

**CITY OF EAGLE LAKE
CITY COUNCIL MEETING
FEBRUARY 2, 2026**

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Whittington called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was said.

ROLL CALL

Council Members present: Garrett Steinberg, Beth Rohrich, Anthony White, Nick Lewis, and Mayor John Whittington.

Staff Present: City Administrator Jennifer Bromeland, Deputy Clerk Kerry Rausch, and Public Works Director Andrew Hartman. Blue Earth County Sheriff's Office Liaison Lieutenant Mitch Gahler.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

- None.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

- **Council Member Rohrich moved, seconded by Council Member Lewis, to approve the January 5 and January 22, 2026 City Council minutes as presented. The motion carried with Council Members Steinberg, Rohrich, White, Lewis, 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. 2026-10 Transforming Tomorrow Together
	2040 Regional Plan
Duck Unlimited Gambling Request-Bingo/Raffle March 7 at American Legion	Board and Commission Minutes
Res. 26-12 Appoint Enevold to FD Reserves	

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

PRESENTATION

1. Jill Cusick, United Way Resources and Donor Development Director: Community Partner
 - Jill Cusick provided an overview of United Way programs and initiatives, partner agencies, campaign goals, and the impact United Way continues to have in Eagle Lake. In 2024, more than 1,000 Eagle Lake residents received support through United Way-funded programs, with over \$63,000 invested back into the community.
 - United Way is currently at 87% of its 2026 campaign goal, with \$307,452 remaining. Donations may be made by calling 507-345-4554, visiting mankatounitedway.org/donate, or via Venmo at @GreaterMankatoAreaUnitedWay. The Andreas Family Foundation is matching up to \$50,000 in new and increased gifts.
2. Tom Hunter, Eagle Lake Lutheran Church: Possible Donation for Changing Tables in Restrooms
 - Tom Hunter with Eagle Lake Lutheran Church, which holds Sunday services at City Hall, stated the Church would like to donate two changing tables for the restrooms at City Hall.
 - Public Works Director stated he has contracted JR Murilla Construction who provided an estimate of \$150 to install the changing tables.
 - Eagle Lake Lutheran Church has confirmed they would donate funds to supply the free-standing wall-mounted changing tables and cover the cost of hiring a contractor to complete the installation.
 - **Council Member White moved, seconded by Council Member Lewis, to adopt Resolution 2026-11 accepting the donation to the City. The motion carried with Council Members Steinberg, Rohrich, White, Lewis, and Mayor Whittington voting in favor.**

NEW BUSINESS

1. Congenital Heart Defect Awareness Week February 7-14, 2026 Mayoral Proclamation
 - Administrator Bromeland explained that the City has received a request from Amanda Rueter, Director of the nonprofit organization Lasting Imprint, asking that the City of Eagle Lake declare February 7-14 as Congenital Heart Defect Awareness Week. Lasting Imprint supports families and individuals affected by congenital and acquired heart defects and works to raise awareness of these conditions, which are the leading cause of death among infants with birth defects.
 - Administrator Bromeland stated that Lasting Imprint will be coordinating the installation of an Automated External Defibrillator (AED) at the city park, along with the training of 5-6 city personnel on the property use and maintenance of the equipment.
 - **Council Member Steinberg moved, seconded by Council Member White, to proclaim February 7-14, 2026 as Congenital Heart Defect Awareness Week. The motion carried with Council Members Steinberg, Rohrich, White, Lewis, and Mayor Whittington voting in favor.**
2. Pricing to Replenish Water Meter Inventory
 - Public Works Director Hartman stated he is requesting the authorization to purchase 48 water meters at a cost of \$16,272 from Metering and Technology Solutions. He also explained that the existing water meters in homes are reaching the end of their life expectancy.
 - Director Hartman explained that the residents pay for the original meters when the house is constructed but the City covers the cost of replacement meters.
 - **Council Member Steinberg moved, seconded by Council Member White, to authorize the purchase of 48 water meters at \$16,272. The motion carried with Council Members Steinberg, Rohrich, White, Lewis and Mayor Whittington voting in favor.**

3. NLC Congressional City Conference and Meeting with Federal Legislators for Water Treatment Plant Funding
 - Administrator Bromeland explained that authorization is being sought for Mayor John Whittington, Council Member Rohrich, and City Administrator Bromeland to attend the National League of Cities (NLC) Congressional City Conference, March 16-18, 2026 in Washington DC.
 - The purpose of the conference is to bring together over 2,000 city leaders to address federal policy issues impacting local governments. Attendance allows City representatives to meet directly with members of Congress, federal agencies, and national policy leaders, advocate for Eagle Lake's priorities, and gain educational insights on infrastructure, public safety, community resilience, and federal regulations.
 - The estimated cost per attendee is \$2,830, which covers registration, lodging and airfare.
 - **Council Member White moved, seconded by Council Member Steinberg, authorizing Mayor Whittington, Council Member Rohrich and City Administrator Bromeland to attend the NLC in Washington DC. The motion carried with Council Members Steinberg, Rohrich, White, Lewis, and Mayor Whittington voting in favor.**
4. Lobbyist Agreement for State Funding for Water Treatment Plant Funding
 - Administrator Bromeland explained that the City of Eagle Lake first engaged a government relations firm in 2024 to assist with State legislative advocacy. In 2025, the City expended \$20,000 for services provided by Capital Hill Associates. To continue engaging a lobbyist for the 2026 legislative session, the proposed cost is \$18,000.
 - The 2025 legislative session resulted in a last-minute bonding bill; however, Eagle Lake's funding request for the Water Treatment Plant was not included. Meetings with State legislators have been scheduled for March 25, when City representative are in St. Paul attending the Coalition of Greater Minnesota Cities conference. Those scheduled to attend the meetings include City staff, Mayor Whittington and Council Member Rohrich.
 - For the 2025 legislative session, the City's state funding request totaled \$7,077,000. Representative Luke Frederick has indicated that funding for Eagle Lake's Water Treatment Plant is his number one priority for inclusion in a bonding bill during the upcoming legislative session, which begins on February 17. The City's focus this session will be meeting with the Senate to gain their support for Eagle Lake's request.
 - **Council Member White moved, seconded by Council Member Steinberg, to approve the agreement with Capitol Hill Associates for the government relations services in 2026. The motion carried with Council Members Steinberg, Rohrich, White, Lewis, and Mayor Whittington voting in favor.**
5. Certify Charges for Collection with Taxes for Leaking Water Service Repair at 108 S 2nd Street
 - Administrator Bromeland explained that the legal guardian for the property owner of parcel R121018133011 contacted the City to request that outstanding charges related to this property from Dirt Merchant, Inc (DMI) be certified for collection with the parcel's property taxes.
 - The charges were incurred for repairs to a leaking water service at the shutoff located between the curb and the sidewalk. The repair work was completed by DMI at a total cost of \$4,325.24.
 - Upon Council approval to certify the charges, the City will issue payment to DMI of \$4,325.24. The cost will then be assessed to the parcel and collected with property taxes payable in 2027, plus 4 percent interest, in accordance with City policy and state statute.

- **Council Member White moved, seconded by Council Member Lewis, to authorize the City to pay DMI and to certify the charges to parcel R121018133011 property taxes. The motion carried with Council Members Steinberg, Rohrich, White, Lewis, and Mayor Whittington voting in favor.**
6. Proposals Received for Auditing Services for Years Ending 2025-2027
- Administrator Bromeland explained that Requests for Proposals (RFP) for auditing services was issued. The RFP was sent directly to firms known to provide municipal audit services and was also posted on the League of Minnesota Cities classified ads and the City's website. Three proposals were received. The lowest proposal was received from Creative Planning, with Abdo coming in with the next lowest, and Eide Bailly with the highest proposal.
 - The City's audit for year ending 2024 was \$40,189.51 plus an additional amount for bank reconciliation services.
 - City staff met with representatives from Abdo and Creative Planning to discuss the City's needs, expectations, and concerns related to auditing services. Based on the proposals received, cost considerations, and discussions with the firms, City staff recommend approval of the proposal submitted by Abdo.
 - **Council Member Rohrich moved, seconded by Council Member Lewis, to accept the proposal from Abdo in the amounts of \$35,550 (2025), \$37,500 (2026), and \$39,500 (2027). The motion carried with Council Members Steinberg, Rohrich, White, Lewis, and Mayor Whittington voting in favor.**
7. Verizon Escrow Agreement
- Administrator Bromeland explained that Verizon is undertaking a C-Band installation project involving equipment on the City's water tower. Bolton and Menk will review and approve all drawings, plans, and related documents on the City's behalf. The cost for these reviews is passed directly on to Verizon. Work is scheduled to begin the week of February 9. Public Works Director Hartman will coordinate with the crew on-site on behalf of the City throughout the project.
 - Verizon is proposing a \$10,000 escrow and has overnighted payment for this amount. Bolton and Menk has recommended a \$20,000 escrow amount due to the delay in work beginning which has resulted in more meetings and trips.
 - Verizon has requested more details from Bolton and Menk.
 - **Council Member Rohrich moved, seconded by Council Member White, to authorize staff to sign the escrow agreement upon reaching consensus of the escrow amount. The motion carried with Council Members Steinberg, Rohrich, White, Lewis, and Mayor Whittington voting in favor.**
8. Preventive Maintenance Proposals for City Hall Heating and Cooling Discussion
- Administrator Bromeland stated that following the January City Council meeting staff obtained a preventative maintenance proposal from Skogen Mechanical in the amount of \$950 for two inspections per year. Schwickert's current agreement is \$1,568 for two inspections per year. If Council would like to change providers, the change would occur when the current contract expires on July 27, 2026.
 - Council discussion included the proposals are for only at City Hall and wondering if there needs to be agreements for the Public Works shop and Fire Department. Public Works Director stated that they change their filters regularly. Administrator Bromeland will contact the Fire Department to determine their needs.

- **Council Member White moved, seconded by Council Member Lewis, accepting the proposal from Skogen Mechanical for preventative maintenance at City Hall. The motion carried with Council Members Steinberg, Rohrich, White, Lewis, and Mayor Whittington voting in favor.**
9. Childcare Forgivable Loan Program Announcement and Guidelines
- Administrator Bromeland explained that the Economic Development Authority (EDA) reviewed a draft announcement and program guidelines for the Child Care Forgivable Loan Program at its meeting on January 22 and recommends approval.
 - The grant application submitted to the Taylor Family Farms Foundation was approved in the amount of \$10,000, with a required \$10,000 local match from the EDA. The combined funds will be used to establish a forgivable childcare loan program modeled after the Blue Earth County Forgivable Loan Program launched in 2018.
 - Upon Council approval staff will announce the availability of the loan.
 - **Council Member White moved, seconded by Council Member Rohrich, to approve the draft announcement and guidelines. The motion carried with Council Members Steinberg, Rohrich, White, Lewis, and Mayor Whittington voting in favor.**
10. Bills List Included with Council Packets on Website and Fraud Prevention Discussion
- Administrator Bromeland stated that the finance committee, which consists of Councils Members Beth Rohrich and Nick Lewis, Administrator Bromeland, and Deputy Clerk Rausch, met and discussed fraud. Currently the bill listing is listed on the City’s website in the Council packet.
 - Stemming from discussion, staff is asking for input from Council as to if the bills listing should remain on the website or if it should be pulled and available for interested parties to view at City Hall since it is public data. A placeholder would be included in the packet to let people know it is available at City Hall. Staff is also working with its banker to protect against fraud.
 - **Council Member Steinberg moved, seconded by Council Member White, authorizing Administrator Bromeland to work with legal counsel to determine appropriate methods to minimize fraud. The motion carried with Council Members Steinberg, Rohrich, White, Lewis and Mayor Whittington voting in favor.**
11. Capital Outlay and Committed Fund Balance for Year Ending 12/31/25
- Administrator Bromeland explained that as of December 31, 2025, the City’s pre-audit fund balance for capital outlay is \$2,340,244.39. At the recommendation of the City’s auditor, Eide Bailly, the City Council is advised to formally designate this amount as a “committed” fund balance for capital outlay purposes. This action is an important step in the year-end financial process and should be completed prior to the finalization of the City’s annual audit.
 - The “Committed” fund balance designation is a key component of governmental financial reporting. It ensures these funds are formally earmarked for capital projects and aligns with the City’s long-term capital planning and budgeting practices.
 - **Council Member Rohrich moved, seconded by Council Member Lewis, to designate the Capital Outlay fund balances of \$2,340,244.39 as a committed fund balance for capital outlay purposes as of December 31, 2025. The motion carried with Council Members Steinberg, Rohrich, White, Lewis, and Mayor Whittington voting in favor.**
12. Proposal for Accounting Services
- Administrator Bromeland explained the proposal before Council from Abdo Financial Solutions for accounting services has a term of January 1, 2026 through December 31, 2026. The scope of services would include responding to questions from City staff related to bank reconciliations,

month-end close activities, and journal entries. Services would be provided on an as-needed basis, and the City would be billed only for time incurred. Estimated total fees for the contract are approximately \$7,500; however, the final cost may vary depending on the level of assistance required.

- **Council Member Rohrich moved, seconded by Council Member White, to approve the proposal for accounting services from Abdo Financial Solutions. The motion carried with Council Members Steinberg, Rohrich, White, Lewis, and Mayor Whittington voting in favor.**

CITY ADMINISTRATOR REPORT

1. YTD Revenue and Expenditure Report for December 2025

- The year-end preaudit general fund revenues are higher than the budgeted revenue and the year-end expenditures are lower than budget for 2025. There were some unplanned expenses such as the roof repairs at City Hall and the damage to the Public Works shop. The City will receive reimbursement for shop damages, less the City's deductible.

2. Employee Leave Balances

- The leave balance report is included for Council review.

3. Accounting and Bank Reconciliation Project Update

- Abdo reported that a significant amount of time was spent overhauling cash accounts in Banyon, as several accounts were not originally set up correctly. Abdo has worked to bring the bank reconciliation process back into the system. Abdo is training staff on bank reconciliations with the goal that the City will be able to perform this critical monthly account function independently and accurately. This proposal would allow issues to be addressed promptly as they occur.

4. MS4 Decertification Update and Next Steps

- City staff consulted with ISG regarding next steps in the MS4 decertification process now that the City is no longer designated as an MS4 community. While the City is no longer required to administer the MS4 program, many beneficial stormwater management practices remain in place as a result of the program.
- It was discussed that contractors are still required to comply with state stormwater requirements; however, the City is no longer the enforcement authority for violations.
- ISG recommends that City staff maintain relevant certifications to remain knowledgeable, assist with identifying potential issues, and be prepared should Eagle Lake be brought back into the MS4 program in the future. ISG is also assisting with a review of the City's current application processes, paperwork for new construction, and related code language.

5. Communications from Rep. Finstad and Senators Klobuchar and Smith about Federal WTP Funding

- The City has received communications from Rep. Finstad and Senators Klobuchar and Smith indicating that the City of Eagle Lake has been awarded \$1,050,000 in federal funding. While this funding announcement is exciting, additional funding will still be necessary to fully complete the project, and continued advocacy efforts remain important.

6. Recap of Childcare Provider Appreciation Swag Bags Delivered to Providers

- As part of the RCCIP Core Team's initiatives, showing appreciation to local childcare providers was identified as a priority. Donations were collected to assemble appreciation swag bags, which were recently delivered to Eagle Lake childcare providers.

7. RFP for Garbage and Recycling

- City staff has revisited the timing of releasing a Request for Proposals (RFP) for garbage and recycling services. After reviewing the current contract, proposal review timelines, and the requirement to provide 60 days' notice to terminate the existing agreement, staff recommend releasing the RFP now with an effective date of February 2027. This will allow sufficient time for proposal review and City Council consideration before determining whether to enter into a new five-year agreement or select a different hauler. The current contract is renewed on a one-year basis.

COUNCIL REPORTS

- Council Member Rohrich provided a report from the Community Education and Recreation meeting. The summer Aces program will not be held at the Eagle Lake School this year due to a construction project but stated Aces will return in 2027. It is important for the City work to ensure this returns in 2027.

ADJOURNMENT

Council Member White moved, seconded by Council Member Lewis, to adjourn the meeting at 7:15 p.m. The motion carried with Council Members Steinberg, Rohrich, White, and Mayor Whittington voting in favor.

John Whittington, Mayor

Kerry Rausch, Deputy City Clerk