

**Lanesboro City Council
Regular Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, September 3, 2024 – 6:00 p.m.
Lanesboro Community Center Meeting Room & Zoom**

Present Members:

☒ Mindy Albrecht-Benson ☒ Chase Bakke ☒ Joe Goetzke ☒ Jason Resseman ☒ Kathryn Wade

Staff:

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

Guests: Jon Pieper, Jon Buggs, Jon Nicol, Delia Bell, Stephen Rogers, Sandy Webb, Lynn Susag, Dave Susag, Stacey Schultz, Sarah Pieper, Linda Hennessey, David Hennessey, Bonita Underbakke, Phil Holtegaard, Ceil Allen, Hannah Wingert, Susan Ritter, Jerry Ritter, Brian Malm, Anna Loney, Tom Brudvig, Lynn Sherfer, Carly McNeilus, Shirley Mulder, Deane Benson, Jonathan Levine, Don Bell, LAN01, Alissa Sindelar, Jody Solminski, Sheila Walbridge, Stephanie Jakim, Stella Burdt, Molly Gage, Carol Anderson, Emily Moore, Pat Gemlo, Dale Forster, Betsy Holbrook, Linda Tacke, Alicia Pearson

Public Hearing: Member Resseman called to order the public hearing for Amendments to Lanesboro City Ordinance Chapter 151 – Land Use, City Ordinance 30.111 City Fee Schedule, and Addition of Ordinance Chapter 120 – Lodging Businesses at 6:00 p.m.

- Jon Pieper addressed the city council regarding amendments to Chapter 151 – Land Use and how it would rezone his property from Rural Agriculture District (RA) to Single Family Residential District (R-1).
- Stephen Rogers addressed the city council regarding amendments to Chapter 151 – Land Use and how rezoning his property to Single Family Residential District (R-1) will directly impact his property parcel.

Administrator Walbridge noted that rezoning property parcels is not part of the amendments to Chapter 151 – Land use.

Member Resseman closed the public hearing at 6:08 p.m.

Regular Meeting

Call to Order: Member Resseman called to order the Regular Meeting at 6:08 p.m.

A. Agenda: City Administrator Mitchell Walbridge requested one addition to the agenda.

- Truth in Taxation Hearing be added to Miscellaneous.

Member Albrecht-Benson entered a motion to approve the agenda with the requested addition; Member Wade seconded the motion. Motion carried with all in favor.

B. Public Comment:

- Anna Loney addressed the city council regarding the revision of language to draft resolution 2024-29 as the Friends of the Lanesboro Library intend its donation to be put towards library materials and programs. Loney stated she felt the library board be left as a governing board.
- Tom Brudvig addressed the city council about state statute not providing explanation on an advisory library board.
- Susan Ritter addressed the city council about Minnesota Statute 134 and how the proposed ordinance is problematic with the statute. Ritter stated that conversion of library funds is not legal.
- David Hennessey addressed the city council citing his former role as a library board member. Hennessey stated that library funds would be in question if the board becomes advisory.
- Sandy Webb addressed the council about the benefit of a public comment period. Webb stated that the library is a place for ideas to be shared and that everyone should have access to

information. Webb stated she felt that library board members have the best interest of the library in mind.

- Linda Tacke addressed the city council and stated that the library is a big attraction to people who move to Lanesboro.
- Stacey Schultz addressed the city council about her eight years as a library board member and has served seven of those years as board secretary. Schultz mentioned the library board's personnel committee has always conducted the library director's annual review. Schultz encouraged council members to attend library events and activities.
- Delia Bell addressed the council expressing a lack of confidence in the city council's decision making.
- Jon Nicol addressed the city council regarding the use of donated funds to the library and opposition to the proposed ordinance regarding the library.
- Linda Hennessey addressed the city council and shared she was a SELCO Board representative for three years. Hennessey stated that the library and Lanesboro School's daycare has had a collaborative relationship for story time programming. Hennessey noted the increase in donation amounts from the Friends of Lanesboro Library in recent years.
- Bonita Underbakke addressed the city council regarding the proposed ordinance change. Underbakke said she is puzzled by the proposed change and does not see the need for change. Underbakke questioned the motive and sees the ordinance as a power struggle over money. Underbakke stated there is a genuine ignorance over what libraries mean to communities.
- Sarah Pieper addressed the city council about the library board's status and questioned why there is a need for change.
- Stephanie Jakim addressed the city council as a supporter of the library.
- Emily Moore addressed the city council and expressed that libraries are a sacred place for patrons.
- Alicia Pearson addressed the council in support of the library. Pearson also recommended microphones to amplify council discussion. Pearson also requested the city council consider adding a comment period to the end of the meeting rather than the beginning.
- Pat Gemlo addressed the city council requesting a microphone system be added to enhance the public's ability to hear discussion.

C. Approval of Minutes:

- a. Minutes of Regular Meeting, August 5, 2024: Member Goetzke entered a motion to approve the minutes as submitted; Member Albrecht-Benson seconded the motion. Motion carried with all in favor.

D. Consent Agenda:

- a. Accounts Payable
- b. Brush Dump Lease – Contract Renewal
- c. Resolution 2024-27: Authorization to Terminate Local Sales & Use Tax
- d. Resolution 2024-28: Accepting Donations to the Lanesboro Fire Department
- e. Resolution 2024-29: Accepting Donations to the Lanesboro Public Library
- f. League of Minnesota Cities Insurance Trust – Liability Coverage Waiver
- g. Resolution 2024-31: Authorizing Joint Powers Agreement with the State of Minnesota

Member Goetzke entered a motion to approve the Consent Agenda; Member Bakke seconded the motion. Motion carried with all in favor.

Department Reports

A. Fire: Member Bakke provided the fire department update.

- The annual street dance for Buffalo Bill Days had roughly 600 attendees.
- Two members are almost complete with training and are taking certification exams.
- A vehicle extrication training will take place on September 21 along with the Lanesboro EMS crew.

- The warning light system is partially installed with the second sign anticipated to be installed soon.
 - The department is working on grant opportunities to replace SCBAs.
 - The department has had 17 calls in the past three months, bringing the year-to-date total to 30 calls.
- B. Police: Due to a meeting conflict, Preston Police Chief Blaise Sass was not in attendance. Administrator Walbridge read a letter submitted from Chief Sass. Details of the letter included an update on 2024 equipment purchases, recruitment efforts for officers, and the call volume being 1,160 between the three contracted communities. Also, a 5.5% department budget increase is anticipated for 2025.
- C. EDA: Member Goetzke provided the EDA department update.
- The EDA is in the process of obtaining the \$100,000 grant award to recapitalize the city's revolving loan fund.
 - The city has 11 loans, one of which is past due and administration is working on a payment plan.
 - EDA Director Cathy Enerson is working with three prospective loan applicants who are looking to open businesses in Lanesboro.
 - The EDA is working on developing a mini-grant program to implement during the Highway 250 project.
 - An EDA strategic work plan is in progress.
 - Director Enerson submitted a grant application to seek funds to put towards the Legion Lights holiday light show and to install two new pickleball courts in Sylvan Park.

Continued Business

- A. Consideration of Adoption of Amendments to Ordinance Chapter 151 – Land Use: Member Albrecht-Benson entered a motion to table consideration of the amendments to ordinance chapter 151; Member Wade seconded the motion. Motion carried with all in favor.
- B. Consideration of Adoption of Ordinance Chapter 120 – Lodging Businesses: Member Wade entered a motion to adopt ordinance chapter 120; Member Bakke seconded the motion. Motion carried with all in favor.
- Administrator Walbridge requested members consider approving the ordinance summary for publication in the legal newspaper. Member Albrecht-Benson entered a motion to approve the ordinance summary for publication; Member Bakke seconded the motion. Motion carried with all in favor.
- C. Consideration of Adoption of Amendments to ordinance 30.111 – City Fee Schedule: Member Albrecht-Benson entered a motion to approve the amendments to ordinance 30.111; Member Wade seconded the motion. Motion carried with all in favor.
- D. MnDOT Partnership Agreement: Highway 250 Project: Brian Malm, Bolton & Menk, explained that the Partnership Agreement was in line with the contents of the previously approved Letter of Intent. Malm explained that Right of Way acquisition costs in the agreement refer to the professional services in the acquisition process rather than payment to landowners for any transfer or conveyance of any land needed to be acquired for the project. Malm further explained that the costs associated with the purchase of any property would be addressed in a later agreement. The Partnership Agreement spells out the scope of work and deliverables the city is required to provide. Administrator Walbridge asked Malm if the estimated \$1.6 million in engineering fees will cover the costs pertaining to the Partnership Agreement's deliverables. Malm confirmed the engineering estimate directly correlates with the scope of work laid out in the Partnership Agreement. Member Goetzke entered a motion to enter into the MnDOT Partnership Agreement for the TH250 Project; Member Bakke seconded the motion. Motion carried with all in favor. Administrator Walbridge noted that temporary financing options to cover the engineering fees is being worked on with the city's financial advisor. Options will be brought forward at the October city council meeting. Brian Malm stated that Bolton & Menk can delay payments due until the temporary financing is in place.

Approved 10/07/2024

- E. Bolton & Menk, Inc. Work Order: Highway 250 Project: Member Albrecht-Benson entered a motion to approve the Bolton & Menk, Inc. Work Order for the Highway 250 Project; Member Wade seconded the motion. Motion carried with all in favor.

New Business

- A. Ordinances 31.80-31.83: Library Board – 1st Reading: Administrator Walbridge shared a statement to provide context as to why the city council is considering adoption of the proposed ordinances. Adoption of the ordinances seek to integrate the library board under the same regulatory framework of the other city boards and commissions as there have been issues in the past several months that are inconsistent with the city's practices of Minnesota Open Meeting Law, handling of personnel matters, and the following of standardized policies and procedures. Administrator Walbridge explained that adoption of the ordinances is intended to ensure consistent governance across all city-appointed boards while also maintaining the library's role in the community.
Members discussed the impact of the proposed ordinances. Member Goetzke asked questions regarding the library board and library staff's current operations and what the city administration currently handles for library operational responsibilities. Member Albrecht-Benson explained that consideration of making decisions on the proposed ordinance language must be made on facts and not emotions.
Member Wade entered a motion to call for a public hearing at the October 7, 2024 city council meeting; Member Albrecht-Benson seconded the motion. Members Resseman, Wade, Albrecht-Benson, and Bakke voted in favor; Member Goetzke voted against the motion. Motion carried.

Member Resseman put the meeting in recess at 7:22 p.m.

Member Resseman resumed the meeting at 7:27 p.m.

- B. Preliminary Budget: Administration, Fire Department, Library, Debt Funds: Members reviewed each of the remaining departments and reduced the comprehensive plan line item from \$5,000 to \$1,000 in the general fund 2025 budget. Council members noted that budgeting \$1,000 per year will allow for future updates to the comprehensive plan to be executed on a timely schedule. Members also requested Administrator Walbridge to calculate adjustments to the debt service fund to eliminate transfers from the Lanesboro Public Utilities water and sewer funds for the 2017A bond payment and add it to the property tax levy.
Member Resseman put the meeting into recess at 7:47 p.m. to allow for the administrator to make the adjustment and calculate the preliminary tax levy.
Member Resseman resumed the meeting at 7:57 p.m.
- C. Resolution 2024-30: Setting the 2025 Preliminary Tax Levy: Member Resseman read the draft language of Resolution 2024-30 to set the preliminary tax levy at \$974,161.56. Member Wade entered a motion to adopt Resolution 2024-30; Member Bakke seconded the motion. Motion carried with all in favor.

Miscellaneous

- A. Comprehensive Plan: Member Albrecht-Benson entered a motion to table comprehensive plan discussion to the October city council meeting; Member Resseman seconded the motion. Motion carried with all in favor.
- B. Administrator Annual Performance Evaluation: Members discussed that a special meeting can be scheduled to complete the city administrator's annual performance evaluation. Evaluation materials will be distributed to members via email.
- C. Truth in Taxation Hearing: Member Resseman entered a motion to set the Truth in Taxation Hearing for December 2, 2024 at 6:00 p.m.; Member Albrecht-Benson seconded the motion. Administrator Walbridge noted that December 2 does not conflict with the Lanesboro School holiday concerts. Motion carried with all in favor.

Approved 10/07/2024

Next Meeting: Monday, October 7, 2024 at 6:00 p.m.

Member Resseman adjourned the meeting at 8:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mitchell Walbridge
City Administrator/Clerk