

**Lanesboro City Council
Regular Meeting Minutes
Monday, August 4, 2025 – 6:00 p.m.
Lanesboro Community Center Meeting Room & Zoom**

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: Jon Nicol, Peter Torkelson, Karen Heimdahl, Wanda Hanson, Delia Bell, Joe Goetzke; *Via Zoom:* Deane Benson, Carly McNeilus, Sheila Walbridge, Sarah Pieper, Jonathan Levine, Don Bell

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

A. Agenda Approval: Member Wade entered a motion to approve the agenda; Member Albrecht-Benson seconded the motion. Motion carried with all in favor.

B. Public Comments:

- Peter Torkelson addressed the Lanesboro City Council regarding the May 14 Library Board meeting, raising questions about the City Administrator’s role in that meeting. Mr. Torkelson also expressed concern about matters related to staff discipline, referring to internal administrative actions not typically within the scope of public oversight.
- Jon Nicol addressed the Lanesboro City Council about the tone of its meetings. Mr. Nicol stated that it is not always necessary to model the City of Lanesboro’s practices after other cities. Mr. Nicol encouraged members to think creatively.
- Sarah Pieper addressed the Lanesboro City Council requesting revision to the City’s website as she struggles to navigate the webpages and find city council agenda materials. Ms. Pieper stated she would like to see a volunteer page added to the City’s website, as well as public meeting recordings added to the website.

C. Approval of Minutes

- a. Minutes of Regular Meeting, July 7, 2025: Member Albrecht-Benson entered a motion to approve the minutes as presented; Member Bakke seconded the motion. Motion carried with all in favor.
- b. Minutes of Special Meeting, July 21, 2025: Member Albrecht-Benson entered a motion to approve the minutes as presented; Member Wade seconded the motion. Motion carried with all in favor.

D. Consent Agenda

- a. Accounts Payable
- b. Accept Resignation of Erica Newton, Substitute Librarian
- c. Sylvan Brewing Street Closure Application
- d. Resolution 2025-39 – Accepting Donations to the Lanesboro Public Library
- e. Resolution 2025-40 – Accepting Donations to the Lanesboro Fire Department
- f. Lanesboro Arts Temporary Liquor License Application – October 4, 2025
- g. Lanesboro Arts Temporary Liquor License Application – November 15, 2025

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

New Business

- A. Consider City Council, Board, and Commission Remote Participation Policy:** With recent changes to Minnesota Open Meeting Law, City Administrator Walbridge recommended adoption of a local

policy that ensures appointed officials uphold their commitments with a certain level of in-person participation and that there is sufficient notice for city administration to properly notice the public of members participating remotely. Member Albrecht-Benson entered a motion to adopt the drafted policy; Member Wade seconded the motion. During discussion on the motion, Mayor Pearson questioned whether the limit of three remote participation meetings was the appropriate number since the board and commission members are volunteers. Member Albrecht-Benson stated she would like to see as much in-person participation as possible as she wants people on the board and commissions who are present and invested in the community. Member Bakke pointed out that if there are extenuating circumstances, the Council has discretion to increase the limit on a case-by-case basis. The motion carried with all members voting in favor.

- B. Consider Proposal to Make City Council and Public Meeting Recordings Accessible via City Website and YouTube Channel:** Member Albrecht-Benson entered a motion to table the topic indefinitely; Member Wade seconded the motion. Members discussed what the appropriate number of meetings to publish and what platform to publish the meeting recordings on. Member Albrecht-Benson asked if the meetings are already accessible as she thought they were via a public data request. Member Albrecht-Benson also questioned whether uploading videos was an effective use of staff time when there are so few requests for meeting recordings. Member Bakke asked about the storage needs for the video files and the costs associated. Mayor Pearson stated she hears many requests for people to view the meetings and would like to increase transparency. Member Albrecht-Benson rescinded her motion to allow for further options of posting the meetings to be investigated. Following discussion on the rescinded motion, Administrator Walbridge stated he needed clear directions on what the city council is seeking. Mayor Pearson entered a motion to have the city administrator assess the feasibility of having 12 months of city council meeting recordings posted to the city website, including any associated costs and the potential to house the meeting recordings on YouTube via a private channel; Member Bakke seconded the motion. Motion carried with all in favor.
- C. Consider Proposal for Volunteer Policy:** Mayor Pearson introduced the idea of implementing a formal volunteer policy to encourage public engagement in city projects. She noted that some residents have expressed interest in contributing their skills to efforts they perceive as aligned with the City's objectives. Administrator Walbridge responded by emphasizing that the City already advertises for specific volunteer needs—such as watering city flowers and supporting the Buffalo Bill Days Committee. Those advertisements received little to no response for those roles. He stressed that the City's priority should be to recruit volunteers for existing, clearly identified needs rather than creating a system where individuals expect to pursue personal projects or advance their own agendas under the guise of volunteering. He also noted that many tasks require appropriate staff oversight and that expanding activity in areas not driven by the current City needs could impose an unnecessary burden on staff. Member Albrecht-Benson questioned whether many of the tasks individuals were seeking to volunteer for were even under the City's jurisdiction. Mayor Pearson entered a motion to table the discussion indefinitely; Member Albrecht-Benson seconded the motion. Motion carried with all in favor.
- D. Resolution 2025-41 – Supporting Local Soil Health Practices and Groundwater Protection through Partnership with the Fillmore County SWCD:** Mayor Pearson introduced Resolution 2025-41, requesting to articulate the City's position on supporting programming to reduce nitrates in the City's groundwater. Members questioned whether there were specific programs that Fillmore County is seeking support for. Mayor Pearson stated she did not know, although an event was recently held in Lanesboro regarding groundwater and nitrate level mitigation. Member Bakke asked if there was currently a problem with nitrate levels in the City's drinking water. Administrator Walbridge the 2024 Drinking Water Report showed 0.05 parts-per-million, and that the EPA's standard is 10 parts-per-million or less. Member Bakke stated he prefers to consider resolutions for specific programs in need of support rather than having the City take a generalized stance. Mayor Pearson entered a motion to table

Approved 09/02/2025

discussion indefinitely; Member Albrecht-Benson seconded the motion. Motion carried with all in favor.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, September 2, 2025 at 6:00 p.m.

Mayor Pearson adjourned the meeting at 6:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mitchell Walbridge
City Administrator/Clerk