MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING

OF THE FIFTY LAKES CITY COUNCIL

September 9th, 2025

The Regular Monthly Meeting of the Fifty Lakes City Council was held on Tuesday, September 9th, 2025, at City Hall at 6:00 pm. The following officers were present: Gary Staples, Mayor; Mark Bradley, Randy Zeigler, Juan Cabrera, Toni Buchite, Council Members; Ann Raph, City Clerk; Chester Borntreger, Maintenance Supervisor; Emily Brodhead, Municipal Liquor Manager; Jesse Anderson, Fire Chief.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Mayor Staples requested one (1) deletion to the September Agenda.

**MOTION MADE BY MR. ZEIGLER AND SECONDED BY MR. BRADLEY TO APPROVE THE AGENDA WITH THE REMOVAL OF THE TILE BID UNDER PARKS.** When polled: All members voted aye. Motion carried.

Open Forum: Diane Marsolek, resident of Fifty Lakes, asked for more information on building a new fire hall building. Mayor Staples stated that nothing has been decided, and the committee is still in the very beginning stages, developing ideas and potential plans for the future of the Fire Hall/ Community center building. Robin Denault, resident of Emily, had concerns with the service in the Fifty Lakes Bar and Bottle Shop. Ms. Denault stated that she feels she no longer gets waited on in a timely fashion. Sharon Nuffer, resident of Fifty Lakes, stated that she witnessed a friend having to wait fifteen (15) minutes to receive service. Mayor Staples apologized to the residents for the lack of service. Ms. Brodhead, Municipal Liquor Manager, was directed by Mayor Staples to address these concerns. Ms. Brodhead suggested meeting with Ms. Denault to discuss the concerns, and she would work with bar staff on solutions.

Consent Agenda: Mayor Staples requested consideration of the consent agenda. Council reviewed: Council Meeting Minutes from August 12th and August 18th Special Meeting; Treasurer’s Report: Payment of bills in the amount of $271,745.98 including Check No# 52319 to #52411; Fire & Rescue Minutes from August; Resolution 2025-07 Fire Relief Association Donations, Resolution 2025-08 LMC Grants, Resolution 2025-09 Tile Project Donations.

**MOTION MADE BY MR. BRADLEY AND SECONDED BY MS. BUCHITE TO APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA.** When polled: All members voted aye. Motion carried.

New Business/Critical Issues: Jordan Larson, Crow Wing County Highway Department, updated the council on the planned replacement of the Crooked Creek Bridge in 2028. Mayor Staples expressed his concerns for the width of the road and shoulders on County Road 136 and the need for the bridge to be wider to allow for pedestrians to walk or ride bikes along with widening the shoulders along County Road 136. Mr. Larson stated that at the time the project was being assessed and planned there was no room in the budget to expand the shoulders. Mr. Bradley stated that the ATV damage along the ditches is extensive and needs to be fixed. Mayor Staples read a letter from a concerned citizen regarding the speed limit change on County Road 1 at the intersection of County Road 3, being raised from 45 mph to 55 mph. Mr. Larson states that the County has very minimal say on speed limits. Speed studies are conducted and limits changed through MNDOT. Mr. Larson will follow up with more information via email to the city clerk.

The council heard a presentation from Cory Bory and Matt Heslin from PTMA Finance Solutions about a 4M (Minnesota Municipal Money Market) Fund. Mr. Bory gave a brief description of the program to the council regarding investing, money markets, CD investments and the roll PMA would be to act as administrator and investment advisors for the city on behalf of the League of Minnesota Cities (LMC). Ms. Raph suggested she speak with the City Auditor, Doug Host, to discuss how it would affect the end of year audit. The council requested more information and research on the topic at the October council meeting. No action taken.

The council discussed the solar project and reviewed the solar contract that was edited by the city attorney, Tom Pearson. Council wishes to review the contract with Mr. Pearson at the October council meeting. No action taken.

Ms. Raph requested council create a DNR grant fund in the cities accounting software as it is a requirement in the contract of the DNR grant for the park expansion project.

**MOTION MADE BY MR. BRADLEY AND SECONDED BY MS. BUCHITE TO APPROVE CREATING A DNR GRANT FUND**. When polled: All members voted aye. Motion carried. Ms. Raph informed the council of a few changes to the preliminary budget. Changes are as follows: Reduction in Roads & Bridges and an additional $5,000 in the general fund under grounds and maintenance. Ms. Raph stated that the total levy did not change and remains the same as 2025 budget.

**MOTION MADE BY MS. BUCHITE AND SECONDED BY MR. BRADLEY TO APPROVE RESOLUTION 2025-12 ADOPTING THE 2026 PRELIMINARY BUDGET AND CERTIFYING TAX LEVY TO CROW WING COUNTY AS AMENDED.** When polled: All members vote aye. Motion carried.

Planning and Zoning: Ms. Soderlund reported to the council via a memo: There was no Planning Commission meeting held in August. There have been forty-two (42) approved land use permits YTD.

Road Construction and Maintenance: The council reviewed quotes on sealcoat for the bar/city hall parking lot and Town Hall Road. The council decided to hold off on the sealcoat until spring of 2026. Ms. Buchite suggested evaluating the size of the parking spaces and increasing the width. No action taken.

**MOTION MADE BY MR. BRADLEY AND SECONDED BY MR. CABRERA TO APPROVE THE QUOTE FROM TREMOLO FOR 3 (THREE) ADDITIONAL CAMERAS FOR THE COMMUNITY CENTER AND FIRE HALL BUILDING TO INCLUDE INSTALL FEE AND LABOR AT A TOTAL COST OF $ 1,190.00.** When polled: All members voted aye. Motion carried.

Liquor Store: Liquor profit and loss report was reviewed with a gross profit of 53.8% with a net profit of $20,540.53 in the month of August. The bar’s net profit for the year to date is $46,103.34. Ms. Brodhead stated the food sales have increased and the addition of the cook position has been beneficial. Ms. Brodhead stated that the original bid for a new point of sale system that was presented last month did not include off sale and requested the additional purchase to help streamline the operation into one system and aims to have everything switched over by October 1st. Ms. Brodhead informed the council of a broken down freezer and that a new freezer may be needed due to the difficulty of finding parts to for replacement. Mayor Staples discussed with Ms. Brodhead the importance of bringing complete bids and fully researching anything that is purchased for the bar. Mr. Zeigler cautioned Ms. Brodhead on rushing the October 1st live date.

**MOTION MADE BY MR. BRADLEY AND SECONDED BY MAYOR STAPLES TO APPROVE PURCHASING A NEW POS SYSTEM “TOAST” FOR THE OFF-SALE BOTTLE SHOP AT THE UPFRONT COST OF $400.00 AND A MONTHLY PAYMENT OF $290.00.** When polled: All members voted aye. Motion carried.

**MOTION MADE BY MAYOR STAPLES AND SECONDED BY MR. BRADLEY TO APPROVE HIRING MCKAYLA DUCHARME AS A PART-TIME BARTENDER AT $12.50 PER HOUR.** When polled: All members voted aye. Motion carried.

**MOTION MADE BY MS. BUCHITE AND SECONDED BY MR. BRADLEY TO APPROVE RESOLUTION 2025-10 AGREEING TO SUBMIT AN APPLICATION TO SOURCEWELL IMPACT FUNDS $50,000.00 FOR KITCHEN/VENTILATION IMPROVEMENTS.** When polled: All members voted aye. Motion carried

Parks: **MOTION MADE BY MS. BUCHITE AND MR. BRADLEY TO APPROVE ADDING BELINDA YURICK AND GINA ANDERSON TO THE PARK COMMITTEE.** When polled: All members voted aye. Motion carried. Mayor Staples discussed with the council the progress of the installation of engraved tiles on the park pavilion walls for the Tile Project.

Fire & Rescue: Lori Crawford, Gambling Manager, gave the following gambling updates to the council: increased “E-Tabs” machine from four (4) to six (6), looking into digital sign for total contributions from the Fire Department to keep up to date, Ms. Crawford and bar staff communication have been great, three (3) staff members are trained and able to close out boxes, some issues with missing signatures from bar staff and gambling staff. Mr. Bradley inquired about lowering the rent for the fire department gambling space that is currently 20%. Ms. Crawford is gathering more information.

**MOTION MADE BY MAYOR STAPLES AND SECONDED BY MR. BRADLEY TO APPROVE RESOLUTION 2025-11 AGREEING TO SUBMIT AN APPLICATION TO SOURCEWELL PUBLIC SAFETY IMPACT FUNDS FOR $24,122.40 FOR WILDLAND GEAR.** When polled: All members voted aye. Motion carried**.** Jesse Anderson, Fire Chief, reported calls for the month of August: Zero (0) fire and 2 (two) medicals. Mr. Anderson has been working on decreasing the ISO rating number from seven (7) to six (6) which affects homeowners’ insurance. Mr. Anderson stated the fire department has received a $2,000 boost grant from Sourcewell for new EMS bags.

Feasibility Committee: **MOTION MADE BY MS. BUCHITE AND SECONDED BY MR. BRADLEY TO APPROVE ADDING LORI CRAWFORD AND ANN RAPH TO THE FEASIBILITY COMMITTEE.** When polled: All members voted aye. Motion carried.

Purchasing/ Personnel: Ms. Raph discussed with council the MN Paid Leave Act that will begin January 1st, 2026. Ms. Raph stated that she will be attending a free conference on September 24th for additional information. Ms. Raph asked the council to review the security camera policy concerning the possibility of downloading an app to view the cameras from a cell phone. Ms. Raph to research with other cities to update the policy and bring revision to next council meeting. The council reviewed a bid from Geo’s Painting to paint the entry and exterior doors of City Hall and back service entrance doors of the bar.

**MOTION MADE BY MR. BRADLEY AND SECONDED BY MR. CABRERA TO APPROVE THE BID FROM GEO’S PAINTING TO PAINT THE CITY HALL ENTRY AND EXTERIOR DOORS AND THE BACK SERVICE DOORS OF THE BAR FOR A TOTAL COST OF $2,965.00.** When polled: All members voted aye. Motion carried. Mayor Staples requested sending a letter of support to reestablish Ambulance services for the northern part of Crow Wing County with a headquarters in Crosslake.

**MOTION MADE BY MR. BRADLEY AND SECONDED BY MR. CABRERA TO APPROVE THE LETTER OF SUPPORT FOR CROSSLAKE AMBULANCE LOCATION THROUGH NORTH MEMORIAL AMBULANCE SERVICES.** When polled: All members voted aye. Motion carried. Mayor Staples requested to apply for the internship reimbursement program through Sourcewell for additional help in grounds and maintenance for summer 2026. Ms. Raph stated that the office staff would also consider an intern for additional help digitizing all property files.

**MOTION MADE BY MR. BRADLEY AND SECONDED BY MR. ZEIGLER TO APPROVE APPLYING FOR THE INTERNSHIP REIMBURSEMENT PROGRAM THROUGH SOURCEWELL.** When polled: All members voted aye. Motion carried.

**MOTION MADE BY MAYOR STAPLES AND SECONDED BY MS. BUCHITE TO APPROVE REISSUING CHECK #51360 TO CANDENCE PATENAUDE FOR $72.64 LESS $25.00 FEE**. When polled: All members voted aye. Motion carried.

**MOTION MADE BY MAYOR STAPLES AND SECONDED BY MR. CABRERA TO APPROVE REISSUING CHECK #51677 TO KEITH FITZPATRICK FOR $184.70 LESS THE $25.00 FEE.** When polled: All members voted aye. Motion carried.

Unfinished Business: The council reviewed a memo from Bryan Drown from Bolten and Menk regarding land surveying for a 5-acre parcel the city may purchase and architectural services for a proposed new fire hall building. No action taken. Ms. Raph reminded the council of Clean Up Day on September 20th from 9 am to Noon and that volunteers are needed.

Open Forum: Mr. Borntreger updated the council that all four (4) batteries for the weather siren on Kego Road are dead. Mr. Anderson stated that he has been in contact with Mr. Stancer and they are working on the issues. Mr. Borntreger will check the batteries on the siren on Country Road 136.

Adjourn: **MOTION MADE BY MAYOR STAPLES AND SECONDED BY MS. BUCHITE TO ADJOURN**. The meeting adjourned at 8:11pm.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Jessica Istvanovich, Deputy Clerk