

**CITY OF EAGLE LAKE  
CITY COUNCIL MEETING  
JANUARY 6, 2025**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Pro Tem Garrett Steinberg called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was said.

**OATH OF OFFICE**

- Administrator Bromeland administered the swearing in of elected officials, John Whittington as Mayor, Beth Rohrich and Anthony White as Council Members.

**ROLL CALL**

Council Members present: Garrett Steinberg, Beth Rohrich, Anthony White, and Mayor John Whittington.  
Staff Present: City Administrator Jennifer Bromeland, Deputy Clerk Kerry Rausch, Fire Chief Vern Simpson, and Public Works Director Andrew Hartman. Blue Earth County Sheriff's Office Liaison Lieutenant Mitch Gahler.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

- None.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

- **Council Member White moved, seconded by Council Member Steinberg, to approve the agenda. The motion carried with Council Members Steinberg, Rohrich, White, and Mayor Whittington voting in favor.**

**APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES**

- **Council Member White moved, seconded by Council Member Rohrich, to approve the December 2, 2024 City Council minutes as presented. The motion carried with Council Members Steinberg, Rohrich, White, and Mayor Whittington voting in favor.**

**CONSENT AGENDA**

Monthly Bills	Treasurer's Report
Public Works Report	Fire Report
Gambling Report	Building and Zoning Permit
BECSO Report	Res. 2025-01 Official Depositories
Res. 2025-02 Official Newspaper	Res. 2025-03 2025 Fee Schedule
Res. 2025-04 Designate Bank Signatories/Delegating Authorizing Electronic Fund Transfers	Res. 2025-05 Accept Donations for Active Adults
Res. 2025-06 Accept General Government Donation	Res. 2025-07 Accept Donation for Holiday Open House
Res. 2025-08 Employee 2025 Wages	Minutes from Boards and Commissions

- **Council Member White moved, seconded by Council Member Steinberg, to approve the consent agenda as presented. The motion was carried with Council Members Steinberg, Rohrich, White, and Mayor Whittington voting in favor.**

#### PUBLIC HEARING

1. Cannabis Ordinance No. 2025-01
  - **Council Member Rohrich moved, seconded by Council Member White, to open the public hearing. Motion carried with Council Members Steinberg, Rohrich, White, and Mayor Whittington voting in favor.**
  - With no comments being offered, the public hearing was closed.
  - **Following the public hearing Council Member Rohrich moved, seconded by Council Member White, to adopt Ordinance 2025-01 An Ordinance Creating Section 13.150 of the Eagle Lake City Code Creating Regulations Regarding Cannabis Businesses. A roll call vote was taken with Council Members Steinberg, Rohrich, White, and Mayor Whittington voting in favor.**

#### PRESENTATION

1. Sally Comfort with Computer Technology Solutions: Pricing for Needed Computers
  - Sally Comfort explained that Windows 11 will reach end of life support in October 2025 and therefore computer upgrades are needed. She reviewed the quote which includes two desktop computers, monitors, wireless mouse/keyboard, printer, and webcams for public works, one desktop and two laptops for the fire hall, and one desktop for the administrative clerk. The quote is in the amount of \$8,474 and includes full deployment/installation.
  - Ms. Comfort also explained that to reduce the upfront overall cost, the laptop assigned to the Community Development Coordinator position could be repurposed until that spot is filled resulting in one less device needed to be purchased at this time.
  - Administrator Bromeland stated that the 2025 budget was increased to cover this expense.
  - **Council Member White moved, seconded by Council Member Rohrich, to approve the purchase of equipment for Public Works, Fire Hall and the Administrative Clerk. Motion carried with Council Members Steinberg, Rohrich, White, and Mayor Whittington voting in favor.**

#### NEW BUSINESS

1. Pricing for Computer Replacement
  - See Presentation.
2. Cannabis Ordinance No. 2025-01
  - See Public Hearing.
3. Declare Vacancy of City Council and Discuss Next Steps for Filling Vacancy
  - Administrator Bromeland explained that Council Member John Whittington was elected Mayor during the 2024 general election. This means that upon his accepting the mayoral seat and taking the oath of office, a vacancy automatically occurred. The City Council should declared the vacancy and fill the open seat following the usual process.

- Administrator Bromeland also explained that according to information available from the League of Minnesota Cities, there is no statutory guidance regarding posting a vacancy or advertising for applicants. It is recommended that the council adopt a resolution declaring the vacancy. The city may determine how best to advertise the vacant. Common practice is to post the information in the same locations as the city posts other public notices. Many cities ask for applications or letters of interest for the council to consider. The city is not obligated to offer the vacancy to any losing candidates from the most recent election. The council may appoint any individual who is eligible for election to that office. If the council is tied on a vote to fill the vacancy, the mayor makes the appointment.
  - Two letters of interest have been received by the two candidates that ran for city council this past election: Garret Lieffring and Nick Lewis.
  - The City Council may wish to open it up to the public and review letters of interest prior to making an appointment. While the statute does not seem to prevent you from filling the opening at tonight's meeting, best practice may be to determine the process to fill it and then make an appointment at the February 3 meeting after giving members of the public an opportunity to submit letters of interest.
  - **Council Member Steinberg moved, seconded by Council Member White, to adopt Resolution 2025-09 A Resolution Accepting Resignation and Declaring a Vacancy. The motion carried with Council Members Steinberg, Rohrich, White, and Mayor Whittington voting in favor.**
  - Council consensus was that with the recent election they would like to appoint the candidate with the next highest number of vote.
  - **Council Member Rohrich moved, seconded by Council Member Steinberg, to appoint Nick Lewis to fill the vacancy on the City Council. The motion carried with Council Members Steinberg, Rohrich, White, and Mayor Whittington voting in favor.**
  - Mayor Whittington stated he would like to find a way to utilize Garrett Lieffring within the city government.
4. Out of State Travel Request for Congressional City Conference
- Administrator Bromeland explained that Mayor Whittington and herself are requesting authorization to attend the National League of Cities Congressional City Conference, March 8-12, 2025 in Washington, D.C. with the primary driver being to lobby for federal funding for the Water Treatment Plant Project and to learn important skills that can be carried over to lobbying efforts at the local level for issues important to Eagle Lake. This conference brings together more than 2,000 elected and appointed city leaders for focus on the federal policy issues that are important to local governments. There will be three days of intense policy and program workshops and then one day dedicated to advocating and meeting members of Congress.
  - The cost per person is \$3,330 which includes airfare, ground transportation, hotel, meals, and conference fees.
  - Council discussion included how beneficial this conference was for the City last year and how this benefits the city on the state level as well.
  - **Council Member Rohrich moved, seconded by Council Member White, authorizing Administrator Bromeland and Mayor Whittington to attend the Congressional City Conference in Washington, D.C. The motion carried with Council Members Steinberg, Rohrich, White, and Mayor Whittington voting in favor.**

5. Vending Machine Inquiry for Parks

- Administrator Bromeland explained that the topic of concessions or lack thereof at Lake Eagle Park has arisen in recent years due to increased activity at the park with ball games and gatherings. A council member recently inquired about the possibility of installing a vending machine at the park to help meet a demand without causing a conflict of interest or generating a profit. Anytime there is a contract involving an elected official and the city, a conflict of interest must be considered.
- Administrator Bromeland reviewed a letter received from the City's attorney on this matter. Mr. Kennedy stated in his letter that a public officer who has authority to take part in the making of any sale, lease or contract in their official capacity must not voluntarily have a personal financial interest in the sale, contract or lease or benefit from it personally or financially. The language of the statute would provide that the council member would not be able to take part in the discussion or the vote in any matter in which the council member may have a personal interest.
- Mr. Kennedy's response also stated the first issue before the City Council is whether or not it serves the City's (public's) interest in having vending machines in City parks or on other City property. The Council member would have the appearance of a conflict if not an actual conflict and it would be advisable if they did not participate in this process. If the Council determined that vending machines are appropriate on any city owned property, they need to then discuss next steps. This would include determining whether they want to accept bids to provide that service or if they want city staff to contact a number of providers to see what rent they would be willing to pay to the City for permission to place the vending machines on City property. The council members would be able to participate in this process, but they would not be able to vote.
- Discussion included the possibility of vandalism and looking to see if there are companies that could provide this type of service.
- Administrator Bromeland stated she would like to bring this to the Park Board so that they are aware of this discussion and then bring back to the City Council at either the February or March meeting.

6. Appraisal for Water Treatment Plant Land

- Administrator Bromeland explained that City staff requested proposals for appraisals for ag land that has been identified as possible locations for a new water treatment facility. Since the City is seeking federal funding, the appraiser selected must be familiar with the federal funding process. One of the appraisers contacted has responded that they are unable to submit a proposal due to not having experience completing an appraisal for a project that has federal funding. The other appraiser has not yet submitted a proposal.
- Discussion included the possibility of Council delegating authority to Administrator Bromeland and the land subcommittee to accept a proposal with a specific dollar limit.
- **Council Member Rohrich moved, seconded by Council Member White, to authorize the land subcommittee and Administrator Bromeland to contract with a qualified appraiser with a not-to-exceed limit of \$7,500 for the appraisal. The motion carried with Council Members Steinberg, Rohrich, White and Mayor Whittington voting in favor.**

## CITY ADMINISTATOR REPORT

1. Solid Waste Management Open House Notice from Blue Earth County
  - Blue Earth Council is holding an open house about a Solid Waste Management Plan on Tuesday, January 21 from 4-6 p.m. and virtual open house on January 23 at 2:00 p.m. Administrator Bromeland is planning to attend the virtual open house. Council Members were invited to attend if available.
2. Temporary Agreement for LP Tank at 129 North Agency Street
  - LP tanks are not allowed by City code with the two exceptions of business who do not have access to gas lines. Per the temporary agreement with the property owner of 129 N. Agency Street the temporary LP tank would need to be removed when spring comes, and the City will need to complete an inspection.
3. YTD Revenue and Expenditure Report for December 2024
  - The preliminary year end 2024 revenues exceed what was forecasted in 2024, while expenditures are below what was budgeted for 2024.
4. Audit for Year Ending 2024
  - The City's annual audit is schedule to take place the week of April 14-18.
5. Community Development Coordinator Position Update and Next Steps
  - Applications are still being taken but no applications meeting minimum requirements have been received. Staff continues to work with MN Valley Council of Governments to fill this position and Administrator Bromeland is looking into contracting options for this position.
6. Capital Budget Request for Water Treatment Improvements Project
  - City staff is in the process of updating the capital budget requests for the water treatment improvements project for the upcoming legislative session.
7. BECSO Services
  - The first year of contracted police service has been great and positive feedback from the community has been heard.
8. Elected Officials
  - Administrator Bromeland congratulated the newly elected officials.
9. Officer Matt Bergmann
  - Blue Earth County Deputy Matt Bergmann was welcomed as a Blue Earth County Deputy committed to serving Eagle Lake residents.

## COUNCIL REPORTS

1. Eagle Lake Pick Up Basketball
  - Council Member White reported that open gym for basketball begins this week, January 8<sup>th</sup> and will run through March 19<sup>th</sup>. Waivers will need to be completed by all participants.

2. Council Member Rohrich stated childcare innovation continues and that the group is doing everything they can to keep childcare in Eagle Lake.
3. Council Member Steinberg stated the Summer Sounds committee will start planning in early spring.
4. Mayor Whittington thanked Council Member Rohrich for much time spent on the Childcare Initiative and thanked Council Member Steinberg for serving as Mayor Pro Tem the past couple of months.

ADJOURNMENT

**Council Member White moved, seconded by Council Member Steinberg, to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried with Council Members Steinberg, Rohrich, White, and Mayor Whittington voting in favor.**

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John Whittington, Mayor

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Kerry Rausch, Deputy City Clerk