

**CITY OF EAGLE LAKE  
CITY COUNCIL MEETING  
FEBRUARY 3, 2025**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor John Whittington 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 appointed official Nick Lewis as Council Member.

**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, Assistant Fire Chief Trent Talle, Public Works Director Andrew Hartman and Blue Earth County Sheriff's Office Liaison Lieutenant Mitch Gahler.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

- None.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

- **Council Member White moved, seconded by Council Member Rohrich, 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 White moved, seconded by Council Member Rohrich, to approve the January 6, 2025 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	EFT Enrollment for FleetCor
Res. 2025-10 Appoint Rahe to Fire Dept Reserves	Election Expense Agreement and Voter Account Amendment
Res. 2025-11 Accept Donations for Active Adults	Board and Commission Minutes
Approve Bingo/Raffle Application	

- Council Member Rohrich asked about the internet outages that have affected the water alarm systems. Administrator Bromeland stated that City staff recently contacted Metronet with concerns about

outages and impacts to critical services and communication systems. She reported that, per a response from Metronet, they believe that they have addressed the issue that caused the recent outages. Apparently, there was a conduit under the road that had been frozen due to extreme cold which caused some separation of fibers in the conduit. City staff was told that a permanent fix was made.

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

#### PUBLIC HEARING

- None.

#### PRESENTATION

1. Utility Billing Late Fee Waiver Request: Trayldon Beveridge, 305 Linda Drive
  - Administrator Bromeland explained that a request was received from the utility customer at 305 Linda Drive. There was an issue with how the account was set up in Payment Service Network, the online payment system, and the utility customer was unable to make payment by the 25<sup>th</sup> and due to the Christmas holiday, was not able to come into City Hall until the 26<sup>th</sup> to pay in person. The utility customer is requesting the late fee be waived.
2. Congenital Heart Defect Awareness Week Proclamation: Amanda and Eisen Reuter
  - Administrator Bromeland stated that Amanda Reuter and her son Eisen would like to help raise awareness about Congenital Heart Defect Awareness Week which is February 7-14, 2025. They have requested the City's assistance by making an executive proclamation declaring this special week in February.
3. GreenStep Cities Program Overview: Erica Bjelland with MPCA and Jennifer Lindahl with Clean Energy Resources Team
  - Erica Bjelland explained the GreenStep Cities program stating that it is a challenge, assistance, and recognition program for sustainability initiatives and action. 54% of Minnesotans live in one of the 151 communities that are GreenStep cities.
  - GreenStep includes 29 best practices and 181 action items available to cities. Categories under this program include buildings and lighting, land use, transportation, environmental management, and resilient economic and community development. The program includes five (5) steps with the first being the city adopting a resolution to participate in the program. The remaining steps include actions, reporting, and metrics. The city is able to progress through the steps at its own pace.
  - Jennifer Lindahl explained that her role is to work with Minnesota cities in south east Minnesota and the program is designed to connect cities with each other and that the program makes cities more sustainable and achieves results.
4. Warning and Scene Light Safety Upgrades: Trent Talle, Assistant Fire Department Chief
  - Assistant Fire Chief Trent Talle stated the new warning lights are important for alerting drivers of the need to yield and provide a clear path for the emergency vehicles, while scene lights are

designed to illuminate the area around an incident, enhancing effective scene safety especially in low light conditions at night.

- The request before the Council is to upgrade warning and scene lights on the rescue truck, grass rig, and tanker with the cost totaling \$14,459.41. Three estimates from Mike's Emergency Vehicle Installations LLC have been provided and the cost for these upgrades were included in the 2025 budget under fire department capital outlay.

5. SCSC Spotlight Employee Recognition Award Presentation

- Administrator Bromeland explained that the City is a member of the South Central Service Cooperative and that they have a program designed to shine the spotlight on great employees. This quarter, Eagle Lake's Public Works Director Andrew Hartman was nominated and selected for consistently going above and beyond to find ways to make public works operations more safe, effective, and efficient. He encourages his department to work hard and do the best job possible. Andrew is reliable, skilled in operating equipment, has a strong work ethic, and prioritizes the well-being of the community.
- Director Hartman was presented with the South Central Service Cooperative Employee Recognition Award.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Utility Billing Late Fee Waiver Request from 305 Linda Drive

- **Council Member White moved, seconded by Council Member Lewis, to approve removing the \$5.00 late fee from the account at 305 Linda Drive. Motion carried with Council Members Steinberg, Rohrich, White, Lewis, and Mayor Whittington voting in favor.**

2. Congenital Heart Defect Awareness Week Proclamation Adoption

- Administrator Bromeland read the proposed proclamation.
- **Council Member White moved, seconded by Council Member Steinberg, moved to proclaim February 7-14, 2025 as Congenital Heart Defect Awareness Week. Motion carried with Council Members Steinberg, Rohrich, White, Lewis, and Mayor Whittington voting in favor.**

3. Resolution Authorizing Participation in the MN GreenStep Cities Program

- Administrator Bromeland stated that if adopted, Luke Drummer would do the data entry work.
- Discussion included the verification that the city can work this program at its own pace and completed steps would most likely be verified.
- **Council Member Rohrich moved, seconded by Council Member White, to adopt resolution 2025-12, a resolution authorizing the city of Eagle Lake to participate in the Minnesota GreenStep Cities Program. Motion carried with Council Members Steinberg, Rohrich, White, Lewis, and Mayor Whittington voting in favor.**

4. Warning and Scene Light Safety Upgrades for Fire Department Vehicles

- **Council Member Rohrich moved, seconded by Council Member Lewis, to approve the purchase of warning and scene light safety upgrades for the fire department. Motion carried with Council Members Steinberg, Rohrich, White, Lewis, and Mayor Whittington voting in favor.**

5. Year Ending 2024 Audit Engagement Letter

- Administrator Bromeland explained that before Council is an engagement letter from Eide Bailly which represents their understanding of the auditing services to be provided to the City of Eagle Lake for the year ending 2024. The fee for the audit is estimated to be \$31,000 as compared to the cost for the 2023 audit which was \$30,324.
- Administrator Bromeland also explained that new last year was the requirement for the auditors to supply a Governance Planning Letter, which means that they must list any areas where potential risk might exist. This does not mean that they've seen any issues in these areas, but they are looked to help guide audit procedures and are consistent across government clients.
- **Council Member Rohrich moved, seconded by Council Member White, to authorize Mayor Whittington to sign the Audit Engagement Letter from Eide Bailly. Motion carried with Council Members Steinberg, Rohrich, White, Lewis, and Mayor Whittington voting in favor.**

6. Approval to Increase Amount of EDA Funds Invested with 4M for Higher Yield

- Administrator Bromeland stated that the Economic Development Authority (EDA) currently invests a portion of its funds with the Minnesota Municipal Money Market Fund (the 4M Fund) to obtain a higher yield. This fund is a customized cash management and investment program for Minnesota public funds and is sponsored and governed by the League of Minnesota Cities. The 4M Fund is managed in accordance with Minnesota Statutes and customized specifically for public entities, providing safety, liquidity, and highly competitive yields.
- In 2022, the EDA was tasked with considering investing funds in a certificate of deposit or money market until the money was needed for an economic development related project. The EDA decided at that time to move \$200,000 of its funds to the 4M Fund. This money market fund is fluid and there are no penalties for withdrawing funds as needed.
- At the present time the 4M Fund is earning 4.356% interest, while the remaining balance is in an account earning a rate of .60%. Discussion took place at the most recent EDA meeting about staff moving more funds to the 4M Fund to obtain a more competitive yield.
- Administrator Bromeland stated a motion is needed to authorize staff to move funds as appropriate with the goal being to obtain the most competitive yield and grow the EDA fund balance. It was explained that back in 2022, the motion identified a specific amount of money and staff would like to ensure authorization for staff to transfer EDA funds to the 4M fund as needed to obtain higher yields.
- **Council Member Steinberg moved, seconded by Council Member White, to authorize city staff to move funds as appropriate with the goal being to obtain the most competitive yield. Motion carried with Council Members Steinberg, Rohrich, White, Lewis, and Mayor Whittington voting in favor.**

7. Resolution Supporting Grant Application for MN DNR Regional Trail Program

- Administrator Bromeland stated that before the Council is Resolution 2025-13 a resolution supporting grant application. The application is to construct approximately 5,000 feet of paved trail for the Eagle Lake sidewalk and trail network.
- The city was previously awarded \$475,982 in federal Transportation Alternatives (TA) funds for this project. To help offset the local share portion, additional grant funding is being sought. This will be

the second application made to the DNR for the Regional Trail Program as the first application was not awarded funding. This program is highly competitive.

- Council discussion included where existing sidewalks are located in the Fox Meadows subdivision and the need to be aware of the increased traffic volume along this area and how to handle this.
- **Council Member White moved, seconded by Council Member Steinberg, to approve Resolution 2025-13 Resolution Supporting Grant Application. Motion carried with Council Members Steinberg, Rohrich, White, Lewis, and Mayor Whittington voting in favor.**

8. Approval to Accept Credit Card Payments for All City Fees

- Administrator Bromeland explained that currently the City of Eagle Lake accepts credit card payments for utility bills only through Payment Services Network (PSN). Convenience fees are absorbed 100% by the city. All other services and fees must be paid for by cash or check. Due to the inconvenience that many customers experience with not having cash or checks, multiple trips to City Hall are often necessary to pay for a service or fee.
- To increase customer convenience and satisfaction when making payments for services and fees other than utility bill payments, City staff recommend that credit card payments be accepted for all services and fees with the caveat that all convenience fees for non-utility bill payments be passed onto the customer.
- Staff have spoken to both GovCard and PSN about card payment options and it is recommended that PSN be utilized as the platform by which to accept credit card payments and absorb costs associated with a card reader and terminal.
- Discussion included if it would be best to buy or rent the necessary equipment and the cost for each option. Administrator Bromeland stated she will follow up with Council relating to the cost of equipment.
- **Council Member Steinberg moved, seconded by Council Member White, to approve allowing non-utility bill payments via PSN with convenience fees passed onto the customer. Motion carried with Council Members Steinberg, Rohrich, White, Lewis, and Mayor Whittington voting in favor.**

9. Amend Fee Schedule for Meal Reimbursement Amounts to Reflect 2025 GSA Per Diem Rates

- Administrator Bromeland explained that before Council is a request to amend the city's fee schedule pertaining to meal reimbursement amounts. Currently the reimbursement amounts are \$8 for breakfast, \$14 for lunch, and \$20 for dinner.
- Staff is recommending expenses for meals, including sales tax and gratuity, be reimbursed according to the per diem rates found on the U.S. General Services Administration GSA page: [www.gsa.gov/travel/plan-book/per-diem/rates](http://www.gsa.gov/travel/plan-book/per-diem/rates).
- **Council Member Rohrich moved, seconded by Council Member White, to update the meal reimbursement limits by utilizing the U.S. General Services Administration's per diem rates. Motion carried with Council Members Steinberg, Rohrich, White, Lewis, and Mayor Whittington voting in favor.**

CITY ADMINISTATOR REPORT

1. YTD Revenue and Expenditures Report for January 2025

- The January revenue and expenditure report is in the packet for Council review.

2. Full-Time Employee Leave Accrual and Use Summary Report
  - This report is for Council to review and is included each month in the packet.
  
3. Mankato-Mississippi River 345kV Transmission Line Project Correspondence and Opportunity to Submit Input
  - The City recently received notice from the Minnesota Department of Commerce containing information that the Mankato-Mississippi 345vK Transmission Project that has been proposed by Xcel Energy could potentially encroach on Eagle Lake city limits. Xcel applied to the Public Utilizes Commission for a certificate of need and route permitting processes for the project, the Commission must complete and Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to identify potential impacts of the proposed project and any alternatives that are brought forward for consideration. The original proposed segments by Xcel Energy did not encroach on Eagle Lake city limits. The U.S. Highway 14 alternative was one of several alternatives carried forward for further consideration and has been included in the EIS Scoping Decision for the proposed project. This means that Eagle Lake could potentially be impacted. The draft EIS is scheduled to be completed and released on May 5, 2025, and will be available for public review. There will be public hearings scheduled in May as well as a public comment period. City staff will work to draft a comment to document concerns about any route potentially encroaching into City limits or along Highway 14 that could restrict future modifications to make the roadway abutting Eagle Lake safer. City staff has requested a meeting with a representative from the Minnesota Department of Commerce to better understand potential impacts and opportunities for input and comments to be submitted on record.
  
4. Update on Personnel Policy Updates and Next Steps
  - City staff is currently working with Minnesota Valley Council of Governments (MVCOG) staff on a review of the Personnel Policy. A meeting is set up to review the personnel policy next week and following that meeting, a meeting with the City's Personnel Committee will be scheduled to review before being brought to the City Council in March.
  
5. InterCity Leadership Visit Planning Committee
  - The InterCity Leadership Visit (ICLV) is an initiative organized by Greater Mankato Growth that brings together leaders to promote the betterment of the Greater Mankato region. The visit serves as a platform for fostering collaboration among leaders from government, business, and nonprofit sectors to address and tackle important local issues. Every couple of years, a delegation is assembled. The last delegation traveled to Arkansas in 2018, of which Eagle Lake's former mayor participated. Per a recent planning committee meeting which staff attended, Wichita, Kansas is currently being studied as a potential city that shares similar objectives and priorities. It is anticipated that the trip will take place in October or November. Depending on the cost of travel, City staff would like to recommend that the Mayor and City Administrator attend.
  
6. Water Treatment Improvement Project Funding Request and Contact with Legislators
  - An updated capital budget request was submitted to both the House and Senate capital investment committee contacts for the water treatment improvement project. The City's lobbyist has been

engaging legislators and will be scheduling meetings for staff and elected officials to attend in St. Paul.

## COUNCIL REPORTS

1. Recap of Meeting with Mankato Area Public Schools Reps Related to Pre-School and Discussion (Mayor Whittington and Council Member White)
  - Council Member White stated that Mayor Whittington, Administrator Bromeland and he attended a meeting with Mankato school representatives to discuss the elimination of the age 4 preschool program from the Eagle Lake school and moving it to Mankato. His takeaway from the meeting is that the school district is not interested in keeping the age 4 pre-school program in Eagle Lake and that next year the age 3 pre-school program will also move to Mankato. This change is the result of a financial decision. Council Member White encouraged residents to contact the school district to provide their input.
  - Mayor Whittington stated he was disappointed in the meeting and stated the City would like to preserve the district's pre-school programs in Eagle Lake.
  - Council Member Rohrich stated she sits on a subcommittee with the school district and stated Eagle Lake residents should not take for granted that the summer ACES program in Eagle Lake will continue and that this program is not guaranteed.
  - Mayor Whittington suggested that Eagle Lake residents reach out to the school district on this matter.
2. Park Board
  - Council Member Rohrich stated the Park Board decided to not hold the Winter Park Event but instead is looking at a possible fall event.
3. Summer Sounds
  - Council Member Steinberg stated the Summer Sounds committee will begin planning summer music events soon.

## ADJOURNMENT

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

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John Whittington, Mayor

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Kerry Rausch, Deputy City Clerk