

**Lanesboro City Council
Regular Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, September 2, 2025 – 6:00 p.m.
Lanesboro Community Center Meeting Room**

Present Members:

☒ Mindy Albrecht-Benson ☒ Chase Bakke ☒ Joe Cullen ☒ Alicia Pearson ☒ Kathryn Wade

Staff:

☒ Mitchell Walbridge ☒ Darla Taylor ☐ David Haugen ☐ Mark Lawstuen ☐ Jerod Wagner
☐ Tara Johnson ☒ Joseph O’Koren ☒ Michelle Marotzke

Guests: David Gray, Kate O’Neary, Elve Albrecht, Tommy Schmitz, Tara Johnson, Pat Gemlo, Dale Forster Hal Cropp, Ceil Allen, Jeff Norby, Julie Norby, Peter Torkelson, Vicki Chambard-Torkelson, Don Bell, Michael Wambacher, Amy McCall, Tony Semmen, Amanda Specht, Jerry Ritter, Gregory Qualy, Sheryl Qualy, Delia Bell, Jon Nicol, Betsy Holbrooke, Gary Wade, Joe Goetzke, Ryan Palmer, Allie Palmer, Erik Wrede, Maria Reyes-Wrede, Aaron Gage, Brandon Henerson; *Via Zoom:* Joe Deden, Molly S., Marguerite Lee, Nancy Martinson, Sheila Walbridge, Steve Olson, Anna Loney, Deane Benson

Public Hearing on Improvement – TH250 Road/Utility Improvement Project: Mayor Pearson called the public hearing to order at 6:00 p.m.

- **Hal Cropp (Commonweal Theatre Company):** Noted the project budget lacks marketing funds. Suggested \$150,000–\$200,000 for “Lanesboro is open” messaging to support downtown businesses. Expressed concern over assessments and potential business revenue losses during construction.
- **Michael Wambacher:** Questioned the need for sidewalks on Ashburn Street, citing proximity to houses and potential cost savings if removed.
- **Don Bell:** Asked about the proposed stormwater retention pond in the preliminary plan and why the affected property owner had not been contacted.
- **Dale Forster:** Reported inadequate drainage at Parkway Avenue South and Pleasant Street. Asked how much stormwater capacity would increase after the project.
- **Erik Wrede:** Commended staff for exploring stormwater solutions in his neighborhood. Opposed sidewalks on Ashburn Street, noting pedestrians typically use the Root River Trail.
- **Jerry Ritter:** Raised concerns about the draft resolution ordering the improvement, questioning cost-effectiveness and due process. Stated difficulty in obtaining answers from engineers.
- **Amy McCall:** Requested evaluation of speed limits and mitigation on Ashburn St.
- **Steven Bacon:** Asked whether existing light poles on Parkway Avenue would be reused or redesigned.
- **Julie Norby:** Asked how assessments would be calculated for corner lots. Expressed concern about potential foundation damage to her home during construction.

Mayor Pearson closed the hearing at 6:31 p.m. and opened the regular meeting.

A. Agenda Approval: City Administrator Walbridge requested that Resolution 2025-45 Amending the Fire Fund Budget and accepting the resignation of Tamara DeGarmo from the library board be added to the Consent Agenda. Member Albrecht-Benson entered a motion to approve the agenda with the requested additions; Member Wade seconded the motion. Motion carried with all in favor.

B. Public Comments:

- Kate O’Neary addressed the Lanesboro City Council about not being able to hear the City’s civil defense siren at her residence on Coffee Street. O’Neary stated she would also like to have the noon whistle reinstated
- Peter Torkelson addressed the Lanesboro City Council about disciplinary action against a city employee.

Approved 10/06/2025

C. Approval of Minutes: Member Wade entered a motion to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of August 4, 2025, and the minutes of the special meeting of August 26, 2025; Member Bakke seconded the motion. Motion carried with all in favor.

D. Consent Agenda

- a. Accounts Payable
- b. Exempt Gambling Permit – Lanesboro Area Chamber of Commerce – November 8, 2025
- c. Street Closure Request – November 29, 2025 – Lanesboro Legion Lights Parade
- d. Resolution 2025-43 Recognizing Senator Jeremy Miller and Representative Greg Davids as 2025 Legislators of Distinction
- e. Resolution 2025-44 Authorizing a Budget Amendment to Repurpose General Fund Expenditures
- f. Combination of Parcel ID's 190338030 and 190015000
- g. City Brush Dump Lease Renewal
- h. LMCIT Liability Coverage Waiver
- i. Resolution 2025-45 Authorizing a Budget Amendment to Repurpose Fire Fund Expenditures
- j. Accept Resignation of Tamara DeGarmo – Lanesboro Public Library Board

Member Albrecht-Benson entered a motion to approve the Consent Agenda; Mayor Pearson seconded the motion. Motion carried with all in favor.

Department Updates

A. Fire Department: Member Bakke reported 22 calls to date. Training highlights were shared, new equipment needs identified, and Fire Safety Week plans with Lanesboro Schools and ECFE outlined.

Continued Business

A. Consider Proposal to Make City Council and Public Meeting Recordings Accessible via the City Website: Administrator Walbridge will post the three most recent council meetings on the city website. No action was taken.

New Business

- A. Consider Resolution 2025-41 – Ordering Improvement and Preparation of Plans for the TH250 Reconstruction Project:** Member Wade entered a motion to adopt Resolution 2025-41; Member Albrecht-Benson seconded the motion. Motion carried with all in favor.
- B. Consider Contracting Outside Counsel for Wastewater Treatment Facility Pay Request Dispute:** Administrator Walbridge summarized the information from Maslon, LLP about obtaining a written opinion on the City's claim. Mayor Albrecht-Benson entered a motion to authorize getting the written opinion from Maslon, LLP; Member Cullen seconded the motion. Mayor Pearson asked what the current financial investment was in pursuing the deduction. Administrator Walbridge explained that it was limited to billable hours by Bolton & Menk, Inc. for their correspondence with Wapasha Construction's counsel and meeting with city staff. Member Bakke asked how much a deduction was being asked for, and Administrator Walbridge stated that the request for an estimated \$300,000. After discussion, the motion carried with all members voting in favor.
- C. Consider Resolution 2025-42 – Adopting the 2026 Proposed Tax Levy:** Administrator Walbridge explained that based on the budget workshop of August 26, Resolution 2025-42 and the listed levy amounts were consistent with the budget review. Also, the required Truth-in-Taxation hearing would be scheduled for December 1, 2025 per the resolution. Mayor Pearson entered a motion to adopt Resolution 2025-42; Member Wade seconded the motion. Motion carried with all in favor.
- D. Consider Revolving Loan Fund Application for the Lanesboro Golf Club:** Economic Development Director Michelle Marotzke presented a summary on the Lanesboro Golf Club's revolving loan fund application for \$40,000 with terms of seven (7) years at two-percent (2%) interest. Member Wade recused herself from discussion. Member Albrecht-Benson entered a motion to approve the loan application as recommended by the Lanesboro EDA Board; Member Cullen seconded the motion. Members discussed the collateral on the loan being a second mortgage position. The motion passed with

Approved 10/06/2025

Members Bakke, Cullen, Albrecht-Benson and Pearson voting in favor. Member Wade abstained from voting.

- E. Consider City Ordinance Regulating the Feeding of Deer in the City of Lanesboro:** Mayor Pearson introduced the proposed ordinance advanced to the City Council from the Planning and Zoning Commission for consideration. Member Bakke asked if the Planning Commission was aware that the Department of Natural Resources already has rules in place about feeding regulations. Mayor Pearson stated she did not think so. Member Bakke also asked if the ordinance was even feasible to enforce. Member Bakke felt that the ordinance would not be beneficial given that Lanesboro is in a rural area and the Root River goes through the City. Member Wade also questioned how enforceable the ordinance would be and if there would be any benefit to the ordinance's adoption. Member Albrecht-Benson entered a motion to table discussion on the topic indefinitely; Member Bakke seconded the motion. Motion carried with Members Albrecht-Benson, Bakke, Wade, and Cullen voting in favor; Mayor Pearson voted against the motion.

Next Meeting: Monday, October 6, 2025 at 6:00 p.m.

Mayor Pearson adjourned the meeting at 7:09 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mitchell Walbridge
City Administrator/Clerk