



OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER

www.cityofyankton.org

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Commission Information Memorandum

The Yankton City Commission meeting on Monday, January 26, 2026 will begin at 6:00 pm.

Non-Agenda Items of Interest

1) Finance Department Update

As a reminder, all utility customers need to update their contact information with the Finance Office. Please call 605-668-5241 to provide an updated phone number, mailing address, etc. for your utility account. Having updated contact information helps us provide better customer service for residents, so we greatly appreciate your help keeping this up to date.

Finance continues working on end-of-fiscal year tasks and processing vendor 1099 tax forms. The deadline for these forms is January 31st.

The SDML Workers Compensation Fund has contracted with Discover Systems to perform the annual workers compensation payroll audit for 2025. It has been scheduled with the Finance Department for Tuesday, March 3. Finance will begin compiling the necessary information for auditors.

Please see the enclosed list of 2026 City Licenses, Monthly Finance Report for December 2025, and the Q4 2025 Revenues and Expenditures Report.

2) Human Resources & Employee Engagement Department Update

Applications are being accepted for Police Officer. Interviews are ongoing. Applications are being accepted for a Police Intern position. This position is open until February 20th.

Applications were accepted for Sanitation Truck Operator in our Public Works Department. Interviews were held and Robert Lehman has accepted the position. Robert is currently an employee in our Parks and Recreation Department and has been employed with our organization for almost three years.

Internal applications were accepted for the position of Water Distribution/Wastewater Collection Operation Specialist in our Environmental Services Department. This position closed on January 20. Interviews are scheduled and a recommendation for hire will be forthcoming.

Applications are being accepted for two open positions of Grounds Maintenance in our Parks, Recreation and City Events Department. These positions are open until they are filled.

January's employee wellness challenge is wrapping up. The challenge for January is the 20-Day Movement Challenge. Employees were asked to complete 60 minutes of physical activity every day for 20 days. Employees were asked to submit their log at the end of the month to be entered into a drawing for a prize.

The Employee Committee is hosting a Super Bowl Tailgate on Friday, February 6. Staff is invited to bring their favorite tailgate snack and encouraged to wear their favorite team gear.

Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) Training will be held on February 25-26 at Fire Station #2. This is an annual refresher training requirement for some positions in our organization.

3) Parks & Recreation Department Update

An update on the various activities in the Parks & Recreation Department is included in this packet.

4) Community & Economic Development Department Update

In terms of valuation, 2025 was an unexpectedly busy building year. Total building permit valuation for the year came to \$101.27M – almost double 2024's total of \$54M. This total edges out the previous valuation record of \$100.5M set in 2023. That valuation was heavily weighted in commercial construction projects.

The commercial non-profit sector was the primary driver of building activity with the Benedictine Residential Project (\$21.2M) and Avera Cancer Center remodel (\$8.9M) being the two largest projects for the year. Multi-family construction continued to add more units to our inventory in 2025 with the highest profile project being the Meridian Tower apartments valued at \$6.5M and continued construction of the Links and Bluestem projects which were permitted in 2024. Work at Yankton Mall added approximately \$6M in construction activity with additional permit activity anticipated in 2026.

Other notable 2025 commercial projects include:

- Park Haven Learning and Recovery Center
- First Dakota National Bank Remodel
- Elkhorn Valley Bank and Trust
- ShurCo Addition
- Meridian Counseling
- Nelson Shop Condos

Consistent with regional and national trends, single family home activity was down in 2025 with 15 new houses and 3 duplexes permitted for a total valuation of \$4.9M. Those trends have not yet shown signs of turning around for 2026. The 10-year average for single family home construction is 29.5 homes per year with an average value of \$200,703 (not adjusted for inflation).

The total number of permits issued for the year was 469 which is nearly double the 258 permits issued in 2024. The increase was driven almost entirely by residential roofing repair with the majority of the 250+ roofing permits issued as a result of hail damage. Residential roofing permits are a flat \$20.00.

5) Information & Technology Services Department Update

On January 14, we completed the last two installs for MIDCO services for the City at the wastewater plant and street shop. On January 21, we will be upgrading the landfill software to the newest version and installing a new computer. The current software was no longer being supported. During the upgrade, staff will be calculating weights and charges manually. On Monday, January 26, we will be traveling to Vermillion to tour their new 911 center and discuss a cooperative arrangement with them to allow both entities to share radio equipment capabilities in backup scenarios.

The electric project in City Hall is progressing, and contractors have completed work in the Engineering, Public Works and Human Resources offices. Overall, the project is progressing and we have identified a few additional items that will need attention.

6) Environmental Services Department Update

Water department staff is working with Finance staff to send the required lead and copper service line notices. The first set of letters with known lead (94) and known galvanized (102) service lines were delivered. The material in these service lines was verified during our water meter change out project. The second round of letters are for service lines that could potentially have a lead service line but is unknown at this time. The City has over 2,600 service lines in the unknown category. The unknown portion is most likely the portion underground. Many of the unknown service lines have been verified inside the home as non-lead but cannot be verified from the home to the main. The notification is a requirement from the Environmental Protection Agencies (EPA) recent update to the lead and copper rule. This is the second year the notifications were sent and will be required annually.

The City does not have any lead service lines. The lead lines are privately owned service lines.

The City has migrated to an Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) that allows water meters to be read remotely. The City is also migrating to a new style ultrasonic water meter. During the winter months, the distribution staff works to replace any meters that are not compatible with our AMI system or that have reached the design life of the meter. Older meters become less accurate and lead to greater water loss in the system. Staff is currently dropping off notices to residents that have meters that need to be replaced in order to schedule the replacement.

7) Police Department Update

Officers Bret Craig and Garrett Anderson recently conducted CPR training for all officers, detectives, and administrative staff. They are also working on recertifying dispatchers in CPR to ensure the entire department is prepared for emergency situations.

On January 19, Officer Fishel met with members of the Yankton Lions Club to discuss strategies for avoiding scams and fraud. The presentation covered common schemes including online scams, text message scams, phone scams, and cryptocurrency-related fraud. Our best advice: If something seems suspicious or you are unsure whether it is a scam, contact your local bank, insurance agent, or law enforcement officer before taking any action. These professionals can help protect you from losing your hard-earned money.

The Police Department's year-end statistics are in. Calls for service decreased by approximately 9% compared to 2024. We also observed reductions in assaults, thefts, vandalism, and burglary cases. Although we were not fully staffed throughout the year, most shifts were covered at full strength. We are optimistic about continuing this downward trend in 2026.

Recently, a uniform vendor visited the department to showcase their products. They have agreed to provide trial uniforms for evaluation. While the appearance will remain largely the same, the material and durability may offer noticeable improvements for daily use. After testing and gathering feedback from staff, we will determine whether to adopt these changes. Any adjustments will be minimal, and the public is unlikely to notice a difference.

Over the past three years, enforcement activity related to dynamic engine braking has been minimal but gradually increasing. In 2023, there were no enforcement actions recorded. In 2024, officers issued four warnings, and in 2025 that number increased to nine warnings.

While these figures may appear low, it is important to understand the context. Enforcement of dynamic engine braking violations requires an officer to personally hear the braking event, accurately identify it as dynamic engine braking, and be available to respond. If an officer is already engaged in a call for service, they cannot address the violation at that time. As a result, there may be instances where the public observes an officer nearby and hears dynamic engine braking, but the officer is unable to take enforcement action due to other obligations.

8) Fire Department Update

In 2025, the Fire Department responded to a total of 346 incidents which remains consistent with recent years (354 incidents in 2023 and 340 incidents in 2024). Overall call volume has remained relatively stable over the past several years.

Of the 346 total incidents, 199 incidents occurred outside normal working hours (defined as 7:00 AM to 5:00 PM, Monday through Friday).

- 139 of these incidents were handled by on-call staff, typically consisting of the Fire Chief and Fire Marshal with periodic assistance from volunteer captains.
- These responses accounted for just under 75 hours of staff time outside normal working hours in 2025, compared to 42 hours in 2023 and 59 hours in 2024.
- When factoring in full-department responses outside working hours, total personnel time spent on incidents outside normal working hours was just under 130 hours in 2025.
- The average time spent per incident was approximately 39 minutes.
- Sunday was the day of the week with the highest number of incidents occurring outside normal working hours.

A total of 147 incidents occurred during normal working hours in 2025 which is also consistent with prior years.

- Staff spent approximately 72 hours on incidents during working hours in 2025 which represents a decrease from 82 hours in 2024.

The Fire Department is in the process of transitioning to the National Emergency Response Information System (NERIS). This mandatory national transition replaces the National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS) and is intended to provide more timely, standardized, and actionable data for fire and emergency services agencies nationwide.

Apparatus and Operational Updates:

- Engine 2, a shared apparatus between the City and the Yankton Fire Protection District, experienced significant pump-related mechanical issues and was temporarily out of service for several days. The necessary repairs have been completed, and the apparatus is back in service. Engine 2 responded to an incident this past Saturday night, confirming its operational readiness.
- Fire Department staff conducted a walk-through of the new monastery building as part of pre-incident planning and familiarization efforts.
- Deputy Chief Preadable has worked with Astec and Shurco on recent fire protection system upgrades, supporting continued risk reduction and system reliability within the community.

9) Public Works Department Update

Street department staff continue to perform winter maintenance projects on equipment and the streets. Crews continue to remove street trees slated to be removed this winter.

2026 Construction Projects:

The FAA has given approval to prepare a bidding schedule for the Terminal Apron Reconstruction and Taxiway Rehabilitation project at the airport. The advertisement for bids will be published soon with a late February bid opening date. If favorable bids are received, project award would be contingent on grant funding from the FAA and State.

Included in this packet is the advertisement for the Alley Reconstruction, Green Street to Maple Street, from 4th Street to 6th Street.

Also included are sample ads for the following projects:

- 30th Street – West City Limits Rd. to Adkins Dr.; Adkins Dr. – Mulligan Dr. to 31st St.
- 3rd Street – Mulberry St. to Picotte St.
- Chan Gurney Airport Utility Expansion – Water & Sanitary Sewer
- Alley Reconstruction – Riverside Dr. to 4th Street between Green St. and Locust St.

The design process is still ongoing for these four projects. We expect them to be ready for advertising by early February.

10) Library Update

The Yankton Community Library was closed on Monday, January 19, for a staff in-service. As staff are normally spread out to cover operations, it is a rare opportunity to have everyone together and fully focused. Our agenda included fine tuning internal procedures, beginning work on updating the library's mission statement, planning for upcoming events and working out our Summer Reading Program goals.

Keley Smith-Keller, Licensed Professional Counselor and Certified Career Counselor (National Career Development Association) led the work on updating the mission statement. Everyone felt like we have a good start and will soon have a finished product to present to the Board of Trustees for input.

Captain O'Farrell and Detective Hansen graciously gave us a tour of the Yankton Police Department where we discussed some potential cooperative programming related to internet safety.

Stay tuned for lots of great Summer Reading Program plans and, as always, check our Facebook page and event calendar for the latest info on more fun events, book recommendations, and all things library related!

11) Monthly reports

The Joint Powers monthly report is included for your review as well as minutes from the Airport Advisory Board.

Have an enjoyable weekend and do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions about these or other issues. If you will not be able to attend the Commission meeting on Monday, please inform my office.

Sincerely,

Amy Leon
City Manager