

MINUTES, REGULAR MEETING
CITY COUNCIL, CITY OF LA CRESCENT, MINNESOTA
MARCH 24, 2025

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, the second meeting of the City Council of the City of La Crescent for the month of March was called to order by Mayor Mike Poellinger at 5:00 PM in the La Crescent Community Building, La Crescent, Minnesota, on Monday, March 24, 2025.

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, City Attorney Skip Wieser, Sustainability Coordinator Jason Ludwigson, Community Development Coordinator Larry Kirch (via Zoom), and City Clerk Angie Boettcher

ITEM 1 – CONSENT AGENDA

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

- 1.1 MINUTES – MARCH 10, 2025
- 1.2 BILLS PAYABLE THROUGH – MARCH 21, 2025

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.

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

A MOTION TO APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA AS PRESENTED.

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 – SOLAR ON PUBLIC BUILDING GRANT – AQUATIC CENTER

Sustainability Coordinator Jason Ludwigson reviewed with City Council an update regarding the uncertainty that exists at the federal government level for the thirty percent (30%) elective pay tax credit that was going to help cover the solar PV project at the City Aquatic Center. Lawyers from Good Government and Peter Lindstrom with the Minnesota Clean Energy Resources Team are confident projects completed in 2025 will receive the elective pay tax credit. The city cost for the system would be \$8,500 with the elective pay tax credit. Without the elective pay tax credit the city cost for the system would be \$34,000. The City Council approved entering into the agreement with Solar Connection at the second council meeting in January. Due to the uncertainty of the elective pay tax credit at the federal government level, it was asked if the City Council would still like to enter into the agreement with funds coming from the 2022 Capital Equipment Certificate. Details of the project and the proforma that outlined the entire project monetary impact were included for council review. Following discussion, Member O’Donnell-Ebner made a motion, seconded by Member Langen as follows:

MOTION TO APPROVE MOVING FORWARD WITH THE SOLAR PV PROJECT AT THE CITY AQUATIC CENTER WITH THE UNCERTAINTY OF AVAILABLE FEDERAL FUNDS AND IF NECESSARY, WOULD UTILIZE FUNDS FROM THE 2022 CAPITAL EQUIPMENT CERTIFICATE FUNDS FOR THE 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 3.2 – 2025 MnDOT LANDSCAPE PARTNERSHIP PROJECT

Sustainability Coordinator Jason Ludwigson reviewed with City Council the Cooperative Agreement for the proposed Community Roadside Landscape Partnership Project in the city. The fiscal year 2025 project includes improvements adjacent to the new dog park and new native plantings in the mulch beds along Highway 14/61 between the Wagon Wheel Bicycle and Pedestrian bridge and the South 3rd Street Kwik Trip. The 2025 project will include tree plantings, native prairie seeding, and native vegetation plantings. A copy of the project plan was included. There is up to \$8,000 in reimbursable grant funding available for the 2025 project. It was recommended that City Council approve entering into the Cooperative Agreement

for the Community Roadside Landscape partnership. Following discussion, Member Jostad made a motion, seconded by Member Williams as follows:

MOTION TO APPROVE ENTERING INTO THE COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT FOR THE PROPOSED 2025 COMMUNITY ROADSIDE LANDSCAPE PARTNERSHIP 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 3.3 – ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ASSISTANCE GRANT

Sustainability Coordinator Jason Ludwigson reviewed with City Council a letter from the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) stating that the city's Active Transportation Program Planning Assistance application was selected for funding through the MnDOT 2024 Active Transportation Program planning assistance solicitation. The City Council approved a Resolution on December 9, 2024, for submitting the application. Planning assistance will be provided by a MnDOT consultant expected to begin in May of 2025. A timeline of the project was included. This was informational only, no action required.

ITEM 3.4 – PROCLAMATION – BIKE TO SCHOOL DAY

Sustainability Coordinator Jason Ludwigson reviewed with City Council for approval a proclamation recognizing May 7, 2025, as National Bike to School Day in the City of La Crescent. Following discussion, Member O'Donnell-Ebner made a motion, seconded by Member Langen as follows:

MOTION TO APPROVE A PROCLAMATION RECOGNIZING MAY 7, 2025, AS NATIONAL BIKE TO SCHOOL DAY IN THE CITY OF LA CRESCENT.

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 – TREE CARE ORDINANCE

Sustainability Coordinator Jason Ludwigson reviewed with City Council a new Tree Care Ordinance for the City of La Crescent. The goal of the new ordinance is to preserve La Crescent’s high valued trees, while allowing reasonable development to take place and not interfering with how existing property owners use their property. The ordinance has been reviewed numerous times by the Natural Resource Advisory Group and GreenSteps Committee. Following discussion, it was the consensus of the City Council to have recommended changes made to the proposed ordinance, and bring back to a future City Council meeting.

ITEM 3.6 – AUTHORIZE EXPENDITURES – TREE AUGER

Sustainability Coordinator Jason Ludwigson reviewed with City Council that the city was awarded a ReLeaf Community Forestry Grant by the Minnesota DNR in 2023. It was recommended that City Council approve the purchase of a tree auger in the amount of \$4,500 through Bobcat of the Coulee Region utilizing the grant funds. Following discussion, Member O’Donnell-Ebner made a motion, seconded by Member Langen as follows:

MOTION TO APPROVE THE PURCHASE OF A TREE AUGER IN THE AMOUNT OF \$4,500 THROUGH BOBCAT OF THE COULEE REGION UTILIZING GRANT FUNDS FROM THE 2023 RELEAF COMMUNITY FORESTRY GRANT.

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

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

and Member Williams abstained. The motion was declared duly carried by a 4-0 vote.

ITEM 3.7 – AGENDA REQUEST – LIMIT CANNABIS RETAIL STORES

City resident and pre-approved licensed cannabis microbusiness owner Maxwell Weber had an agenda request and spoke with City Council regarding the number of cannabis business licenses allowed within the city. No action was taken by the City Council regarding Mr. Weber’s request.

ITEM 3.8 – AUTHORIZE EXPENDITURES – NETWORK STORAGE/COMPUTER

City Council reviewed a letter from Police Chief Luke Ahlschlager regarding an emergency expenditure for replacement of the Police Department Network Attached Storage (NAS) Backup System, which serves as the sole backup for their body and squad camera video system. The current system is approximately seven years old and configured with three hard drives in a RAID 5 array providing 16TB of storage. Recently one of the three drives failed. To prevent the risk of another drive failure resulting in complete loss of video backup, the Police Department has proceeded with the purchase of a new 10 GBE NAS in the amount of \$2,068.79 which offers:

- Enhanced reliability and storage
- Extended warranty
- Scalability

City Administrator Bill Waller and Finance Director Kara Tarrence were made aware of the failure and deemed the expenditure as necessary to ensure the integrity of the video storage system. There are funds included in the 2025 general fund budget for the expenditure. It was recommended that City Council approve this expenditure.

City Council reviewed a second letter from Police Chief Luke Ahlschlager requesting approval of an expenditure for a laptop for Corporal Roth Clark. Chief Ahlschlager received a quote from Morris Electronics for one HP ProBook Touchscreen laptop with updated specifications to meet department requirements and a three-year premium onsite warranty to ensure uninterrupted operation and support for \$1,441.84. Funding for this is included in the approved 2025 general fund budget. It was recommended that City Council approve this expenditure. Following discussion, Member Williams made a motion, seconded by Member O'Donnell-Ebner as follows:

MOTION TO APPROVE THE EXPENDITURE OF \$2,068.79 FOR A NETWORK ATTACHED STORAGE (NAS) BACKUP SYSTEM AND \$1,441.84 FOR AN HP PROBOOK TOUCHSCREEN LAPTOP FROM MORRIS ELECTRONICS FOR CORPORAL ROTH CLARK WITH THE PURCHASE COST COMING FROM THE APPROVED 2025 GENERAL FUND BUDGET.

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 3.9 – RESOLUTION – DNR LOCAL TRAIL CONNECTION GRANT

Community Development Coordinator Larry Kirch (via Zoom) reviewed a Resolution with City Council regarding the submitting of and sponsorship of a Minnesota Department of Natural Resources local connections program grant application. Following review and discussion, Member O'Donnell-Ebner introduced the following Resolution and moved its passage and adoption:

Attachment B

RESOLUTION NO. 3-25-13

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING SUBMITTAL OF AND SPONSORSHIP OF A MINNESOTA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES LOCAL TRAIL CONNECTIONS PROGRAM GRANT APPLICATION FOR THE CITY OF LA CRESCENT, MN

WHEREAS the City of La Crescent supports the grant application made to the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources for the Local Trail Connections Program. The application is to construct 1,000 feet of paved trail for La Crescent's Recreational Trail System. The trail is located within Abnet Field park and connects residential areas to Abnet Field, the Community Ice Arena, and the city connections to the Wagon Wheel Trail and the future connections to the Root River State Trail system; and

WHEREAS the City of La Crescent recognizes that it has secured \$31,340 in non-state cash matching funds for this project.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, if the City of La Crescent is awarded a grant by the Minnesota Department of Natural resources, the City of La Crescent agrees to accept the grant award and may enter into an agreement with the State of Minnesota for the above referenced project. The City of La Crescent will comply with all applicable laws, environmental requirements and regulations as stated in the grant agreement; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the applicant has read the Conflict-of-Interest Policy contained in the Local Trail Connection Grant Manual and certifies it will report any actual, potential, perceived, or organizational conflicts of interest upon discovery to the state related to the application or grant award; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the City Council of the City of La Crescent names the fiscal agent for the City of La Crescent for this project as:

Kara Tarrence, Director of Finance

City of La Crescent
315 Main Street
La Crescent, MN 55947
ktarrence@cityoflacrescent-mn.gov (507) 895-2069

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the City of La Crescent hereby assures the La Crescent Abnet Field Park/Community Ice Arena Recreational Trail will be maintained for a period of no less than 20 years.

PASSED AND ADOPTED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LA CRESCENT THIS 24TH DAY OF MARCH, 2025.

City of La Crescent

Mikel Poellinger, Mayor

Attest: _____
Angie Boettcher, City Clerk

The foregoing motion was duly seconded by Member Jostad and upon a roll call taken and tallied by the City Clerk, all 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 and the resolution duly passed and adopted.

ITEM 3.10 – GAMBLING PERMIT APPLICATION

City Council reviewed a letter from Administrative Assistant Chris Fortsch for approval of a gambling permit application from the Onalaska Foundation for Educational Excellence to be held on January 17, 2026, at the La Crescent Area Event Center. The application appears to be in order, and it was

recommended that City Council approve the application and authorize it be forwarded to the Minnesota Gambling Control Board. Following discussion, Member Jostad made a motion, seconded by Member Langen as follows:

MOTION TO APPROVE A GAMBLING PERMIT APPLICATION FROM THE ONALASKA FOUNDATION FOR EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE FOR A RAFFLE TO BE HELD ON JANUARY 17, 2026, AT THE LA CRESCENT AREA EVENT CENTER AND AUTHORIZE IT BE FORWARDED TO THE MINNESOTA GAMBLING CONTROL BOARD.

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.

ITEM 3.11 – 2025 LICENSE RENEWAL

City Council reviewed a letter from Administrative Assistant Chris Fortsch regarding approval of a 2025 gas installers license renewal from G & T Heating and Air conditioning, LLC. The application appears to be in order, and it was recommended that City Council approve the license renewal application. Following discussion, Member Langen made a motion, seconded by Member Jostad as follows:

MOTION TO APPROVE THE 2025 GAS INSTALLERS LICENSE RENEWAL FOR G & T HEATING AND AIR CONDITIONING, LLC.

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.

ITEM 3.12 – PERSONNEL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

The Personnel Committee had the following recommendation for consideration by the City Council:

- The Personnel Committee is recommending that the City Council approve the internal posting of the position of Assistant Fire Chief in the La Crescent Fire Department. A letter from the Fire Chief regarding this recommendation was included.

Following discussion, Member O’Donnell-Ebner made a motion, seconded by Member Langen as follows:

MOTION TO APPROVE THE INTERNAL POSTING OF THE POSTION OF ASSISTANT FIRE CHIEF IN THE LA CRESCENT FIRE DEPARTMENT WITH A HIRING RECOMMENDATION BEING BROUGHT BACK TO A FUTURE CITY COUNCIL 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.

6. STAFF CORRESPONDENCE/COMMITTEE UPDATES:

- 6.1 COMMUNITY CONVERSATION NIGHT – APRIL 2, 2025
City Council reviewed a flyer regarding the Community Conversation Night with the City and County Law Enforcement Officials
- 6.2 EXPLORE LA CROSSE
City Council reviewed the Explore La Crosse March 18, 2025, board meeting agenda and the February 20, 2025, board meeting minutes.
- 6.3 WIESER PARK PAVILION USAGE SUMMARY
City Council reviewed the first eighteen-month usage summary for the Wieser Park Pavilion.

7. HOUSTON COUNTY

Houston County Commissioner Cindy Wright was in attendance and provided updates.

There being no further business to come before the Council at this time, Member Langen made a motion, seconded by Member O'Donnell-Ebner 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 6:15 P.M.

APPROVAL DATE: April 14, 2025

SIGNED:

Mayor

ATTEST:

City Administrator