



**MINUTES
CITY COUNCIL MEETING
October 21, 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: Interim City Administrator: Amanda Nowezki; Public Works Director: Sean Diercks; and City Clerk: Jeanette Moeller

Absent: None

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

Mayor Miner gave a brief overview of the topics of discussion at both the EDA and Council Work Session meetings that took place immediately prior to the regular Council meeting.

Last Tuesday, Mayor Miner and local area Mayors had attended a meeting with Representative Kelly Morrison to receive updates on Federal actions, and to share their own updates as cities. One area of discussion had been growing water quality issues and increased blue-green algae presence.

Mayor Miner had attended a recent Orono School District event. He commended the District for their ongoing efforts to improve their curriculum; and for working to inject character into their students while helping them prepare them for adulthood and future careers.

He also reminded residents that on October 28 at 7:30 pm, there will be an event hosted by the Long Lake Waters Association and the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District to share information about water quality issues.

APPROVE AGENDA

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

CONSENT AGENDA

The Consent Agenda consisted of the following:

- A. Approve Minutes of October 7, 2025, City Council Work Session Meeting
- B. Approve Minutes of October 7, 2025, City Council meeting
- C. Approve Vendor Claims and Payroll
- D. Receive 3rd Quarter 2025 Revenues and Expenditures as of September 30, 2025
- E. Adoption Resolution No. 2025-35 Conditionally Appointing Joseph MacDonald to the position of Paid On-Call Firefighter

- F. Adoption Resolution No. 2025-36 Conditionally Appointing Bryan Hinrichs to the position of Paid On-Call Firefighter

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

OPEN CORRESPONDENCE

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

REGULAR BUSINESS

A. Approve Furnace/Air Conditioning Replacements Proposal from City View Plumbing, HVAC & Water Conditioning for the Public Works Building and LMCC Office Space

Public Works Director Diercks reviewed quotes he had obtained for the installation of a new furnace and air conditioning unit that will serve the LMCC office space, as well as a new air conditioning unit for the eastern portion of the upstairs office area in the Public Works building.

A motion was made by Kvale, seconded by Miner, to approve the proposal from City View Plumbing, HVAC & Water Conditioning in the amount of \$21,067.88 for the installation of a new furnace and air conditioning unit serving the LMCC offices, and a new air conditioning unit for the east half of the upstairs office of the Public Works building. Ayes: all.

B. Authorize Staff to Advertise for a Full-Time Public Works Maintenance Worker II Position

City Clerk Moeller indicated that staff was requesting the Council consider authorizing hiring for a Public Works Maintenance Worker II position to fill a vacancy created by the resignation of a Maintenance Worker I. She clarified that the Maintenance Worker II position requires that applicants already have two years of experience in the water/wastewater field, and have obtained their Class D drinking water treatment and SD sanitary sewer collection licenses. A new employee with experience, training and licensing in place would offer more support for Public Works Director Diercks.

A motion was made by Feldmann, seconded by Dyvik, to approve the job description for the Public Works Maintenance Worker II position, revised October 15, 2025, and to authorize staff to advertise and solicit applications for the position. Ayes: all.

Moeller suggested that the Council reorder the agenda a bit in order to move the Fire Department-related item earlier on the agenda.

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

Mayor Miner recalled that Steve McDonald from Abdo had been at a February Council meeting at which they had discussed the service area change that occurred in the City of Orono in July of 2024.

Steve McDonald, Abdo, reviewed the benefit projections and assumptions used in the analysis for the Long Lake Fire Volunteer Fire Relief Association pension benefit through 2030 and presented details of three options for benefit level changes for Council consideration.

The Council discussed the possibilities of negative returns and the potential impact of various return scenarios.

Mayor Miner reported that it was looking likely that beginning in January 2026, most of the city of Medina would not be continuing their service with the new Fire Department, and he asked if that would impact the projections.

Mr. McDonald replied that he would have to look at the market values unless the Council had a percentage number for Medina's portion.

Mayor Miner believed that it was around 6%.

With that information, Mr. McDonald believed the projections would not change significantly.

Councilmember Kvale asked Mr. McDonald which funding level and risk he would recommend.

Mr. McDonald shared that he believed having a cushion was important, but anything over 100% would be acceptable.

The Council discussed their level of comfort with buffers and risk to the City.

Interim Administrator Nowezki observed that in the report for pensions anticipated to be paid, the report indicated an assumption based on interviews with members. She sought verification that the interviews were current.

Ryan Kanive, Vice President of the Long Lake Fire Relief Association, explained that this year they had reviewed members to include those who had over 20 years of service and were over 50 years old. He had also added himself in the assumption because he expects to retire within the next four or five years.

Councilmember Dyvik speculated that there may be a few retirements that happen as soon as the increase in pension benefits has been approved.

Mr. Kanive agreed that could be a probable outcome.

Mayor Miner added that the prepared information assumed that there would be about five retirements within the next five years, and he asked if any scenario had been run utilizing the example of a mass exodus as of January 1 to see how that may impact the funds.

Mr. McDonald confirmed that situation probably would not have too great an effect.

Councilmember Feldmann asked if this was all transparent, if the Fire Department changed names, and the Bylaws.

Mayor Miner asked if Mr. McDonald had any experience with a changing Fire Department. He questioned whether new Bylaws and a new name for the Fire Department may create pension related issues during an interim period.

Mr. McDonald indicated he would advise approaching the State for guidance and clarification.

Councilmember Kvale inquired about the impact to the City's liability if the structure of the JPA and the Fire Department changed. She asked if additional parties/partners to the agreement would be taking on any risk alongside the City.

Mayor Miner mentioned his concern about someone retiring during the interim period before all the JPA background documents and transition materials are in place.

Mr. McDonald offered to look into the matter in greater detail and bring back a recommendation to the City, recognizing that they are facing unique circumstances.

Nowezki stated that both the Bylaws and the new Fire Department name should be approved and enacted by the end of 2025.

Councilmember Kvale questioned whether it would be advisable to wait to make a decision on a pension benefit level change until after the new Bylaws and Fire Department were approved. She pointed out that it sounded like the proposed action for the Long Lake Relief Association may affect additional partners. She emphasized that there should be an increase in the pension benefit level, but wondered if the timing was correct to vote on it at this moment.

Councilmember Feldmann shared that he had asked himself if the City was making prudent decisions that their future partner city would also think were prudent. With that in mind, he expressed that he would be comfortable approving an increase now.

Councilmember Dyvik agreed that a benefit level increase was deserved and that the City should be prudent in this decision. Because of the transition in progress, it was important to him that the 110% funding level be maintained, which puts the increase to about \$9,000.

Councilmember Feldmann reviewed some of the calculations and clarified that an increase to \$9,200 would be at the 110% funding level, which he was comfortable with. He believed the City's future partner would also be comfortable with that amount.

A motion was made by Feldmann, seconded by Kvale, to increase the pension benefit to \$9,200 per year of service for the Long Lake Fire Relief Association.

Councilmember Dyvik noted that he was supportive of the proposed increase but asked if there were any considerations the Council wasn't anticipating that could cause problems in the future.

Councilmember Feldmann commented hypothetically that if the current Long Lake Fire Department contract were to be extended until 2030, he would vote the same in support of the proposed motion.

Ayes: all.

D. Consider Approval of a Roof Replacement Proposal for City Hall

Moeller reported that the City had budgeted \$50,000 for building maintenance and repairs for anticipated improvements to City Hall in 2025. Former City Administrator Weske had been working with a vendor to explore a possible insurance claim for damages to the roof, but that claim had been unsuccessful. Weske had begun the process by obtaining quotes from a single contractor, but with year-end and winter weather coming, staff had taken the initiative to work with multiple contractors and obtain quotes for further consideration. She briefly described the various current roof issues and damages that have been observed, and reviewed details of quotes received from three area contractors.

Council and staff discussed the deteriorating condition of the roof, soffit, and fascia materials; the age of the current shingles; budget details; what would happen if the work was not done in 2025; the possible inclusion of gutters in key areas of the roof; and other entry improvements they would like to see.

Moeller added that she had some sample shingle colors available for the Council to take a look at and noted that staff was suggesting leaning toward something in the gray family to be more complementary to the buildings surrounding City Hall.

Councilmember Dyvik asked about other possible color options for fascia besides white.

Moeller responded that fascia color options hadn't been explored, but staff could look into available options.

A motion was made by Dyvik, seconded by Miner, to approve the pricing proposal for a full City Hall roof, soffit, and fascia replacement from All Around Property Preservation of Long Lake, MN, in the amount of \$43,800, and to authorize staff to approve additional incidental costs associated with any necessary roof decking repairs.

Councilmember Kvale asked when the contractor would be able to complete the work.

Moeller believed it was likely they would start very soon. She added that if the weather holds, staff anticipated the work should be able to be completed before mid-December.

Ayes: all.

E. Approve Removing and Replacing Five HVAC Roof-Top Units (RTUs) at Fire Station 1

Nowezki informed Council that Fire Chief Heiland had gathered three quotes for the replacement of the five HVAC rooftop units at Fire Station 1. Both she and Fire Chief Heiland were operating under the expectation that this would be run through the current fire services contract. She reviewed details of the quotes received and explained that Fire Chief Heiland had not included his recommendation in the staff report he'd prepared, but had communicated via email that he would recommend moving forward with the quote provided by New Century Service because they had done considerable work at both stations, were familiar with the facilities, were fair, and had always stood by their work.

Councilmember Kvale asked about the proposal for the work from Ditter, as the Fire Chief's report indicated they came well-recommended by Orono Public Works.

Nowezki read aloud an email Fire Chief Heiland had sent to Orono's Administrator Edwards, in which he had recommended Orono move forward with authorizing the proposal from New Century Service. Administrator Edwards had responded that Orono would base their cost calculations on the bid from New Century Service.

Councilmember Dyvik sought details on warranties for the work and possible exclusions.

Nowezki responded that New Century Service's proposal referenced a one-year warranty for parts and labor, but she was unaware if there was a warranty included in the quote from Modern Heating and Air.

Councilmember Dyvik noted that New Century Service had indicated that they would offer a free preventative maintenance agreement for 2026 and asked about costs for that service beginning in 2027.

Nowezki replied that she did not believe the City currently had a preventative maintenance agreement with anyone for HVAC equipment at the station, and could research costs for the service beginning in 2027.

The Council discussed how the expense of the RTU replacements would be allocated to the current member cities.

A motion was made by Feldmann, seconded by Kvale, to approve the bid from New Century Service for the removal and replacement of the five HVAC/RTU units on the roof of Fire Station 1, in an amount not to exceed \$103,983.75, under the existing fire services contract.

Mayor Miner asked what would happen if Orono chose to vote in favor of one of the other quotes.

Moeller stated that in that scenario, staff would bring the item back to the Council for further discussion.

Councilmember Dyvik suggested the motion be amended to include that the Council's action was contingent upon approval from the City of Orono.

Amended motion was made by Feldmann, seconded by Kvale, to approve the bid from New Century Service for the removal and replacement of the five HVAC/RTU units on the roof of Fire Station 1, in an amount not to exceed \$103,983.75, under the existing fire services contract and subject to approval by the Orono City Council.

Ayes: all.

F. Schedule a Special City Council Meeting for Thursday, October 30, 2025

Moeller indicated that staff was requesting the Council schedule a Special City Council Meeting for October 30, 2025 at 5:00 pm to discuss agreements and matters related to the Fire Department. She read aloud the recommended motion language.

A motion was made by Dyvik, seconded by Feldmann, to schedule a Special City Council Meeting for Thursday, October 30, 2025 beginning at 5:00 pm for the purpose of conducting a Closed Session pursuant to MN. Stat. 13D.05, subd. 3(b) under attorney-client privilege to discuss open litigation related to the fire services contract; and to meet and consider approval of the Joint Powers Agreement for the Shoreline Fire Department, station leases, settlement agreement, contract extension, and related agreements.

Mayor Miner asked if the suggested motion language had included appointing Joint Powers Agreement Board members.

Nowezki interjected that she believed that should have been included in the recommended motion language from City Attorney Thames.

An amended motion was made by Dyvik, seconded by Feldmann, to schedule a Special City Council meeting for Thursday, October 30, 2025, beginning at 5:00 p.m., for the purpose of conducting a Closed Session pursuant to MN. Stat. 13D.05, sub. 3B, under attorney-client privilege to discuss open litigation related to the fire services contract and to meet and consider approval of the Joint Powers Agreement for

the Shoreline Fire Department, station leases, settlement agreement, contract extension, related agreements, and appointment of members to the Joint Powers Agreement Board. Ayes: all.

OTHER BUSINESS

Long Lake Water Quality Issues - Councilmember Dyvik encouraged residents to attend the meeting on October 28, 2025 being put on by the Long Lake Waters Association and the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District related to water quality issues. He voiced concern that the MCWD's proposed plans would be for the long-term rather than offering more immediate assistance. He commented that there should also be consideration given to solutions in the present, such as alum treatments. Council and staff discussed possible funding options for alum treatments, including a need to determine whether charitable gambling funds could be used for this purpose.

Midco Progress Update – Council and staff discussed the status of Midco's City-wide fiber project, and Diercks informed Council on issues with delays associated with locates.

Finance Updates - Nowezki commented that while the City has not been receiving LGA funds from the State, the City has been receiving funding through the Small Cities Assistance Program administered by MnDOT. For 2026, the City's allocation should be \$13,923, and it will be deposited into the City's Pavement Management Fund. Nowezki also reported that the City had received the awarded fire services related settlement, which had been deposited directly into the Fire Capital fund.

Grant Application - Moeller reported that she'd received notification a 2025 Polling Place Accessibility Grant was available. She explained that the current City Hall doors are heavy, and staff receives complaints about them regularly. Additionally, the electronic opening system for the outer doors isn't able to be utilized. She had reached out to the State to describe the status of the doors and ask whether a replacement project might fit with the goals of the grant, and received feedback that a door replacement project would likely fall under the primary priorities established for grant funding eligibility. She indicated that she was working on the preparation of a grant application and had been gathering quotes for the replacement of the doors. She had also prepared a letter for Mayor and Council signatures for the Council to support an application and authorize her to move forward with a submittal. Mayor and Council members were supportive of the application and signed the circulated letter.

Highway 12 Access Gate - Mayor Miner mentioned that he had reached out to local legislative representatives regarding the Highway 12 emergency access gate between the County road and the State road and was told that they were actively working with MnDOT to find a solution.

Orono Girls Swim & Dive Team - Councilmember Dyvik shared that the Orono Girls Swim and Dive Team won the State Championship last week for their second year in a row.

ADJOURN

Hearing no objection, Mayor Miner adjourned the meeting by general consent at 8:28 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeanette Moeller

City Clerk