

NORTHWEST MUNICIPAL CONFERENCE

1600 East Golf Road, Suite 0700
Des Plaines, Illinois 60016
(847) 296-9200 • Fax (847) 296-9207
www.nwmc-cog.org



*A Regional Association of Illinois
Municipalities and Townships
Representing a Population of Over One Million*

MEMBERS

- Antioch
- Arlington Heights
- Bannockburn
- Barrington
- Bartlett
- Buffalo Grove
- Deer Park
- Deerfield
- Des Plaines
- Elk Grove Village
- Evanston
- Fox Lake
- Glencoe
- Glenview
- Grayslake
- Hanover Park
- Highland Park
- Hoffman Estates
- Kenilworth
- Lake Bluff
- Lake Forest
- Lake Zurich
- Libertyville
- Lincolnshire
- Lincolnwood
- Morton Grove
- Mount Prospect
- Niles
- Northbrook
- Northfield
- Northfield Township
- Palatine
- Park Ridge
- Prospect Heights
- Rolling Meadows
- Schaumburg
- Skokie
- South Barrington
- Streamwood
- Vernon Hills
- West Dundee
- Wheeling
- Wilmette
- Winnetka

- President*
- Donna Johnson
- Libertyville

- Vice-President*
- Eric Smith
- Buffalo Grove

- Secretary*
- Paul Hoefert
- Mount Prospect

- Treasurer*
- Scott Anderson
- Barrington

- Executive Director*
- Mark L. Fowler

NWMC Board

Minutes

Wednesday, January 14, 2026

6:00 p.m.

NWMC Offices and Via Videoconference

I. Call to Order

President Johnson called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

II. Pledge of Allegiance

President Johnson led the Pledge of Allegiance.

III. Roll Call

Ms. Durso called the roll.

Members Present:

- Arlington Heights, Manager Randy Recklaus
- Barrington, Manager Scott Anderson
- Bartlett, President Dan Gunsteen
- Buffalo Grove, President Eric Smith
- Deer Park, President Greg Rusteberg
- Des Plaines, Manager Dorothy Wisniewski
- Elk Grove Village, Manager Matt Roan
- Hanover Park, President Rod Craig
- Highland Park, Manager Ghida Neukirch
- Hoffman Estates, Mayor Bill McLeod
- Kenilworth, Manager Kathy Thake
- Lake Zurich, Manager Ray Keller
- Libertyville, Mayor Donna Johnson
- Lincolnwood, Mayor Jesal Patel
- Morton Grove, Administrator Chuck Meyer
- Mount Prospect, Mayor Paul Hoefert
- Niles, Trustee Ajay Mody
- Northfield, Trustee Matt Galin
- Palatine, Manager Reid Ottesen
- Rolling Meadows, Manager Rob Sabo
- Schaumburg, Mayor Tom Dailly
- Skokie, Mayor Ann Tennes
- South Barrington, Mayor Paula McCombie
- Streamwood, Manager Sharon Caddigan,
- Wheeling, Manager Jon Sfondilis
- Winnetka, Manager Kristin Kazenas

Others in Attendance:

- Pat Eaves-Heard, Nicor Gas
- Nancy Firfer, Metropolitan Mayors Caucus
- Mark Fowler, NWMC Executive Director
- Larry Bury, NWMC Deputy Director

Eric Czarnota, NWMC Program Manager for Transportation
Marina Durso, NWMC Executive Assistant
Brian Larson, NWMC Program Associate for Transportation
Chris Staron, NWMC Policy Director

IV. Approval of Meeting Minutes – November 12, 2025

Motion to approve the minutes of the November 12 meeting was made by Mayor Hoefert. The motion was seconded by Mayor Tennes and unanimously approved.

V. President’s Report – Donna Johnson, NWMC President and Mayor, Village of Libertyville

A. FY 2025-2026 NWMC Work Plan – Q2 Update

Mr. Fowler presented the second quarter update to the FY 2025-2026 NWMC Work Plan. He highlighted notable items including: hiring CP2 Consulting to conduct the NWMC Strategic Plan; development of the 2026 NWMC Legislative Program; implementation of the veto session pension strategy and related activities; scheduling the joint legislative dinner with the DuPage Mayors and Managers Conference; hosting the e-mobility summit and forming the legislative working group to draft legislation; monitoring and analyzing the NITA legislation; securing nearly \$23 million in funding for the Northwest and North Shore Councils of Mayors from the STP-L redistribution fund; being invited to sponsor, exhibit and speak at the Build Up Cook Celebration and purchasing Vendor Fair in January; and, securing Independence Grove in Libertyville for the 2026 NWMC Gala.

B. Strategic Plan Update

Mr. Bury provided an update on development of the NWMC Strategic Plan. He thanked the eighty-six NWMC members who responded to the strategic planning survey as well as those members who participated in the November 15 retreat. He discussed the issues reviewed at the retreat and resulting strategic issues, goals and outcomes for inclusion in the plan. He said staff met with CP2 consulting on November 24 to determine performance targets for the goals and outcomes and reported on the January 9 staff meeting to assign more detail and completion dates for the goals and outcomes.

C. NWMC Website Upgrade

President Johnson reported that the Executive Board recommended approval of a proposal from Muniweb to rebuild the website with an upgraded operating system and enhanced ADA access. Mr. Bury provided additional details, including the \$5,250 cost and timeline for completion.

Motion to approve the recommendation was made by Mayor Hoefert. The motion was seconded by Mayor Craig and unanimously approved.

D. Effective Lobbying Presentation

President Johnson reported that the Executive Board recommended inviting the Anderson Legislative Consulting team to provide an in-person presentation on how to effectively influence legislators at an upcoming NWMC Board meeting. Due to the General Assembly’s schedule, she said the presentation will be held at the February 11 Board meeting and thanked President Smith for offering to host the meeting at the Buffalo Grove Village Hall. Mr. Fowler reported that this is an item from the draft Strategic Plan and will also be held one week prior to the NWMC Legislative Days in Springfield. He noted that the meeting would begin at 6:00 p.m.

Motion to approve the recommendation was made by Mayor McCombie. The motion was seconded by Mayor Craig and unanimously approved.

VI. Priority Issues

A. Legislative Committee – Eric Smith, President, Village of Buffalo Grove, Co-Chair and Paul Hoefert, Mayor, Village of Mount Prospect, Co-Chair

1. Legislative Update: Spring Session Preview

Mr. Staron provided an overview of the spring session and key dates in the legislative calendar. He noted that this is the second year of the General Assembly’s session, so proposals that were not approved or did not advance in the previous year may still move through the process. He said

issues that were anticipated to be considered by legislators include Tier 2 pension changes, zoning control and housing, paid family leave for firefighters and e-mobility legislation. He provided a status report on the state budget, potential impacts through the remainder of the state's fiscal year and issues that may impact next year's budget. Finally, Mr. Staron reviewed the schedule of sub-regional legislator meetings and thanked Mayor Rotering and Ghida Neukirch for hosting the meeting with Senator Morrison.

2. Tier 2 Pension Legislative Strategy

Mr. Fowler reviewed the spring session legislative strategy and work plan in response to Tier 2 pension enhancement legislation. He said the effort began prior to the veto session and is being spearheaded by the NWMC and DMMC. He said the strategy was reviewed by the COG Presidents and rolled out to the COG Directors through the Invest in Communities Coalition.

He reviewed components of the strategy including legislator briefings, the upcoming joint legislative dinner with the DMMC, member actuarial reports, in-district legislator meetings, development of customizable fact sheets for members to complete, strategic partnerships and other activities to be determined.

3. 2026 NWMC Legislative Program and Action Plan

President Johnson reported that the Executive Board and Legislative Committee recommend approval of the draft 2026 NWMC Legislative Program and Legislative Program action plan. Mr. Staron reviewed the program and the action plan in support of the three priorities, with a focus on evidence-based arguments.

Motion to approve the recommendation was made by Mayor Patel. The motion was seconded by Mayor Tennes and unanimously approved.

4. NWMC-DMMC Joint Legislative Dinner

President Johnson reminded members to RSVP for the event. Mr. Fowler provided additional details and attendance numbers to date. He said the primary focus of the evening will be on pension legislation. He said the full legislative programs for each organization will be at each place setting and will share additional details as they become available.

5. NWMC Legislative Days

President Johnson announced that the NWMC Legislative Days will be held during the week of the Governor's budget and state of the state address, February 17-19. Mr. Bury reviewed the itinerary and attendance numbers to date. He encouraged members to sign up as there was plenty of room to participate.

6. 2026 Metropolitan Mayors Caucus (MMC) Legislative Priorities

President Johnson reported that the Executive Board and Legislative Committee recommend the approval of the 2026 MMC Legislative Priorities. She noted that the Caucus priorities aligned with those of the Conference. Mr. Fowler noted that the Caucus document also contained federal legislative priorities but there were no objections to approving those as well.

Motion to approve the recommendation was made by Mayor Craig. The motion was seconded by Mayor Hoefert and unanimously approved.

B. Finance Committee – Scott Anderson, Manager, Village of Barrington, Chair

1. Budget Reports and Purchase Journals

Mr. Anderson reviewed the October 2025 Budget Report and Purchase Journal. He said the budget was tracking as expected and there were no notable variances.

Motion to approve the recommendation was made by Mayor Tennes. The motion was seconded by Mayor McLeod and unanimously approved.

2. Review of NWMC Financial and Investment Policies

Mr. Anderson reported that the Finance Committee conducted its annual review of the NWMC Financial and Investment Policies prior to development of the annual budget. He said that the Executive Board and Finance Committee recommended no changes to the Financial and Investment Policies.

Motion to approve the recommendation was made by Mayor Craig. The motion was seconded by Mayor McLeod and unanimously approved.

3. Review of Financial Procedures and Controls

Mr. Anderson reported that the Finance Committee annually reviews the NWMC Financial Procedures and Controls document prior to development of the annual budget and recommends adjustments where necessary. He outlined suggested amendments to the document said the Executive Board and Finance Committee recommended approval.

Motion to approve the recommendation was made by Mayor McLeod. The motion was seconded by Mayor Dailly and unanimously approved.

**C. Transportation Committee – Rodney Craig, President, Village of Hanover Park, Co-Chair and Lara Sanoica, Mayor, City of Rolling Meadows, Co-Chair
NWMC e-Mobility Working Group**

President Johnson reported that the NWMC e-Mobility working group met weekly beginning in November to develop consensus legislative language that enhances safety while providing clarity and consistency for e-mobility devices in Illinois communities. She commended staff for their work over the holidays on this issue and noted that Representative Dan Didech was also involved in this effort.

Mr. Czarnota reported that the working group consisted of local elected officials, municipal staff, a city manager, law enforcement, advocacy groups, legal, DuPage Mayors and Managers Conference and Representatives Dan Didech and Mary Beth Canty. He said the group focused on 3 legislative buckets: providing a clear definition of e-mobility devices based on classification and capabilities; identifying appropriate user age and/or licensing requirements; and, specifying locations where use is allowed or restricted. He said the consensus of the working group was that the state should define the vehicles and local municipalities should determine where they would be permitted. He said that legislative language was submitted to the Legislative Reference Bureau by Representative Didech on behalf of the working group.

Mr. Czarnota noted similar efforts by the Secretary of State (SOS) that will be sponsored by Senator Villivalam and Representative Barbara Hernandez. He noted the similarities between the proposals and outlined some subtle differences specifically regarding age. He said staff shared the NWMC language and was added to the SOS stakeholder email list to participate in future discussions.

VII. Other Business

No report.

VIII. For the Good of the Order

President Johnson reminded members to participate in the February 2, 10:00 a.m. “How to File a Witness Slip” webinar, sponsored by the DuPage Mayors and Managers Conference. Mr. Fowler said staff sent the invitation to members yesterday evening with the link to RSVP.

IX. Next Meeting

President Johnson announced that the next Board meeting will be held on Wednesday, February 11, 6:00 p.m. at the Buffalo Grove Village Hall, 50 Raupp Boulevard in Buffalo Grove. She reminded members that this will be an in-person meeting with no virtual option. She thanked President Smith for hosting the meeting.

X. Executive Session

Mayor Dailly moved to go into Executive Session pursuant to 5 ILCS 120/2 to determine the employment and compensation of specific employees. Mayor McLeod seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved. The Board convened Executive Session at 7:07 p.m.

The Board reconvened regular session at 7:16 p.m. Motion to approve the recommended staff compensation adjustment was made by Mayor Hoefert. The motion was seconded by Mayor Craig and unanimously approved.

XI. Adjournment

There being no further business, Mayor Tennes moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by President Smith and unanimously approved. The meeting adjourned at 7:17 p.m.