

MINUTES
Lake Crystal City Council
Monday, November 3, 2025, 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; Administrative Assistant, Kenzie Doering; Finance Director, Megan Kurkowski; Lake Crystal Ambulance Service, Rhonda Ingebritson; and David Paul, Fire Chief

Others present: Robert Bunde, Nikki Bunde, Mary Wiese, Annette Zellmer, Ainsley Bierma, Ryan Yunkers; Lake Crystal Area Rec Center, and Jessica Green; Northland Securities

Discussion on Feral Cat Population and For Pets Non-Profit:

Mary Wiese informed the Council that she operates a non-profit organization called *For Pets*, based in Mankato, MN. Through this organization, she travels to five different clinics each month to assist with spaying, neutering, and vaccinating animals. Wiese also helps with trap-neuter-release (TNR) programs, which have proven to be effective in managing stray cat populations. She noted that she has recently received three to four calls regarding cat population issues within Lake Crystal. Wiese, who has been part of *For Pets* since 2012, stated that the program has greatly helped reduce cat population concerns in other communities. Lake Crystal resident Nikki Bunda added that she has been volunteering to capture stray cats and kittens and transport them to shelters, having captured about 20 so far. Wiese further explained that she has partnered with other cities, such as Eagle Lake. It is \$40 per cat to cover the cost of spaying, neutering, and vaccinating. Once treated, cats are either adopted out or released back if they are feral, with an ear tip to indicate they have been altered. Wiese typically submits invoices twice a year, providing details of locations and the number of cats trapped. Resident Robert Bunde also spoke, emphasizing the importance of controlling the cat population through spay and neuter efforts.

Substation Bonding Discussion:

Green provided an update on the substation project and discussed bonding options for financing with the Council. She reviewed both 20-year and 30-year bonding options and outlined the current issues with the existing substation. Green indicated that the Public Utilities Commission is planning to move forward with the 30-year bonding option.

Staff Reports

Ambulance Service Update: Ingebritson addressed the Council that the Ambulance Department is currently short-staffed but is working with Madelia Health to develop solutions to address the issue. She noted that onboarding has begun for herself and two additional staff members to ensure a smooth transition and cross-training going into next year. Transitional meetings have been going as smoothly as possible. Additionally, letters have been sent to townships seeking approval to move toward Advanced Life Support (ALS) service, which is expected to be about a six-month process to obtain licensing and certification.

Fire Department: Paul updated the Council that all ladder testing was completed last month, and all equipment passed inspection. He noted that the Rural Association meeting is scheduled for December 2nd and encouraged Council members to attend and bring discussion topics. Additionally, Ryan Marti from Madelia Health reached out to Paul and Ingebritson to meet with the fire staff to get acquainted and explore collaboration opportunities.

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Police Department Update: City Administrator Grafstrom informed the Council that the new Police Chief, full-time officer, and part-time officer are all in the background process. The smooth hiring process is expected to bring the department to full strength by the new year. The department underwent a POST Board audit on October 22 and was found to be in full compliance, receiving a Certificate of Compliance. A total of 130 calls were reported for October.

Street & Maintenance: No report.

Parks Department Update: No report.

City Administrator Update
Written report provided in the packet.

Rec Center Update: Yunker thanked the Council and City Administrator for their support in making the new children's indoor playground a success. The playground has attracted visitors from Mankato, St. James, New Ulm, Shakopee, and surrounding areas. In the first two weeks, 167 non-member visitors used the facility. Recent events included the Halloween Trunk-or-Treat, which drew 1,052 attendees.

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 Month October 20, 2025, Regular Meeting of the City Council
2. Payment of bills totaling \$233,894.97
 - reviewed by Councilor Hanson and Councilor Cooper prior to the meeting
3. Resolution 2532 Accepting Donations from Sandra Jarels and James Mack of \$25.00 each for the Fire Department

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

Action Items

Approve Maintenance IBEW Contract

The City of Lake Crystal and IBEW Local 160 have negotiated labor agreements for the Maintenance Units, covering the period from January 1, 2026, through December 31, 2028. These agreements formalize the terms of employment for the units and will remain in effect through the end of 2028.

Motion made by Councilor Bierma to approve IBEW Maintenance contract for 2026-2028, motion seconded by Councilor Windsperger and carried unanimously.

Approve Utilities IBEW Contract

The City of Lake Crystal and IBEW Local 160 have negotiated labor agreements for the Utilities Units, covering the period from January 1, 2026, through December 31, 2028. These agreements formalize the terms of employment for the units and will remain in effect through the

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end of 2028.

Motion made by Councilor Hanson to approve IBEW Utility contract for 2026-2028, motion seconded by Councilor Cooper and carried unanimously.

Approve Glass Replacement

The Council was presented with two proposals: Saint Peter Glass for \$18,780 and South-Central Glass for \$21,500 to replace front window glass at City Hall.

Motion made by Councilor Bierma to approve the city covering the majority of the cost, with the PUC paying the remainder, up to \$5,000, for the St. Peter Glass replacement estimate of \$18,780 for the front windows, motion seconded by Councilor Windsperger and carried unanimously.

Bolton-Menk EMS Renovation Proposal

The Council reviewed a proposal from Bolton & Menk for professional services to develop a renovation concept for the existing Fire/EMS office and administrative area, aiming to provide additional office space. The proposed scope included reviewing existing building conditions, developing preliminary and final concept floor plans with dedicated office space for each department, and providing an estimate of probable cost for the renovation. Bolton & Menk estimated the concept plans to be completed within 4–6 weeks following approval, for a fixed fee of \$10,000. The proposal did not include the preparation of construction documents.

Motion made by Councilor Windsperger to approve Bolton-Menk EMS Renovation Proposal and a fee of \$10,000, motion seconded by Councilor Bierma and carried unanimously.

Approve Updated Data Practices Policy and Forms

The Council reviewed and approved the updated City of Lake Crystal Data Practices Policy and Procedures. The policy establishes the City's compliance with the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act (Minn. Stat. Ch. 13) and provides guidance for the proper management, classification, and release of government data. It outlines procedures for responding to public and data subject requests, protecting nonpublic and confidential data, and ensuring staff compliance with data handling requirements. The document also includes sample request forms and internal procedures to assist staff in implementing the policy consistently.

Motion made by Councilor Hanson to approve Updated Data Practices Policy and Forms, motion seconded by Councilor Cooper and carried unanimously.

Approve a Part-time Police Officer

The Council discussed Bob Roelofs as a Part-time Police Officer at \$30.30 per hour, with a start date of November 17, 2025.

Motion made by Councilor Cooper to approve Bob Roelofs as a Part-time Police Officer at \$30.30/hour with a start date of 11/17/25, motion seconded by Councilor Windsperger and carried unanimously.

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Information/Discussion Items

The Council was informed that the city's main substation, which powers the entire city, is failing and is unlikely to remain operational for another year. Oil testing revealed overheating and a breakdown of the transformer's paper insulation. Backup generators initially failed to start, but repairs are being arranged. Staff are evaluating temporary solutions, including a new transformer or a portable substation, to maintain power until the new substation can be completed. The new substation, originally scheduled for June 2027, is being accelerated by approximately six months, with an anticipated completion date of December 2026 to January 2027. Costs for temporary equipment and repairs will be incorporated into the bonding for the new substation, and staff aim to have a reliable power supply in place before the winter and holiday season. A more definitive plan will be presented once options are finalized.

Upcoming meetings and events:

- Monday, November 17, 2025, 7:30 PM Regular Council Meeting

Council Comments and Observations

Mayor Wiens reported that he and ED& Director Schuetz attended the REDA meeting in October, which had a good turnout. He noted that he is working to arrange for a representative from REDA to meet with the Council to provide an update and discuss upcoming initiatives for the city.

Councilor Windsperger commented that Highway 60 is now open and noted that the walking trail along the lake is very nice. Windsperger also addressed concerns regarding the Streets Department driving on the new walking path.

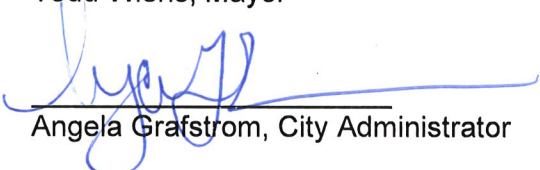
Adjournment:

There being no further business of the Lake Crystal City Council, Councilor Hanson motioned to adjourn the regular meeting of November 3, 2025, motion seconded by Councilor Windsperger and carried unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 8:32 P.M.

Minutes prepared by: Kenzie Doering



Todd Wiens, Mayor



Angela Grafstrom, City Administrator