

**MINUTES**  
**LAKE CRYSTAL CITY COUNCIL**  
**REGULAR MEETING**  
**MONDAY, DECEMBER 5, 2022, at 7:30 p.m.**  
**CITY HALL COMMUNITY ROOM**  
**100 E. ROBINSON STREET**

Mayor Todd Wiens called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. Members present: Councilors Brett Hanson, Gina Cooper, Michael Turgeon, and Susan Gengler.

Staff members present: Angela Grafstrom, City Administrator; Megan Hutchens, Administrative Assistant; Christopher Kennedy, City Attorney; Joe Flavin, Blue Earth County Police Department; Jeff Becker, Lake Crystal Fire Department; Rhonda Ingebritson, Lake Crystal Ambulance

Others present: Aaron Dailey, John Turgeon, Gordy Kuznia, Cheryl Browning, Gary Reed, Ted Goettl, Larry Brandenburg, Jerris Barents, Grace Kranz; Lake Crystal Tribune

Mayor Wiens closed the regular meeting of the City Council and opened the Public Hearing for Truth in Taxation.

**Truth In Taxation Public Hearing**

The city prepared its final 2023 Tax Levy and General Fund Budget. \$2,736,876.00 for the total General Fund Revenues, \$2,736,876.00 for the total General Fund Expenditures, and \$1,405,664.00 for the total General Tax and Debt Levy.

Three citizens voiced questions and concerns regarding tax rates and how money can be spent for the city. City Administrator Angela Grafstrom was able to help clarify the tax rates and capacity, various reasons for the increase in budget, and how funds and bond funds can be spent.

The city's tax capacity, which is set by the county, increased to 23.75% due to a change to home values and additional new properties. The tax capacity is used to figure the city's tax rate. Last year's tax rate was 63.33% and this year's proposed tax rate is 61.19%; a 2.14% decrease.

Here is a written statement from City Administrator Angela Grafstrom that was read to the public during the hearing: "If you go with the reduction council is discussing and only tax 61.19%, the \$250,000 proposed taxes would be approximately \$1529.75, a reduction of approximately \$54.00 for the year from their 2022 bill, or a reduction of 2.14% Now at that rate, if the same house's property value increased by the \$100,000 the new tax bill would be approximately \$2141.65, an increase of \$558.40 over last year. Again, the assessed value is set by the county and based on the current housing market."

Mayor Wiens proposed a motion to close the public hearing.

***Motion made by Councilor Hanson to close the Truth in Taxation Public Hearing***, motion seconded by Councilor Gengler and carried unanimously. Public Hearing adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

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**Staff Reports**

Ambulance Department Update:

Ingebritson reported they made 550 for the year and have 2 potential new EMT's for the beginning of 2023.

Fire Department Update:

No report.

Police Department Update:

First snow emergency of the season was declared on November 29. Roughly 144 CodeRED text messages and 288 CodeRED voice messages were sent out. The officer on duty issued and documented 37 informational fliers on vehicles parked in the streets. The documentation will guide officers on next course of action if repeat vehicles are parked on the streets for the next snow emergency. The department was hopeful on hiring a part-time officer this month, but the current prospect has a full-time offer from the City of Mankato and the City of North Mankato.

Street & Parks Department Update:

No report.

City Administrator Update:

Written report included 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 November 16 Special Meeting, November 16 Work Session, November 21, 2022 Regular Meeting
2. Payment of bills totaling \$118,905.20
  - Payments reviewed by Councilor Gengler and Councilor Turgeon prior to the meeting.
3. Approve 2023 Fire Department Officers
4. Approve Lake Crystal Cemetery Deed for Richard and LaVonne Roll of \$1250.00 to Blue Earth County and State of MN for Burial Lot No. 927, Section C, Space 3 and 4
5. Resolution 2238 Transferring Funds of \$40,000.00 from General Fund to Capital Assets Fund for payment in 2023 of Lake Crystal Ambulance's Ferno Cot
6. Resolution 2240 Preapproving the Accepting Donations of \$35,000.00 from Larry Brandenburg to the Lake Crystal Fire Department for the title transfer, registration fees, and purchase of a 2015 Ram Crew Cab 4 x 4 pickup
7. Approve Cigarette Licenses for 2023:
  - Collis C Store and Bakery
  - Staples/Kev's Market
  - Staples/On the Rocks
  - Lakes Sports Bar and Grill

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***Motion made by Councilor Turgeon to approve items 1 through 7 on the consent agenda, motion seconded by Councilor Gengler and carried unanimously.***

**Action Items**

*Ted Goettl Regarding Sharing Costs of Fountains*

Ted Goettl requested the city help share the electric costs of running the fountains in the bay area for Crystal Lake for 2023 going forward. The electric costs for 2022 averaged \$4,000. Goettl voiced his concern that it is difficult to get help for the electric payments from other community members. The maintenance costs are minimal due to better conditions of the lake and help with donations. Grafstrom

suggested looking into the Parks and Rec budget to help share the cost. Grafstrom and the Council will consider the budget for 2023 and potentially share 30-50% of the electric costs. Council tabled further discussion until the December 19, 2022 meeting.

***No motion was made at this time.***

*Resolution 2239 Certifying 2023 Final Budget and Tax Levy*

Resolution 2239 Certifying 2023 Final Budget and Tax Levy was discussed during the Truth in Taxation Public Hearing prior to the City Council meeting. There was no further discussion from council.

***Motion made by Councilor Gengler to approve Resolution 2239 Certifying the 2023 Final Budget and Tax Levy, motion seconded by Councilor Hanson and carried unanimously.***

*2023 Fee Schedule*

Fire Department Chief Jeff Becker requested the change to the amount charged for non-emergency/false alarm/accidental calls after the first call. He proposed no charge for first call and \$150.00 for any additional calls within 12 months. The current fee schedule is written as first call free, \$150.00 for 2<sup>nd</sup> call in 12 months, and \$300.00 for 3<sup>rd</sup> call in 12 months.

***Motion made by Councilor Cooper to approve the 2023 Fee Schedule with the change to charge \$150.00 for additional false alarm & accidental calls after the first call in a 12-month period for the Fire Department, motion seconded by Councilor Hanson and carried unanimously.***

*Retirement of Tim Smith*

Tim Smith submitted his retirement from the Lake Crystal Fire Department on October 18, 2022

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to be effective January 12, 2023. Smith served as a firefighter for the community for 20 years and 9 years as the department's engineer. His retirement banquet will be held in February of 2023.

***Motion made by Councilor Cooper to approve the retirement of Tim Smith from the Lake Crystal Fire Department effective January 12, 2023, motion seconded by Councilor Turgeon and carried unanimously.***

*Conflict of Interest Policy*

City Attorney Chris Kennedy mentioned that this policy is to help provide additional protection during audits.

***Motion made by Councilor Turgeon to approve the Conflict-of-Interest Policy, motion seconded by Councilor Gengler and carried unanimously.***

*Variance Request for Pool*

A public hearing for the variance request was held during the Planning and Zoning Meeting. Richard and Dawn Kottke are requesting a variance to have a 5-foot setback from the rear property line and 5-foot

variance from the side property line due to the smaller size of the lot. Current code requires inground pools to have a minimum of 10-foot spacing between the pool and any surrounding structure. Mayor Wiens stated the Planning and Zoning Commission recommended that council approve the variance request.

***Motion made by Councilor Gengler to approve the variance request for reducing the setbacks on the side and rear yard to 5 feet for the installation of a semi-inground pool, motion seconded by Councilor Hanson and carried unanimously.***

**Information/Discussion Items**

*Ambulance Pay Schedule*

City Administrator Angela Grafstrom held a meeting with Ambulance Director Rhonda Ingebritson regarding a Pilot Program to simplify payroll and to focus pay incentives for on-call runs and shifts. Grafstrom has included a written report regarding different pay structures for ambulance staff. Rhonda requested council to consider paying ambulance staff more for any administrative work. Mayor Todd Wiens suggested another work session to continue discussing the ambulance pay and a structure that will work to pay staff monthly. Further discussion was tabled until the council holds another work session.

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Proposed Smoke Shop 221 Main St.

City Administrator Angela Grafstrom has forwarded all appropriate licensing for the proposed smoke shop. City Attorney Chris Kennedy suggested to wait until February for legislation to make any further decisions on the sale of CBD, vape items, and other tobacco products. There was no further discussion from council.

Angela Grafstrom 6-month Review

Mayor Todd Wiens and Councilor Mike Turgeon held Grafstrom's 6-month review on November 30, 2022. There were no concerns and goals were set for 2023.

Larry Brandenburg Recognition

Recognition and thanks were given to Larry Brandenburg for his planned donation of \$35,000.00 to the Lake Crystal Fire Department.

Upcoming meetings and events:

- Regular meeting of City Council Monday, December 19, 2022, 7:30 p.m.

Councilor Turgeon entertained a motion to change the time of the December 19<sup>th</sup> meeting from 7:30 pm to 5:30 pm due to personal time conflicts.

**Motion made by Councilor Turgeon to approve the time change of the December 19<sup>th</sup> council meeting to 5:30 pm**, motion seconded by Councilor Gengler and carried unanimously.

Adjournment:

**There being no further business of the Lake Crystal City Council, Councilor Hanson motioned to adjourn the regular meeting of December 5th, 2022**, motion seconded by Councilor Cooper and carried unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 8:37 p.m.

  
Todd Wiens, Mayor

  
Angela Grafstrom, City Administrator