



**MINUTES
CITY COUNCIL MEETING
February 4, 2025**

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm.

Present: Mayor: Charlie Miner; Council: Jahn Dyvik, Mike Feldmann, Deirdre Kvale, and Todd Newcomer

Staff Present: City Administrator: Scott Weske; Fire Chief: Mike Heiland; Finance Director: Amanda Nowezki; and City Clerk: Jeanette Moeller

Absent: None

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

MAYOR'S COMMENTS – LONG LAKE NEWS, MEETING REVIEW AND UPDATES

Mayor Miner shared that he had recently attended a retirement gathering for former Independence Mayor Marvin Johnson, who had been their City's Mayor for the last 45 years. Mr. Johnson served his community well and there was a great turnout for his retirement gathering.

Last Saturday, Mayor Miner had attended the Snowball Open hosted by the Orono Lions Club at Birch's on the Lake, which was also well attended.

APPROVE AGENDA

A motion was made by Feldmann, seconded by Newcomer, to approve the agenda as presented. Ayes: all.

CONSENT AGENDA

The Consent Agenda consisted of the following:

- A. Approve Minutes of January 21, 2025, City Council Work Session Meeting
- B. Approve Minutes of January 21, 2025, City Council Regular Meeting
- C. Approve Vendor Claims and Payroll
- D. Approve Issuance of 1 to 4 Day Temporary On-Sale Liquor Licenses for the Church of St. George's 'Lenten Fish Fry' Events on Friday, March 7, 2025, and Friday, April 11, 2025
- E. Approve Issuance of a 1 to 4 Day Temporary On-Sale Liquor License for the Church of St. George's 'Corned Beef and Cabbage Dinner' Event on Saturday, March 15, 2025

A motion was made by Dyvik, seconded by Feldmann, to approve the Consent Agenda, as presented. Ayes: all.

OPEN CORRESPONDENCE

No one was in attendance to address the City Council during Open Correspondence.

BUSINESS ITEMS

Presentation and Remarks by Hennepin County District 6 Commissioner Heather Edelson

Hennepin County Commissioner Edelson introduced herself and shared a bit about her background and experience. She noted that there were about 1.3 million people in Hennepin County and she represented 16 cities and 182,000 people. She briefly reviewed the County's commitment to providing quality services to its residents and outlined some County operational and service information, highlighting the following areas: County budget details; human services programs; public safety services; housing services and programming; County health care initiatives and services; involvement in education throughout the County; certain resident services provided by the County; as well as items falling under the Public Works and transportation category. She reviewed some of the grant opportunities that were available through the County, including grant programs for tree canopies, youth activities, and business recycling, and encouraged Long Lake to apply for them. She shared her cell phone number and welcomed everyone to contact her when needed.

Councilmember Feldmann asked if there were any carp related grants available through the County.

Commissioner Edelson was supportive of a carp grant as being a good idea. She recalled that she used to serve on the Environment Committee at the capitol and believed that was something they had intended to implement in the future.

Councilmember Feldmann indicated that the City of Medina, the City of Long Lake, and the Long Lake Waters Association had pulled together in the past to conduct a big carp project for the lake which had been pretty successful.

Councilmember Dyvik agreed that it was successful, but added that there was still more that should be done.

Hennepin County Commissioner Edelson responded that she would like to discuss the carp issue in greater detail sometime in order to learn about it and see if there was something that could be done from a County perspective.

Councilmember Newcomer asked about the admissions process for the youth mental health stabilization center.

Commissioner Edelson explained that admission can happen via an emergency room visit or through a juvenile detention facility. She clarified that the stabilization center was primarily for youth who have severe mental health needs or violent tendencies.

Councilmember Newcomer pointed out that there were currently only 15 beds in the stabilization center and asked if the County is working on plans for possible expansion.

Commissioner Edelson acknowledged that there were plans to expand the stabilization center; however, the County couldn't be the only one paying for it so there would need to be some collaborative partnerships with the seven metro counties. She voiced her hope that an expansion could be undertaken quickly because additional spaces are urgently needed.

Mayor Miner commented that Long Lake appreciated everything the County has been doing and thanked Commissioner Edelson for her presentation that outlined some of the activities that the County is involved in and people may not have known about.

Commissioner Edelson recalled that District 6 went eight months without representation and shared that she sees her job as making sure that District 6 gets what it needs, given that they are large taxpayers. She reiterated that she had offered her phone number because she wanted people to know that she was genuinely working to address the needs of the community.

Presentation by the Long Lake Fire Relief Association Requesting a Fire Pension Benefit Level Change

City Administrator Weske noted that a background summary of pension increases dating back to 2004 had been included in the meeting packet and indicated that for 2025, the Long Lake Fire Relief Association was asking the Council to approve increasing the pension benefit level to either \$8,000 or \$8,500 per year of service. He introduced Steve McDonald from Abdo to share more details related to the possible benefit level scenarios for the fire pension.

Steve McDonald, Abdo, shared details of the benefit projections he had prepared for the Long Lake Fire Department Relief Association including a summary of the various assumptions and alternatives available using three different scenarios for Council consideration.

Mayor Miner noted that Councilmember Feldmann represented the City for the Relief Association and asked if he wanted to add anything to what Mr. McDonald had shared.

Councilmember Feldmann thanked Mr. McDonald for taking a phone call from him earlier in the day and answering some of his questions. He recalled that they had discussed the various scenarios used in the calculations. Given the available information, everything presented by Mr. McDonald made sense, but Councilmember Feldmann did express some concerns about the state aid number because there was uncertainty in that area there right now. He questioned whether staff had any insight into that issue and advised that the assumption in the projections right now was that there would be a consistent state aid amount.

Mayor Miner stated that as of July 2024, Orono had changed the service area and his understanding was that it would have to go a full year, and anticipated that a state aid reduction would not actually take place until after 2025. He asked Mr. McDonald whether his scenarios had factored that in.

Mr. McDonald confirmed that it had not been factored in because Abdo was unaware of the change in the service area that had occurred, and asked what percentage the decrease in area was.

Mayor Miner stated that for the City of Orono coverage area, it was roughly a one-third decrease, but he wasn't sure if there was an easy way to quantify what that dollar amount would be.

Mr. McDonald stated that once he had obtained an exact number, he could update the benefit projections for the City.

Mayor Miner explained that would be the initial change and added that the City was currently in a contract with Orono that would be ending on December 31, 2025. Unless something changes between now and then, Orono's 2% funding would be lost, so that would also need to be factored in in order to see how it would impact the numbers.

Mr. McDonald agreed that it would need to be factored in.

Councilmember Feldmann mentioned that the contract ending was one scenario, but there was also a scenario where negotiations go well, which would mean that the benefit projections presented at the meeting were actually the numbers that they should be considering.

Mayor Miner agreed and reflected that there are still just a lot of unanswered questions and unknown factors out there.

Mr. McDonald reiterated that if they had numbers that had a bit more certainty to them, they would be happy to change the benefit projections.

Councilmember Kvale stated that it sounded like the Council did not want to make a decision on this tonight and suggested that they table it.

Mayor Miner agreed that may be the best approach in order to allow for obtaining more information and to address some of the unknown factors. He clarified that the City wanted to support its firefighters, but he felt it would be good for the City to have more data before a decision was made. He noted that the fire negotiating group has a meeting coming up with Orono representatives later in the week, and Mayor Miner planned to bring this topic up during their discussions. He added that there remain a lot of areas to cover and future agreements that will need to be signed.

Mr. McDonald confirmed that Abdo would be happy to update the projects when they have arrived at a point that they were comfortable with.

Councilmember Feldmann commented that his intuition was also to table the item, but to keep the information presented at the forefront because the scenarios offered may actually be completely right. He agreed that once the Council has more clarity, he would like to bring the matter back up with the Council for action.

A motion was made by Miner, seconded by Dyvik, to table consideration of the request of the Long Lake Fire Relief Association for a Fire Pension Benefit Level Change.

Councilmember Dyvik emphasized that the Council was completely committed to the Long Lake Fire Department. He indicated that he had no problem supporting the benefit change, but wanted to see how the next few months go as the cities work to navigate the direction negotiations may be going.

Councilmember Newcomer observed that there is a lot of uncertainty and a lot of unknowns, but the one thing that was known for sure and not uncertain was the respect that the Council had for the firefighters for everything they do for the community.

Ayes: all.

Accept the Donation of a Refrigerator from the Long Lake Fire Relief Association and Consider Partial Reimbursement to the Fire Relief Association

Fire Chief Heiland explained that the Relief Association had purchased a new refrigerator at a cost of \$2,701, which included delivery and disposal of the old refrigerator and pop machine. He noted that the reason the Fire Relief Association was requesting partial reimbursement from the City was because they had upgraded the purchase from a regular refrigerator to a commercial model in order to accommodate

events like the pancake breakfast and open houses. He explained that the Fire Relief Association was asking for a contribution from the City of \$1,350.50.

A motion was made by Kvale, seconded by Feldmann, to adopt Resolution No. 2025-04 accepting the donation of a refrigerator to the City of Long Lake for the Long Lake Fire Department and authorizing a partial reimbursement payable to the Long Lake Firefighters Relief Association. Ayes: all.

Receive 4th Quarter 2024 Revenues and Expenditures

Finance Director Nowezki reviewed details of the 4th Quarter 2024 unaudited revenues and expenditures and noted that it appeared that the City would end the year on track, if not better than expected. She shared information about the various enterprise funds, observed that she felt that the City was on a good path with those funds, and committed to continuing to keep an eye on their expenses as well as utility rates.

Councilmember Dyvik asked about the cost for Phases 1, 2, and 3 for the CSAH 112 project and noted that he thought that they could have been taken out of the turnback funds.

Nowezki explained that the City had bonded for CSAH 112 and when they thought the majority of the money had been paid, they redistributed the bond proceeds into the funds. She had worked closely with the auditors on this situation and that approach was what they had directed made sense. She noted that she had spoken with the auditors earlier in the morning and had also reached out to the County in an attempt to obtain a final amount for Phase 3, and assured the Council that the auditors were aware of that impending billing. She clarified that as the Council was looking through the reports in order to see where CSAH 112 payments came from, they could be found towards the bottom of each fund in a line item called, 'Construction Contract'.

Mayor Miner asked where they would see information on the Fire Department.

Nowezki replied that Fire financials could be found towards the end of the report on page 68.

Mayor Miner asked what the year-end fund status equated to for possible refunds to the contract cities.

Nowezki had asked the auditors to verify the numbers and will be working with City Administrator Weske on determining how much a refund may be.

Mayor Miner noted that he found it impressive that the Police contract was within about \$3.00 of the budget; and questioned if the Pavement Management Fund balance was a bit higher than what they had been anticipating.

Weske responded that the City did not undertake a road project in 2024, but would be improving Lindawood Lane in 2025.

Councilmember Dyvik asked if the City was \$130,000 over on actual revenue from their budgeted amounts in the General Fund.

Nowezki indicated that building permits had experienced an upturn over the last few years and have not decreased, though with the increased revenues, there were also increased expenses that offset them. She highlighted that for Fund 101, she didn't like to depend on interest earnings from their investment accounts and had asked that they not budget for it in the future. She noted that the interest earned was

divided amongst the funds based on the amount of money in each fund. She reiterated that she did not want to budget for any money from interest, because it was an uncontrolled activity that the City could not control.

Councilmember Dyvik asked about the total interest the City had earned in 2024 from their investment accounts.

Nowezki responded that interest had amounted to approximately \$250,000 to \$300,000 in 2024, and it is currently projected between \$400,000 and \$500,000 for the next few years. She mentioned that for 2025 and 2026, the City has some really low-interest earning accounts falling off, and she offered to send the Council the investment statements for 2024 so they could see more of the detail.

Weske reflected that City staff worked very hard to ensure that the City stayed on or under budget and thanked staff for doing a good job running their various departments so well.

Councilmember Dyvik reflected that with all the unplanned expenses that the City had in 2024, he felt it was impressive that they were able to come in so close to budget.

Mayor Miner noted that there had been a narrative out in the public that Long Lake was having financial problems or hurting financially, and the materials presented showed that was not actually the case. He added that the Council appreciated staff's help in making good use of taxpayer money.

Nowezki encouraged the Council to feel free to ask her additional questions once they had a chance to look more closely at the numbers.

A motion was made by Dyvik, seconded by Feldmann, to receive the 4th Quarter 2024 Revenues and Expenditures as of December 31, 2024, as presented. Ayes: all.

OTHER BUSINESS

Comments Regarding Completion of Phase 3 CSAH 112 Project - Councilmember Dyvik mentioned that as he had driven on the newly completed Phase 3 area of Wayzata Boulevard W, an observation he has made was that there was a big difference from what was originally going to be allowed by the County. He liked the work that had been done, but reiterated that it was very different than what had been discussed originally by the Citizens Advisory Commission, for example in relation to shoulders in certain areas. He noted that the look of Phase 3 was very different than the Phase 1 and 2 segments, and asked who would be maintaining the median area because it was in Long Lake on one side and Orono on the other. Moeller replied that the question raised was a good one, though she did not know the answer. Councilmember Dyvik commented that he was also confused about the speed limit going west because there were not any signs from Brown Road N to Old Crystal Bay Road. He added that he was glad the trail had been continued all the way to Old Crystal Bay Road.

Fire Chief Updates – Chief Heiland reported that there would be a blood drive event at Fire Station 1 on February 20, 2025. He advised that the auction for old Engine 11 would be closing sometime in the next few days. Councilmember Dyvik asked if the Fire Department was planning to hang onto the heavy rescue because it was still useful. Heiland replied that they intended to hang on to it for a while as it still has come in handy, but as changes occur with the fire services contract, the Department may end up getting rid of it in the future. Councilmember Newcomer asked if the blood drive was a fundraiser. Heiland confirmed that the blood drive would be a fundraising event for the Paszkiewicz family. Also

shared that he and City Administrator Weske had represented Long Lake in a boot hockey tournament last Saturday.

City Clerk Updates - Moeller stated that she has a phone meeting scheduled for February 5 with Municode to chat about the City's online code hosting in order to become a bit more engaged in that product. Later in the week, she would be completing an election equipment inventory and exchange for replacing the OmniBallot units with ExpressVote units.

Utility Bills - Nowezki mentioned that utility bills had been sent out yesterday that included the new rates and encouraged residents to contact her if they have questions about their bill or the rates. Related to that, Moeller reminded residents to double-check their refuse hauler bills and ensure that they were not being billed for organics. She added that if they are being billed for organics, she encouraged them to get in touch with her and she would see what she could do to ensure that it be changed as quickly as possible.

Next Meeting Date - Mayor Miner noted that the next City Council meeting would be on February 18, 2025.

ADJOURN

Hearing no objection, Mayor Miner adjourned the meeting by general consent at 7:48 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Scott Weske
City Administrator