

**BIG LAKE CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
FEBRUARY 18, 2026**

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Paul Knier called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

3. ROLL CALL

Council Members present - Ken Geroux, Ken Halverson, Paul Knier, Kim Noding, and Paul Seefeld. Also present - City Administrator Hanna Klimmek, City Clerk Gina Wolbeck, Finance Director Deb Wegeleben, City Engineer Layne Otteson, Community Development Director Marie Popp, Acting Police Chief Sam Olson, Liquor Store Manager Greg Zurbey, Streets/Parks/Fleet Superintendent Norm Michels, Water/Wastewater Superintendent Dan Childs, and Big Lake Student Liaison Adelyn Gosewisch.

Pastor Jim Herzing from Spirt Life Church provided an invocation.

4. OPEN FORUM

Mayor Knier opened the Open Forum at 6:31 p.m.

Christy Campbell, 321 Lakeshore Drive – addressed the City Council to discuss she has suffered thievery at the Community Gardens, noting this thievery devastated the gardens this past year. There was hundreds of dollars in product lost to theft, and the individual responsible for the theft was ticketed and trespassed by the Big Lake Police Department. Campbell noted this individual took entire crops from people, and she hopes the City will agree to place cameras at the Community Garden plot to deter stealing. Campbell reviewed signage will help, but cameras will help more.

Mayor Knier closed the Open Forum at 6:34 p.m.

5. PROPOSED AGENDA

Council Member Seefeld motioned to adopt the proposed Agenda with the addition of item no. 7G. Student Liaison Update. Seconded by Council Member Halverson, unanimous ayes, Agenda adopted.

6. CONSENT AGENDA

Council Member Noding motioned to approve the Consent agenda as presented. Seconded by Council Member Halverson, unanimous ayes, Consent Agenda approved. The Consent Agenda consisted of: 6A. Approve List of Claims, 6B. Approve Joint City/County/Township/School Meeting Minutes of January 15, 2026, 6C. Approve Council Workshop Minutes of January 21, 2026, 6D. Approve Regular Council Meeting Minutes of January 21, 2026, 6E. Approve Midwest Sound and Stage, Inc. Stage Rental Agreement for the 2026 Music in the Park Series, 6F. Approve a Proclamation proclaiming February 22 – 28, 2026 as Professional Engineer’s Week, 6G. Approve Appointment of Police Reserve Officers Mason Moss and Ryan Murray, 6H. Approve Appointment of Tom Kucala to the Police Captain Position, 6I. Approve Resolution No. 2026-07 approving a Massage Therapist License to Brianna Berganza under the Muscle Revive, LLC Massage Enterprise License at 29 Lake Street South, 6J. Approve a Professional Services Agreement with SEH, Inc. for an Update to the City of Big Lake AWIA Risk and Resiliency Analysis and Emergency Response Plan, 6K. Approve Law Enforcement Labor Services Memorandum of Understanding Amending the Vacation Accrual Schedule, 6L. Approve Law Enforcement Labor Services Memorandum of Understanding Increasing the Annual Uniform Allowance, 6M. Approve Request from Farm Friends Barn for a Letter of Support for their pursuit of Grant Funding from the MN Department of Agriculture, and 6N. Accept Resignation of Police Officer Sam Norlin.

7. BUSINESS

7A. Appointment of Sam Olson to the Chief of Police/Emergency Manager Position, and Conduct Oath of Office

Hanna Klimmek reviewed, at the January 21, 2026 workshop, the City Council unanimously directed staff to bring forward the appointment of Sam Olson as Chief of Police/Emergency Manager. Klimmek noted Olson has served with the Big Lake Police Department since 2003, and brings more than two decades of institutional knowledge, leadership experience, and a deep understanding of the community. This type of continuity is critical at a time of transition for the Police Department and the City. Olson has committed to a minimum five-year term and will play a key leadership role in the planning and development of the new Public Safety building. In addition, Olson will evaluate the current and future needs of the Police Department, review organizational structure, and return to Council within six-months with clearly defined goals and objectives to guide the department forward.

Council Member Halverson motioned to approve the appointment of Sam Olson to the Chief of Police/Emergency Manager position, effective February 18, 2026. Seconded by Council Member Noding, unanimous ayes, motion carried.

Mayor Knier administered the Oath of Office to Chief Olson.

7B. County Attorney Annual Update

Sherburne County Attorney Dawn Nyhus provided an update on the Sherburne County Attorney's Office statistics and services provided to the City in 2025. Nyhus reviewed Big Lake cases her office sees as part of the prosecution contract with the City.

7C. PUBLIC HEARING – Resolution Directing Preparation of Final Plans and Specifications for the 2026 Street and utility Improvement Project No. ST2026-1

Layne Otteson discussed the City Council, at their January 21, 2026 meeting accepted the Preliminary Engineering Report and called for a public hearing on February 18, 2026 for the 2026 Street and Utility Improvement Project No. ST2026-1. Otteson reviewed the proposed work includes improvements on segments on 172nd Street from US 10 to Prairie Drive, Minnesota Avenue 300 feet west of CR 43 to CR 43, County Road 43 to 180th Street, and 176th Street to 177th Street. The estimated cost of the project is \$1,960,000. The scope includes Minnesota Avenue Extension (\$1,750,000), Minnesota Avenue Connector (\$50,000) and 172nd Street (\$160,000.00). The City has applied for a grant through the State of MN Local Road Improvement Program (LRIP) and requested full funding of construction. If successful, the grant will cover all construction costs except watermain and sanitary sewer. LRIP grant awards will be announced after the public hearing, sometime in late March. The current fund balance of CIP Fund 196 cannot meet the cost obligation of this project without the LRIP grant. If funding from the State is unsuccessful, Council can then reduce scope to match funding availability. Staff would bring back a reduced scope for the Minnesota Avenue Extension to construct the western 500' segment required for the future Public Safety Facility. This scope reduction would reduce the cost and maintain a CIP Fund 196 balance. Delaying a portion of the proposed project to a later date does not impact the Chapter 429 schedule but does require Council action and notification to affected properties, and assessments would then be reduced accordingly.

Otteson reviewed the Chapter 429 assessment process the City must follow for assessing properties that benefit from a public improvement, noting the Notice of Public Hearing was published twice in the City's designated newspaper, and each property owner subject to special assessments was mailed a notice on February 1, 2026. All notices included the time and place of the hearing, the general nature of the improvement, the estimated cost, and the street area proposed to be assessed.

Council Member Halverson asked what the cost of the stoplight is expected to be and asked how that cost will be funded. Otteson reviewed he has met with the Assistant County Engineer, and he did not indicate that a signal would be needed. He talked about having circulation in that area and anticipates there will be improvements in the future when traffic necessitates it, noting you can only put a traffic signal in if it meets warrants. You cannot arbitrarily put it in, as MNDOT will not allow it. Halverson stated he recalls underground wiring was put in to accommodate a future signal. Otteson asked for clarification on what location Halverson is concerned about, and Halverson responded he is referring to the intersection of CR 43 and Minnesota Avenue near the future Public Safety Facility. Halverson stated this project will create substantial traffic, including commercial vehicles by the schools. Otteson discussed the County has not indicated the need for a signal at this intersection and stated we would not direct semi-trucks to go down by a school. If they do go that route, that will be their decision; however, he expects trucks coming from the industrial area will most likely want to head towards US Highway 10 instead of going by the schools, so they can make the fastest time. Otteson also discussed when CR 43 was built, there were discussions with the County, and radiuses were looked at. They laid out templates so trucks could make the turn because there is that potential. Otteson reiterated the signal will go in once warrants are met.

Mayor Knier asked when we will find out about the LRIP grant. Otteson responded we anticipate the State will release results at the end of March, and we are competing with 232 other applicants in the state for \$43M. Knier also asked what the plan will be if we don't get funding from the LRIP grant. Otteson responded if we do not get the grant, he will be bringing the item back to Council; however, his proposal for tonight is we move forward with full design from one end to the other, so we have the full 1,270 foot design. We would look at scaling it back based on budget and have a discussion that includes possibly building 500 feet as a full urban section, and the remaining 700 feet as a gravel road strictly to be used for emergency service access. Halverson asked if the grant does go through would staff still have to bring the item back, and Otteson explained the LRIP grant we applied for is for payment for the full section. If we don't get that, it would need to be scaled back unless the Council wants to fund the full length and exhaust our street fund. Halverson asked if the grant would still need to come back to Council, and Hanna Klimmek indicated the grant would need to be accepted by the Council. Otteson explained he is currently requesting Council approve the project and design for the full length, noting he will need to come back for approval of the final plans and ask for bid advertising.

Mayor Knier opened the public hearing at 7:11 p.m. No one came forward. Mayor Knier closed the public hearing at 7:11 p.m.

Council Member Seefeld motioned to approve Resolution No. 2026-08 ordering the Final Plans and Specifications for the 2026 Street and Utility Improvement Project No. ST2026-1. Seconded by Council Member Geroux. Mayor Knier asked for any further discussion.

Council Member Halverson stated he will be voting against this because he doesn't think taxpayer money should be used in any way shape or form to go across a piece of private property.

Motion passed with a vote of 4:1 with Council Members Geroux, Knier, Noding and Seefeld voting in favor, and Council Member Halverson voting against. Motion carried.

7D. Resolution Approving a Construction Manager At Risk (CMAR) Agreement with Bradbury Stamm Construction Winkelman, LLC for the Public Safety Facility Project

Hanna Klimmek reviewed during the fourth quarter of 2025, the Public Building Planning Committee (PBPC), in coordination with staff, initiated a formal Request for Qualifications (RFQ) and Request for Proposals (RFP) to solicit Comprehensive Program Management Services (a professional service), including Construction Manager at Risk, as well as Architecture and Engineering services. Three construction management firms submitted responses to the RFQ, and all three were shortlisted to submit proposals in response to the RFP and participated in interviews. Following the evaluation process, the PBPC selected Bradbury Stamm Construction Winkelman, LLC to provide Comprehensive Program Management Services for the Big Lake Public Safety Facility Project. Klimmek reviewed that at the direction of the City Council and the Big Lake Economic Development Authority (BLEDA), the PBPC has been working since 2023 on a project for the possible relocation of the Big Lake City Hall and Public Safety building. At the City Council Workshop meeting on September 24, 2025, the City Council discussed the recommendations of the PBPC related to the scope, not-to-exceed budget, type of financing, and delivery method of the Project. One key component of the PBPC recommendations was the choice of the Construction Manager at Risk (CMAR) as the delivery method for the Project. At the end of its discussion, the City Council directed City Staff to move forward with the recommendations of the PBPC as had been outlined in the Staff Report presented at that meeting. Klimmek reviewed staff's recommendation is for Council to approve Bradbury Stamm Construction Winkelman, LLC, as the CMAR for the design and construction of a new City Hall/Public Safety Facility; approve the contract documents with the CMAR; authorize the Public Building Planning Committee, in coordination with city staff, to negotiate a GMP with the CMAR; and authorize the City Administrator to execute all contracts and other documents necessary to complete the Project. Klimmek also noted the next step is for completion of design work and negotiation of Guaranteed Maximum Price (GMP) and GMP Amendment with the CMAR.

Council Member Halverson asked, if this thing is being ran through the EDA the EDA pulled all the grants and are doing everything, why is the City the approving body of the CMAR if all the funding is through the EDA. Deb Wegeleben reviewed the Lease Revenue Bond funding will be used to build the project, and the City will have the contract with the CMAR to build the project and pull the funds. We then have to make the payments for the bond, noting the BLEDA received the funding, but the City has to pay it back. We lease the parcel to build the project. Wegeleben stated

the agreement is that it is actually the City's building.

Council Member Geroux motioned to approve Resolution No. 2026-09 approving Bradbury Stamm Construction Winkelman, LLC, as the Construction Manager at Risk (CMAR) for a project to design and construct a new City Hall/Public Safety Facility, approving the contract documents with the CMAR, authorizing the Public Building Planning Committee, in coordination with city staff, to negotiate a Guaranteed Maximum Price with the CMAR following completion of the design of the Project, and authorizing the City Administrator to execute all contracts and other documents necessary to complete the Project. Seconded by Council Member Seefeld. Mayor Knier asked for any further discussion.

Council Member Noding asked why the motion includes negotiating the GMP as she thought that it was already negotiated. Klimmek responded the GMP has not yet been established, which will happen sometime this summer. We will have to bring the contract back to be amended to include the GMP, which will have to be under \$33M. Mayor Knier clarified we have established the amount we needed to borrow, but we haven't established the maximum price of the project yet.

Motion passed with a vote of 4:1 with Council Members Geroux, Knier, Noding and Seefeld voting in favor, and Council Member Halverson voting against. Motion carried.

7E. 2025 City of Big Lake Year in Review Report

Hanna Klimmek presented the 2025 City of Big Lake Year in Review. Klimmek reviewed highlights from 2025 including the Oath of Office conducted by Mayor Paul Knier and Council Members Ken Geroux and Paul Seefeld. The City strengthened existing partnerships and established new collaborations with Sherburne County, Big Lake Township, the AmeriCorps Seniors RSVP Program, Community and Economic Development Associates (CEDA), Marco Technologies LLC, and Main Street Family Services. Klimmek reviewed the City added over \$66M in new valuation to the City's tax base, staff and Mayor Knier were called to testify in support of the Wastewater Treatment Facility Expansion Project, we hosted site visits for both the House and Senate Capital Investment Committees, we successfully completed the 2025 Street and Utility Project, created a new City Council meeting schedule which was implemented as of January 1, 2026, and completed housekeeping amendments to the City Code. Lake Liquors exceeded its budgeted transfer requirement, contributing \$450,000 to the City General Fund, the City added a Verizon Mobile app to better control park irrigation, and the City welcomed Adelyn Gosewisch as the City Council's Student Liaison.

Klimmek also reviewed projects that will be underway in 2026 include the swearing in of new Police Chief Sam Olson, the Big Lake Public Safety Facility Project along with redevelopment plans for the existing City Hall/BLEDA owned building at the corner of US Highway 10/25, planning for the Wastewater Treatment Facility Expansion Project, the Minnesota Avenue extension, park

redevelopment, communications/marketing, a new parking meter system at Lakeside Park, completion of the Water Meter Exchange project, and a new strategic plan of the City Council. Mayor Knier stated there is a lot to be proud of here in Big Lake. Klimmek also reviewed the 2026 General Fund Budget, noting the cost per day to provide City services based on the City's population estimate of 13,084 is \$1.63 per person.

7F. Resolution Authorizing a Contract with a City Official

Greg Zurbey reviewed recent Council direction at the January 21, 2026 workshop was to move forward with an office-remodeling project at Lake Liquors. The low quote was submitted by Ken Geroux Construction Corp in the amount of \$58,679.38. Wegeleben noted, as Council Member Geroux has a financial interest in this quote, staff is recommending he abstain from the vote on this item.

Council Member Seefeld motioned to approve Resolution No. 2026-10 authorizing a Contract with a City Official; accepting a quote submitted by Ken Geroux Construction Corp in the amount of \$58,679.38 to remodel office space at the Municipal Liquor Store located at 615 Rose Drive. Seconded by Council Member Noding. Motion passed with a vote of 4:0:1 with Council Members Halverson, Knier, Noding and Seefeld voting aye, and Council Member Geroux abstaining. Motion carried.

7G. Student Liaison Update

Student Liaison Adelyn Gosewisch provided an update on Big Lake Schools. Gosewisch provided an update on enrollment statistics, activities of the Student Council, and reviewed events happening district wide including Sno Daze, Hornet Sports, Evening of the Fine Arts, holiday concerts/performances, Poetry Out Loud competition, and the MSHSL awards recognizing recipients of the AAA Award to Kyla Gosewisch and Dylan Kunz.

8. ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

City Administrator Hanna Klimmek discussed the Minnesota legislative session kicked off yesterday at noon, noting she has attended a couple of legislative preview presentations leading up to it, and based on what was shared at the Ehlers Public Finance Seminar on February 6, three issues are expected to dominate the conversation this year: gun policy, fraud, and ICE. As of that date, 36 legislators had announced they are either retiring or running for another office, which represents more than 400 years of combined experience leaving the Legislature. Klimmek noted we are hopeful a bonding bill will come together this session and that the Big Lake Wastewater Treatment Facility Expansion project will be included, and noted bonding is typically one of the final actions before adjournment, which is scheduled for May 18. Klimmek also reviewed the City of Big Lake

has been awarded \$2 million in federal funding for the Wastewater Treatment Facility Expansion project, which will help move the design phase forward while reducing the financial burden on our taxpayers. We will continue pursuing additional funding opportunities wherever possible. Klimmek discussed staff will be attending City Day on the Hill on March 11, noting we plan to meet with Senator Mathews and Representative Mekeland to continue conversations about Big Lake's priorities and ongoing projects. We are also looking forward to the annual Big Lake Chamber Community Fair on Saturday, March 14. This event provides an opportunity for city officials to connect with residents, answer questions, and share updates on what's happening around the City. Klimmek recognized Water/Wastewater Superintendent Dan Childs and Staff Accountant/Deputy City Clerk Lisa Miller who are celebrating 15 years of service with the City. Klimmek expressed how grateful the City is for their dedication and the experience they bring to our team and community.

9. MAYOR & COUNCIL REPORTS and QUESTIONS/COMMENTS

Mayor Knier: discussed the recent Fire Board Finance Committee Meeting and recent Public Building Planning Committee Meetings. Mayor Knier also discussed his attendance at the LMC Elected Officials Conference.

Council Member Halverson: reviewed the January Big Lake Beyond the Yellow Ribbon Meeting.

Council Member Noding: discussed the recent Big Lake Community Lakes Association Meeting and the January Parks Advisory Committee Meeting.

10. OTHER – No other.

11. ADJOURN

Council Member Seefeld motioned to adjourn at 7:33 p.m. Seconded by Council Member Noding, unanimous ayes, motion carried.

Gina Wolbeck
Clerk

Date Approved by Council 03.18.26