

MINUTES, REGULAR MEETING
CITY COUNCIL, CITY OF LA CRESCENT, MINNESOTA
JANUARY 26, 2026

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, the second meeting of the City Council of the City of La Crescent for the month of January was called to order by Mayor Mike Poellinger at 5:00 PM in the La Crescent Community Building, La Crescent, Minnesota, on Monday, January 26, 2026.

Upon a roll call taken and tallied by the City Clerk, the following members were present: Members Cherryl Jostad, Chris Langen, Teresa O'Donnell-Ebner, Dale Williams, and Mayor Mike Poellinger. Members absent: None. Also present were, City Administrator Bill Waller, Assistant Attorney Kayla Schmitz, Public Works Director Tyler Benish, Finance Director Kara Tarrence, Sustainability Coordinator Jason Ludwigson, Community Development Director Larry Kirch (via Zoom), and City Clerk Angie Boettcher.

Also in attendance was Tammy Omdal from Northland Securities.

ITEM 1 – CONSENT AGENDA

At this time, the Mayor read the following items to be considered as part of the Consent Agenda for this regular meeting:

- 1.1 MINUTES – JANUARY 12, 2026
- 1.2 BILLS PAYABLE THROUGH – JANUARY 24, 2026

At the conclusion of the reading of the Consent Agenda, Mayor Poellinger asked if the Council wished to have any of the items removed from the Consent Agenda for further discussion. Prior to the meeting City Council members were provided with a supplemental page to the bills payable.

Member O'Donnell-Ebner made a motion, seconded by Member Langen, as follows:

A MOTION TO APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA WITH THE ADDITION OF THE SUPPLEMENTAL PAGE TO THE BILLS PAYABLE.

Upon a roll call vote taken and tallied by the City Clerk, the following Members voted in favor thereof, viz;

Cherryl Jostad	Yes
Chris Langen	Yes
Teresa O'Donnell-Ebner	Yes
Dale Williams	Yes

Mayor Poellinger

Yes

and none voted against the same. The motion was declared duly carried.

ITEM 3.1 – REVIEW FINANCE PLAN FOR 2026A BOND ISSUE

Tammy Omdal from Northland Securities reviewed the Finance Plan for the City’s proposed 2026A bond issue with City Council. As proposed, the 2026A bond issue will include funds for the costs of the 2026 street reconstruction projects. The projects include Walnut Street, Redwood Drive, and Maple Street. The bond issue also includes funds for the costs of replacing portions of the water and sewer utilities in the streets that will be reconstructed in 2026. The final portion of the 2026A bond issue includes funds for the cost of land acquisition that is included in the City’s Five-Year Capital Improvement Plan.

ITEM 3.2 – BOND SALE TRIGGER RESOLUTION

City Council reviewed a Resolution approving the issuance of the 2026A General Obligation Bonds. It was recommended that City Council adopt the resolution as presented. Following discussion, Member O’Donnell-Ebner introduced the following resolution and moved its passage and adoption:

EXTRACT OF MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LA CRESCENT, MINNESOTA

HELD: January 26, 2026

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, a regular or special meeting of the City Council of the City of La Crescent, Houston and Winona Counties, Minnesota, was duly held at La Crescent Community Building on January 26, 2026, at 5:00 P.M.

Member _____ introduced the following resolution and moved its adoption:

RESOLUTION NO. 01-26-04

**APPROVING THE AUTHORIZATION FOR THE ISSUANCE OF
GENERAL OBLIGATION BONDS, SERIES 2026A**

A. WHEREAS, the City Council (the "Council") of the City of La Crescent, Minnesota (the "City") hereby finds and declares that it is necessary and expedient for the City to sell and issue its fully registered General Obligation Bonds, Series 2026A in the total aggregate principal amount not to exceed \$5,000,000 (herein, the "Bonds"). The proceeds of the Bonds will be used to finance (i) street reconstruction projects; (ii) utility improvements; and (iii) the acquisition of land for the construction of municipal facilities for the City.

B. WHEREAS, the Council desires to proceed with the sale of the Bonds by direct negotiation with Northland Securities, Inc. (herein, "NSI"). NSI will purchase the Bonds in an arm's-length commercial transaction with the City.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City of La Crescent, Minnesota, as follows:

1. Authorization. The Mayor and City Administrator are hereby authorized to approve the sale of the Bonds in an aggregate principal amount not to exceed \$5,000,000 and to execute a bond purchase agreement for the purchase of the Bonds with NSI, provided the true interest cost is less than 4.80%.

2. Meeting. Upon approval of the sale of the Bonds by the Mayor and the City Administrator, the Council will take action at a regular or special scheduled meeting thereafter to adopt the necessary approving resolutions as prepared by the City's bond counsel.

3. Official Statement. NSI is authorized to prepare an Official Statement related to the sale of the Bonds.

4. Expiration. If the Mayor and City Administrator have not approved the sale of the bonds and executed the related bond purchase agreement by June 30, 2026, this resolution shall expire.

The motion for the adoption of the foregoing resolution was duly seconded by Member _____, and upon vote being taken thereon, the following voted in favor thereof:

and the following voted against the same:

Whereupon said resolution was declared duly passed and adopted.
STATE OF MINNESOTA
HOUSTON AND WINONA COUNTIES
CITY OF LA CRESCENT

I, the undersigned, being the duly qualified and acting City Administrator of the City of La Crescent, Minnesota, DO HEREBY CERTIFY that I have compared the attached and foregoing extract of minutes with the original thereof on file in my office, and that the same is a full, true and complete transcript of the minutes of a meeting of the City Council duly called and held on the date therein indicated, insofar as such minutes relate to the authorization for the issuance of General Obligation Bonds, Series 2026A.

WITNESS my hand on January 26, 2026

City Administrator

The foregoing motion was duly seconded by Member Langen and upon a roll call vote taken and tallied by the City Clerk, the following Members voted in favor thereof, viz;

Cherryl Jostad	Yes
Chris Langen	Yes
Teresa O'Donnell-Ebner	Yes
Dale Williams	Yes
Mayor Poellinger	Yes

and none voted against the same. The motion was declared duly carried.

ITEM 3.3 – REVIEW PINE CREEK IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

Sustainability Coordinator Jason Ludwigson reviewed with City Council an updated report on the Pine Creek Stream Restoration Project. Included in the packet was the pre-and-post construction Bank Erosion Hazard Index (BEHI) compiled by University of La Crosse students Jackie Oetter and Maggie Scrobel along with Steve Herrington from the Nature Conservancy. This item was informational only. No action was required.

ITEM 3.4 – PHASE 2 STONEY POINT RESTORATION PROJECT CONTRACT

Sustainability Coordinator Jason Ludwigson reviewed with City Council a contract agreement between the City of La Crescent and Natural Resource Preservation, LLC for Phase II of the Forest Habitat Restoration Project at Stoney Point. This project is funded by the Conservation Partners Legacy grant through the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources. The CPL grant amount is \$49,875. It was recommended that City Council approve the contract agreement. Following discussion, Member Williams made a motion, seconded by Member Jostad as follows:

MOTION TO APPROVE THE CONTRACT AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE CITY OF LA CRESCENT AND THE NATURAL RESOURCE PRESERVATION, LLC FOR PHASE II OF THE FOREST HABITAT RESTORATION PROJECT AT STONEY POINT WITH THE FUNDING OF \$49,875 COMING FROM THE CONSERVATION PARTNERS LEGACY GRANT.

Upon a roll call vote taken and tallied by the City Clerk, the following Members voted in favor thereof, viz;

Cherryl Jostad	Yes
Chris Langen	Yes
Teresa O'Donnell-Ebner	Yes
Dale Williams	Yes
Mayor Poellinger	Yes

and none voted against the same. The motion was declared duly carried.

ITEM 3.5 – WINTER SALT WEEK PROCLAMATION

City Council reviewed for approval a proclamation recognizing the week of January 26th through January 30th, 2026, as Winter Salt Week. Following discussion, Member Jostad made a motion, seconded by Member O’Donnell-Ebner as follows:

MOTION TO PROCLAIM THE WEEK OF JANUARY 26TH THROUGH JANUARY 30TH, 2026, AS WINTER SALT WEEK.

Upon a roll call vote taken and tallied by the City Clerk, the following Members voted in favor thereof, viz;

Cherryl Jostad	Yes
Chris Langen	Yes
Teresa O’Donnell-Ebner	Yes
Dale Williams	Yes
Mayor Poellinger	Yes

and none voted against the same. The motion was declared duly carried.

ITEM 3.6 – CONSULTATION AGREEMENT – DIRECT PAY TAX CREDIT

Sustainability Coordinator Jason Ludwigson reviewed with City Council an Adoption Agreement with Deloitte Tax. Deloitte Tax has contracted with the State of Minnesota to provide tax filing services for Minnesota communities with the elective pay (direct pay) clean energy tax credits. The City has seven projects that will receive the elective pay (direct pay) clean energy tax credits. The tax credits amount to \$123,758.80. The City would like to take advantage of the no-cost services of Deloitte Tax for filing the tax credits. It was recommended that City Council approve the Adoption Agreement and authorize City Staff signatures. Following discussion, Member O’Donnell-Ebner made a motion, seconded by Member Langen as follows:

MOTION TO APPROVE THE ADOPTION AGREEMENT WITH DELOITTE TAX TO PROVIDE TAX FILING SERVICES FOR THE CITY’S ELECTIVE PAY (DIRECT PAY) CLEAN ENERGY TAX CREDITS AND AUTHORIZE CITY STAFF SIGNATURES.

Upon a roll call vote taken and tallied by the City Clerk, the following Members voted in favor thereof, viz;

Chris Langen	Yes
Teresa O’Donnell-Ebner	Yes
Dale Williams	Yes
Mayor Poellinger	Yes

and Member Jostad voted against the same. The motion was declared duly carried by a 4-1 vote.

ITEM 3.7 – LCCMR GRANT APPLICATION – LETTER OF SUPPORT ROOT RIVER TRAIL PROJECT

Community Development Director Larry Kirch (via Zoom) reviewed with City Council a letter from the Mayor authorizing the submittal of a Legislative Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCCMR) grant application for the Root River Trail extension project. The application is similar to last year’s application. The Minnesota LCCMR program covers seventy-five percent (75%) of the costs. The decision on the LCCMR grant is made in the summer of 2027. The application seeks funding for the planning, public engagement, environmental review process, and preliminary engineering design for the final eighteen (18) miles of the Root River Trail from La Crescent to Hokah and Houston. The application seeks final design for the six-mile segment between La Crescent and Hokah. The City would also contribute in-kind services for several city staff to administer and undertake the project. This program is reimbursable and the application is due by March 18, 2026. It was recommended that City Council approve submission of the letter from the Mayor for the application process. Following discussion, Member O’Donnell-Ebner made a motion, seconded by Member Williams as follows:

MOTION TO APPROVE THE LETTER SIGNED BY THE MAYOR FOR SUBMITTAL TO THE LEGISLATIVE CITIZEN COMMISSION ON MINNESOTA RESOURCES GRANT APPLICATION FOR THE ROOT RIVER TRAIL EXTENSION PROJECT.

Upon a roll call vote taken and tallied by the City Clerk, the following Members voted in favor thereof, viz;

Cherryl Jostad	Yes
Chris Langen	Yes
Teresa O’Donnell-Ebner	Yes
Dale Williams	Yes
Mayor Poellinger	Yes

and none voted against the same. The motion was declared duly carried.

ITEM 3.8 – REVIEW DRAFT 2026 WATER/SEWER DEPARTMENT BUDGETS & PROPOSED RATE INCREASES

City Resident Greg Husmann had an agenda request and addressed the City Council regarding the proposed 2026 water/sewer budget.

Public Works Director Tyler Benish reviewed with City Council drafts of the 2026 Water and Sewer Budgets along with a proposed rate sheet. The proposed water increase includes 5% to the usage fee and a \$1.50 increase to the 5/8" water fixed fee and a \$1.00 increase to all other water fixed fees. The average single-family home uses about 10,000 gallons per quarter. The proposed increase on 10,000 gallons of water would be \$4.55 to \$5.05 per quarter based on meter size. The rate increase is proposed to become effective April 1, 2026. Then in 2027 it was proposed there would be a 5% increase and \$1.00 increase on all water fixed fees. The proposed sewer fee increase would go from \$70.37 per quarter to \$100.00 per quarter. There is also a proposed increase to the rate of usage over 30,000 gallons by \$0.02 per thousand gallons in the spring quarter. This item was informational only. No action was required.

ITEM 3.9 – REVIEW CITY ADMINISTRATOR SEARCH PROCESS

City Administrator Bill Waller provided City Council with an update on the search process for a new City Administrator. The deadline to apply was January 16, 2026. The City received nineteen applications. The Personnel Committee will be reviewing and scoring the applications with Finance Director Kara Tarrence taking Administrator Waller's place in this process. The names of the finalists will be presented to the City Council at either the February 9th or February 23rd City Council meeting. At that time, the City Council will call for a special City Council meeting in March for the purpose of conducting the interviews. This item was informational only. No action was required.

ITEM 3.10 – 2026 MEAL ALLOWANCE REIMBURSEMENT RATES

Finance Director Kara Tarrence reviewed with City Council the City's current approved meal allowance expense reimbursement set at \$31.00 per day. The U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) has set the 2026 meal allowance at \$63.00 per day including tax and tip. The GSA rates are determined based on cost of living and historical travel data. It was recommended that City Council approve increasing the meal allowance to \$63.00 per day to align with the GSA approved 2026 rate. Following discussion, Member Jostad made a motion, seconded by Member Langen as follows:

MOTION TO APPROVE INCREASING THE MEAL ALLOWANCE REIMBURSEMENT TO \$63.00 PER DAY INCLUDING TAX AND TIP PER THE U.S. GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION (GSA) GUIDELINES WITH THE FOLLOWING ALLOTMENTS, \$16.00 FOR BREAKFAST, \$19.00 FOR LUNCH, AND \$28.00 FOR DINNER.

Upon a roll call vote taken and tallied by the City Clerk, the following Members voted in favor thereof, viz;

Cherryl Jostad	Yes
Chris Langen	Yes
Teresa O'Donnell-Ebner	Yes
Dale Williams	Yes

Mayor Poellinger

Yes

and none voted against the same. The motion was declared duly carried.

ITEM 3.11 – LIONS CLUB CANDLELIGHT HIKE REQUEST

City Council reviewed a letter from Police Chief Ahlschlager regarding the 5th Annual La Crescent Lions “Frozen Apple” Candlelight Trail Hike. The Lions Club is requesting permission to hold this event on Saturday, February 14, 2026, from 5:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at Veterans Park and utilizing Eagle Bluff Access Trail(s). The Lions Club also requests permission to:

- Utilize a UTV on the trail to assist with event setup and take down
- Assistance from the City Police Department officers and reserve unit for traffic control, parking management, and barricades at the upper parking lot at Vets Park
- Assistance from the City Public Works Department to refrain from plowing the Eagle Bluff Access trail for at least one month before the event and assist with providing three garbage cans and three or four five-gallon pails of sand.

It was recommended that City Council approve the event requests. Following discussion, Member Williams made a motion, seconded by Member Langen as follows:

MOTION TO APPROVE THE 5TH ANNUAL LA CRESCENT LIONS “FROZEN APPLE” CANDLELIGHT TRAIL HIKE TO BE HELD ON SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 14TH, 2026, FROM 5:30 P.M. TO 8:00 P.M. AT VETERANS PARK AND ASSISTANCE FROM CITY DEPARTMENTS AS STATED.

Upon a roll call vote taken and tallied by the City Clerk, the following Members voted in favor thereof, viz;

Cherryl Jostad	Yes
Chris Langen	Yes
Dale Williams	Yes
Mayor Poellinger	Yes

and Member O’Donnell-Ebner abstained. The motion was declared duly carried by a 4-0 vote.

ITEM 3.12 – CRUCIFIXION SCHOOL MARDI GRAS EVENT REQUEST

City Council reviewed a letter from Police Chief Luke Ahlschlager regarding the Crucifixion School organizing its annual Mardi Gras Event to be held on Monday, February 16, 2026. The school is requesting the La Crescent Police Department donate a “Ride To School” with a police officer as a prize. It was recommended that City Council approve the donation request. Following discussion, Member Williams made a motion, seconded by Member O’Donnell-Ebner as follows:

MOTION TO APPROVE THE LA CRESCENT POLICE DEPARTMENT TO DONATE A “RIDE TO SCHOOL” WITH A POLICE OFFICER AS A PRIZE FOR THE CRUCIFIXION SCHOOL MARDI GRAS EVENT TO BE HELD ON MONDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 2026.

Upon a roll call vote taken and tallied by the City Clerk, the following Members voted in favor thereof, viz;

Cherryl Jostad	Yes
Chris Langen	Yes
Teresa O'Donnell-Ebner	Yes
Dale Williams	Yes
Mayor Poellinger	Yes

and none voted against the same. The motion was declared duly carried.

ITEM 3.13 – POLLING PLACE ACCESSIBILITY GRANT AGREEMENT

Public Works Director Tyler Benish reviewed with City Council a polling place accessibility grant agreement. The City was awarded a polling place accessibility grant from the State of Minnesota for a push button activated door opener at the La Crescent Community Arena. The Arena is the polling place for two precincts. The grant award is \$2,659.61, forty-nine percent (49%) of the project. The total project cost is \$5,390. The grant amount is prorated based on the number of approved applications. The project will be completed in 2026 prior to the elections. It was recommended that the City Council approve the grant agreement and authorize the City Administrator and Mayor to sign the grant agreement and authorize \$2,730.39 from the Capital Outlay – buildings and structures in the 2026 general fund budget to be used to match the grant funds. Following discussion, Member O'Donnell-Ebner made a motion, seconded by Member Langen as follows:

MOTION TO APPROVE THE POLLING PLACE ACCESSIBILITY GRANT AGREEMENT FOR \$2,659.61 AWARDED FROM THE STATE OF MINNESOTA FOR A PUSH BUTTON ACTIVATED DOOR OPENER AT THE LA CRESCENT COMMUNITY ARENA AND TO AUTHORIZE \$2,730.39 BE USED FROM THE CAPITAL OUTLAY - BUILDING AND STRUCTURES IN THE 2026 GENERAL FUND BUDGET TO BE USED TO MATCH THE GRANT FUNDS AND AUTHORIZE THE CITY ADMINISTRATOR AND MAYOR TO SIGN THE AGREEMENT.

Upon a roll call vote taken and tallied by the City Clerk, the following Members voted in favor thereof, viz;

Cherryl Jostad	Yes
Chris Langen	Yes
Teresa O'Donnell-Ebner	Yes

Dale Williams	Yes
Mayor Poellinger	Yes

and none voted against the same. The motion was declared duly carried.

6. STAFF CORRESPONDENCE/COMMITTEE UPDATES:

6.1 City Council reviewed a letter from Kristin Mroz, GreenStep Cities & Tribal Nations Coordinator, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency congratulating the City for accomplishing three additional Gold Leaf Challenge actions in 2025.

6.2 EXPLORE LA CROSSE – City Council reviewed the January 20, 2026, Explore La Crosse Board Meeting Agenda and the November 18, 2025, Board Meeting Minutes.

7. CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Chamber of Commerce representative Olivia Lamke was in attendance and provided an update.

8. HOUSTON COUNTY

Houston County Commissioner Cindy Wright was in attendance and provided an update.

There being no further business to come before the Council at this time, Member O’Donnell-Ebner made a motion, seconded by Member Langen to adjourn the meeting. Upon a roll call vote taken and tallied by the City Clerk, the following Members present voted in favor thereof, viz;

Cherryl Jostad	Yes
Chris Langen	Yes
Teresa O’Donnell-Ebner	Yes
Dale Williams	Yes
Mike Poellinger	Yes

and none voted against the same. The motion was declared duly carried and the meeting duly adjourned at 5:53 P.M.

APPROVAL DATE: February 9, 2026.

SIGNED:

Mayor

ATTEST:

City Administrator