



**MINUTES
CITY COUNCIL MEETING
April 15, 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; Finance Director: Amanda Nowezki; Fire Chief: Mike Heiland; and City Clerk: Jeanette Moeller

Absent: None

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

Mayor Miner offered the following comments and updates:

On April 3, Mayor Miner, Administrator Weske, and the City's contracted engineer went to the State Capital to testify before the House regarding a bonding bill request for funding reconstructing Grand Avenue. He conveyed his appreciation to Representative Andrew Myers for sponsoring the legislation in the House, and to Senator Ann Johnson Stewart for sponsoring it in the Senate.

Yesterday, Mayor Miner had attended an event hosted by Representative Kelly Morrison for area Mayors to give and receive updates on what was happening in their cities.

Mayor Miner also mentioned that the Long Lake Fire Department will be hosting their annual Pancake Breakfast on May 4.

APPROVE AGENDA

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

CONSENT AGENDA

The Consent Agenda consisted of the following:

- A. Approve Minutes of April 1, 2025 City Council Meeting
- B. Approve Vendor Claims and Payroll
- C. Receive 1st Quarter 2025 Revenues and Expenditures
- D. Adopt Resolution No. 2025-09 Approving Issuance of a Special Event Permit for the Temporary Outdoor Patio at Carbone's Pizzeria Long Lake, Effective May 1 through September 30, 2025

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

OPEN CORRESPONDENCE

Kelly Grady, 271 Greenhill Lane – Ms. Grady explained that she had attended the previous night's Orono City Council meeting, at which there was a lot of discussion on the First Amendment to Agreement and Contract for Fire Protection. She shared that she had appreciated Long Lake's steady hand and open communication that they'd provided throughout the situation with fire services; as well as the honest reporting and correct data that had been provided by Long Lake when false data was being given by others to justify the need for a duplicative and redundant fire department. She reflected that one other thing she had appreciated was the commitment to public safety by the Long Lake Fire Department and the firefighters who have continued to serve through unsteady times. She felt that these times had been incredibly difficult and she knew there were a lot of fire families, including outside of Long Lake and Orono, who had been keeping a close eye on the situation. One of the comments she heard while attending the Orono City Council meeting was that Orono was going to end up paying more to fix what was never broken, and she indicated she agreed with that comment because the Long Lake Fire Department was never broken. She commented that one of the Orono firefighters who spoke at their meeting asked for mediation if the amendment is approved in order to help bring the firefighters together. She stated that she knows the Long Lake Council and leadership realize how difficult this situation has been for the firefighters and their families, and hoped that the City would do whatever they could to help bring the firefighters back together again. She added that she was unable to stay for the entire meeting, but planned to watch the live coverage online and she conveyed her hope that the Council will continue to push forward with the initiatives that they have focused on from the very beginning to keep the Fire Department together by moving forward into a shared services agreement with the surrounding municipalities.

Bryan Miller, 295 Lakeview Avenue – Mr. Miller congratulated the Council for being able to get to Agenda Item 7A, the First Amendment to the Agreement and Contract for Fire Protection. He voiced his appreciation for the Council; stated that he felt the Fire Chief Heiland stepping into his position had been a God-send; and also thanked City staff for their fantastic work over the last few years. He noted that he was sorry that Long Lake had to go through this situation since it was something completely created by former Orono Mayor Walsh and his cabal.

Gabriel Jabbour, 985 Tonkawa Road, Orono – Mr. Jabbour commented that he felt it was important to show up when things went right and not just when things were going wrong. He stated that he lived in this community and did not define it by the physical border of a city. He shared that he was in attendance to thank the City of Long Lake and the Council for staying the course and taking all the abuse from the former members of the Orono City Council. He noted that initially he was a bit frustrated that Long Lake was moving a bit too slowly, but he appreciated what they had done because good things happen when they can work together. He recalled that he had represented the community during condemnation proceedings in preparation for the Highway 12 bypass project, they ended up receiving \$7.2 million at that time, and he reiterated that when working together, good things happen. He observed that the Long Lake Council had stayed the course and prevailed, and he felt that good should always prevail over evil. He added that he was also really grateful for former Councilmember Joyce and her work while on the Council. He pointed out that the cities are a community and he encouraged the Council to plan something like a barbecue and invite Orono to try to engage. He also encouraged the City to attempt to resolve the lawsuit with Orono, noting that he, Barbara Peterson, and Jim White, had filed an amicus brief on behalf of Long Lake.

Tim M. Hultmann, 280 Lakeview Avenue – Mr. Hultmann recalled that in June of 2022, he'd spoken before the Orono City Council and read aloud a portion of his statement from that night that had been

included in their meeting minutes. He highlighted that he'd quoted Mick Jagger when he stated, 'you can't always get what you want'; and in this case, former Orono Mayor Walsh did not get what he wanted, and he wanted to thank the Long Lake Council for that.

BUSINESS ITEMS

A. Discuss and Approve First Amendment to Agreement and Contract for Fire Protection

City Administrator Weske introduced the proposed agreement and reminded the Council that the existing fire services contract began in 2002 was set to expire on December 31, 2025. He referenced Exhibit C, which highlighted the transitional goals for each Fire Department. He noted that as shown in Exhibit D, both Orono and Long Lake have agreed to negotiate a Joint Powers Agreement (JPA) for some type of partnership. He explained that the first part of the transition would be for the Departments to work together, and the second part would be moving to more of a JPA or fire district model. He concluded that staff recommended approval of the First Amendment to the Agreement and Contract for Fire Protection.

Mayor Miner reported that he and Councilmember Dyvik have been working on the proposed amendment since the beginning of 2025, along with their counterparts on the Orono City Council, as part of a negotiating committee. He felt Orono Mayor Tunheim and Orono Councilmember Persian were great representatives for Orono and had expressed their desire to work with Long Lake and other communities in the area to continue the partnership that had been in place for many years, outside of a few bumps in the road for a year or two. He stated that their goal was also to consolidate the two fire departments and get back to the way operations were before July 1, 2024, when the previous Orono Council had chosen to go in a different direction and create their own fire department. He commented that the proposed amendment to the agreement and contract will bring many facets of the departments back together while continuing the part-time duty crew model that Orono had implemented. He gave a brief overview of some of the items that were included in the amendment to the agreement and contract, including some language that allows for an extension. He referenced Exhibit D and noted that he felt that the exhibit laid out a course for the future, a path for a jointly operated fire department, and possibilities for a fire district. He indicated that the outcome of a fire department operated by both cities was what Long Lake had been pushing for all along. He reflected that Long Lake did want to maintain a stake in the fire department because the Long Lake Fire Department had existed since 1915, so they were not willing to just turn over the keys to the fire department to the previous Orono City Council. Mayor Miner expressed his appreciation for the residents of Orono who had acted to elect a new City Council that was willing to step up and work with the neighboring cities. He summarized that he felt what was proposed in the amendment documents represented a good balance for both cities.

Councilmember Dyvik also voiced his appreciation to Orono Mayor Tunheim and Orono Councilmember Persian for working with himself and Mayor Miner over the last four months. Collectively they had participated in a lot of meetings that were not always easy, but he believed that there was mutual respect on both sides and that they were working towards rebuilding trust, which was an important piece of this situation. While he noted that there was additional work to be done, taking this first step was a pretty major hurdle for all three member cities, including Medina.

Mayor Miner added that the legal action that the City of Long Lake had been forced to take against the previous Orono City Council for breaching the contract was still in progress, but they were working towards a settlement. He shared that the Orono City Council had voted to approve the amendment at their meeting last night, and he was hopeful that Medina would also vote to approve it at their meeting in progress.

Councilmember Feldmann also thanked Orono Mayor Tunheim and Orono Councilmember Persian, as well as Mayor Miner and Councilmember Dyvik, for putting in a huge amount of time and effort to get to this point. He reiterated an earlier statement by Mayor Miner that the amendment approval doesn't fully get things 'done', but it is the first step and puts the cities on the right trajectory, which he found exciting because it felt like they were moving in the right direction.

Councilmember Dyvik briefly reviewed the bulk of what was included in the amendment's accompanying exhibits and added that the exhibits essentially commit all parties to not stop but to continue on to JPA discussions and settling the lawsuit.

A motion was made by Dyvik, seconded by Miner, to approve the First Amendment to Agreement and Contract for Fire Protection. Ayes: all.

B. Review City Council Code of Conduct Policy

City Clerk Moeller shared some of the goals behind the current trend of Minnesota cities adopting a Code of Conduct for their City Councils. She reported that she had prepared a draft City Council Code of Conduct Policy for the Long Lake Council's consideration. After the meeting packet had been distributed, City Attorney Thames had taken a look at the draft and had recommended a few changes be made, especially in the conflict of interest section.

Councilmember Kvale asked if City Clerk Moeller could review City Attorney Thames' recommendations.

Moeller explained that the changes were minor outside of the conflict of interest section, where he had advised that the draft language be a bit more concise. She displayed the red-lined version of the proposed Code of Conduct and reviewed the changes that City Attorney Thames had recommended. She reviewed the options for Council action which included adoption of the policy as is, adoption with amendments, or providing direction to staff on requested edits to prepare for action on the policy at a future meeting.

Councilmember Kvale read aloud a portion of the compliance and enforcement section in the policy and noted that a provision stated that the Council may refer a matter for criminal prosecution; though, nothing within the policy was criminal in nature.

Moeller responded that there were certain actions such as the acceptance of high value gifts that could fall under a criminal act.

Councilmember Kvale pointed out that they would not need a code of conduct policy to prosecute someone in that kind of situation.

Moeller clarified that the intent of the language included in the draft policy was to keep their options open for any circumstance that could occur.

Councilmember Feldmann commented that he liked the overall theme of the proposed Code of Conduct and asked if there could also be something enacted for appointed individuals.

Moeller replied that the draft policy's language could be modified to also apply to Board and Commission members as well as the City Council.

Councilmember Feldmann stated that he would support the addition of Board and Commission members to this Code of Conduct policy.

It was the consensus of the Council that staff should be directed to make changes to the proposed Code of Conduct policy in order to include expectations for Board and Commission appointees.

OTHER BUSINESS

Midco Permitting - Councilmember Kvale indicated that she believed Public Works Director Diercks had likely heard from Midco. Moeller reported that she'd been contacted by Jim Lundberg at the LMCC, as well as by a representative from Midco. Mr. Lundberg had sent out an email to collect information from LMCC member cities regarding their Right-of-Way Permit procedures and the primary contact persons for each city in order to provide Midco with everything they needed to begin their permitting application process.

Fence Standards Ordinance – Moeller mentioned that she would have an ordinance updating fence standards coming before the Council in May after the Planning Commission made a recommendation at their next meeting.

Ice Cream Shop - Councilmember Dyvik shared that he had heard an ice cream shop was coming to town. Moeller confirmed that she had received the project's building permit application yesterday and it was currently in review. The ice cream shop will be called 'Shivers'. Councilmember Dyvik added that their motto will be 'embrace the cold', and explained that he knows the family who will own the shop because his and their daughters swim together.

Lindawood Lane Street Project - Finance Director Nowezki commented that the bid opening for the Lindawood Lane pavement management project had been held and it appeared the bids had come in lower than the engineer's estimates, which was good news. Moeller added that the bid award for the project was scheduled to come before the Council at their May 6, 2025 meeting.

Reviewing Finance Information - Councilmember Newcomer thanked Finance Director Nowezki for spending time with him to go over the budget report information and stated that it had been very helpful for him. Councilmember Kvale highlighted information in the 1st quarter report related to water billing revenue percentages and sought clarification for why they didn't appear to be on trend. Nowezki clarified that it was normal for 1st quarter revenue percentages to be around 19% of the amount budgeted for the year because they haven't hit the irrigation season yet. She reiterated that the Council can expect an uptick in the water fund once people start irrigating.

Quorum Notice for Upcoming Events - Moeller informed Council that she had posted a quorum notice for the upcoming Long Lake Fire Department Pancake Breakfast and the Orono Council Candidate forum.

ADJOURN

Hearing no objection, Mayor Miner adjourned the meeting by general consent at 7:28 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Scott Weske

City Administrator