

MINUTES, REGULAR MEETING
CITY COUNCIL, CITY OF LA CRESCENT, MINNESOTA
SEPTEMBER 22, 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 September was called to order by Mayor Mike Poellinger at 5:00 PM in the La Crescent Community Building, La Crescent, Minnesota, on Monday, September 22, 2025.

Upon a roll call taken and tallied by the City Administrator, 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, Finance Director Kara Tarrence, and Police Chief Luke Ahlschlager.

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 – SEPTEMBER 8, 2025
- 1.2 BILLS PAYABLE THROUGH SEPTEMBER 19, 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. It was requested that additional language be added to the September 8, 2025, Minutes under Item 3.5 – Personnel Committee Recommendations as follows: “The City Attorney reviewed options with the City Council to fill the vacancy, including the option to either post the position internally or externally, and a timeline for completing the process. The City Council requested a review in the future of existing job descriptions for City supervisory positions, along with a review of information from the League of Minnesota Cities.” The additional language should be added after the vote on the motion accepting City Administrator Bill Waller’s resignation.

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

A MOTION TO APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA WITH THE ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE TO THE SEPTEMBER 8, 2025, MEETING MINUTES UNDER ITEM 3.5 AS STATED.

Upon a roll call vote taken and tallied by the City Administrator, 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 2 – PUBLIC HEARING/MEETING – STREET VACATION – UNION STREET

At 5:00 PM the City Council held a public hearing to consider vacation of Union Street. City Attorney Wieser reviewed the vacation request and the proposed Resolution with City Council. Mayor Poellinger opened the meeting for public comment. There were no public comments. Mayor Poellinger closed the public hearing at 5:05 PM.

City Council reconvened with the schedule of the regular City Council Meeting.

Following discussion, Member O'Donnell-Ebner introduced the following resolution and moved its passage and adoption:

RESOLUTION NO. 09-25-31

A RESOLUTION VACATING PORTION OF UNION STREET UPON PETITION OF A MAJORITY OF ABUTTING LANDOWNERS.

WHEREAS, a petition signed by the majority of property owners abutting Union Street in the City of La Crescent was received by the City Clerk; and

WHEREAS, the petition requested that the City Council pursuant to Minnesota Statute § 412.851 vacate Union Street illustrated and described on the attached Exhibit A.

WHEREAS, the City Clerk reviewed and examined the signatures on said petition and determined that such signatures constituted a majority of the landowners abutting a portion of North Decorah Street to be vacated; and

WHEREAS, a public hearing to consider the vacation of such street was held on the 22nd day of September, 2025, before the City Council in the City Hall located at 315 Main Street, La Crescent, Minnesota at 5:00 p.m. after due published and posted notice had been given, as well as personal mailed notice to all affected property owners by the City Clerk on the 5th day of September, 2025 and all interested and affected persons were given an opportunity to voice their concerns and be heard; and

WHEREAS, any person, corporation or public body owning or controlling easements contained upon the property vacated, reserves the right to continue maintaining the same or to enter upon such way or portion thereof vacated to maintain, repair, replace or otherwise attend thereto; and

WHEREAS, the Council in its discretion has determined that the vacation will benefit the public.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LACRESCENT, MINNESOTA AS FOLLOWS:

That such petition for vacation is hereby granted and Union Street is hereby vacated.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Mayor and City Clerk are hereby authorized to sign all documents necessary to effectuate the intent of this resolution and file notice of the vacation as required by law.

Passed by the City Council of La Crescent, Minnesota this 22nd day of September, 2025.

Mikel Poellinger, Mayor

Attested:

Bill Waller, City Administrator

The motion for adoption of the foregoing resolution was duly seconded by Member Langen and upon a roll call vote taken and tallied by the City Administrator, all 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 3.1 – PROCLAMATION – NATIONAL FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY WEEK

Member Teresa O'Donnell-Ebner, on behalf of Library Director Jess Witkins, reviewed with City Council for approval a proclamation declaring October 19-25, 2025, as Friends of the Libraries Week in

La Crescent. Following discussion, Member O'Donnell-Ebner made a motion, seconded by Member Williams as follows:

MOTION TO PROCLAIM OCTOBER 19-25, 2025, AS FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARIES WEEK IN LA CRESCENT.

Upon a roll call vote taken and tallied by the City Administrator, the following Members 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 3.2 – 2025 HOMECOMING PARADE REQUEST

Police Chief Luke Ahlschlager reviewed with City Council a request from the La Crescent-Hokah School District to hold a homecoming parade on Friday, October 3rd, 2025. The parade will begin at approximately 1:45 PM in the La Crescent Middle School parking lot and will travel north on Lancer Boulevard, turn onto South 11th Street, proceed north on South Elm Street, circle the La Crescent Elementary School, and return to the High School via the same route. A parade permit application was completed and reviewed by the Police Chief with requirements being met with the City being added as an additional insured under the School Districts policy. The La Crescent Police Department will escort the parade, providing front and rear coverage with emergency lighting. Following discussion, Member Williams made a motion, seconded by Member Langen as follows:

MOTION TO APPROVE THE LA CRESCENT-HOKAH SCHOOL DISTRICT TO HOLD A HOMECOMING PARADE ON FRIDAY, OCTOBER 3RD, 2025 AS SPECIFIED.

Upon a roll call vote taken and tallied by the City Administrator, 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 – AUTHORIZE EXPENDITURES – WIESER PARK

Public Works Director Tyler Benish reviewed with City Council an outdoor recreation grant awarded to the City of La Crescent through the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MNDNR) for \$277,314. The grant will fund fifty percent (50%) of the Wieser park improvement project. The project will include new playground equipment, poured in place surfacing, benches, walking path, bike parking, and the addition of three pickleball courts. The City received the following proposals:

- Landscape structures for the playground equipment for \$157,632.36, purchased from the state contract.
- Flagship Recreation for installation of the playground equipment and poured in place surfacing for \$183,781.64. Pricing from the state contract.

It was recommended that City Council approve the expenditures with Landscape structure and Flagship Recreation with funding coming from \$112,170.74 in donations, \$157,632.26 from the 2022 capital equipment certificate, and \$7,512.00 from the 2026 general fund budget and authorize City Staff to sign the contracts upon receiving the fully executed grant agreement with MNDNR. Following discussion, Member Langen made a motion, seconded by Member O'Donnell-Ebner as follows:

MOTION TO APPROVE THE EXPENDITURE OF \$157,632.36 FROM LANDSCAPE STRUCTURES FOR PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT WITH FUNDING COMING FROM THE 2022 CAPITAL EQUIPMENT CERTIFICATE, DONATIONS, AND THE 2026 GENERAL FUND BUDGET.

Upon a roll call vote taken and tallied by the City Administrator, 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.

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

MOTION TO APPROVE THE EXPENDITURE OF \$183,781.64 FLAGSHIP RECREATION FOR INSTALLATION OF THE PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT AND POURED IN PLACE

SURFACING, WITH FUNDING COMING FROM THE 2022 CAPITAL EQUIPMENT CERTIFICATE, DONATIONS, AND THE 2026 GENERAL FUND BUDGET.

Upon a roll call vote taken and tallied by the City Administrator, 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 – PROCLAMATION – ENERGY EFFICIENCY DAY

City Council reviewed a letter from Sustainability Coordinator Jason Ludwigson requesting approval of a proclamation declaring the first Wednesday in October as Energy Efficiency Day 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 FIRST WEDNESDAY IN OCTOBER, AS ENERGY EFFICIENCY DAY IN LA CRESCENT.

Upon a roll call vote taken and tallied by the City Administrator, the following Members 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 3.5 – REVIEW PROPOSED 2026 GENERAL FUND BUDGET

Public Works Director Tyler Benish and Finance Director Kara Tarrence reviewed with City Council the requirements needed to approve the proposed 2026 general fund budget. By September 30th, the City Council is required to adopt a resolution setting the preliminary levy and set the date for the public meeting

at which time the proposed budget and levy will be discussed, and the final budget and levy determined. As part of the budget review and adoption process, it was noted to City Council that they cannot adopt the 2026 general fund budget until after the public meeting in December, and once the preliminary levy is set, the City Council has the discretion to lower the levy, but the City Council cannot increase the preliminary levy.

ITEM 3.6 – 2026 PRELIMINARY LEVY RESOLUTION

Public Works Director Tyler Benish and Finance Director Kara Tarrence reviewed with City Council the resolution that sets the preliminary levies for 2026 which was provided to the City Council at the Council meeting. It was recommended that the City Council adopt the resolution presented at the meeting setting the preliminary levies for 2026. The proposed 2026 preliminary resolution reflects a 5% increase. The final total City levy in 2025 was \$3,886,178.00, and the proposed 2026 levy is \$4,082,068.00. Following discussion, Member O'Donnell-Ebner introduced the following resolution, and moved its passage and adoption:

RESOLUTION 09-25-29

RESOLUTION MAKING PRELIMINARY GENERAL LEVIES FOR COLLECTION WITH REAL ESTATE TAXES PAYABLE IN THE CALENDAR YEAR 2026

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

1. It is hereby determined and declared that there shall be and there is hereby levied upon all taxable property within the City for the general purposes of the City, as provided by law, to be collected in the year 2026 as part of the general taxes due and payable in the year 2026 a direct ad valorem tax in the amount of \$2,805,527.00 as provided by State law to be levied and collected in the manner provided by law.
2. Be it also hereby determined and declared that there shall be and there is hereby levied upon taxable property within the City of La Crescent for public library service, a tax in the amount of \$204,141.00 to be collected in the year 2026, as authorized by Minnesota Statutes, Section 134.33 and 134.34.
3. It is hereby found, determined, and declared that the amounts set forth in a column at the right to be levied with taxes to be collected in the calendar year 2026, in conjunction with the various bonds issued and sinking funds described below:

FUND #	YEAR	DESCRIPTION	TO BE LEVIED FOR COLLECTION IN CALENDAR YEAR 2026
325	2016A	G.O. Refunding Rec. Fac. Bonds – Aquatic Center	\$195,300.00

FUND #	YEAR	DESCRIPTION	TO BE LEVIED FOR COLLECTION IN CALENDAR YEAR 2026
327	2016A	G.O. Improvement Bonds - Oak St. Recon.	\$115,500.00
328	2017A	G.O. Equipment Certificates	\$119,800.00
329	2018A	G.O. Improvement Bonds - Streets/Veterans Park	\$148,000.00
330	2019A	G.O. Equipment Certificates - Fire Truck	\$46,100.00
331	2019B	G.O. Improvement Bonds - Street Recon.	\$32,900.00
332	2020A	G.O. Improvement Bonds - HTM	\$172,900.00
333	2020A	G.O. Bonds - Tax Abatement - Ice Arena	\$12,200.00
334	2022A	G.O. Imp. Bonds/Equip. Cert. & CIP Bonds	\$229,700.00
		TOTAL DEBT SERVICE LEVY	\$1,072,400.00

4. Total levy for the City of La Crescent for collection in 2026 is \$4,082,068.00

ADOPTED this 22nd day of September, 2025.

SIGNED:

Mayor

ATTEST:

City Administrator

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

ITEM 3.7 – SET 2026 PUBLIC MEETING FOR BUDGET/LEVY RESOLUTION

Public Works Director Tyler Benish and Finance Director Kara Tarrence recommended City Council set the date and time for the public meeting as December 15, 2025, at 6:00 p.m. at which time the proposed 2026 general budget and levy will be discussed, and the final budget and levy determined. Following discussion Member Jostad made a motion, seconded by Member Langen as follows:

MOTION TO SET THE DATE AND TIME FOR THE PUBLIC MEETING FOR MONDAY, DECEMBER 15, 2025 AT 6:00 P.M. AT WHICH TIME THE PROPOSED 2026 GENERAL BUDGET AND LEVY WILL BE DISCUSSED, AND THE FINAL BUDGET AND LEVY DETERMINED.

Upon a roll call vote taken and tallied by the City Administrator, the following Members 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 3.8 – 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 current part-time Police Officer Bryce Helke to full-time status effective September 22, 2025. The 2025 general fund budget includes funds for the addition of a 9th Police Officer position in the second half of 2025. Mr. Helke will start at Step 1 of the LELS Union contract and pursuant to the terms and conditions of the LELS Union contract, Mr. Helke will serve a twelve-month probationary period. Upon successful completion of the probationary period, Mr. Helke would advance to Step 2 of the LELS Union contract. A letter from the Police Chief regarding the recommendation was included. Following discussion, Member Langen made a motion, seconded by Member Williams as follows:

MOTION TO APPROVE PROMOTING POLICE OFFICER BRYCE HELKE FROM PART-TIME STATUS TO FULL-TIME STATUS STARTING AT STEP 1 OF THE LELS UNION CONTRACT AND SERVE A TWELVE-MONTH PROBATIONARY PERIOD PURSUANT TO THE TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF THE LELS UNION CONTRACT AND UPON COMPLETION OF THE PROBATIONARY PERIOD, MR. HELKE WILL ADVANCE TO STEP 2 OF THE LELS UNION CONTRACT.

Upon a roll call vote taken and tallied by the City Administrator, the following Members 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.

2. The Personnel Committee is recommending that the City Council accept Maseray Bangura's resignation from the Park & Recreation Commission and Gina Schneider's resignation from the Planning Commission. Copies of their letters were included. Following discussion, Member Jostad made a motion, seconded by Member O'Donnell-Ebner as follows:

MOTION TO APPROVE MASERAY BANGURA'S RESIGNATION FROM THE PARK & RECREATION COMMISSION AND GINA SCHNEIDER'S RESIGNATION FROM THE PLANNING COMMISSION.

Upon a roll call vote taken and tallied by the City Administrator, the following Members 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.

3. City Attorney Wieser reviewed current job descriptions for supervisory positions in the City. City Attorney Wieser will bring back an updated City Administrator job description at the next City Council meeting.

ITEM 3.9 – DONATION RESOLUTION

City Council reviewed a Resolution regarding the acceptance of donations to the City for the Months of August and September. Following discussion, Member Jostad introduced the following Resolution and moved its passage and adoption:

RESOLUTION NO. 09-25-30

**RESOLUTION ACCEPTING DONATIONS MADE TO THE
CITY OF LA CRESCENT IN AUGUST AND SEPTEMBER 2025**

WHEREAS, the following donations were made to the City of La Crescent in the months of August and September 2025:

1. The La Crescent Community Bike Shoppe/Healthy Community Partnership wishes to donate \$3750.00 to the DriftCycle Bike Station.
2. The La Crescent Community Garden/Healthy Community Partnership wishes to donate \$100.00 to the La Crescent Fire Department.
3. Debi Wagner wishes to donate \$100.00 to the La Crescent Fire Department in memory of Donnis Buchan.
4. An Anonymous donor wishes to donate \$10,000.00 to Wieser Park.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council of the City of La Crescent hereby accepts the donations as stated above.

ADOPTED this 22nd Day of September 2025.

SIGNED:

Mayor

ATTEST:

City Clerk

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

Cherryl Jostad	Yes
Christopher Lange	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 3.10 – SERVICE CONTRACT RENEWAL

Public Works Director Tyler Benish reviewed with City Council for approval a service contract renewal with Cintas Corporation who provides floor mats and shop towels for the City and Golf Course negotiated with the Office of Procurement with the State of Minnesota. Following discussion, Member O'Donnell-Ebner made a motion, seconded by Member Jostad as follows:

MOTION TO APPROVE THE SERVICE CONTRACT RENEWAL AGREEMENT WITH CINTAS CORPORATION.

Upon a roll call vote taken and tallied by the City Administrator, 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 – AMEND OPTION AGREEMENT WITH VSC

City Attorney Wieser reviewed with City Council a proposed amendment to the existing VSC Option. This is in follow up to the planning session from July 2025. Because it is unknown when the existing City Hall will be vacated, the existing agreement is amended as follows:

- Extend the Option period to two years with the Option period beginning when the City tells VSC that City Hall is being vacated.
- Allow VSC to assign the Option in the event the “Quillins” property is sold in the interim.
- Sale price will remain at Three Hundred Forty-Seven Thousand 00/100 (\$347,000.00) until 2028 then build in a five percent (5%) escalator every year thereafter.

Following discussion, Member Williams made a motion, seconded by Member Jostad as follows:

MOTION TO APPROVE THE AMENDED OPTION AGREEMENT WITH VSC AS PRESENTED AND AUTHORIZE THE MAYOR AND CITY ADMINISTRATOR TO EXECUTE THE DOCUMENT.

Upon a roll call vote taken and tallied by the City Administrator, 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 – 2025 LICENSE APPLICATION

City Council reviewed a proposed Gas Installers License application from John Yehle at Coulee Region heating and Air Conditioning for 2025. The application appears to be in order, and it was recommended City Council approve the license application. Following discussion, Member O'Donnell-Ebner made a motion, seconded by Member Langen as follows:

MOTION TO APPROVE THE 2025 GAS INSTALLERS LICENSE APPLICATION FROM JOHN YEHLE AT COULEE REGION HEATING AND AIR CONDITIONING.

Upon a roll call vote taken and tallied by the City Administrator, 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 EXPLORE LA CROSSE

City Council reviewed the September 16, 2025 Explore La Crosse Board Meeting Agenda and The July 29, 2025 Board Meeting Minutes.

6.2 2025 FALL NEWSLETTER

City Council reviewed the City of La Crescent Fall Newsletter.

7. CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

A representative from the Chamber of Commerce was in attendance and had no updates.

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 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 Administrator, 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 5:45 P.M.

APPROVAL DATE:

SIGNED:

Mayor

ATTEST:

City Administrator