City Council Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, May 20, 2025

CALL TO ORDER

This meeting was officially called to order at 5:30 pm on May 20, 2025. This meeting was presided over by Mayor Mike Lorenson.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ROLL CALL

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

PUBLIC FORUM

PRESENTATIONS/PROCLAMATIONS/PUBLIC INFORMATION ANNOUNCEMENTS

Proclamation - Bike Month 2025

Mike read the proclamation and presented Scott Pream (BikeTRF board member) with the signed certificate.

APPROVE AGENDA

Councilmember Jason Aarestad motioned, being seconded by Councilmember Scott Pream, to approve the agenda with the addition of addendum item 8.24.

On vote being taken, the resolution passed unanimously.

CONSENT AGENDA

RESOLUTION NO. 05.107.25: Approval of May 6, 2025 City Council Proceedings

Presented as part of the Consent Agenda, Council member Steve Narverud introduced RESOLUTION 05.107.25, being seconded by Council member Michele McCraw, that:

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the City Council, to approve the May 6, 2025 Council Proceedings.

On vote being taken, the resolution was unanimously passed.

RESOLUTION NO. 05.108.25: City of Thief River Falls Bills and Disbursements

Presented as part of the Consent Agenda, Councilmember Steve Narverud introduced RESOLUTION 05.108.25, being seconded by Councilmember Michele McCraw, that:

THREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the City Council, to authorize payment of bills and disbursements in the total amount of $914,410.90. A printout of the approved payments and disbursements are attached hereto and made a part hereof.

On vote being taken, the resolution passed unanimously.

RESOLUTION NO. 05.109.25: Approve On-Sale Intoxicating Liquor License App for VFW Post 2793 August 16-16, 2025.

Presented as part of the Consent Agenda, Councilmember Steve Narverud introduced RESOLUTION 05.109.25, being seconded by Councilmember Michele McCraw, that:

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council to approve the On-Sale Intoxicating Liquor License application for the VFW Post 2793 parking lot party August 16, 2025.

On vote being taken, the resolution passed unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

RESOLUTION NO. 05.110.25: Approve Online Utility Exchange

Following discussion, Councilmember Michele McCraw introduced Resolution 05.110.25, being seconded by Councilmember Megan Arlt, that:

WHEREAS, The current application process cannot identify if a Social Security number is being used fraudulently or missing a digit. The Social Security number is used to submit claims to MN Recapture and SWS collection agencies to recoup monies owed by customers.

WHEREAS, The Utility Billing Office has witnessed people coming to set up Utilities without having a Social Security number, leaving and then returning with a completed application. Until now, there hasn't been a way to verify the identification of the applicants.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED to approve Online Utility Exchange as an additional program that will help expedite the identification process of Utility customers and determine if larger deposits will need to be charged.

On vote being taken, the resolution was unanimously passed.

RESOLUTION NO. 05.111.25 : To approve Councilmember Per Diem

Following discussion, Councilmember Scott Pream introduced Resolution 05.111.25, being seconded by Councilmember Kelly Langness , that:

WHEREAS, The City of Thief River Falls relies on Councilmembers to participate actively and regularly by attending meetings to which they have been assigned. Meetings are scheduled at all times of the day both in Thief River Falls and in other locations. Attendance at meetings often requires councilmembers to change their work or personal schedules or both and may result is lost income. City Council meetings would not be eligible for per diem payment.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED To authorize payment of councilmember per diem of $32.50 per meeting for meetings approved by City Council as listed in the January council minutes or such other meetings as may be approved by the City Council for per diem payment except that no more than three per diem meeting payments shall be approved for any one calendar day. If a councilmember attends a conference or training the following per diem will be authorized. A conference or training that lasts 1 hour or under in one calendar day will be paid $32.50, if a conference or training is over 1 hour or 4 hours or under in 1 calendar day will be paid at $75, if conference or training is over 4 hours in 1 calendar day it will be paid at $100. Payments would be for meetings after May 20, 2025.

On vote being taken, the resolution was unanimously passed.

RESOLUTION NO. 05.112.25: To approve HDR On-Call Service Contract

Following discussion, Councilmember Michele McCraw introduced Resolution 05.112.25, being seconded by Councilmember Steve Narverud, that:

WHEREAS, HDR has served as a trusted advisor and consultant on City projects large and small for more than 30 years. Going forward the requested services will be engaged only upon request by the City Department Heads from Public Works, Water, or Electric for the following tasks: Project management and Coordination, Project planning and technical requests, and concept and design and bidding services, meetings, permitting, field work, construction administration, and TRF staff support.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council, to authorize the City Administrator to execute the HDR On-Call Service Contract for services totaling $25,000.00 based upon future tasks and services requested by the City o Thief River falls. If no tasks or services are requested, there are no charges.

On vote being taken, the resolution was unanimously passed.

RESOLUTION NO. 05.113.25: Social Media Policy for Employees

Following discussion, Councilmember Scott Pream introduced Resolution 05.113.25, being seconded by Councilmember Julie Bolduc, that:

WHEREAS, The previous Social Media Policy has been revised and divided into separate policies for Employees and Elected Officials to more accurately reflect their distinct roles.

WHEREAS, Social networking in government serves two main purposes: delivering messages directly to citizens and fostering public engagement through interaction and feedback. Information shared through social networking must be accurate, consistent, timely, and aligned with the needs of the City's intended audience. This policy aims to ensure proper administration of the City of Thief River Falls' social media platforms by its employees.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED Approve the updated Social Media Policy for Employees for the City of Thief River Falls.

On vote being taken, the resolution was unanimously passed.

RESOLUTION NO. 05.114.25: Social Media Policy for Elected Officials

Following discussion, Councilmember Julie Bolduc introduced Resolution 05.114.25, being seconded by Councilmember Megan Arlt, that:

WHEREAS, The previous Social Media Policy has been revised and divided into separate policies for Elected Officials and Employees to more accurately reflect their distinct roles.

WHEREAS, Social networking in government serves two main purposes: delivering messages directly to citizens and fostering public engagement through interaction and feedback. Information shared through social networking must be accurate, consistent, timely, and aligned with the needs of the City's intended audience. This policy aims to ensure proper administration of the City of Thief River Falls' social media platforms by its elected officials.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED Approve the updated Elected Officials Social Media Policy for the City of Thief River Falls.

On vote being taken, the resolution was unanimously passed.

RESOLUTION NO. 05.115.25: Creation of Assistant Fire Chief position

Following discussion, Councilmember Kelly Langness introduced Resolution 05.114.25, being seconded by Councilmember Megan Arlt, that:

WHEREAS, Council approved the creation of the job description and grading at the 2/18/25 council meeting. Public Safety Committee recommended to approve the position on 5/12/2025. The position is being created in order to ensure leadership, and a chain of command should the Chief be absent. It will be a Grade 7 position with a salary range of $36.71-$46.57. This will be a Teamsters #320 Firefighters position.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED To approve the creation of an Assistant Fire Chief position.

On vote being taken, the resolution was unanimously passed.

RESOLUTION NO. 05.116.25: Public Safety Aid Purchase

Following discussion, Councilmember Scott Pream introduced Resolution 05.116.25, being seconded by Councilmember Jason Aarestad, that:

WHEREAS, The emergency services dock behind the fire department needs repair. The original decking material to the dock has deteriorated and rotted out in several spots, rendering it unusable.

WHEREAS, The dock is primarily used for emergency services and is also used by the general public. The dock in its current state of repair is not safe to put back in the water.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED Approve spending of approximately $1000 from the Public Safety Aid money for the purchase of dock decking material.

On vote being taken, the resolution was unanimously passed.

RESOLUTION NO. 05.117.25: Purchase & Installation of new Fire Alarm System

Following discussion, Councilmember Julie Bolduc introduced Resolution 05.117.25, being seconded by Councilmember Kelly Langness , that:

WHEREAS, The current system at City Hall is obsolete. With the upgrade to the elevator, the old system will not detect, nor control the elevator car as required by code. The city looked at this as part of the remodel to city hall. Prices have gone up slightly from that original quote a year or two ago. SOK Enterprises is utilized by both the electrical and water departments. The scope of work includes removing the obsolete devices, providing and installing any additional wire/cable, installing relays for the second-floor coiling fire door and the HVAC system shutdown, interconnecting the fire alarm system with the elevator recall, and perform system programing and final test. The project will be done in phases with the elevator portion done first and the rest of the building done later

WHEREAS, • Building code requires fire detection outside the elevator car on each floor and the ability to return the car to the main floor in the event of a fire being detected. Our current system does not allow this.
• Building codes require the alarm system to be monitored 24/7 365 days per year.
• The fire alarm system was activated during the elevator upgrade process. There should have been an automated call placed to the fire department – they were never notified, which calls into question how well the current system is working.
• The current system only allows the fire department to know which floor the fire is on, the new system will indicate not only which floor, but where on that floor the fire is located.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED Approve the purchase and installation of a new fire alarm system at City Hall from SOK Enterprises Technology Systems at a cost of 23,970.62. And the monthly monitoring cost of $21.75 per month.

On vote being taken, the resolution was unanimously passed.

RESOLUTION NO. 05.118.25: Community Voice Mobile App

Following discussion, Councilmember Michele McCraw introduced Resolution 05.118.25, being seconded by Councilmember Kelly Langness , that:

WHEREAS, Improved Communications is a goal of the City's Strategic Plan. The Administration Committee had a presentation several months ago on the Community Voice Mobile Application. Council members further had a chance to learn more at the Tri-City Meeting on how the City of Crookston is utilizing the App. Community Voice bills themselves as the one-stop mobile app for increasing community engagement, transparency, and efficiency. Features include a community calendar, business directory, push notifications, community info & services, nearby events, volunteer listings, community map with markers, community resources, community news, and reporting and survey options.

Individual businesses, governmental entities, nonprofits, etc. will have their own login credentials to post their events and news to this App. It is hoped that it becomes the go-to place where citizens of Thief River Falls and visitors can access information about events and community news that they are looking for.

WHEREAS, • The City continuously hears citizens commenting that they are not aware of events happening in the city, and the desire to be notified about city service disruptions, etc.
• The City's Strategic Plan calls for an improvement in communications.
• In using this App, the City hopes to increase an engaged audience for local events and happenings, decrease miscommunication, and provide a one-stop platform for all community resources, services and information.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED Approve the City Administrator to enter into a contract with Community Voice Mobile Application at a start-up cost of $10,000 and yearly maintenance fees of $3,500.

On vote being taken, the resolution was passed. Bolduc voted against.

RESOLUTION NO. 05.119.25: Second Reading for Amendment to the Comprehensive Plan

Councilmember Kelly Langness motioned, being seconded by Councilmember Steve Narverud to call for the second reading of an ordinance of

WHEREAS, A public hearing was held during a special meeting of the Planning and Zoning Commission at 5:00 p.m. on Wednesday, April 30, 2025. Following the hearing, the Commission voted 4–1 to recommend approval to the City Council.

This is a State Statute required procedural process to ensure that the proposed zoning change for this parcel matches with the City's Land Use Plan. The Proposed Land Use Plan adopted in 2019 shows the proposed use of the parcel as Medium-High Density Residential. Amending this Land Use Plan in the 2040 Comp Plan to High Density Residential would allow for the rezoning of the parcel to an (R-4) Multi-family Residential District. For the property to be rezoned, the proposed zoning classification must match the proposed land use designated in the comprehensive plan. The city's zoning regulations reference certain aspects of the comprehensive plan for compatibility.

The legal description of this parcel is as follows:

CERTIFICATE OF SURVEY
PART OF LOTS 18, 19, & 20, BLOCK 3, OAK HAVEN SUBDIVISION;
PART OF THE NW1/4 OF SEC. 9, T. 153 N., R. 43 W. OF THE
5TH PRINCIPAL MERIDIAN, PENNINGTON COUNTY, MN

PROPOSED LEGAL DESCRIPTION
That part of Lots 18, 19, and 20, Block 3, Oak Haven Subdivision; and that part of the Northwest Quarter of Section 9, Township 153 North, Range 43 West of the Fifth Principal Meridian, all in Pennington County, Minnesota, described as follows: Commencing at the northwest corner of said Northwest Quarter; thence North 88 degrees 40 minutes 08 seconds East, assumed bearing, along the north line of said Northwest Quarter, a distance of 1493.49 feet, more or less, to the northerly extension of the easterly right of way line of Sanford Parkway; thence South 01 degree 20 minutes 00 seconds East 33.00 feet to the point of beginning; thence North 88 degrees 40 minutes 08 seconds East 403.71 feet, more or less, to the west line of said Oak Haven Subdivision; thence South 01 degree 19 minutes 47 seconds East, along said west line, a distance of 194.75 feet; thence South 88 degrees 40 minutes 13 seconds West, along said west line, a distance of 53.91 feet; thence South 02 degrees 15 minutes 53 seconds West, along said west line, a distance of 60.12 feet, more or less, to the northwest corner of said Lot 20; thence North 88 degrees 40 minutes 13 seconds East, along the north line of said Lot 20, a distance of 150.00 feet, more or less, to the northeast corner of said Lot 20; thence South 02 degrees 15 minutes 53 seconds West, along the east line of said Block 3, a distance of 192.45 feet; thence on a tangential curve, along the east line of said Block 3, being concave to the east and having a radius of 270.00 feet, a delta of 19 degrees 16 minutes 53 seconds, and an arc length of 90.86 feet; thence South 88 degrees 40 minutes 13 seconds West 385.40 feet, more or less, to the easterly right of way line o Sanford Parkway; thence North 21 degrees 19 minutes 55 seconds West, along the easterly right of way line of Sanford Parkway, a distance of 233.10 feet; thence on a tangential curve, along the easterly right of way line of Sanford Parkway, being concave to the northeast and having a radius of 470.00 feet, a delta of 19 degrees 59 minutes 55 seconds, and an arc length of 164.05 feet; thence North 01 degree 20 minutes 00 seconds, along the easterly right of way line of Sanford Parkway, a distance of 156.96 feet, more or less, to the point of beginning. The above-described parcel contains 5.07 acres, more or less, and is subject to any easements, restrictions, or reservations of record, if any.

WHEREAS, • The City may not rezone the subject property without first amending its comprehensive plan.

- The proposed project is a Market Rate Apartment development and therefore must be approved by a two-thirds vote of all of the members of the Council.

Except for amendments to permit affordable housing development, a resolution to amend or adopt a comprehensive plan must be approved by a two-thirds vote of all of the members. Amendments to permit an affordable housing development are approved by a simple majority of all of the members. For purposes of this subdivision, "affordable housing development" means a development in which at least 20 percent of the residential units are restricted to occupancy for at least ten years by residents whose household income at the time of initial occupancy does not exceed 60 percent of area median income, adjusted for household size, as determined by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development, and with respect to rental units, the rents for affordable units do not exceed 30 percent of 60 percent of area median income, adjusted for household size, as determined annually by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development.

- Our 2024 Housing Study showed a vacancy rate of 0.3%; 5% is considered a healthy housing market.
- The building site is on a high-traffic road, not ideal for single-family homes, making multi-family housing a more sensible fit.
- It buffers residential homes from commercial zones, following smart growth principles.
- Our businesses need employees to maintain operations and grow in Thief River Falls, but people cannot move here to work if they cannot find housing.
- The utilities are at this site. The Thief River Falls Land Use Plan proposes an orderly growth pattern that avoids the premature extension of utilities and services.
- It takes a willing developer, a willing land seller and the required capital to all come together to make a project occur. All three are in place with a generous $3.5 million contribution by Digi-Key to the Minnesota State Housing Tax Credit Program. Thief River Falls has had several projects stall over the last five years because the current cost of construction makes the projects financially unfeasible.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED approve the second reading to amend the 2040 Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map for the 5.07 acres, more or less, that is being proposed for the Edge multi-family housing development from a Medium-High Density Residential designation to a High-Density Residential designation. This action will be contingent upon the rezoning approval.

On vote being taken, the resolution was passed. Roll call vote - Aye: Lorenson, McCraw, Narverud, Langness, Pream, Aarstad. Nay: Arlt, Bolduc.

RESOLUTION NO. 05.120.25: Approve Amendment to the Comprehensive Plan

Following discussion, Councilmember Steve Narverud introduced Resolution 05.120.25, being seconded by Councilmember Kelly Langness , that:

WHEREAS, A public hearing was held during a special meeting of the Planning and Zoning Commission at 5:00 p.m. on Wednesday, April 30, 2025. Following the hearing, the Commission voted 4–1 to recommend approval to the City Council.

This is a State Statute required procedural process to ensure that the proposed zoning change for this parcel matches with the City's Land Use Plan. The Proposed Land Use Plan adopted in 2019 shows the proposed use of the parcel as Medium-High Density Residential. Amending this Land Use Plan in the 2040 Comp Plan to High Density Residential would allow for the rezoning of the parcel to an (R-4) Multi-family Residential District. For the property to be rezoned, the proposed zoning classification must match the proposed land use designated in the comprehensive plan. The city's zoning regulations reference certain aspects of the comprehensive plan for compatibility.

The legal description of this parcel is as follows:

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WHEREAS, • The City may not rezone the subject property without first amending its comprehensive plan.
• The proposed project is a Market Rate Apartment development and therefore must be approved by a two-thirds vote of all of the members of the Council.
Except for amendments to permit affordable housing development, a resolution to amend or adopt a comprehensive plan must be approved by a two-thirds vote of all of the members. Amendments to permit an affordable housing development are approved by a simple majority of all of the members. For purposes of this subdivision, "affordable housing development" means a development in which at least 20 percent of the residential units are restricted to occupancy for at least ten years by residents whose household income at the time of initial occupancy does not exceed 60 percent of area

median income, adjusted for household size, as determined by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development, and with respect to rental units, the rents for affordable units do not exceed 30 percent of 60 percent of area median income, adjusted for household size, as determined annually by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development.

- Our 2024 Housing Study showed a vacancy rate of 0.3%; 5% is considered a healthy housing market.
- The building site is on a high-traffic road, not ideal for single-family homes, making multi-family housing a more sensible fit.
- It buffers residential homes from commercial zones, following smart growth principles.
- Our businesses need employees to maintain operations and grow in Thief River Falls, but people cannot move here to work if they cannot find housing.
- The utilities are at this site. The Thief River Falls Land Use Plan proposes an orderly growth pattern that avoids the premature extension of utilities and services.
- It takes a willing developer, a willing land seller and the required capital to all come together to make a project occur. All three are in place with a generous $3.5 million contribution by Digi-Key to the Minnesota State Housing Tax Credit Program. Thief River Falls has had several projects stall over the last five years because the current cost of construction makes the projects financially unfeasible.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED approve amending the 2040 Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map for the 5.07 acres, more or less, that is being proposed for the Edge multi-family housing development from a Medium-High Density Residential designation to a High-Density Residential designation. This action will be contingent upon the rezoning approval.

On vote being taken, the resolution was passed. Roll call vote - Aye: Lorenson, McCraw, Narverud, Langness, Pream, Aarstad. Nay: Arlt, Bolduc.

Upon suggestion from City Attorney Delray Sparby, Councilmembers provided a statement of rational explaining the reason for their vote:

Mike Lorenson (Mayor, Aye vote): My core reason is the amount of housing we need in the area. We have employment opportunities all over the city and businesses are struggling for people to find a place to live. We are in a very bad position right now as far as housing.

Jason Aarestad (At-Large, Aye vote): We are in a dire emergency need for housing. A lot of downtown businesses are struggling; we need the population. We can't move forward without population. We need this.

Steve Narverud (At-Large, Aye vote): This is the way you build things; to put a buffer between residential and commercial areas. Our utilities are available there and it reduces the cost significantly.

Megan Arlt (Ward 1, Nay vote): I believe it would adversely affect property values in the neighborhood.

Julie Bolduc (Ward 2, Nay vote): I don't agree with the location, it'll affect the families there. I feel it was a last-minute placement. There are other places to build it.

Kelly Langness (Ward 3, Yay vote): This is my Ward, we are in desperate need of housing and need the population to grow Thief River.

Michele McCraw (Ward 4, Yay vote): We definitely are in need of additional housing. Businesses are looking to hire, we need housing.

Scott Pream (Ward 5, Yay vote): We are in need of housing we need it bad.

RESOLUTION NO. 05.121.25: Second Reading to Rezone Edge Parcel from AG to R-4

Councilmember Kelly Langness motioned, being seconded by Councilmember Steve Narverud to call for the second reading of an ordinance of

WHEREAS, The City of Thief River Falls' 2024 Housing Study showed a housing need for 110 to 121 housing units per year; 26 to 30 of those units each year being market rate and affordable rental housing. The proposed 65-unit apartment building would be market rate. This is a private development with corporate sponsorship and a request for tax increment financing. The 2040 Comp. Plan calls for medium-high density residential in that area. But, with the building of the bridge across the river on Mark Blvd. and the designation as a truck bypass route for Hwy. 59, the character of the area has changed, and it is less desirable to locate single family housing along Mark Blvd. With commercial property directly across Sanford Parkway to the west, multi-family housing is traditionally used as a buffer between commercial and low-density single-family homes.

A Public Hearing was held at a Special Meeting of the Planning and Zoning Commission at 5:00 pm on Wednesday, April 30, 2025, and was recommended on a 4-1 vote by the Planning and Zoning Commission to recommend approval by the City Council.

The legal description of this parcel is as follows:

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seconds East 33.00 feet to the point of beginning; thence North 88 degrees 40 minutes 08 seconds East 403.71 feet, more or less, to the west line of said Oak Haven Subdivision; thence South 01 degree 19 minutes 47 seconds East, along said west line, a distance of 194.75 feet; thence South 88 degrees 40 minutes 13 seconds West, along said west line, a distance of 53.91 feet; thence South 02 degrees 15 minutes 53 seconds West, along said west line, a distance of 60.12 feet, more or less, to the northwest corner of said Lot 20; thence North 88 degrees 40 minutes 13 seconds East, along the north line of said Lot 20, a distance of 150.00 feet, more or less, to the northeast corner of said Lot 20; thence South 02 degrees 15 minutes 53 seconds West, along the east line of said Block 3, a distance of 192.45 feet; thence on a tangential curve, along the east line of said Block 3, being concave to the east and having a radius of 270.00 feet, a delta of 19 degrees 16 minutes 53 seconds, and an arc length of 90.86 feet; thence South 88 degrees 40 minutes 13 seconds West 385.40 feet, more or less, to the easterly right of way line o Sanford Parkway; thence North 21 degrees 19 minutes 55 seconds West, along the easterly right of way line of Sanford Parkway, a distance of 233.10 feet; thence on a tangential curve, along the easterly right of way line of Sanford Parkway, being concave to the northeast and having a radius of 470.00 feet, a delta of 19 degrees 59 minutes 55 seconds, and an arc length of 164.05 feet; thence North 01 degree 20 minutes 00 seconds, along the easterly right of way line of Sanford Parkway, a distance of 156.96 feet, more or less, to the point of beginning. The above-described parcel contains 5.07 acres, more or less, and is subject to any easements, restrictions, or reservations of record, if any.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED approve the second reading for the rezoning application from Edge Housing, LLC, 7539 Front Street NW, Walker, MN 58484, for the rezoning of Part of lots 18, 19, & 20, Block 3, Oak Haven Subdivision, Part of the NW1/4 of Sec. 9. T. 153 N., R. 43 W. of the 5th Principal Meridian, Pennington County, MN. Said parcel, currently owned by Sanford Medical Center, consists of approximately 5.07 acres, and has been assigned a postal address of 1926 Sanford Parkway. Edge Housing LLC is requesting that the property be rezoned from Agricultural District (AG) to (R-4) Multi-family Residential District for the purpose of constructing a three-story 65-unit apartment building.

On vote being taken, the resolution was passed. Roll call vote - Aye: Lorenson, McCraw, Narverud, Langness, Pream, Aarstad. Nay: Arlt, Bolduc.

RESOLUTION NO. 05.122.25: Rezoning of Edge Parcel from AG to R-4

Following discussion, Councilmember Kelly Langness introduced Resolution 05.122.25, being seconded by Councilmember Steve Narverud, that:

WHEREAS, The City of Thief River Falls' 2024 Housing Study showed a housing need for 110 to 121 housing units per year; 26 to 30 of those units each year being market rate and affordable rental housing. The proposed 65-unit apartment building would be market rate. This is a private development with corporate sponsorship and a request for tax increment financing. The 2040 Comp. Plan calls for medium-high density residential in that area. But, with the building of the bridge across the river on Mark Blvd. and the designation as a truck bypass route for Hwy. 59, the character of the area has changed, and it is less desirable to locate single family housing along Mark Blvd. With commercial property directly across Sanford Parkway to the west, multi-family housing is traditionally used as a buffer between commercial and low-density single-family homes.

A Public Hearing was held at a Special Meeting of the Planning and Zoning Commission at 5:00 pm on Wednesday, April 30, 2025, and was recommended on a 4-1 vote by the Planning and Zoning Commission to recommend approval by the City Council.

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5TH PRINCIPAL MERIDIAN, PENNINGTON COUNTY, MN

PROPOSED LEGAL DESCRIPTION
That part of Lots 18, 19, and 20, Block 3, Oak Haven Subdivision; and that part of the Northwest Quarter of Section 9, Township 153 North, Range 43 West of the Fifth Principal Meridian, all in Pennington County, Minnesota, described as follows: Commencing at the northwest corner of said Northwest Quarter; thence North 88 degrees 40 minutes 08 seconds East, assumed bearing, along the north line of said Northwest Quarter, a distance of 1493.49 feet, more or less, to the northerly extension of the easterly right of way line of Sanford Parkway; thence South 01 degree 20 minutes 00 seconds East 33.00 feet to the point of beginning; thence North 88 degrees 40 minutes 08 seconds East 403.71 feet, more or less, to the west line of said Oak Haven Subdivision; thence South 01 degree 19 minutes 47 seconds East, along said west line, a distance of 194.75 feet; thence South 88 degrees 40 minutes 13 seconds West, along said west line, a distance of 53.91 feet; thence South 02 degrees 15 minutes 53 seconds West, along said west line, a distance of 60.12 feet, more or less, to the northwest corner of said Lot 20; thence North 88 degrees 40 minutes 13 seconds East, along the north line of said Lot 20, a distance of 150.00 feet, more or less, to the northeast corner of said Lot 20; thence South 02 degrees 15 minutes 53 seconds West, along the east line of said Block 3, a distance of 192.45 feet; thence on a tangential curve, along the east line of said Block 3, being concave to the east and having a radius of 270.00 feet, a delta of 19 degrees 16 minutes 53 seconds, and an arc length of 90.86 feet; thence South 88 degrees 40 minutes 13 seconds West 385.40 feet, more or less, to the easterly right of way line o Sanford Parkway; thence North 21 degrees 19 minutes 55 seconds West, along the easterly right of way line of Sanford Parkway, a distance of 233.10 feet; thence on a tangential curve, along the easterly right of way line of Sanford Parkway, being concave to the northeast and having a radius of 470.00 feet, a delta of 19 degrees 59 minutes 55 seconds, and an arc length of 164.05 feet; thence North 01 degree 20 minutes 00 seconds, along the easterly right of way line of Sanford Parkway, a distance of 156.96 feet, more or less, to the point of beginning. The above-described parcel contains 5.07 acres, more or less, and is subject to any easements, restrictions, or reservations of record, if any.

WHEREAS, • Thief River Falls needs housing. Our 0.3% vacancy rate is well below a normal vacancy rate of 5 percent.

- Our Housing Study shows a need of 26-30 market rate and affordable rental housing per year until 2035 and an overall housing need of 110 to 121 housing units per year.
- Without housing, we cannot continue to grow our population. We need continued population growth to supply the much-needed workforce to our employers.
- The lack of workforce is hampering the continued growth of our local businesses, stifling expansion plans, and making it difficult to recruit new businesses to our community. This leads to a lack of growth in our taxbase.
- Growth in population to a minimum of 10,000 population is needed for many potential national retailers/restaurants to consider a location in Thief River Falls; amenities that many residents are asking for.
- The new bridge on Mark Blvd across the river allowing Mark Blvd to connect to the east side and the designation of that road as the Hwy. 59 bypass road has changed the character of the area making that location along Mark Blvd less desirable for single family housing.
- There are C-2 Commercial zoned properties across Sanford Parkway to the west. Multi-family housing is a good transition to use as a buffer between commercial and single-family homes.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED approve the rezoning application from Edge Housing, LLC, 7539 Front Street NW, Walker, MN 58484, for the rezoning of Part of lots 18, 19, & 20, Block 3, Oak Haven Subdivision, Part of the NW1/4 of Sec. 9. T. 153 N., R. 43 W. of the 5th Principal Meridian, Pennington County, MN. Said parcel, currently owned by Sanford Medical Center, consists of approximately 5.07 acres, and has been assigned a postal address of 1926 Sanford Parkway. Edge Housing LLC is requesting that the property be rezoned from Agricultural District (AG) to (R-4) Multi-family Residential District for the purpose of constructing a three-story 65-unit apartment building.

On vote being taken, the resolution was passed. Roll call vote - Aye: Lorenson, McCraw, Narverud, Langness, Pream, Aarstad. Nay: Arlt, Bolduc.

SUGGESTED FINDINGS FOR GRANTING ZONING AMENDEMENT REQUEST

In granting a request for a rezoning, the City Council makes the following findings:

1. **That the rezoning conforms to the Comprehensive Plan for the City, as well a, present land uses.** The Comp Plan has been amended to allow high density R-4.
2. **That the rezoning will not impede the normal and orderly development and improvement of surrounding property for uses predominant in the area.**
3. **That the rezoning will no adversely affect property values of adjacent landowners.** There is no proof that property values will be affected by multi-family, in fact, increased employment opportunities and the ongoing housing shortage may even increase home values.
4. **That the rezoning will not impose other undue hardship on adjacent landowners such as noise, electrical display signs, or other nuisances.** There

will not any electrical display signs, or odors, and noise has not been an issue with current properties in the city that D.W. Jones own. Parking lot, lighting is on west side of apartment building and will minimize effect on adjacent landowners.

5. **That necessary utilities be available to serve the use intended. The utilities, water, sewer and electrical, are nearby and more than adequate to serve this area.**
6. **That additional public services needed by the rezoning be considered.** TRF Department heads were consulted on any increase in services. Most indicated no increase in services from the normal services provided. Based off call volumes across the city, the police chief estimates 10 calls per year.
7. **That alternate areas previously zoned for the intended use be considered.** The challenge for TRF is that most of the developable land is owned by other developers waiting for the right market conditions to occur to build their developments. That is still years away as development in outstate Minnesota is not occurring without subsidies. These landowners are not currently willing to sell.
8. **That there is a public need for the proposed land use.** The housing study conducted in 2024 and the demand for employees by our business community clearly indicates that we need housing to be able to continue to grow as a community.

RESOLUTION NO. 05.123.25: Approve Temporary Intoxicating Liquor License for the Fair Board August 2-3, 2025.

Following discussion, Councilmember Julie Bolduc introduced Resolution 05.123.25, being seconded by Councilmember Scott Pream, that:

WHEREAS, Pennington County Fair Association has submitted a Temporary Intoxicating Liquor License Application for the Pennington County Fair Grounds August 2-3, 2025 from noon – 11 pm.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED Approve the Pennington County Fair Association's Temp Intoxicating Liquor License Application.

On vote being taken, the resolution was passed. Langness abstained.

RESOLUTION NO. 05.124.25: Cultural Resource Study

Following discussion, Councilmember Michele McCraw introduced Resolution 05.124.25, being seconded by Councilmember Kelly Langness , that:

WHEREAS, The city of Thief River Falls is currently in the process of relicensing the Thief River Falls Municipal Power Dam Hydroelectric Project, FERC No: P-11546. This is a 30 year license.

The issuance of a license by FERC to TRF is a federal undertaking subject to compliance with relevant federal historic preservation laws. In particular, as the lead federal agency for the undertaking, FERC must comply with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) of 1966, as amended (54 United States Code §300101 et seq.), which requires federal agencies to take into account the effects of their undertakings on historic properties. This Cultural Resources Study will fulfill the requirement.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED To approve HDR Engineering, Inc. (HDR) to complete a Cultural Resources Study in order to facilitate the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) relicensing of the City's Municipal Power Dam Hydroelectric Project.

On vote being taken, the resolution was unanimously passed.

RESOLUTION NO. 05.125.25: Lafave Beach Bash

Following discussion, Councilmember Julie Bolduc introduced Resolution 05.125.25, being seconded by Councilmember Michele McCraw, that:

WHEREAS, City ordinance does not allow for food trucks to use city property. Special events have obtained permission from a City Council vote on a single request basis.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED Allow up to three Food Trucks to be present and operating in a pre-approved location in the municipal lot that is adjacent to Lafave Park (beach) during a TRF Chamber of Commerce organized event called *Lafave Beach Bash* on Thursday, June 26th, 2025 from 5-9 p.m.

On vote being taken, the resolution was unanimously passed.

RESOLUTION NO. 05.126.25: Email Security

Following discussion, Councilmember Scott Pream introduced Resolution 05.126.25, being seconded by Councilmember Kelly Langness , that:

WHEREAS, To enhance the City's protections against phishing, malware, and impersonation threats, I recommend implementing an additional layer of email security. This measure will significantly strengthen our defenses and reduce our risk exposure.

WHEREAS, With our existing MDR solution, this added protection will integrate seamlessly and provide deeper, more comprehensive email threat detection.
Key features include:

- Account Compromise Detection
- Malware Identification
- Malicious URL Blocking
- Impersonation Protection
- Spam Filtering
- Data Loss Control
- Post-Delivery Threat Mitigation

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED Approve the City of Thief River Falls' purchase of email security for additional layer of email security.

On vote being taken, the resolution was unanimously passed.

RESOLUTION NO. 05.127.25: Surplus Property

Following discussion, Councilmember Kelly Langness introduced Resolution 05.127.25, being seconded by Councilmember Megan Arlt, that:

WHEREAS, The City of Thief River Falls continually compiles a list of no longer needed equipment and miscellaneous to be declared surplus by the City Council so items may be disposed of through the Public Surplus Auction System.
WHEREAS, The following have been submitted by Department Heads for Surplus Declaration :

- 2014 International Trash Compacting Truck
- 2015 Dodge half ton pickup
- 2004 Chevrolet Tahoe
- 2004 White/GMC tandem truck and Box
- 2001 Jeep Wrangler
- Honda portable Generator
- John Deere Z Track zero turn mower
- Office partitions and desks from the Depot remodel

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED Approve Declare the listed items Surplus Property to be sold at Public Auction.

On vote being taken, the resolution was unanimously passed.

RESOLUTION NO. 05.128.25: Memorandum of Understanding agreement with Pennington County

Following discussion, Councilmember Scott Pream introduced Resolution 05.128.25, being seconded by Councilmember Michele McCraw, that:

WHEREAS, The project is a community effort that combines county, city and township rights-of-way. There have been public input meetings, public works committee and city council discussions to educate the community about the improved infrastructure project.

WHEREAS, The city portion is to be based on a 50% cost share with Pennington County of the joint segment of the project. This amount is to be capped and not to exceed $85,000.00.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED To enter a Memorandum of Understanging with Pennington County of support in design approval and fiscal commitment to the scheduled 2026 construction project of CASH #11 and a portion of Kendall Ave S.

On vote being taken, the resolution was unanimously passed.

RESOLUTION NO. 05.129.25: Remove and replace sidewalk at the Ralph Englestad Arena

Following discussion, Councilmember Megan Arlt introduced Resolution 05.129.25, being seconded by Councilmember Steve Narverud, that:

WHEREAS, Operations are currently carried out to replace the East Entrance steps and sidewalk at the Ralph Englestad Arena.

WHEREAS, Adjacent sidewalk was deemed in need of replacement. The contractor was willing to perform additional work before leaving the job.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED Approve the purchase of additional sidewalk replacement at the REA in the amount of $5,760.00.

On vote being taken, the resolution was unanimously passed.

RESOLUTION NO. 05.130.25: Approval Rivers & Rails On Sale Intoxicating License Application

Following discussion, Councilmember Kelly Langness introduced Resolution 05.130.25, being seconded by Councilmember Julie Bolduc, that:

WHEREAS, Rivers & Rails has applied to change their license from a Brewery to a Brew Pub with the State of Minnesota and On-Sale Intoxicating License with the City of Thief River Falls.

WHEREAS, The change in license means Rivers & Rails will no longer sell wholesale; anything produced must be consumed on-site or off-site wholesale. Rivers & Rails will also apply with the State of MN for a Buyer's Card; they will no longer have a Tap Room License.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED Approve a new On-Sale Intoxicating License application for Rivers & Rails.

On vote being taken, the resolution was unanimously passed.

RESOLUTION NO. 05.131.25: Approve Appointment of Jim Retka

Following discussion, Councilmember Kelly Langness introduced Resolution 05.131.25, being seconded by Councilmember Julie Bolduc, that:

WHEREAS, Merle Lorenson stepped down from the board leaving a vacancy. Mayor Mike Lorenson held interviews with six applicants. Lorenson appointed Jim Retka whom accepted.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED Approve the appointment of Jim Retka to Planning & Zoning Board. The term will be effective immediately, expiring January 31, 2028.

On vote being taken, the resolution was unanimously passed.

RESOLUTION NO. 05.132.25: Pennington County Fair Association's Temp Intoxicating Liquor License App

Following discussion, Councilmember Jason Aarestad introduced Resolution 05.132.25, being seconded by Councilmember Michele McCraw, that:

WHEREAS, The Pennington County Fair Association will host an event at the Pennington County Fair Grounds Band Shelter on August 2-3, 2025 and has applied for a temporary liquor license.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED Approve the Pennington County Fair Association's Temp Intoxicating Liquor License Application.

On vote being taken, the resolution was passed. Langness abstained.

RESOLUTION NO. 05.133.25: Approve Beer in the Park Permit for Lafave Beach Bash - Chamber of Commerce

Following discussion, Councilmember Michele McCraw introduced Resolution 05.133.25, being seconded by Councilmember Megan Arlt, that:

WHEREAS, The Chamber of Commerce will be hosting its first annual Lafave Beach Bash. This is a family-friendly free event for the community. The event will last from 5-9 pm.

WHEREAS, An RCA was presented to Council to approve up to three (3) food trucks be allowed in the parking lot of Lafave Beach Park.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED Approve the Chamber of Commerce Lafave Beach Bash Beer in the Park Permit for June 26, 2025.

On vote being taken, the resolution was unanimously passed.

COUNCIL BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS REPORTS

UPCOMING MEETINGS

- City Council - June 3 at 5:30 pm in Council Chambers
- Public Utilities Committee - June 9 at 7 am in Room 101
- Public Safety Committee - June 9 at 4:30 pm in Room 101
- Administrative Committee - June 10 at 4:30 pm in Room 101
- Public Works Committee - June 11 at 4:30 pm in Room 101
- City Council - June 17 at 5:30 pm in Council Chambers

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

- Investment Summary
- City Offices are closed Monday, May 26 for Memorial Day. No Garbage pickup. Utility bills can be dropped off in the grey mailbox in the City Hall parking lot.

- Reminder City Hall Summer Hours begin May 27th. M-F 7am-4:30pm. F 7am - Noon.

  Bolduc noted Memorial Day is very important to her and her family and reminds everyone to show honor on Monday to our fallen soldiers and their families. Pream also requested community members and council to visit the Greenwood Cemetery to see the display in honor or Memorial Day.

- Mayor Update

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further discussion, Councilmember Scott Pream motioned being seconded by Councilmember Kelly Langness to adjourn at 6:47 pm. On vote being taken, the Chair declared the motion unanimously carried.

____ ________Mayor Mike Lorenson

ATTEST: City Administrator Angela Philipp ______________________________________