

MINUTES, REGULAR MEETING
CITY COUNCIL, CITY OF LA CRESCENT, MINNESOTA
AUGUST 25, 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 August was called to order by Mayor Mike Poellinger at 5:00 PM in the La Crescent Community Building, La Crescent, Minnesota, on Monday, August 25, 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, Public Works Director Tyler Benish, Sustainability Coordinator Jason Ludwigson, Fire Chief Josh Tarrence, Library Director Jess Witkins, and City Clerk Angie Boettcher.

Also present was Fire Department Relief Association Treasurer Todd Hase and Assistant Fire Chief Bill Kreibich.

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 – AUGUST 11, 2025
- 1.2 BILLS PAYABLE THROUGH AUGUST 22, 2025
- 1.3 DENIAL OF CANNABIS APPLICATION – Flor Oscura LLC, 100 Twilite Street, La Crescent.

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

and Mayor Poellinger abstained. The motion was declared duly carried by a 4-0 vote.

ITEM 3.1 – LIBRARY SUMMER READING PROGRAM REVIEW

Library Director Jess Witkins reviewed the library’s summer reading program with City Council. This was informational only, no action was required.

ITEM 3.2 – FIRE DEPARTMENT RELIEF ASSOCIATION/PENSION INCREASE

Fire Department Relief Association Treasurer Todd Hase reviewed with City Council for approval a proposed increase to the Fire Relief Members annual benefit amount from \$5,400 to \$6,100. It was recommended by City Staff that City Council not approve the increase as proposed. This is based on a review of scenarios, and the potential for an additional City contribution should the rate of return on the Relief Associations fund balance not be sufficient to cover the proposed increase. Following discussion, Member O’Donnell-Ebner made a motion, seconded by Member Jostad as follows:

MOTION TO DENY THE REQUEST FROM THE FIRE DEPARTMENT RELIEF ASSOCIATION TO INCREASE THE MEMBERS’ ANNUAL BENEFIT AMOUNT AND CONTINUE TO HAVE CONVERSATIONS WITH THE RELIEF ASSOCIATION REGARDING AN INCREASE.

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

and Mayor Poellinger abstained. The motion was declared duly carried by a 4-0 vote.

ITEM 3.3 – DRIFT COMMUNITY BIKE SHARE AGREEMENT

Sustainability Coordinator Jason Ludwigson reviewed with City Council a two-year Bike Share Program Sponsorship Agreement between the City of La Crescent and Drift Share, Inc. for a shared use bike station. The City has been working with DriftCycle and the La Crescent Community Bike Shoppe to bring a shared use bike station to the City. Funding has been secured from Houston County SHIP and the La Crescent Community Bike Shoppe. The station will be operated by DriftCycle and includes annual maintenance for the station. It will contain five bikes available for use between April and November. The bikes will be rented through the DriftCycle App. The City will help to install the rack for the five bikes near the Wagon Wheel Trail Bridge. The La Crescent Community Bike Shoppe has committed to funding the station after

the initial two-year agreement terminates. It was recommended that City Council approve the agreement. Following discussion, Member O'Donnell-Ebner made a motion, seconded by Member Langen as follows:

MOTION TO APPROVE THE TWO-YEAR BIKE SHARE PROGRAM SPONSORSHIP AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE CITY OF LA CRESCENT AND DRIFT SHARE, INC. FOR A SHARED USE BIKE STATION WITH THE LA CRESCENT COMMUNITY BIKE SHOPPE FUNDING THE STATION AFTER THE INITIAL TWO-YEAR AGREEMENT TERMINATES.

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 3.4 – MPCA DC FAST CHARGING PROJECT AGREEMENT

Sustainability Coordinator Jason Ludwigson reviewed with City Council a Site Host and Owner Agreement and an Owners and Operations Agreement between the City of La Crescent and the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) for a DC Fast Charging Project. The City of La Crescent was awarded \$69,500 from the MPCA to be on the Greater MN DC Fast Charging Corridor. The grant funds are from Minnesota's share of the national Volkswagen settlement to build EV charging infrastructure across the state. The funds from the settlement grants were awarded to ZEF Energy for the Southeast Minnesota Corridor. The City has been working with ZEF Energy to design, plan, and locate two level 2 EV chargers and one level 3 (DC Fast) charger. The chargers will be installed in the parking lot across from the Fire Station. The MPCA and Xcel Energies Make Ready Program will cover the majority of the cost for the chargers. The City is responsible for \$12,836 of the 129,765 total project cost. It was recommended that City Council approve the agreement and amend the 2021 Capital Equipment Certificate to include the City match amount of \$12,836. The chargers will be networked enabling the City to set the rate per kWh or per hour use. It was recommended that City Council approve the Owner and Operations Agreement and not approve the Site Host and Owner Agreement. Following discussion, Member O'Donnell-Ebner made a motion, seconded by Member Langen as follows:

MOTION TO APPROVE THE OWNER AND OPERATIONS AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE CITY OF LA CRESCENT AND ZEF ENERGY, NOT APPROVE THE SITE HOST AND OWNER AGREEMENT AND AMEND THE 2021 CAPITAL EQUIPMENT CERTIFICATE TO INCLUDE THE CITY MATCH AMOUNT OF \$12,836.

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 – CARBON REDUCTION FUND GRANT AGREEMENT/RESOLUTION

Sustainability Coordinator Jason Ludwigson recommended to City Council that this item be tabled and brought back to a future City Council meeting due to further conversation with LAPC prior to the meeting regarding changes to the Carbon Reduction Fund. Following discussion, Member Jostad made a motion, seconded by Member O'Donnell-Ebner as follows:

MOTION TO TABLE THE CARBON REDUCTION FUND GRANT AGREEMENT AND BRING IT BACK TO A FUTURE CITY COUNCIL MEETING.

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 – FEE SCHEDULE AMENDMENT – PET LICENSING

City Council reviewed a letter from Police Chief Luke Ahlschlager requesting a change to the pet licensing fees from ten dollars for spayed/neutered and fifteen dollars for unspayed/neutered pets to a single fee of twelve dollars per pet. This will simplify the pet licensing process for both residents and staff. Following discussion, Member Williams made a motion, seconded by Member Langen as follows:

MOTION TO APPROVE POSTING THE PROPOSED ORDINANCE REGARDING CHANGING THE PET LICENSING FEE FROM TEN DOLLARS AND FIFTEEN DOLLARS RESPECTIVELY

TO TWELVE DOLLARS PER PET, WITH THIS ITEM BEING PRESENTED FOR CONSIDERATION AT THE SEPTEMBER 8TH CITY COUNCIL MEETING.

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 3.7 – 2026 LA CROSSE MTU OPERATING AGREEMENT – BUS SERVICE

City Council reviewed the 2026 Transit Operating agreement with the La Crosse MTU for the operation of the local Apple Express bus service. It was recommended that City Council approve the 2026 operating agreement and authorize the required signatures. Following discussion, Member Williams made a motion, seconded by Member O'Donnell-Ebner as follows:

MOTION TO APPROVE THE 2026 TRANSIT OPERATING AGREEMENT WITH THE LA CROSSE MTU FOR THE OPERATION OF THE LOCAL APPLE EXPRESS BUS SERVICE AND AUTHORIZE THE REQUIRED SIGNATURES.

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 – 2026 MOTOR VEHICLE LEASE – LA CROSSE MTU

City Council reviewed the 2026 motor vehicle lease with the La Crosse MTU. The City of La Crescent owns the bus that is used in the operation of the local Apple Express bus service and leases the bus to the La Crosse MTU. It was recommended that City Council approve the 2026 motor vehicle lease and

authorize the required signatures. Following discussion, Member Jostad made a motion, seconded by Member Langen as follows:

MOTION TO APPROVE THE 2026 MOTOR VEHICLE LEASE AGREEMENT WITH THE LA CROSSE MTU AND AUTHORIZE THE REQUIRED SIGNATURES.

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 – CANNABIS DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENT – 270 STRUPP AVENUE

City Attorney Wieser reviewed a development agreement for 270 Strupp Avenue. This item was continued from the August 11th City Council Meeting. At that meeting the developer expressed concern with the timeline for completion of the project. After additional communication with the developer, the following changes were made to Article 3:

- Date changed from October 1st, 2025, to November 15th, 2025, for the Developer to satisfy the following obligations:
 - A. MnDOT review and approval
 - B. Drainage Plan and Grading Plan
 - C. Development Plan or Development Improvements
- Certificate of Occupancy date changed from the end of the first quarter of 2026 to no later than July 31, 2026.
- Street obligation completed by the end of August 2026 with the letter of credit term ending October 31, 2026, unless otherwise agreed to.

It was recommended that City Council approve the development agreement and authorize the Mayor, City Administrator, and City Clerk to sign the document. Following discussion, Member O'Donnell-Ebner made a motion, seconded by Member Williams as follows:

MOTION TO APPROVE THE DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENT WITH MNRE 270 STRUPP AVE LLC AND HIGH HOPES VENTURES, LLC LOCATED AT 270 STRUPP AVENUE WITH NOTED CHANGES AND AUTHORIZE THE MAYOR, CITY ADMINISTRATOR, AND CITY CLERK TO SIGN THE DOCUMENT.

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 3.10 – PERSONNEL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

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

1. The Personnel Committee is recommending that the City Council promote Jay Meier to the position of Assistant Training/Safety Officer in the La Crescent Fire Department. Mr. Meier has been a member of the Fire Department since 2017. Pursuant to the terms and conditions of the Fire Department Rules and Regulations, Mr. Meier will serve a twelve-month probationary period. A letter from the Fire Chief regarding this recommendation was included. Following discussion, Member Langen made a motion, seconded by Member Jostad as follows:

MOTION TO PROMOTE JAY MEIER TO THE POSITION OF ASSISTANT TRAINING/SAFETY OFFICER IN THE LA CRESCENT FIRE DEPARTMENT WITH MR. MEIER SERVING A TWELVE-MONTH PROBATIONARY PERIOD PURSUANT TO THE TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF THE FIRE DEPARTMENT RULES AND REGULATIONS.

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

and Mayor Poellinger abstained. The motion was declared duly carried by a 4-0 vote.

2. The Personnel Committee is recommending that the City Council approve changes to the Fire Department Rules and Regulations and the job descriptions for the Fire Department. A letter from the Fire Chief that summarizes the recommendations was included. Prior to the meeting grammatical corrections were recommended to the Fire Chief. Following discussion, Member Langen made a motion, seconded by Member O'Donnell-Ebner as follows:

MOTION TO APPROVE CHANGES TO THE FIRE DEPARTMENT RULES AND REGULATIONS AND JOB DESCRIPTIONS WITH GRAMMATICAL CHANGE RECOMMENDATIONS.

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

and Mayor Poellinger abstained. The motion was declared duly carried by a 4-0 vote.

ITEM 3.11 – LICENSE APPLICATION – CIGARETTE/OTHER TOBACCO

City Council reviewed a memo from Administrative Assistant Chris Fortsch regarding a license application by Karim Wazwaz owner of Apple City Smoke Shop for retail sales of cigarettes and other tobacco products at 318 Walnut Street South. The application appears to be in order, and it was recommended that City Council approve the license application and authorize that it be forwarded to the Minnesota Department of Revenue. Following discussion, Member Langen made a motion, seconded by Member Williams as follows:

MOTION TO APPROVE THE LICENSE APPLICATION BY KARIM WAZWAZ OWNER OF APPLE CITY SMOKE SHOP FOR RETAIL SALES OF CIGARETTES AND OTHER TOBACCO PRODUCTS AT 318 WALNUT STREET SOUTH.

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 – PROCLAMATION – DIRECT SUPPORT PROFESSIONAL RECOGNITION WEEK

City Council reviewed for approval a proclamation recognizing the week of September 7, 2025, as Direct Support Professionals (DSP) Week in the City of La Crescent. Following discussion, Member O'Donnell-Ebner made a motion, seconded by Member Langen as follows:

MOTION TO PROCLAIM THE WEEK OF SEPTEMBER 7, 2025, AS DIRECT SUPPORT PROFESSIONALS (DSP) WEEK IN THE CITY OF LA CRESCENT.

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
Dale Williams	Yes

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

5. MAYOR'S COMMENTS

5.1 LEAGUE OF MINNESOTA CITIES – REPRESENTATIVE DAVIDS

Mayor Poellinger reviewed with City Council a letter received from the League of Minnesota Cities stating Representative Davids who represents the City of La Crescent was recognized as a League of Minnesota Cities Legislator of Distinction for 2025. It was recommended that City Council approve a letter of appreciation be sent to Representative Davids. It was the consensus of City Council to send a letter of appreciation to Representative Davids.

5.2 LEAGUE OF MINNESOTA CITIES – SENATOR MILLER

Mayor Poellinger reviewed with City Council a letter received from the League of Minnesota Cities stating Senator Miller who represents the City of La Crescent was recognized as a League of Minnesota Cities Legislator of Distinction for 2025. It was recommended that City Council approve a letter of appreciation be sent to Senator Miller. It was the consensus of City Council to send a letter of appreciation to Senator Miller.

6. STAFF CORRESPONDENCE/COMMITTEE UPDATES:

6.1 EXPLORE LA CROSSE

City Council reviewed the August 19, 2025, Explore La Crosse Board Meeting agenda and the July 29, 2025, Board Meeting minutes.

7. CORRESPONDENCE

7.1 MINNESOTA STATE DEMOGRAPHIC CENTER

City Council reviewed a letter from the State Demographer regarding population and household estimates for the City.

7.2 WIESER BROTHERS GENERAL CONTRACTOR, INC.

City Council reviewed a letter from Wieser Brothers General Contractors regarding Strupp Avenue Business Development.

8. CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Chamber of Commerce representative Kim Siegersma was in attendance and provided an update.

There being no further business to come before the Council at this time, Member Langen made a motion, seconded by Member Williams 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:

SIGNED:

Mayor

ATTEST:

City Administrator