City Council Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, January 21, 2025

CALL TO ORDER
This meeting is officially called to order at 5:30 pm on January 21, 2025. This meeting is being presided over by Mayor Mike Lorenson.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

OFFICIAL OATH OF OFFICE
Kelly Langness was sworn in as Ward 3 Councilmember.

ROLL CALL
The following Councilmembers were present: Lorenson, McCraw, Arlt, Narverud, Pream, Bolduc, Aarestad and Langness. Mayor Lorenson chaired the meeting.

PRESENTATIONS/PROCLAMATIONS/PUBLIC INFORMATION ANNOUNCEMENTS

Kevin Bigalka - Corp. Of Engineers

> Kevin Bigalka gave an overview of the final RAW Intake Study report and project objective to study the Red Lake River for suitable location for new RAW water intake location.

APPROVE AGENDA
Councilmember Jason Aarestad motioned, being seconded by Councilmember Scott Pream, to approve the agenda.

On vote being taken, the resolution was unanimously passed.

CONSENT AGENDA

RESOLUTION NO. 01.24.25: Approval of January 7, 2025 Council Proceedings

> Presented as part of the Consent Agenda, Councilmember Scott Pream introduced RESOLUTION 01.24.25, being seconded by Councilmember Steve Narverud, that:
>
> THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED By the City Council, to approve the January 7, 2025 Council Proceedings.
> On vote being taken, the resolution was unanimously passed.

RESOLUTION NO. 01.25.25 : Approval of January 9, 2025 Adjourned Council Proceedings

Presented as part of the Consent Agenda, Councilmember Scott Pream introduced RESOLUTION 01.25.25, being seconded by Councilmember Steve Narverud, that:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED By the City Council, to approve the January 9, 2025 Council Proceedings.

On vote being taken, the resolution was unanimously passed.

RESOLUTION NO. 01.26.25: City of Thief River Falls Bills and Disbursements

Presented as part of the Consent Agenda, Councilmember Scott Pream introduced RESOLUTION 01.26.25, being seconded by Councilmember Steve Narverud, that:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED By the City Council, to authorize payment of bills and disbursements in the total amount of $803,131.98. A printout of the approved payments and disbursements are attached hereto and made apart hereof.

On vote being taken, the resolution was unanimously passed.

NEW BUSINESS

RESOLUTION NO. 01.15.25: 2025 Boards and Commissions Committee Assignments

Following discussion, Councilmember Michele McCraw introduced Resolution 01.15.25, being seconded by Councilmember Steve Narverud, that:

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED By the Council, to approve the 2025 Boards and Commissions Committee Assignments.

On vote being taken, the resolution was unanimously passed.

RESOLUTION NO. 01.16.25: Schedule Public Hearing to Amend City Ordinance 150.06 – Regulating and Controlling Towers

Following discussion, Councilmember Jason Aarestad introduced Resolution 01.16.25, being seconded by Councilmember Steve Narverud, that:

WHEREAS, Wikstrom Telephone Company approached the Planning & Zoning Commission requesting a variance to the maximum height restriction of 200 feet as is currently written in our City Ordinance. They are requesting a tower height of 350 feet.

They have been informed that their existing 200' tower base is sinking, and the tower needs to be replaced. They were asking for a variance to install a new self-supporting 350' tower in its place. Currently T-Mobile, Ham Radio, and Wiktel Internet Services are provided on this Tower. The new tower would allow Minnkota Power Company to add Microwave to their power plants in NW Minnesota from Crookston.

Three criteria must be applied when cities consider granting a variance:
1) Reasonableness – The property owner proposes to use the property in a reasonable manner.
2) Uniqueness – The landowner's problem is due to circumstances unique to the property not caused by the landowner.
3) Essential Character – The variance, if granted, will not alter the essential character of the locality.

In this case, the landowner's problem is not due to circumstances unique to the property but instead caused by the landowner's desire to build a taller tower to accommodate the location of Minnkota Power Company. Therefore, the request does not fit the criteria for requesting a variance and thus the request from Planning and Zoning to amend our City Ordinances to allow for an increase in the maximum tower height allowed to be set at 365 feet.

WHEREAS, • Currently, Per City Ordinance 150.06.15.b, Height Limitations the maximum height allowed is 200 feet.

• City ordinance also states, Tower setbacks shall be setback from all property lines by a minimum distance equal to the height of the tower, plus 10 feet, including all antennas, and attachments. Towers may be located closer to a property line, or public rights-of-way, if the tower is designed and engineered to collapse progressively within the distance between the tower and property line, which design must be documented by and signed by a qualify professional engineer licensed in Minnesota. In all cases, the tower shall meet the setbacks of the underlining Zoning district.

• If the Ordinance change is approved, Wikstrom Telephone Co, per City Ordinance, would still be required to apply for a Conditional Use Permit and secure a building permit. Before issuing a building permit, proof that the proposed tower complies with regulations administered by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), and others; tower setback requirements, aesthetic requirements to blend into the surrounding environment unless color is dictated by federal or state authorities.

• Fewer Towers is the preference in and near airports and within the city limits of Thief River Falls. Minnkota Power Company has indicated that, if need be, they will build their own separate tower to accommodate their Microwave transmission requirements. The additional tower height is needed because the line-of-sight requirements of Microwave signals and the need to accommodate for the curvature of the earth.

• The requested tower design would be of a tripod design and not a monopole design. Sec. 150.06.6.b of City Code states: Commercial wireless telecommunication service towers shall be of a monopole design unless the city determines that an alternative design would accommodate co-location of additional antennas or would better blend into the surrounding environment.

- Current zoning requirements allow towers to be erected in I-1 Light Industrial Districts and I-2 General Industrial Districts as a conditional use. In the particular instance that is prompting this ordinance change request, the proposed tower is situated on I-2 with R-3 High Density Residential District across the street to the east and north of the property

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED Approve scheduling a Public Hearing to be held at the February 18th City Council meeting to consider amending City Ordinance 150.06 – Regulating and Controlling Towers.

On vote being taken, the resolution was unanimously passed.

RESOLUTION NO. 01.17.25: Approve the Progression Step Raise for McLain Stennes (Apprentice Lineman)

Following discussion, Councilmember Steve Narverud introduced Resolution 01.17.25, being seconded by Councilmember Scott Pream, that:

WHEREAS, McLain Stennes was hired as an Apprentice Lineman on July 15, 2024. At that time McLain had 2959 hours of Linework registered as an Apprentice. McLain needed to complete 4000 hours of Linework, and complete Book 1 and Book 2 of the Apprentice Lineman Training Program to progress to Step 3 of the Apprentice Lineman position. On January 15, 2025, McLain will have fulfilled those requirements. The next date McLain will be able to qualify for a Progression Step Raise will be January 15, 2026. January 15th will become McLain's Anniversary date for Progression Step raises.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED Approve the progression Step raise of McLain Stennes from Step 2 ($38.27) to Step 3 ($39.80) of the Apprentice Lineman position. The position is a Teamster Union #320 position.

On vote being taken, the resolution was unanimously passed.

RESOLUTION NO. 01.18.25: 2025 Scrap Metal Bids

Following discussion, Councilmember Scott Pream introduced Resolution 01.18.25, being seconded by Councilmember Michele McCraw, that:

WHEREAS, The City of TRF Electric Department advertised for an RFP on Scrap Metal Services for scrap metal generated by the Electric Department. Two proposals were received and reviewed

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED To approve the Phillips Iron and Metal Inc. proposal for Scrap Metal Services from January 1, 2025 to December 31, 2029.

On vote being taken, the resolution was unanimously passed.

RESOLUTION NO. 01.19.25: 2025 MMUA (Minnesota Municipal Utilities Association) Service Agreement

Following discussion, Councilmember Steve Narverud introduced Resolution 01.19.25, being seconded by Councilmember Jason Aarestad, that:

WHEREAS, This agreement provides for the services of a person engaged by MMUA, in the capacity of a Regional Safety Coordinator. This person will plan, organize and /or conduct regular monthly safety meetings at Thief River Falls Municipal Utilities. They will maintain a standard of safety management, record keeping and reporting system. They will also meet with the City of Thief River Falls 24 days per year.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED To authorize the City Administrator to sign the 2025 MMUA Service Agreement. This agreement is dated and in force from January 1, 2025 through December 31, 2025.

On vote being taken, the resolution was unanimously passed.

RESOLUTION NO. 01.20.25: Designate CSAH #11 as a State Aid Route

Following discussion, Councilmember Steve Narverud introduced Resolution 01.20.25, being seconded by Councilmember Scott Pream, that:

WHEREAS, The County Board of the County of Pennington did adopt a resolution on May 14, 2024 locating, establishing, designing and numbering the County State Aid Highway System of Pennington County, and said resolution locates and establishes certain County State Aid Highways within the corporate limits of the City of Thief River Falls, MN.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED By the City Council of the City of Thief River Falls, that the resolution adopted by the County Board, a copy of which is attached hereto and made a part thereof, locating or establishing the County State Aid Highway system within the City limits (and revoking certain portions of said system) is in all things approved.

On vote being taken, the resolution was unanimously passed.

RESOLUTION NO. 01.21.25: Bobcat UW56 Powerlease Agreement

Following discussion, Councilmember Scott Pream introduced Resolution01.21.25, being seconded by Councilmember Steve Narverud, that:

WHEREAS, The current toolcat is entering expected repairs from use. Critical tasks performed by the toolcat include 7.5 miles of sidewalk snow removal enforced by city code. Any unexpected repair time on current toolcat would result in contracted work to perform these tasks. Cemetery has need of a dedicated toolcat on premises throughout most of the year. A new toolcat lease and retainage of our current vehicle would allow a dedicated toolcat on cemetery premises when needed, as well as an alternative vehicle when more than one department needs the unit.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED Enter into a lease agreement for a Bobcat UW56 (toolcat) utility vehicle.

On vote being taken, the resolution was unanimously passed.

RESOLUTION NO. 01.22.25: MTI Equipment Lease Agreement

Following discussion, Councilmember Steve Narverud introduced Resolution 01.22.25, being seconded by Councilmember Michele McCraw, that:

WHEREAS, The parks department maintains vegetation growth of 17 parks with a fleet of three (3) mowers.

WHEREAS, The hour usage of the current mower is entering expected repairs from use. Securing a new replacement mower for the fleet at an optimal time frame between expected repairs and trade-in value are important for consistent budgeting reasons.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED Enter into a lease agreement for one (1) Toro Groundsmaster 4000-D Commercial Mower.

On vote being taken, the resolution was unanimously passed.

RESOLUTION NO. 01.23.25: Approval for CIS Server at the Depot

Following discussion, Councilmember Scott Pream introduced Resolution 01.23.25, being seconded by Councilmember Megan Arlt, that:

WHEREAS, Our CIS Server at the Depot was purchased in 2020 and has a failing hard drive. The redundant server at Electrical was purchased in 2019; which is almost six (6) years old and has an end-of-life processor (Gen 10).

WHEREAS, The new server will be built to meet our present and further needs

- it will have Raid 6 for super performance
- It would replace our existing CIS server (purchased in 2020) located in City Hall
- The existing server at City Hall would replace the old server located at the Electrical building
- Server 2016 will be upgraded to Server 2022

- SQL Server 2017 will be upgraded to SQL 2019 during this process
- The electrical server can be repurposed

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED Approve for the City of Thief River Falls a new server from Morris Electronics.

On vote being taken, the resolution was unanimously passed.

COUNCIL BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS REPORTS

Steve Narverud noted the Carnegie elevator work is complete. We are waiting on parts to come in for the City Hall elevator so it can be scheduled. Richard noted a sump pump needs to be added to the City Hall elevator shaft as well per inspection requirements; he is currently working on getting bids.

Jason Aarestad noted this is a busy weekend in Thief River Falls; 1st Annual Frost Fest activities, Fish Fry at St. Bernards and Hairball concert at the Ralph.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

- City Council - February 4, 2025 at 5:30 pm
- Public Utilities Committee - February 10, 2025 at 7:00 am
- Public Safety Committee - February 10, 2025 at 4:30 pm
- Administrative Services Committee - February 11, 2025 at 4:30 pm
- Public Works Committee - February 12, 2025 at 4:30 pm

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

- December 2024 Investment Summary
- Mayor Meet and Greets - Mike noted his upcoming events schedule and commented on his recent open line appearance. He provided a recap of events and a welcome letter that was presented at orientation.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further discussion, Councilmember Scott Pream being seconded by Councilmember Julie Bolduc to adjourn at 6:29 pm. On vote being taken, the Chair declared the motion unanimously carried.

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Mike Lorenson, Mayor

Attest: ________________________________
Angela Philipp, City Administrator