

**Lanesboro City Council
Special Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, February 18, 2026 – 6:00 p.m.
Lanesboro City Council Chambers**

Present Members:

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

Staff:

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

Public Hearing on Municipal Consent – Minnesota Trunk Highway 250 Road & Utility Improvement Project

Mayor Pearson called the public hearing to order at 6:00 p.m.

- Tom Brudvig commented on the project costs, high taxes in Lanesboro, and the budgetary strategy for the project. Brudvig encouraged the City Council to save on costs wherever possible.
- Jerry Ritter questioned whether the sidewalk on the south side of Ashburn Street was necessary. Jerry Ritter stated that there are few pedestrians on Ashburn Street and that there is access for foot traffic via the trail that leads to the wastewater treatment facility. He encouraged the City Council to consider eliminating the sidewalk to save on project costs.
- Scott Taylor stated that the City Council was making tough decisions just like business owners. Scott encouraged the council to communicate project update timelines thoroughly so that businesses can make access plans well in advance of construction.
- Mike Wombacher addressed the City Council regarding the sidewalk and how the proposed right-of-way is very close to the front of houses on Ashburn Street. Mike also expressed concern regarding how special assessments may be calculated for his property parcel.
- Erik Wrede thanked the City Council and staff for their investigations regarding storm water drainage. Erik explained that public safety trumps accessibility, and that should be considered when the City Council decides whether to proceed with the Ashburn Street sidewalk. Wrede encouraged that the City Council put in a contingency that the sidewalk be removed from the final layout plan.
- David Gray addressed the City Council and advocated for the elimination of the Ashburn Street sidewalk.
- Susan Ritter encouraged the City Council to remove the Ashburn Street sidewalk from the design plan. Susan stated she felt that removal of the sidewalk would save construction time.
- Jim Iverson stated he was not in favor of the extension of the proposed multi-use trail from Pleasant Street to Sheridan Street.

Mayor Pearson closed the public hearing at 6:20 p.m.

A. Agenda Approval: A motion was made by Member Wade to approve the agenda as presented; Member Bakke seconded the motion. All city council members voted in favor; Motion carried.

B. Consent Agenda

- a. Ratify Hire of Lucas Wahl, Library Director – Grade 5, Step 1
- b. Ratify Hire of Ruth Mikos, Assistant Librarian – Grade 1, Step 3

A motion was made by Member Albrecht-Benson to approve the Consent Agenda; Member Wade seconded the motion. All city council members voted in favor; Motion carried.

C. Consider Resolution 2026-24 – TH250 Road and Utility Project Layout Approval: Tony Rodchatdl and Brian Malm, Bolton and Menk, Inc., presented information about the final design layout and the procedure for municipal consent. Information was also provided in response to topics from the public hearing.

Brian and Tony stated that it is MnDOT's preference to have a sidewalk on at least one side of the roadway in a residential zone and even prefers sidewalk to be on both sides of the road in a residential zone. Research on sidewalks and ADA compliance began with the scoping study for the project, and the sidewalk is a goal versus a mandate. The City Council asked questions about how alteration to the sidewalk plan would affect the timeline for the project. Brian and Tony explained that bidding and project letting would very likely be delayed, putting the 2027 construction timeline into jeopardy. Brian and Tony also explained that the sidewalk and the shared use path are funded through grant dollars and ultimately would not yield cost savings to the City. Council members did note that they could consider reducing assessment amounts once final costs are determined.

A motion was made by Member Albrecht-Benson to table discussion to the March 2 city council meeting; Mayor Pearson seconded the motion. During discussion, City Administrator Mitchell Walbridge explained that delay in the 2027 construction timeline may also have implications to Public Facility Authority funding applications, bonding bill funding through the Minnesota legislature, and authorization for the local sales tax that the City applied for. Member Albrecht-Benson rescinded her motion.

A motion was made by Member Wade to adopt Resolution 2026-24; Member Cullen seconded the motion. Member Cullen stated that he acknowledged the feedback regarding the sidewalk but also articulated the importance of sidewalks for pedestrian safety and the time constraints that any delay may have on various aspects of project funding and construction timelines. Per a roll call vote, Members Wade, Cullen, Bakke, and Albrecht-Benson voted in favor and Mayor Pearson voted against the motion; Motion carried.

D. Discuss Payment Options for Permanent Easement and Temporary Easement Acquisitions:

Administrator Walbridge stated that per the Partnership Agreement with MnDOT, the City is responsible to lead right-of-way acquisition efforts, including payment to property owners for the easements. As soon as appraisals are completed, offers will begin to be made to property owners. Administrator Walbridge presented the option to use utility fund cash reserves to pay for the easement acquisitions. Administrator Walbridge had discussed with this financial advisor Mike Bubany of David Drown and Associates. Bubany recommended using cash if it is available to avoid taking out any other short-term note or bond. The approximate total of costs is estimated to be around \$350,000, with much of the payments being reimbursed by MnDOT later as they will be the final holder of the easements. Administrator Walbridge explained that he presented this option to the Public Utility Commission who tabled the topic until the City Council put in an official request to use utility cash reserves.

A motion was made by Mayor Pearson to approve using utility cash reserves contingent upon Public Utility Commission approval; Member Wade seconded the motion. All city council members voted in favor; Motion carried.

E. Consider Request for League of Minnesota Cities City Day on the Hill Reimbursement: Mayor Pearson submitted a request to receive mileage reimbursement and registration costs covered for her to attend City Day on the Hill, a lobbying effort facilitated by the League of Minnesota Cities. A motion was made by Member Bakke to approve the request to reimburse Mayor Pearson for mileage and to have registration paid out of the City Council meetings/trainings budget; Member Wade seconded the motion. Members Wade, Cullen, Bakke, and Albrecht-Benson voted in favor of the motion and Mayor Pearson abstained from voting; Motion carried.

Mayor Pearson adjourned the meeting at 7:22 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mitchell Walbridge
City Administrator/Clerk