

**Lanesboro City Council
Regular Meeting Minutes
Monday, November 3, 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: Hannah Wingert, Bonita Underbakke, Brooke Pfeffer, Theodore Pruett, Maddox Lieb, Bentley Engler, Braden Engler, Justin Svoboda, Andrew Pruett, John Nicol, Delia Bell, Tara Johnson, Kreedon Wangen, Elve Albrecht, Susan Rosa, Colin Klaehn, Corey Saizan, Andy Lieb, Jon Buggs, Dale Forster, Luis Hummel, Peter Torkelson Vicki Chambard-Torkelson, Joe Goetzke; *Via Zoom* – Don Bell, Sarah Swedburg, Deane Benson, Robin Kaufman, Sheila Walbridge, Jonathan Levine

Mayor Pearson called the regular meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

A. Agenda Approval: City Administrator Walbridge requested that a Temporary On-Sale Liquor License Application from the Root River Game Protective League be added to the Consent Agenda. Member Albrecht-Benson moved to approve the agenda with the proposed addition. The motion lacked a second. Mayor Pearson requested that Resolution 2025-48 be removed from the Consent Agenda and added to Continued Business. Mayor Pearson moved to approve the agenda incorporating both amendments; Member Wade seconded the motion. Motion carried with all in favor.

B. Public Comments:

- Jon Buggs emphasized the value of acknowledging the contributions of volunteers and staff to the City of Lanesboro. The 15-year service anniversary of Library Director Tara Johnson was recognized.
- Luis Hummel provided context for the 5th Sun Gardens, LLC parking closure permit application.
- Peter Torkelson shared thoughts on the library board appointment process.
- Vicki Chambard-Torkelson voiced support for Sandra Webb to be appointed to the library board.

C. Approval of Minutes:

- Minutes of Regular Meeting, October 6, 2025 – Member Albrecht-Benson moved to approve the minutes as submitted; Member Wade seconded the motion. Motion carried with all in favor.

D. Consent Agenda

- a. Accounts Payable
 - b. Resolution 2025-47 – Accepting Donations for the Lanesboro Public Library
 - c. Lanesboro Area Chamber of Commerce – Temporary On-Sale Liquor License – December 6, 2025
 - d. Root River Game Protective League Temporary On-Sale Liquor License – January 31, 2026
- Member Albrecht-Benson entered a motion to approve the Consent Agenda; Member Bakke seconded the motion. Motion carried with all in favor.

Continued Business

A. Summary of City Administrator Annual Performance Evaluation: Mayor Pearson summarized the closed meeting session from October 6, 2025 with the following statement:

At our previous meeting, the City Council conducted a closed session in accordance with Minnesota Statute 13D.05, Subdivision 3, to evaluate the performance of our City Administrator, Mitchell

Approved 12/01/2025

Walbridge. This evaluation was part of the annual review process outlined in the City of Lanesboro's personnel policy.

Following a thorough review and discussion, the Council unanimously concluded that Mr. Walbridge continues to effectively perform his duties with professionalism and dedication.

As a result of this evaluation, the Council voted unanimously to approve a step increase in Mr. Walbridge's compensation, moving from Grade 7, Step 4 to Grade 7, Step 5 on the city's pay scale.

We thank Mr. Walbridge for his service and look forward to continued collaboration in the year ahead.

- B. Consider Proposals for Mold Remediation Services:** Administrator Walbridge reported that discussions with Public Works staff and ServPro project managers, it was determined that work completed by city staff would have minimal reduction in the bid. ServPro also advised that certified mold remediation professionals should handle the entire scope of work to prevent further contamination. Administrator Walbridge recommended awarding the full contract balance. Administrator Walbridge noted that a MNOSHA Workplace Safety Grant application was submitted to potentially offset some of the expenses. Mayor Pearson moved to approve the full bid from ServPro; Member Bakke seconded the motion. Motion carried with all in favor.
- C. Resolution 2025-48 – Appointing a Member to the Lanesboro Public Library Board:** Mayor Pearson moved to appoint Sandy Webb to the Library Board; Member Cullen seconded the motion. During discussion, Mayor Pearson raised questions about the preferences shared by Library Board members Mary Junko-Isle and Sjeila Goetzke, noting that Sandy Webb's background aligns well with youth literacy initiatives. Mayor Pearson added that Sandy Webb is a repeat applicant and former board member on the library board. Member Albrecht-Benson expressed interest in bringing fresh perspectives to the board and that it is preference to gain members who have new ideas. Member Cullen noted concerns about rescinding a prior offer to Gwen Harmon. Mayor Pearson withdrew her motion and moved to appoint Gwen Harmon to fill the library board vacancy. Member Albrecht-Benson seconded the motion. The motion carried with Members Pearson, Albrecht-Benson, Bakke, and Cullen voting in favor. Member Wade abstained from voting.

New Business

- A. Consider Interim Use Permit Application for 505 Parkway Avenue South (PID 190259000):** Administrator Walbridge presented an interim use permit application submitted by Sparrow Valley Properties, LLC. The request from the applicant is to operate short-term lodging at a property zoned R-3 Business Residential District. Short-term lodging is not a permitted use in the zoning district. Administrator Walbridge stated the Planning and Zoning Commission conducted a public hearing, reviewed the application, and recommended approval of the application for a duration of 12 months with a list of several conditions, including:
- The permit holder must obtain and maintain an active State of Minnesota lodging license and City lodging license.
 - The permit holder must remain current on EDA loan payments.
 - The permit holder must remain current on property tax payments for 505 Parkway Avenue South.
 - The permit holder must remain current on lodging tax payments as required by City ordinance.
 - The permit holder must remain current on utility payments for the property at 505 Parkway Avenue South.
 - Short-term lodging activity must be limited to no more than three (3) units at any given time.
 - The permit holder must remain in compliance with Minnesota Department of Health short-term rental regulations and State of Minnesota Fire Codes.
 - The permit holder must maintain regular communication with City administration and submit a property management plan, including rental terms and conditions.
 - The interim use permit is solely issued to Sparrow Valley Properties, LLC and may not be transferred to any entity.

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Council members considered the precedent that could be established by issuing an interim use permit for short-term lodging. Members also reviewed the application against zoning requirements, a defined termination date or event, the potential for adverse impact on nearby properties, imposition of additional costs on the public if the public were to take the property in the future, and conditions being offered to the property owner. Findings were outlined in Exhibit A of Resolution 2025-49.

Member Albrecht-Benson entered a motion to approve Resolution 2025-49 and issue an interim use permit; Mayor Pearson seconded the motion. During discussion, Member Bakke voiced concern about prior attempts by the property owner to bypass regulations and was not comfortable issuing them a permit. Member Albrecht-Benson noted that offering support aligns with the City's investment interests due to the City's investment in the Development and TIF Agreement. Members Pearson, Albrecht-Benson, Cullen, and Wade voted in favor of the motion; Member Bakke voted against. Motion carried.

B. Consider 5th Sun Gardens, LLC Street/Parking Closure Application: The City Council considered a parking space closure request submitted by 5th Sun Gardens, LLC to close two parking spaces on the south side of Coffee Street East near the intersection of Coffee Street East and Kenilworth Avenue North. Members expressed concern about the demand for parking in the area given that it is near several other businesses. Discussion was had about approving a date range for the closure versus for specific dates and times. Member Albrecht-Benson also emphasized the need for caution in approving parking space closures as any business owner could start requesting closures for spaces in front of their businesses. Member Albrecht-Benson entered a motion to deny approval of the application; Member Bakke seconded the motion. Motion carried with all in favor.

C. Consider Amendments to Comprehensive Land Use Plan: After several months of work from the project team, steering committee, and many public engagement activities, amendments to the City's comprehensive land use plan were considered. Sarah Swedburg, Planner from Bolton and Menk, Inc., provided an overview of the amendment process, key findings, and themes in the proposed amendments. Member Wade entered a motion to adopt Resolution 2025-50 which would implement the amended plan; Member Albrecht-Benson seconded the motion. Member Wade thanked contributors to the project and appreciated amendments to the plan. Member Albrecht-Benson commented that the implementation plan adds significant value. The motion carried with all in favor.

D. FY2026 Budget Review: After some adjustments to department budgets, Administrator Walbridge outlined budget adjustments and the resulting tax levy. City council members reviewed departmental budgets and discussed suitable expenditure increases for each department. Additional budget work will be completed throughout November. Member Albrecht-Benson moved to schedule an additional budget workshop; Member Bakke seconded the motion. Motion carried with all in favor.

Next Meeting: Monday, December 1, 2025 at 6:00 p.m.

The meeting adjourned at 7:29 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mitchell Walbridge
City Administrator/Clerk