased contracts requiring signature of the mayor and City Administrator is hereby approved. Staff recommends approval of the abstract of bills for January 2, 2026, in the amount of \$562,535.94, January 9, 2026, in the amount of \$3,896,842.90, and January 16, 2026, in the amount of \$6,922,748.28.

Councilmember Santini moved, seconded by Councilmember Morris, to approve the Consent Agenda items with the exception of item 6D.

Voting via voice:

Kim Wilson – aye
Donna Stafford – aye
Steve Morris – aye
Jennifer Santini – aye
Anne Burt – aye

Mayor Burt reordered the Agenda to consider the Discussion portion of the meeting.

Discussion

Consent Agenda Item 6D. Approval of a Budget Amendment; Addition of a Construction Administration Coordinator and Construction Administration Specialist to the Engineering Division

Councilmember Wilson pulled this item for discussion and expressed concern that it has not been a month into the new year, and adjustments are already being made to the budget. She added that she understands why there needs to be additional staff, but does not agree with it and would vote differently. Mayor Burt noted that the additional staff would save the City money in the long run since the work would be done in-house.

Councilmember Morris moved, seconded by Councilmember Stafford,

To adopt the following resolution **Resolution 26-07**

Resolution of the City of Woodbury, Washington County, Minnesota, amending the 2026 Adopted Annual Budget and authorizing the addition of a Construction Administration Coordinator and a Construction Administration Specialist to the Engineering Division.

Voting via voice:

Kim Wilson – no
Donna Stafford – aye
Steve Morris – aye

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Jennifer Santini – aye
Anne Burt – aye

Open Forum

Mark Ragain, City resident, stated he received a letter from the City regarding a disc golf course by the Tamarack Nature Preserve. He explained that it does not seem that there is room to put in a disc golf course in the area and wondered if a lot of trees would be cut down in the process. He asked if there were other locations that had been considered. Mayor Burt stated that a staff person would follow up.

Public Hearings

A. Consider Approval of the Pet Memories Conditional Use Permit; Project No. 18-2025-00599

Mayor Burt declared the public hearing open.

Community Development Director Janelle Schmitz stated J. Wade Jackson has submitted an application for a Conditional Use Permit to operate a pet cremation service with an eco-friendly water-based process called Aquamation. The proposed location is at 2357 Ventura Drive. The land is currently zoned I-1, Light Industrial District, and guided as Places to Work on the Land Use Plan. A Conditional Use Permit is required for uses not identified within the I-1, Light Industrial District. City Code Section 24-43 outlines the guidelines for granting a Conditional Use Permit. Please reference the attached draft resolution for the required findings of fact.

Ms. Schmitz explained that Pet Memories Cremation is proposed to occupy 2,875 square feet of the 35,865 square foot building. The Applicant is proposing to use a cremation process called Aquamation, which is an eco-friendly alternative to traditional flame-based cremation services. Staff has identified that the Conditional Use Permit process is the appropriate zoning process to evaluate this use. The max capacity of the machine holds 47 gallons of water. It is anticipated that the machine will run 2-3 times per week for the first 6 months. After the business is established, it is anticipated that they could run the machine once per day. The applicant identified that the machine is not full most of the time and may run at half water capacity. The technologies for this Aquamation process are improving, and the applicant anticipates reduced water usage per run in the future.

Ms. Schmitz stated that the building has adequate parking on-site. The proposed cremation use would require 6 stalls. The Applicant has indicated they don't anticipate using more than 2 spaces at any given time since their clientele is by appointment only. The Applicant is proposing to utilize the two (2) existing full access points from Ventura Drive into the site for vehicle access.

Ms. Schmitz noted that the Planning Commission reviewed the application at its January 12, 2026, meeting and recommended approval with a 6-0 vote. She introduced Planning Commissioner Stephanie Swanson to provide a report. She added that a neighborhood meeting was held on January 5, 2026. There were no residents who attended.

Planning Commissioner Swanson stated the Planning Commission had very few questions and comments on the project. The Commission had questions regarding odor and whether there were animals waiting to be cremated. The applicant explained that there is a refrigeration process. The applicant also explained that the noise is similar to a large commercial dishwasher that would not be heard by other tenants' spaces. According to the applicant, there would be a net positive regarding water pollution. The Commission had questions regarding the licensing requirements for animal cremation. The Commission learned that there are no licensing requirements for animal cremation. The Commission discussed whether a conditional use permit for animal cremation would allow the business the flexibility to expand the business to do human cremation. The conditional use permit would not allow the flexibility to expand to human cremation.

The applicant, Wade Jackson, introduced himself and noted that he would be available for questions. Councilmember Stafford asked what animals would qualify to be cremated. Mr. Jackson replied that domestic animals such as house pets would qualify. He added that the weight restriction would be 250 pounds due to the equipment.

Councilmember Wilson asked how there could be a net positive for water pollution. Mr. Jackson explained that when it neutralizes, proteins are released into the water treatment, which is good for the sewer system. It is not a deterrent. He added that there have been studies done, and it has shown that the discharge can be used as a fertilizer and has found an increase in crop yield. He noted that the concept is not foreign, and there are other cities that are using the water system. He noted that Aquamation is big in Europe, and Europe tends to have stricter guidelines.

Mayor Burt moved, seconded by Councilmember Morris, to close the public hearing.

Voting in Favor: Wilson, Stafford, Morris, Santini, Burt
Absent: None

Mayor Burt opened an opportunity for discussion and questions from the Council.

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Councilmember Stafford moved, seconded by Councilmember Wilson, to approve the Pet Memories Cremation Conditional Use Permit based on the findings of fact in RESOLUTION 26-11, Project No. 18-2025-00599 subject to the conditions outlined in Council Letter 26-19.

1. The CUP approval shall expire one year from the date of City Council approval unless a building permit has been requested or a time extension has been granted.
2. This approval does not include signs. A separate sign permit is required for all proposed signage.
3. Any ground-mounted and rooftop mechanical equipment shall be hidden from view with materials that match the materials and colors used on the building.

Voting via voice:

Kim Wilson – aye
Donna Stafford – aye
Steve Morris – aye
Jennifer Santini – aye
Anne Burt – aye

Discussion

This item was addressed after the Consent Agenda.

City Administrator's Report

City Administrator Jeffrey Dahl congratulated Shelley Buck for winning the special election for the open House seat. He noted that she won with 98% of the vote and ran unopposed. He stated that the City is looking forward to working with her and is starting to fill her in on the City's legislative priorities. He thanked the Assistant City Administrator/City Clerk for running the special election.

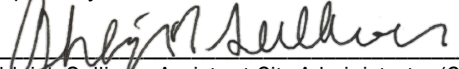
Mr. Dahl stated that the State of the Cities event will be held on February 26th at 6:00 p.m. and will be located in the new Central Park Woodlands room. The event is open to the public and can RSVP on the website. He congratulated Ty Okada for being the safety for the Super Bowl-bound Seattle Seahawks. Ty was born and raised in Woodbury and graduated from East Ridge High School and is the son of Parks and Recreation Director Michelle Okada. He congratulated Phill Drobnik, who is the team captain for the USA curling team and is a Woodbury resident.

Adjournment

Mayor Burt moved, seconded by Councilmember Morris, to adjourn the meeting at 8:32 p.m.

Voting in Favor: Wilson, Stafford, Morris, Santini, Burt
Absent: None

Respectfully submitted,



Ashleigh Sullivan, Assistant City Administrator/City Clerk

Approved by the Woodbury City Council on February 25, 2026.