

City of Long Prairie
7:00 P.M., Wednesday, May 28th, 2025
City Council Meeting Held in Person & Via-Teleconference

The Long Prairie City Council met in person and by phone at City Hall, 7:00 pm, on Wednesday May 28th, 2025. Mayor Jim Kreemer called the meeting to order with Council Members JoAnn Schroeder, Clint Krueger, Gabriel Perez, Lilah Gripne and City Administrator/Clerk Candace Bruder present. Also, present Chief of Police Ryan Hanson, Officer Trevor Larson and City Engineer Kent Louwagie. Members of the public present: Verna Toenyan, Jay Eckel and Danniela Chavez.

Council Member Schroeder motioned, and it was seconded by Council Member Krueger to approve the consent calendar:

- a. Approve Agenda for May 28th, 2025**
- b. Approve Meeting Minutes for May 14th, 2025**
- c. Approve bills April 22, 2025-May 23rd, 2025**
- d. Approve 1-day Mobile Food Unit Permit for Sweet Sisters Concession for May 31, 2025**

Council Reports

Public Works: Council member Krueger informed the council that Public Works has been busy with mowing, trimming, cleaning catch basins, and the daily water and wastewater samples. The main lift station project is going well. They are currently working on the electrical part of the project; the building has been placed that will house the controls for the pumps. The downtown flowers and flags are up for the summer season. In the next few weeks public works will be busy mowing, crack filling, and getting ready for Prairie Days. The public works were acknowledged for a great job on a report that was submitted to the state. It was noted that the lights were out at the airport on the runway, but the issue has been resolved.

Planning & Zoning: Mayor Kreemer informed the council that there was a meeting last night (May 27th, 2025), they looked over the comprehensive plan and tabled it until the next meeting. A public hearing was set for June 24th for a change to the official zoning map (floodplain), it was noted that this will decrease the areas affected by the floodplain.

Police Department and Fire Department: Mayor Jim Kreemer provided an update that over the past two weeks of 05/14/25 through 05/28/25 the LPPD had 233 calls with an average of 16.64 per day. This includes: 7 with suspicious activity, 59 traffic related, 6 medicals, 11 disturbance-domestic-assaults, 2 civil, 5 juvenile-related, 3 Theft, 92 assists, and ordinance specific are: 7 animal-related, 1 Burning, 6 noise related, and 34 vehicle issue complaint(s). In the chief's notes: the PD was present for Bicycle Safety training at the LPGE Elementary School. They were also present at another protest rally and food shelf drive, held at Go Taco this past weekend, on Saturday May 25th. The following employees, Melissa, Jeremy and Lateshia, will be attending Street Survival Tactics training next week on June 2nd and 3rd in Bloomington, MN. Deanna will be attending NIBRS/Criminal Code Training this next week on June 3rd and 4th, at the BCA in St. Paul, MN. The PD is putting together an LPPD Citizen letter to go out with the water/sewer bills

next week, providing a list of ordinances that should be known and with compliance guidelines. The police department was also part of the Memorial Day parade. The Fire Department was asking for permission to have fire trucks in the prairie days parade and council acknowledged.

Liquor Store / Parks & Rec: Council member Schroeder informed the council that Park and Rec had been quiet, but that she went down to Riverside Park after all that rain to check it out. Council Member Schroeder notified the council that Pam said the MMBA conference was very beneficial, and some great ideas will start to be implemented at the liquor store from this conference. Pam is requesting a drop safe for the upcoming busy summer season, for safety and it was agreed to have her purchase this safe. An idea was also brought up about the liquor store building, that there is a shortage of space inside the liquor store for expanding inventory and that the city should investigate expanding the liquor store or possibly looking into a new location.

EDA, Library/Health and Wellness: Council member Gripne informed the council that the June meeting of Health & Wellness has been cancelled due to vacations with various members. At the library on Saturday June 7th, from noon to 2 pm there will be a temporary table tennis trailer ping-pong table so that table tennis may be played. This is available for all ages. Then on Wednesday, June 11th, from 5-6 pm, a presentation by Minnesota author Joe Friedrich's will be given on his book, "Boundary Waters". This is an in-person registration and is limited to 50. Both activities are funded by the Legacy Amendment. For the EDA the subject of handicapped accessibility was brought up. One request from public works was new sidewalks and ADA compliant ramps to the sidewalks. Another request was aluminum light poles with plugins for holiday decorations as a topic for consideration. Electrical panels were also discussed in various locations in the downtown area to accommodate plugins for City activities, etc. There was also a discussion held about housing issues and childcare. It was noted that the Todd County Comprehensive Plan has started. As a city we will need to review goals, etc. The next EDA meeting will be July 16th.

Tourism and Community Concern: Council member Perez informed the council that he is continuing to get donations for the Latino Festival in July. He noted that there were a lot of people at Lake Charlotte using all the facilities. It was also noted that the Concert in the Park with Jim Butler on Memorial Day weekend had a very poor turn out because of a lack of advertising from the tourism committee and there is no point if no proper advertisements are made for these events.

Engineer Road Project Report: City Engineer Kent Louwagie informed the council that the fog sealing (a coating to seal small cracks to extend the life of the tar) will start on the week of June 9th which is still related to the 2022 road project, and this will address issues that were part of the settlement agreement. It was also noted that there are some issues with the turf, and they will work on this issue with the contractors. Some information and pictures on the process at Riverside Park were presented to the council and what was part of the first phases of this project. The LCCMR grant will also be modified to account for what has been done regarding this grant. The main lift station is coming along nicely and will be done in June, and the building should be put up in July. Also noted that work will start on June 6th related to the Hwy 287 project and work should be completed on this project in mid-July.

New Business

City Engineer Kent Louwagie informed the council that about 90 % of phase one of the projects on the Riverside Park Project is complete that has been done by Jeff Leyk. The funding for this project was provided by the Minnesota Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (LCCMR). This Trust Fund is a permanent fund constitutionally established by the citizens of Minnesota to assist in the protection, conservation, preservation and enhancement of the state's air, water, land, fish, wildlife and other natural resources. Currently 40% of the MN Lottery proceeds are dedicated to this trust.

A motion was made by Council Member Schroeder to pay out Pay Application No. 2 to Jeff Leyk the amount of \$8,089.73 for the work done on Riverside Park Improvement Project, it was seconded by Council Member Gripne; unanimously approved.

Review requested payment for project costs related to the MN DOT project Trunk Highway 287 Mill and Overlay request that covers the city's share of this project in the amount of \$77,484.33. It was noted that after the project is complete, to invoice the school for the previous agreement to pay half of the project costs related to the crosswalk portion of the project this estimated portion for the LPGE school district is in the amount of \$22,082.68.

A motion was made by Council Member Gripne to approve the invoice regarding the Hwy 287 Project request from MN Dot in the amount of \$77,484.33 to cover the costs of the mill, overlay and flashers, it was seconded by Council Member Krueger; unanimously approved.

Discussion about applying for a grant related to the updates at the water treatment plant which could range in reward funds from \$30,000 to \$300,000 that the city could be grant eligible for. To complete this grant there would need to an onsite energy audit from Sustainable Energy Savings. The scope of work is an energy audit and would provide data logging equipment where we could potentially save energy and would help assist in applying for these grant funds as well. This could potentially slow the project down until we know if we received the grant until later this summer, but there are no critical needs that need to be met immediately with the city so there would be time to wait to see if these grant funds are available to assist with the cost of this project. It was noted that with LGA amounts being possibly cut for the 2026 budget for small cities it would be wise to investigate more funding streams.

A motion was made by Council Member Krueger to approve the request to proceed with a grant fund application related to the water treatment plant improvements at the cost of \$17,895, it was seconded Mayor Kreemer; unanimously approved.

A representative Verna Toenyan approached the council regarding a future project called Hilltop Square Regional Housing Campus, which would convert the Eagle Valley School into affordable senior housing. This building already has a portion converted into the Hilltop Regional Kitchen which provides meals for 92,000 individuals and provides 26 full and part-time jobs. There is also an auditorium in the facility that could potentially also be used in the future for concerts. This facility is currently a historical site as well. There will be potentially 23 apartments that would be able to be built as lower income housing for seniors over the age of 55. By creating this

new housing opportunity for seniors, it will then open current homes that seniors are living in for new families that could create these as their new homes. Todd County is in dire need of creating more living accommodations. The purpose of this presentation is to create awareness for the community about this potential project and to get the community to provide as much support as possible for this project. They are requesting the city to write a letter of support for this project and to contact our local representatives to write letters of support as well as the city council members. It was agreed that the city and council will write letters in support of this new project.

Discussion on the hiring committee for the City Clerk/Finance Officer position and that there are currently 5 applicants for the position and it was noted we will be interviewing all applicants. The period for the applicants was extended to May 23rd and then two additional applications were submitted in that period. It was previously noted that the council had requested to have the full council interview. After much thought it was suggested to have two council members, two office staff and the City Administrator conduct the interviews within the next week according to scheduling and staff.

A motion was made by Mayor Kreemer to change the interview committee from the City Council to have a committee of Lilah Gripne, Gabriel Perez, Candace Bruder, Deanna Polzin, and Katrina Scheve, it was seconded by Council Member Schroeder; unanimously approved.

Police Chief Ryan Hanson notified the council that they are down one on their part-time officers and is requesting to post for this position on the Police Post Board, Facebook, League of MN Cities and the City Website.

A motion was made by Council Member Gripne to advertise for a Part-Time Police Officer Position to obtain a good, qualified candidate; it was seconded by Council Member Schroeder; unanimously approved.

Police Chief Ryan Hanson is also requesting to obtain a 7th Full-Time Police Officer. It was noted that the grant is still in place as a match and can still be used for funding part of this position. It was noted that the LGA is potentially going to be cut and that we should wait to know how that is going to go at the end of June, before a decision is made to have enough funding for this position.

A motion was made by Council Member Krueger to table the creation of a 7th Full-Time Police Officer Position until the 2nd meeting in July based on the outcome of LGA funding from the State of MN; it was seconded by Council Member Schroeder; unanimously approved.

There being no further business, Council Member Gripne motioned to adjourn the meeting, which was seconded by Mayor Kreemer; unanimously approved - meeting adjourned at 8:11 p.m.

Candace Bruder, City Administrator/Clerk

James Kreemer, Mayor