

Community technology advisory commission

Minutes

Members present: Reid Anderson, Rudyard Dyer, Shane Leverenz, Konnor Slaats
Members absent: Kayla Stautz, Benjamin Straus, Tom Marble (school district liaison)
Staff liaison: Jacque Smith, communications and technology director

1. Call to order – roll call

The meeting was called to order at 6:05 p.m. A roll call was conducted.

2. Approval of minutes – Feb. 18, 2026

It was moved by Commission Member Slaats, seconded by Commission Member Leverenz, to approve the Feb. 18, 2026, minutes with one change. The motion passed.

3. Workplan Items

Chair Slaats provided updates on the AI workplan item, noting that Commission Member Straus and Commission Member Stautz were absent but had been working on the project for an extended time. He indicated he would send notes to fill in team members on current progress and suggested comparing notes on everyone's contributions at the next meeting.

Commission Member Leverenz reported that he had not made progress on their project but had reviewed helpful information provided by city staff about the mystlouispark app. He planned to use this information to document the current status of the city app including its features, management structure, and costs as a baseline for future work.

Vice Chair Dyer acknowledged he had not made significant progress either but had examined other city websites. He found the St Louis Park website significantly better than comparable cities. He expressed difficulty in identifying needed improvements without being an active app user and suggested conducting a public opinion poll to gather resident feedback on desired features rather than brainstorming changes internally.

Commission Member Leverenz noted that during the previous meeting he and another member had documented all app features by going through the application systematically. He found it interesting that the communications team provided download statistics showing approximately 17,000 app downloads, with 6,000 users submitting requests since the app's 2014 implementation.

Chair Slaats questioned whether the download figure represented cumulative downloads since 2014. Commissioner Anderson stated that in the last two years there had been 1,000 iOS downloads and approximately 1,000 Android downloads.

Commission Member Leverenz suggested a resident survey could be valuable for gathering feedback on desired features. Ms. Smith noted that website redesign research might already include relevant information since the new design will provide a better mobile experience that functions similarly to an app. She emphasized the importance of understanding that the app serves as customer response management beyond just providing general city information.

Chair Slaats observed that an assessment review could incorporate multiple elements including capabilities evaluation, expansion opportunities, integration possibilities, modifications, and comparisons with other cities. He suggested these components could be combined with a potential survey as a comprehensive approach.

Commissioner Anderson discussed integration opportunities, noting his professional background in system integration. He identified the lack of integration with key systems like utility billing, task tracking, and solid waste collection as areas for improvement. He proposed that recommendations could focus on automating app submissions directly into relevant city systems to reduce staff workload and improve resident responsiveness.

Commission Member Leverenz supported this approach as it would create efficiency gains for staff members who currently manually transfer information from the app to other systems.

Chair Slaats emphasized the importance of maintaining policy-level focus rather than getting too detailed in technical functionality. He stressed the need to consider how recommendations might influence future policy decisions.

Commission Member Leverenz clarified their goal is educating city council members about the app's current functionality, costs, and considerations while providing information about other cities' approaches. He suggested recommendations could include directing staff to conduct a citywide survey for more detailed app usage information.

Ms. Smith explained that policy recommendations would be valuable for budget requests, which become policy questions affecting city levy decisions. She noted that external assessments help support budget proposals.

Commissioner Leverenz proposed that integration recommendations should focus on creating a closed loop where user submissions go directly to appropriate staff and completion notifications return to users automatically. Chair Slaats agreed this represents a policy question about whether the city wants to achieve best-in-class status and suggested benchmarking against other cities' spending and available products.

Commission Member Leverenz acknowledged making no substantial progress on the work plan and hoped for updates at the next meeting.

Chair Slaats reported extensive research on AI applications across various cities including South Africa, Cincinnati, and Ann Arbor. He noted having approximately 40 different use cases covering multiple municipal divisions. The team's approach involves examining use cases across different city departments rather than focusing on specific implementations.

Chair Slaats outlined their research framework covering internal city operations, chatbots for internal and external use, public works applications including traffic cameras and automated pothole detection, facilities and utilities management, public safety, planning and zoning, public engagement, external resources including AI coalitions, and agentic AI applications.

Commission Member Leverenz mentioned Albania's appointment of an AI government minister to oversee public procurement and combat corruption, representing the first country to have an actual AI employee. He noted this as an interesting use case for AI in checks and balances.

Ms. Smith suggested considering the potential negative implications of AI tools beyond its beneficial applications, such as how data is collected and aggregated on individuals.

Chair Slaats welcomed this perspective as a timely addition to their considerations section, noting the importance of examining both positive applications and negative risks.

Commission Member Leverenz supported including awareness of negative consequences and potential pitfalls alongside optimistic outlooks. He described the "nightmare scenario" method used in strategic planning to identify worst-case outcomes and potential risk mitigation strategies.

Chair Slaats shared an example of enterprise AI model concerns where extensive use could result in companies owning employee thought processes and work products, though he noted this may be less relevant for municipal applications.

Ms. Smith confirmed that city employees are likely using various AI tools since access is not blocked, though Microsoft Copilot access is limited due to government cloud restrictions and cost considerations.

Vice Chair Dyer inquired about potential collaboration with other commissions, specifically regarding data center development concerns raised in communities like Rosemount. He noted environmental and community impact issues that might warrant joint discussion with the environmental commission.

Vice Chair Dyer suggested cross-collaboration with the environmental commission could provide educational value about data center benefits and concerns including job creation and development opportunities versus environmental impacts.

Commission Member Leverenz expressed interest in learning more about data center issues, acknowledging that while he has technology understanding he was unclear about specific community concerns regarding power and water consumption.

Ms. Smith indicated this could be added as an additional work plan item pending planning department consultation about zoning processes for existing and potential data centers.

Chair Slaats confirmed he could communicate individually with team members working on AI projects while maintaining compliance with open meeting requirements. He planned to share compiled research notes with team members for the next meeting's collaborative discussion.

Commission Member Leverenz clarified open meeting law restrictions regarding email communications, confirming that one-way information sharing is permissible but back-and-forth email discussions among multiple members are prohibited.

4. Communications and announcements

Ms. Smith announced that terms for Commission Member Leverenz and Commission Member Straus end in May and they should have received reappointment materials from Pat Coleman.

Ms. Smith noted that the annual council meeting will occur in September rather than April this year. The chair and vice chair will attend with other members welcome to participate.

Ms. Smith reported that a work group of council members and city staff is reviewing 2025 updates to boards and commissions to assess improvements in communication and advisory body effectiveness. The review focuses on implementation results, challenges, and needed

adjustments for 2026 including commission check-ins, communication tools, work plans, information resources, and bylaws. The group will reconvene with a full recap to follow.

5. Adjournment

It was moved by Vice Chair Dyer to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed; meeting adjourned at 6:43 p.m.

These minutes were created with the assistance of a generative AI transcript service, then edited and finalized by a city staff person.