

**CLEARWATER CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**  
**REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING**  
**FEBRUARY 10, 2025**

**1. Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance: 7:00 p.m. at City Hall**

- Mayor Lawrence called the Clearwater City Council to order Monday, February 10, 2025, at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Members present were Mayor Lawrence, Council Members Crandall and Everett. Members Senn and Schwinghammer were absent. Also present were members of the public, staff, and guests.

**2. Approval of Agenda**

- Staff requested the addition of three claims payments to the Consent Agenda; 1) Traut for \$1,325.00; 2) Sharetech for \$985.30; and 3) WCEDP for \$888.00.
- **MOTION** by Crandall to approve Agenda with three additions to Consent Agenda, seconded by Lawrence, all voted aye. **MOTION CARRIED 3-0.**

**3. Wright County Sheriff's Report**

**a. 2024 Annual Report – Lt. Erkens**

- Lt. Erkens gave an overview of the sheriff's annual report, noting that calls continue to trend upwards.
- Sheriff Deringer reported that the county will be discussing contracts in the near future, being mindful of the county's continued growth and each city's needs.
- Mayor Lawrence asked if there had been consideration given to increased ambulance services, given that the majority of both police and fire calls are medical. Sheriff Deringer stated that he views the medical calls as part of customer service. He noted that post-COVID, everyone is short of people and there is a lack of new recruits entering medical/ambulance professions.

**b. Monthly Calls Report**

- Deputy Marschel gave the Sheriff's monthly report. He stated there wasn't anything out of the ordinary to report.

**4. Public Forum**

- None.

**5. Consent Agenda**

- a. Claims/Accounts Payable in the Amount of \$ 139,920.79 + \$3,198.30 = \$143,119.09**
- b. Approval of Minutes from 01-13-2025 Regular City Council Meeting**
- c. Res 2025-06 – Temporary Gambling Permit – Clearwater Masonic Lodge**
- d. Res 2025-07 – Temporary Gambling Permit – Church of St. Luke**
- e. Res 2025-08 – Temporary Liquor License – Rejoice Lutheran Church**
- f. Res 2025-09 – Approving Hire for Fire Department**
- g. Res 2025-10 – Authorizing Fund Transfers and Amending 2024 Budget**
- **MOTION** by Crandall to approve Consent Agenda with claims additions, seconded by Everett, all voted aye. **MOTION CARRIED 3-0.**

**6. Old Business**

**a. Schedule Workshop to Discuss T.H. 24 Corridor Project**

- Members scheduled a workshop for February 24 at 6:00 p.m. to discuss the T.H. 24 Corridor Project.

**b. Schedule Goal-Setting Workshop**

- Members scheduled a goal-setting workshop for February 24 at 7:00 p.m.

**7. New Business**

**a. Consider Utility Upgrades – TH 24 Corridor Project**

- Engineer Kannas explained that there were utility upgrades that he would like the City Council to consider as part of the T.H. 24 Corridor Project.
  - He showed maps of utilities in the area of Ash Street and suggested looping this water line. He estimates the cost would be about \$100,000.
  - **MOTION** by Lawrence to add this project to the 2026 budget and have staff work with MnDOT to include this in the design of Phase 1 of the T.H. 24 Corridor Project, seconded by Crandall, all voted aye. **MOTION CARRIED 3-0.**
  - Kannas also stated that the water and sewer mains under Nelson Drive were built around 1978. He believes the city should consider upgrades here as well. The Public Works staff are televising the lines. He will have a report with a recommendation once the televising is completed.

**b. Consider Partial Release of Letter of Credit**

- Kannas explained that Central Minnesota Cold Storage has requested to have their letter of credit reduced. Kannas outlined his calculations, recommending a partial reduction based on the completion status of the project.
- **MOTION** by Crandall to reduce the letter of credit to \$200,550 in accordance with the city engineer’s recommendation, seconded by Everett, all voted aye. **MOTION CARRIED 3-0.**

**c. Consider Personnel Policy Change**

- Smythe explained the requested change to the Personnel Policy related to weekend rounds and compensatory time as outlined in the staff memo.
- **MOTION** by Crandall to approve the requested change to the Personnel Policy which modifies weekend rounds compensatory time to 6 hours per day, seconded by Lawrence, all voted aye. **MOTION CARRIED 3-0.**
- Smythe asked when the change would be effective.
- **AMENDMENT** by Crandall to make new policy effective January 1, 2025, seconded by Lawrence, all voted aye. **MOTION CARRIED 3-0.**

**d. Consider Purchase of Lift Station Pump**

- Smythe explained the quote for a pump purchase and that it is expected to have a 20-year useful life. This item was in the capital budget for 2024.
- **MOTION** by Lawrence to approve pump purchase per attached quote for \$31,384.00, seconded by Everett, all voted aye. **MOTION CARRIED 3-0.**

**e. S&P Ratings Change**

- Smythe explained the ratings downgrade and background from S&P Global. The key factor was the lack of \$2,000,000 in unrestricted cash reserves in the general fund, which is a new standard from S&P. There will be further discussion of how to address this at the goal-setting workshop.

**f. Consider Options Related to Telephone Project**

- Smythe explained the issues with the telephone upgrade project that was completed last year.
  - The new carrier, TBS, refuses to reimburse the city for early contract termination costs charged by Frontier Communications of around \$3,000. TBS states that they only agreed to cover the termination costs because Frontier told them there wouldn’t be any.
  - Frontier Communications opened a new account without authorization when the city’s old lines were ported to TBS. The city directed Frontier to close the new account and disputed the charges as soon as staff became aware of the new account. The city’s dispute was given to Frontier verbally on the phone each month and in writing. After months of demanding

the account be closed and the city issued a refund, Frontier sent the account to collections, even though they are aware the account is in dispute. The amount sent to collections is just under \$600.

- Smythe explained that she consulted the city attorney about our options. He stated that while he believes the city has reasonable grounds to make a case in both situations, the anticipated attorney's fees would exceed the costs of the matters in dispute.
- Smythe noted that staff have also considered filing a complaint with Better Business Bureau and with the state attorney general's office.
- **MOTION** by Lawrence to pay the disputed costs and file a complaint with Better Business Bureau, seconded by Everett, all voted aye. **MOTION CARRIED 3-0.**

## 8. Committee Reports

### a. Mayor and Council

- Mayor Lawrence stated that she again received compliments for staff about the conditions of the ice rink at El Dorado Park.
- Mayor Lawrence reminded Members about the invitation to attend a ribbon-cutting at Vortex (Central Minnesota Cold Storage project) on February 24.

### b. Boards

- Sewer Authority – Met in January, introduced new members, discussed personnel policy request from staff.
- Fire Relief Association Board – Had their annual meeting, continuing to discuss movement of pension plan to the state and impact to the board and remaining accounts.
- Park Commission – Did not meet due to lack of quorum.
- EDA – Met in January, discussed frontage road ideas. Purple Prairie Business Spotlight has been completed. Things are going well with the new city staff. The board also reviewed goals and plans for 2025.
- Planning Commission – Did not meet.
- Fire Commission – Not scheduled yet.

### c. Staff

- Kannas reported on the following:
  - Stated that there will be surveying crews in the area to begin the Spring Street project.
  - Stated that his team continues to meet with MnDot and Wright County for the T.H. 24 Corridor Project. Noted that the city has been awarded \$850,000 in TED grant funds for Phase 3 of the T.H. 24 Corridor Project. We are working with MnDOT and Wright County to try to get the remaining funds needed for Phase 3. Suggested also reaching out to state legislators.
- Smythe reported on the following:
  - Our waste hauler, Republic Services, has time in their schedule in April if the city would like to move the clean-up day to spring. Members considered the pros and cons of spring versus fall, along with the costs of hosting. After discussion, Members decided to stay with the fall dates.
  - Discussed software updates needed for tablets and the need to have them turned into the city. Members discussed the age of equipment and stated the city should begin replacing some of these. Members stated to let them know when the updates are scheduled, and they will turn them in. They need them back right away for upcoming training dates.

## 9. Other Business

- a. **Next Regular Meeting – March 10, 2025 at 7:00 p.m.**

- Next regular meeting date confirmed for March 10, 2025 at 7:00 p.m.
- Reminder of Workshop on February 24, 2025 at 6:00 p.m.

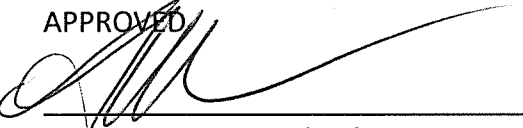
**10. Adjournment**

- **MOTION** to adjourn by Lawrence, seconded by Everett, all voted aye. **MOTION CARRIED 3-0.**
- Meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

ATTEST

  
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Annita M. Smythe, City Administrator

APPROVED

  
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Andrea Lawrence Wheeler, Mayor