

MINUTES
Lake Crystal City Council
Monday, January 5, 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, and Michael Windsperger.

Staff members present: City Administrator Angela Grafstrom; Administrative Assistant Tonia Turner; Police Chief Robert Prescher; Police Officer Colter Killion; and Fire Chief David Paul

Staff Reports

Fire Department: For 2025, Fire Chief Paul reported that the fire department responded to just over 100 calls for service. Paul also reported that several retirements and resignations have occurred or are pending, and the department is in the process of hiring and re-crewing positions as needed. The department also reviewed options for replacing the GMC 1-ton truck.

Police Department Update: Chief of Police Prescher reported on his excitement to be with the city. He addressed that he and newly hired full-time Officer Bottelson will be completing training over the next couple of months. Temporary shift coverage through the Sheriff's Office will continue during the training period.

Street & Maintenance: No report

Parks Department Update: No report

City Administrator Update

Written report provided in the packet.

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 December 15, 2025, Regular Meeting of the City Council
2. Payment of bills totaling \$298,365.43
 - reviewed by Councilor Cooper and Councilor Hanson prior to the meeting
3. Resolution 2601 Adopting BE County Hazard Mitigation Plan
4. Resolution 2602 Adopting Minnesota River-Mankato Watershed Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan
5. Resolution 2603 Accepting/supporting OEMS Grant for \$10,168.33
6. Resolution 2604 Accepting/supporting 2 Heartland Grants totaling \$10,000
7. Resolution 2605 Accepting Donations from Fire Relief for \$100,000
8. Approve Commission Appointees:
 - Planning and Zoning: Dave Richards, Aaron Mumford, and Dan Jones
 - PUC: Dave Richards
 - Parks and Recreation Committee: Sarah Busch

Motion made by Councilor Hanson to approve consent items 1 through 8, motion seconded by Councilor Cooper, and carried unanimously.

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Action Items

Mayoral Celebrate Arbor Day Proclamation 2026

Mayor Todd Wiens proclaimed April 24, 2026, as Arbor Day in the City of Lake Crystal, recognizing the environmental, economic, and community benefits of trees and encouraging residents to celebrate Arbor Day and support tree planting and preservation efforts.

Motion made by Councilor Windsperger to approve Mayoral Celebrate Arbor Day Proclamation 2026, motion seconded by Councilor Cooper, and carried unanimously.

Approve 2026 IRS Mileage Reimbursement Rate of .725 cents

The Internal Revenue Service announced an update to the optional standard mileage rates effective January 1, 2026. The mileage rate for business use of vehicles increased to .725 cents per mile, while the mileage rate for medical use decreased slightly, reflecting updated cost data and inflation adjustments.

Motion made by Councilor Cooper to approve 2026 IRS Mileage Reimbursement Rate of .725 Cents, motion seconded by Councilor Hanson, and carried unanimously.

Ordinance 2026-01 Repeal Chapter Establishment of Cemetery Committee (1st Reading)

The council did the first reading of Ordinance 2026-01, Repeal Chapter Establishment of Cemetery Committee of the Lake Crystal City Code.

Motion made by Councilor Cooper to approve Ordinance 2026-01 Repeal Chapter Establishment of Cemetery Committee

Ordinance 2026-02 Amendment of Chapter 31 Establishment of Planning and Zoning Commission (1st Reading)

The council did the first reading of Ordinance 2026-02, Amendment of Chapter 31, Establishment of Planning and Zoning Commission

Motion made by Councilor Windsperger to approve Ordinance 2026-02 Amendment of Chapter 31 Establishment of Planning and Zoning Commission

Approve 2026 Council Assignments, City Appointments, and Designations

Department and Board Assignments

Administration - Todd Wiens
Public Buildings - Gina Cooper
Police Department- Todd Wiens
Fire Department- Todd Wiens
Ambulance Service -Gina Cooper
Civil Defense/Emergency Management: Michael Windsperger
Street Department – Brett Hanson
Storm Sewers - Brett Hanson

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Weed Control - Todd Wiens, (Must be mayor by statute)
Parks & Recreation - Todd Wiens, Jennifer Bierma
Cemetery – Gina Cooper
Economic Development- Todd Wiens, Michael Windsperger Library - Gina Cooper
Utility Departments-Todd Wiens
Planning and Zoning: Todd Wiens, Michael Windsperger
One Watershed MN River-Mankato Policy Board: Gina Cooper, Alternate: Brett Hanson

Appointments and Designations

Mayor Pro tem - Gina Cooper
Fire Chief - David Paul
Emergency Management/Civil Defense - Sgt. Matt Gangelhoff
Purchasing Agent -City Administrator
Process Officer- Police Chief
City Assessor - Blue Earth County
City Attorney - Chris Kennedy, Kennedy & Kennedy Law Office
City Engineer - Brian Sarf, Bolton & Menk, Inc.
City Auditor -Greg Burkhardt, Carlson SV LLP
City Newspaper-Lake Crystal Tribune
City Depository: MinnStar Bank
Hearing Officers/Tobacco Ordinance-Council Members Cooper, Brett Hanson
Board of Review Officer - Todd Wiens
- Alternate Board of Review Officer - Michael Windsperger
Not appointed but trained: Brett Hanson (expires 7/2025)
Designated approvals without prior council approval:
- Department Head allowed to approve expenditures up to \$1000.00
- City Administrator allowed to approve expenditures up to \$5000.00
- Travel Approvals-City Administrator allowed to approve up to \$1000.00

Motion made by Councilor Hanson to approve 2026 Council Assignments, City Appointments, and Designations, motion seconded by Councilor Windsperger and carried unanimously.

Travel Request Fire Department \$2,322 for Leadership Academy

Joe Kuduk and Tyler Eckert of the Fire Department requested approval to attend the Leadership Academy in Duluth, Minnesota, scheduled for March 20–22, 2026.

Motion made by Councilor Cooper to approve Travel Request for Joe Kuduk and Tyler Eckert of \$2,322 for Leadership Academy, motion seconded by Councilor Hanson, and carried unanimously.

Community Award for Gary Reed

Fire Chief Paul nominated Gary Reed for the Community Contribution Award. Chief Paul noted that Mr. Reed has been a tremendous resource, mentor, and leader not only within the local fire department but also at the regional and state levels.

Motion made by Councilor Windsperger to approve Community Award for Gary Reed,

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motion seconded by Councilor Cooper, and carried unanimously.

Resignations for The Fire Department

The Council reviews the resignations of Rob Grover, effective December 18, 2025; Dave Carlson, effective January 15, 2026; Jason Farrell, effective January 18, 2026; and Gary Reed, effective February 1, 2026.

Motion made by Councilor Hanson to approve Resignations of Rob Grover, Dave Carlson, Jason Farrell, and Gary Reed, motion seconded by Councilor Windsperger, and carried unanimously.

Information/Discussion Items

The Council reviewed a proposed future planning work session, tentatively scheduled for January 13, 2026, at 5:30 p.m.

Council reviewed a letter submitted by Attorney Kennedy discussing the Historical Society's interest in preserving the scout cabin. He noted that the project costs are currently estimated only, with no formal plans prepared, and that the cabin may be relocated. He advised that any project would need to meet ADA and city building requirements by 2027, and that the city could be responsible for future compliance costs if these are not addressed in advance. Attorney Kennedy also emphasized the importance of securing full project funding before construction to avoid potential City liability. Insurance coverage for volunteers was also briefly reviewed.

Upcoming meetings and events:

- Tuesday, January 20, 2026, 7:30 PM Regular Council Meeting due to MLK Holiday

Council Comments and Observations

Councilor Cooper requested department heads submit report items to City Administrator Grafstrom for inclusion in her council packet reports, such as grant activity or day-to-day operations. Administrator Grafstrom informed Councilor Cooper she had previously provided the departments with a draft report so they can submit their own reports and the only ones that use them are the Utility Superintendents. Grafstrom will notify the departments they need to start submitting a written report going forward.

Councilor Cooper also commented on recently approved invoices and the removal of twelve trees at the ball field, noting that it was a planned activity and inquiring whether the trees would be replaced. Mayor Wiens informed Councilor Cooper that the replacement process has already begun.

Mayor Wiens noted an observation regarding incorrect "dates to remember" for City garbage and recycling pickup listed in the Crystal-Clear News. He reported that the issue has been corrected and addressed going forward.

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Adjournment:

There being no further business of the Lake Crystal City Council, Councilor Hanson motioned to adjourn the regular meeting of January 5, 2026, motion seconded by Councilor Windsperger and carried unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 7:50 P.M.

Minutes prepared by: Kenzie Doering



Todd Wiens, Mayor

Angela Grafstrom, City Administrator

