

MINUTES
Lake Crystal City Council
Monday, March 2, 2026, 7:30 pm
City Council Chambers
100 E. Robinson St.

City Administrator Update

Grafstrom provided key upcoming dates, including the Arbor Day Celebration on April 24, the Board of Appeal and Equalization on April 28, the audit presentation for Council and PUC on June 15, primary election voting from June 26 through August 10 with Primary Election Day on August 11, and general election voting from September 18 through November 2 with General Election Day on November 3; election judge training will be scheduled by the county at a later date, likely in June or July.

Madelia Ambulance: Ryan Marti of Madelia Ambulance reported that financial numbers are looking positive following the transition to EMS/MC for billing, with a current reimbursement rate of about 66%, compared to the typical 41–47%. Lake Crystal may also be eligible for a new \$4 million uncompensated care fund, with up to 200 runs eligible; approximately 100 runs in Lake Crystal would have qualified last year. An OEMS grant is also available, and discussions have taken place with City Administrator Grafstrom on how those funds may be used. They are also reviewing billing regulations that may allow certain runs with prescheduled hospital waits to be billed at a slightly higher rate under critical access provisions. Seventeen staff members transitioned to the new service, with one external hire, Catherine Stoll, and two individuals currently in training. Madelia Ambulance is working to increase staffing gradually and sustainably. Beginning in May, a third ambulance may be available to help maintain coverage in Lake Crystal during community events. They also recently completed their first non-emergency transfer, transporting a Lake Crystal resident home from a nearby hospital when coverage allowed.

Consent Agenda *(The following agenda items are considered to be non-controversial and routine in nature. They will be handled with one motion of the City Council. Councilors may request that specific items be removed from the Consent Agenda and be acted upon separately)*

1. Minutes Month February 17, 2025, Regular Meeting of the City Council
2. Payment of bills totaling \$81,276.34
 - reviewed by Councilor Windsperger and Councilor Bierma prior to the meeting
3. Resolution 2609 \$3,000 Donation from GRACE to the “Angel Fund.”

Motion made by Councilor Windsperger to approve consent items 1 through 3, motion seconded by Councilor Bierma and carried unanimously.

Action Items

Resolution 2610 Recognizing March as MS Awareness Month

Ryan Vesey attended the meeting and requested that the Council recognize March as MS Awareness Month.

Motion made by Councilor Hanson to approve Resolution 2610 Recognizing March as MS Awareness Month, motion seconded by Councilor Cooper and carried unanimously.

Approve the 5-year Garbage Contract with a 3% annual increase

The Council reviewed the five-year contract with LJP Enterprises Waste & Recycling, LLC for

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Mayor Todd Wiens called the meeting to order at 7:30 P.M. Members present: Councilors Brett Hanson, Gina Cooper, Michael Windsperger, and Jennifer Bierma.

Staff members present: Kenzie Doering, Administrative Assistant; Robert Prescher, Police Chief; Sierra Roiger, Utility Billing & Cemetery Specialist; and David Paul, Fire Chief

Others present: Ryan Vesey, Ryan Marti, Caitlin Griffin, and Catherine Stoll

Staff Reports

Fire Department: The tanker arrived at the fire hall, with lettering completed and installation of emergency lighting and equipment still pending. The truck committee is scheduled to tour the Rosenbauer factory on March 23–24, where the replacement for the GMC rescue truck (4602) will be built. The department held its annual banquet this past weekend to recognize recent retirements. EMR refresher training has been completed, and Ben Skinner has successfully passed his initial EMR coursework. In March, the department will host SASCS classes at the high school and hold an open house at the fire hall following the classes. The annual rib feed will take place the following week. The Relief Association has also begun hosting horse races at The Lakes Bar.

Police Department Update: Department training has been completed. While Officer Bottelson and Chief Prescher are still becoming familiar with the records management system, school district, and community, their prior law enforcement experience allows them to effectively handle most issues, with administrative and procedural knowledge expected to improve over time. Regular rotational shifts began on 02/23/26, providing coverage from 7:00 a.m. to 3:00 a.m. daily, including weekends, with officers rotating every other weekend; schedule adjustments may be necessary for vacations, sick leave, or unforeseen circumstances. Work is nearly completed with a Mankato vendor to update the Lake Crystal PD digital department seal for use on emails, letterhead, and a new Facebook page to improve community communication. Officers have also been enrolled in online training through the League of Minnesota Cities at an annual cost of \$360, allowing completion of OSHA-mandated and licensure training during regular shifts without additional expense. The 2025 year-end report was submitted for Council review, and increased activity is anticipated due to greater officer presence in the community.

Street & Maintenance: No report.

Parks Department Update: Work is underway on the job description for this year's seasonal park workers, with the goal of posting the position in March. Staff is awaiting further guidance from the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources regarding offsetting parkland from Jones Park to another location in order to remain compliant with the original DNR grant used to purchase the property. The Lake Crystal Safety Council representatives have been identified as Jackson (Water), Madison (Electric), Streets (representative pending), and Kenzie (Office), with the first meeting scheduled for March 18. Direction is still needed regarding the PPE/Clothing Policy; once a decision is made between providing an allowance or a select list of approved items, coordination with department heads will begin for ordering. A Park and Recreation Commission meeting is scheduled this month to discuss potential spring programming suggested by Councilor Cooper; however, the meeting in February was canceled due to a lack of a quorum.

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weekly residential refuse and recycling collection services within the City, effective July 1, 2026, through June 30, 2031, including provisions for holiday scheduling, service standards, insurance requirements, annual rate adjustments, and disposal in accordance with the Blue Earth County solid waste plan. The contract stipulated a 3% annual rate.

Tabled the review of the 5-year Garbage Contract.

Information/Discussion Items

Ryan Vesey

Economic Development Director Ryan Vesey of Greater Mankato Growth provided an update on the economic development alliance. Madison Lake recently joined the alliance, which now includes six cities and two counties. Lake Crystal has participated in the Main Street Economic Revitalization Program, with Crawler Welding receiving funds to support its expansion. Additionally, REDA partners set aside funds to support a public event, hosted by Mankato Area Public Schools, to provide presentations for educators and parents. The event will be held at the Courtyard by Marriott in Mankato, MN.

Crystal Gardens #8

The Council reviewed two preliminary financing scenarios for the Crystal Gardens project, both of which include electric costs. Option A, which excludes reconstruction of Watonwan, would require approximately \$3,000,000 in bonds, resulting in an estimated annual levy of \$78,500 and total annual levy and utility debt service of about \$243,700. Option B, which includes reconstruction of Watonwan, would require approximately \$5,175,000 in bonds, increasing the estimated annual levy to \$173,500 and the total annual levy and utility debt service to about \$421,500. The electric portion would be financed through separate revenue bonds, while street improvements are assumed to be financed over 15 years and utilities over 20 years. Mayor Weins asked the council to review this for future discussion.

County Highway Dept. Construction Plans in Lake Crystal

City Administrator Grafstrom met with Ryan Thilges, the city engineer, and the county engineer to review upcoming county projects within the city limits that will affect the city budget. The primary projects include the reconstruction of Blue Earth Street in 2028, from Blue Earth Street to CSAH 6, which will reduce the street crown, add curb and gutter, and integrate the Lilly Lakes Trail. Additionally, the city discussed relocating the pedestrian island on CSAH 20, requested by the school, though no timeline has been set. Finally, CSAH 6 contains older utilities and may be a candidate for ongoing assessment or improvement (OLAY).

The 2025 Police Department Year-End Report

Council members reviewed the report submitted by Chief Prescher and discussed their review of the materials included in the meeting packet.

Ditch 87

City Administrator Grafstrom received a communication on the County's Ditch 87 planned repair and reroute, included in the packet. Mayor Wiens and Grafstrom had meetings with the county on the project.

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Upcoming meetings and events:

- Monday, March 16, 2026, 7:30 PM Regular Council Meeting
- Tuesday, April 28, 2026, Board of Appeal and Equalization, 9:00 AM

Council Comments and Observations

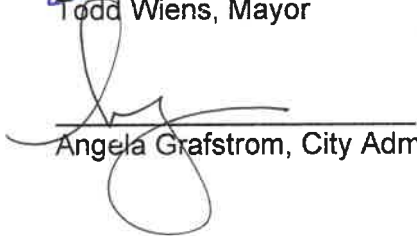
Adjournment:

There being no further business of the Lake Crystal City Council, Councilor Hanson motioned to adjourn the regular meeting of March 2, 2026, motion seconded by Councilor Windsperger and carried unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 8:17 P.M.

Minutes prepared by: Kenzie Doering



Todd Wiens, Mayor



Angela Grafstrom, City Administrator