



**MINUTES
CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION
November 3, 2025**

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 5:00 pm.

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

Staff Present: Interim City Administrator: Amanda Nowezki; and City Clerk: Jeanette Moeller

Absent: None

APPROVE AGENDA

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

OPEN CORRESPONDENCE

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

REGULAR BUSINESS

A. Discuss 2026 Utility Rates

Interim City Administrator Nowezki presented an overview of what she believed the City's utility rates should look like in 2026 and how the proposed rates would impact the City's enterprise funds. She reminded the Council that the City had been notified the City's Metropolitan Council wastewater treatment charge was increasing by 23.75% for the coming year. She gave details of her proposed rate change adjustments and shared examples of monthly billing impacts.

The Council discussed the significant increase in Metropolitan Council charges.

City Clerk Moeller observed that it felt like the charge was increasing in a manner that seemed punitive and stated that Long Lake was not the only small city that had an I/I issue. She noted that it feels as if the Metropolitan Council charge was intended to hurt enough financially to force the cities to spend money and fix their systems. She commented that the City's goal is to begin investing in the system as soon as the results of the recent sewer televising are in and engineering can design a project.

The Council discussed how Long Lake's Metropolitan Council charge compares with similar-sized cities, grants that may be available, and the upcoming use of TIF funds planned for sewer lining projects. Council and staff also reviewed the per-unit sewer and MCES treatment fees, the possibility of metering flows coming from Orono, how unmetered accounts are handled, and the potential costs associated with renting or purchasing a flow meter to monitor Orono flows.

Councilmember Kvale suggested that, with the unmetered accounts, the City be consistent with what it bills to Long Lake residents and noted that if Long Lake residents were unmetered or not using water, the monthly fee would be \$150, and everyone should be charged the pass-through MCEs Treatment Fee as the City's properties do.

Nowezki briefly reviewed the enterprise fund balance cash trends over the last seven years and the budget implications of her proposed adjustments. She had shared this information with Public Works Director Diercks earlier in the day, but he had not had a chance to respond to her recommendations yet.

Councilmember Kvale asked about moving to a paperless billing system.

Nowezki responded that staff has had a lot of discussion about moving to a paperless billing system due to the increased postage rates. She noted that they have been considering how best to find a way not to negatively impact those who still want paper bills, while perhaps discounting charges for people who sign up for electronic billing. She added that she did not think it would be possible to implement that kind of change in 2026 because it would be a significant project.

B. Continue Discussion of 2026 Budget/Levy Preparation

Nowezki recalled that following the last City Council budget conversation, she'd sent an email to the Council with the General Fund work papers for their review. She encouraged Council to look over the information and let her know if there was anything they weren't comfortable with, particularly with regard to CIP changes. She explained that her goal for the next Council budget work session was to bring them what she hoped would be the final budget for the General Fund and Enterprise Funds.

OTHER BUSINESS

No other business was discussed.

ADJOURN

Hearing no objection, Mayor Miner adjourned the meeting by general consent at 6:29 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Jeanette Moeller
City Clerk