MEETING MINUTES
City of Polk City
Work Session

5:00 p.m., August 10, 2026
City Hall Council Chambers

A City Council Work Session was held on August 10, 2026, at 5:00 p.m. at the City Hall Council Chambers in Polk City, Iowa. Mayor Karsjen and City Council Members, Rob Sarchet, Jeff Savage, Dave Dvorak, and James Hill, were present and Nick Otis attended virtually.

Minutes

Greater DSM Partnership/Polk City Economic Development Strategic Planning Session

Economic Development Manager Jake Otis and Certified Economic Developer Tiffany Coleman of the Greater Des Moines Partnership presented findings from an economic development survey and discussed priorities for Polk City's economic development program. Survey responses identified Polk City's strengths as its small-town character, strong schools, recreational amenities, strategic location, and residential growth. Key challenges included limited commercial development, a lack of commercial tax base, limited development-ready sites, and balancing growth with preserving community character.

Staff reviewed proposed economic development priorities, including expanding the commercial tax base, attracting retail and service businesses, increasing visitor spending, supporting downtown and commercial area development, and improving development readiness. Council members discussed maintaining Polk City's small-town identity while pursuing growth and highlighted the importance of placemaking and enhancing the community experience for residents and visitors.

Staff outlined next steps, including development of a one-year economic development plan focused on business retention, site readiness, commercial growth, downtown activation, visitor attraction, and funding opportunities. Council members expressed strong support for the initiative and requested regular monthly progress updates to monitor implementation and maintain momentum.

Adjournment

Motion was made by Savage and seconded by Dvorak to adjourn at 5:47 p.m.
Motion carried unanimously.

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Steve Karsjen, Mayor

Attest

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Meri Merritt, Deput City Clerk