

MINUTES
Lake Crystal City Council
Tuesday, January 20, 2026, 7:30 pm
City Council Chambers
100 E. Robinson St.

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: City Administrator Angela Grafstrom; Tonia Turner, Administrative Assistant; Dean Tibbetts, Street Department

Others present: Four members of the Chamber of Commerce: Amy Gasswint, Jennifer Wiens, Annette Farrell, Ann Lang, and Keith Zacharias

Public Hearing on Ordinances 2026-01 and 2026-02 was called to order at 7:30 pm and closed at 7:33 pm.

Mayor Wiens opened the regular meeting at 7:33 pm

Staff Reports

Fire Department:

Chief Paul reported that the Lake Crystal Fire Department responded to 45 calls in Lake Crystal, 21 in Garden City Township, 5 in Butternut, 20 in Judson, and 4 in Lincoln in 2025.

Police Department Update:

Chief Prescher reported that Officer Bottelson is training with Sergeant Gangelhoff during the day. He closely monitors Officer Bottelson's progress, and when he feels Officer Bottelson is ready, Chief Prescher will move to dayshift with Sergeant Gangelhoff. The Lake Crystal Police Department still relies on the Blue Earth County Sheriff to cover a few shifts. Additionally, the call service for DWIs has increased over the last few weeks.

Street & Maintenance:

Superintendent Tibbetts reported that the extreme cold has kept them less busy than usual, allowing them to focus on cleaning and maintenance. He emphasized the importance of people moving their cars off the streets during snow emergencies. Once the temperatures rise, they plan to cut down more Poplar Trees at Abbott Field. Tibbetts also provided an overview of the new roller they are considering purchasing.

Parks Department Update:

Beth Schmitz currently has organized the 2026 Arbor Day Celebration. She has secured vendors for Maple Syrup and Honey, who will bring educational materials. Additionally, she reported that the staff is forming a Safety Committee, and she is preparing for spring and summer 2026.

City Administrator Update

Administrator Grafstrom and School Superintendent Brett Benson met on January 12, 2026, to discuss updates. Superintendent Benson reported that they finished just under budget on the referendum project and are now exploring options for the remaining funds. He expressed concerns about potential budget deficits in the future and the challenges of retaining substitute teachers, especially with the new paid leave program that may result in more teachers being absent.

Administrator Grafstrom spoke on the topic of the Board of Equalization, pointed out that, as of

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January 20, 2026, everyone on the City Council has completed and updated their training, except for Jenny Bierma. The meeting is scheduled for April 28, 2026, at 9:00 AM in Lake Crystal at City Hall. The city needs a quorum to ensure it does not lose it again.

Administrator Grafstrom noted that the auditors will arrive on site on 01/13/2026 at 8:30 am to start gathering information. We are also sending information through shared files.

Consent Agenda *(The following agenda items are considered to be non-controversial and routine innature. 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 January 5, 2026, Regular Meeting of the City Council
2. Payment of bills totaling \$407,856.56
 - reviewed by Councilor Windsperger and Councilor Bierma prior to the meeting.
3. Approval to Submit Pay Equity Report to the State of MN on or before 1/31/26
4. Resolution 2607 to Submit, Adopt, & Implement Minnesota River-Mankato Watershed Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan (Updated for missing language required by BWSR)
5. Resolution 2608 City Docks (Recommended approval from Park-Rec Commission)

Motion made by Councilor Bierma to approve consent items 1 through 5, motion seconded by Councilor Windsperger and carried unanimously.

Action Items

Approve City Serving as Fiscal Sponsor for Prairie Lake Regional Arts Council Grant

EDA Director Schuetz wrote an Arts Council Grant and would like the city to serve as the fiscal sponsor.

Motion made by Councilor Windsperger to approve serving as the fiscal sponsor for the Prairie Lake Regional Arts Council Grant; motion seconded by Councilor Hanson and carried unanimously.

Approve Hiring Planning and Zoning Services

Council has reviewed quotes from Bolton-Menk, Saferbuilt, and South Central Service Cooperative (SCSC) to provide planning and zoning services to the city. As the city is growing, these requests are becoming more frequent. As they are often time sensitive, the city has a need to contract these services. SCSC has the best pricing.

Motion made by Councilor Hanson to approve the use of South Central for Lake Crystal Planning and Zoning, motion seconded by Councilor Cooper and carried unanimously.

IBEW Letter: Street Department Anniversary Date

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The motion will adjust the service anniversary months for three of the members of the Street Department, Blaine Jaques, Donny Hutchens and Tony Parsons. The new dates will be as follows Blaine Jacques 06/01/2015, Donny Hutchens 06/01/2016, and Tony Parsons 06/01/2017, allowing them to progress through the wage schedule, subsequent vacation accruals, and severance. This only affects these three employees beginning in 2026 and continuing forward. Administrator Grafstrom and Kurt Zimmerman from IBEW Local Union 160 have agreed to this.

Motion made by Councilor Bierma to approve the Street Department Anniversary Dates motion seconded by Councilor Cooper, and carried unanimously.

Ordinance 2026-01 Repeal Chapter 31 Establishment of Cemetery Committee 2nd Read

The City Council repealed the Cemetery Board through this Ordinance.

The Council did the first reading of Ordinance 2026-01 to Repeal Chapter 31 Establishment of Cemetery Committee on 01/05/2026. The second reading was voted on and passed on 01/20/2026.

Motion made by Councilor Cooper to approve Ordinance 2026-01 Repeal Chapter 31 Establishment of Cemetery Committee, motion seconded by Councilor Hanson and carried unanimously.

Ordinance 2026-02 Ordinance 2026-02 to Amendment of Chapter 31 Establishment of P & Z Commission 2nd Read

Ordinance 2026-02 reduces the required number of board members from seven to five.

The council did the first reading of Ordinance 2026-02 to Amend Chapter 31 Establishment of P & Z Commission on 01/05/2026. The second reading was voted on and passed on 01/20/2026.

Motion made by Councilor Windsperger to approve Ordinance 2026-02, motion seconded by Councilor Bierma and carried unanimously.

Approve Purchase of New Roller

The Council looked to acquire a smaller roller because the current one is too large to effectively reach many areas. Superintendent Tibbetts highlighted this issue in his report. The City Council allocated \$10,000 from the Capital budget for the purchase, and Superintendent Tibbetts mentioned that the remaining funds could come from his 2026 maintenance and repair budget.

Motion made by Councilor Cooper to Approve Purchase of New Roller, motion seconded by Councilor Hanson and carried unanimously.

Chamber of Commerce

The Chamber of Commerce discussed with the Council any potential items that could be handled by city staff. Grafstrom noted there are legal concerns, and she will contact the City Attorney.

Action was tabled for now.

Information/Discussion Items

Sidewalk maintenance during the weekend City Hall rentals were discussed. Grafstrom will address the issue.

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Upcoming meetings and events:

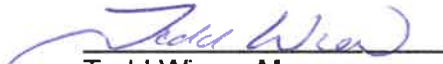
- Monday, February 02, 2026, 7:30 PM Regular Council Meeting
- Tuesday, February 10, 2026, 4:30 PM EDA Meeting
- Tuesday, April 28, 2026, 9:00 AM Board of Appeal and Equalization

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 January 20, 2025, motion seconded by Councilor Bierma and carried unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 8:45 P.M.

Minutes prepared by: Tonia Turner



Todd Wiens, Mayor



Angela Grafstrom, City Administrator