



**Regular City Council Meeting
November 18, 2025, at 6 p.m.
Sturgeon Lake City Hall**

The following council members were at the hall: Mayor Scott Helfman, Councilmember Todd Booker, Councilmember Nick Dagel, Councilmember Ken Grey, and Councilmember Mark Noyes.

The following council members were absent: none.

The following city employees were present at the hall: Fire Chief Al Cekalla and City Clerk/Treasurer Sandra Osterdyk.

The following city staff members were absent:

Members of the public who were present: Joseph Pelawa

Regular City Council

Call to order: Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, Mayor Helfman called the Regular City Council Meeting to order at 6:00 p.m., followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Fire Department

Fire Chief Cekalla shared there had been 8 calls in the last month. There were zero bids received on the tanker. The fire department will look at selling on MNBid. A potential new building idea for the Fire Hall was presented to the city council to consider. The model from the feasibility study will not be moving forward as it does not work due to cost. Fire Chief Cekalla will gather additional information along with possible grants and estimates to provide an update at the December 2025 meeting. The Sturgeon Lake Fire Relief Association retirement increase will be discussed at the December meeting as well. The city recently applied for the Energy Audit grant with the East Central Regional Development Commission grant through the Department of Commerce at no cost to the city.

Special Guests and Visitor Comments

Joseph Pelawa with Widseth was present to discuss the fire hall/city building funding assistance. Further discussion on the Subdivision Ordinance regarding final comments before holding a public hearing and adoption by the city council. Additional conversation regarding the WWTF regarding capacity concerns and the sediment buildup was also discussed.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes for August 20, 2024, Regular Council Meeting, October 29, 2024, Regular Council Meeting, October 21, 2025, Regular Council Meeting, and October 29, 2025, City Council Work Session Meeting minutes were submitted for approval.

Councilmember T. Booker motioned to approve the minutes for August 20, 2024, Regular Council Meeting, October 29, 2024, Regular Council Meeting, October 21, 2025, Regular Council Meeting, and October 29, 2025, City Council Work Session Meeting minutes were with corrections, seconded by Councilmember N. Dagel. The motion carried with all members present voting in favor.

Financial Report

Claims Paid: The Clerk/Treasurer presented the claims paid to the council. Any questions the council had about the Claims Paid were answered satisfactorily by the Clerk/Treasurer.

Councilmember N. Dagel motioned to approve Claims Paid, seconded by Councilmember T. Booker. The motion carried with all members present voting in favor.

Unpaid Claims: The Clerk/Treasurer presented the Unpaid Claims to the council. Any questions the council had about the Unpaid Claims were answered satisfactorily by the Clerk/Treasurer.

Councilmember N. Dagel motioned to approve the Unpaid Claims, seconded by Councilmember T. Booker. The motion carried with all members present voting in favor.

Financial Report/Review: The Clerk/Treasurer presented the Financial Report/Review. Any questions the council had were answered satisfactorily by the Clerk/Treasurer.

Councilmember N. Dagel motioned to approve the Financial Report/Review, seconded by Councilmember T. Booker. The motion carried with all members present voting in favor.

Reports of Departments

Park Committee: The No Overnight Parking signs have been posted at the city park.

Public Works: Update included in the Water and Sewer section.

Roads: There was a trench cut at L&L recently. The roads have been too dry to grade. The plow has been installed on the city truck in preparation for winter. Mike Buetow will plow all general areas and Council member M. Noyes will clean up other areas such as the lift stations.

Storage Facility: Three units are scheduled to be locked out. Notices will be sent tomorrow to the renters, as emails and phone calls have not been responded to. One area at the storage facility has become the “dog area” and will need to be cleaned up. Issues at city hall with a local dog getting into the trash and running around town have also been reported.

Water/Sewer Operator: The gate valves in town have been exercised. There are a couple that need to be adjusted in Spring 2026. No Trespassing signage has been posted at the Plank Road property. Repairs are needed at lift station #1 and #5. Robbins Septic is done as of October 3, 2025, per a message from owner Chad Robbins that he sold the business.

Zoning: Mayor Helfman and Councilmember N. Dagel continue to work on updating the zoning map. Everything is on schedule to have a Public Hearing in January 2026 and pass in February 2026. Building permits look good.

City Clerk/Treasurer: A flag quote was presented for consideration, if funding is provided by an outside source. The City Clerk/Treasurer asked the council to consider an insurance stipend for 2026. Other local towns offer PTO and either insurance or a stipend to offset the insurance cost. There are MCFOA qualifying classes now available through St. Cloud University. The council discussed this agreed to the online classes.

Councilmember T. Booker motioned to allow the City Clerk/Treasurer to attend MCFOA qualifying classes, seconded by Councilmember M. Noyes. The motion carried with all members present voting in favor.

Mayor: The CIP crew of approximately 10 people will be onsite on November '9, 2025 to help with cleanup at the WWTF.

New Business

Guardian Pest Control was onsite to treat the City and Fire Hall twice in the last month.

Review of the final 2025 Levy Certification was completed and set at \$228,118.00

Resolution No. 2025-22: Approving the 2026 Budget and Tax Levy

Councilmember N. Dagel motioned to approve Resolution No. 2025-22: Approving the 2026 Budget and Tax Levy, seconded by Councilmember M. Noyes. The motion carried with a rollcall vote with all members present voting in favor.

Resolution No. 2025-23: Designate the Polling Place for the City of Sturgeon Lake for the 2026 election year.

Councilmember N. Dagel motioned to approve Resolution No. 2025-23: Designate the Polling Place for the City of Sturgeon Lake for the 2026 election year, seconded by Councilmember M. Noyes. The motion carried with a rollcall vote with all members present voting in favor.

Motion to Approve the 1 Day Temporary Liquor License for St. Isidore's Knights of Columbus for January 4, 2026, Polka and Prayer.

Councilmember N. Dagel motioned to approve the 1 Day Temporary Liquor License for St. Isidore's Knights of Columbus for January 4, 2026, Polka and Prayer, seconded by Councilmember M. Noyes. The motion carried with a rollcall vote with all members present voting in favor.

The City Clerk/Treasurer presented the 2026 MN Paid Leave program to the council stating that the volunteer fire department is not eligible for this program. Waiting for a response on the status of the city council/mayor's eligibility was discussed. More information to follow at the December 2025 meeting.

2026 Board of Appeal and Equalization Schedule was presented to the city council for review.

The 2026 Council Meeting Schedule was presented to the city council for review prior to the December meeting. The proposed property taxes for 2026 for the storage unit, water tower, and new Plank Road properties were presented for the council to review. The City Clerk/Treasurer will work on how to combine the Plank Road properties into the existing WWTF property parcel to ensure the property cannot be sold in the future.

The 2025 Holiday lights are scheduled to be installed by MN Power on December 2, 2025. Mayor Helfman will confirm all lights are checked and ready for installation.

Old Business

Nothing old to cover at the meeting.

Announcements

- o Fire Department Turkey Bingo is Friday, November 21, 2025, at 7:00 pm at the Star Club in Kettle River.
- o City Hall Closures:
 - o November 27 & 28, 2025, in observance of Thanksgiving Holiday
 - o December 24 & 25, 2025, in observance of the Christmas Holidays
 - o December 31, 2025, and January 1, 2026, for the New Year Holidays
- o City Council Meeting, December 16, 2025, at 6:00 pm

Adjournment

Councilmember K. Grey motioned to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Councilmember N. Dagel. The motion carried with all members present voting in favor. The meeting adjourned at 8:26 pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Sandra Osterdyk
City Clerk/Treasurer, City of Sturgeon Lake



Scott Helfman
Mayor, City of Sturgeon Lake

