



**City Council Meeting  
March 27, 2024, at 6 pm  
Sturgeon Lake City Hall**

The following council members were present at the hall: Mayor Scott Helfman, Councilmember Nick Dagel and Councilmember Adam Langhorst

The following council members were absent: Councilmember David Lingle

The following city employees were present at the hall: City Clerk/Treasurer Sandra Osterdyk

The following city staff members were absent: Fire Chief Al Cekalla and Public Works Superintendent Larry Coursolle

Members of the public that were present: Ken Grey, Marty Granda, and Joseph Pelawa

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

**Fire Department Report**

**Fire Department Report:** The Council reviewed and discussed the Feasibility Study quotes from the following companies:

Brunton	cost of \$18,500
Scalzo	cost of \$21,100
Widseth	cost of \$14,500

Joseph Pelawa from Widseth was present at the meeting to speak and share that Widseth has onsite services, basic administration support. They will also offer a 50 % discount for the second phase of the building design process. The same contractors are used each time along with Widseth in-house team of mechanical, structural, and electrical engineers. Their quote also includes the site plan and grading. The Fire Department and City will need to discuss and determine if they want a turn-key facility or paving/parking to be completed at a later time, such as 5-10 years as that can be mapped into the growth plan accordingly within the Feasibility Study. It was also asked that any others be added to the Growth Plan as well and be listed in priority status for the Feasibility Plan. Fire Chief Cekalla is to provide a breakout of where most of the calls the City of Sturgeon Lake Fire Department responds to come from and report back at the April 2024 meeting.

To move forward with the Sturgeon Lake Fire Hall project a Feasibility Study is needed. The fire department is looking for the support of the city council to cover the cost of this study to explain what the needs are, the current conditions, repair costs, and what new costs would be. They are asking that the remaining ARPA Funds be used toward the Feasibility Study costs. Expected costs could range from \$15,000 to \$25,000.

[Councilmember A. Langhorst made a motion to accept the Feasibility Study quote from Widseth, and Councilmember N. Dagel seconded the motion. The motion carried with a roll call vote all members present voting in favor, D. Lingle absent.](#)

The City Clerk/Treasurer has sent a letter to the three local townships that the Sturgeon Lake Fire Department provides services to keep them informed that the city is looking at options to try to get new Fire Hall Stations built.

### **Special Guests and Visitor Comment**

Marty Granda was present at the council meeting to bring up L&L Granite plowing the sidewalks closed near his property and stacking items to the edge of the road right-of-way on 2<sup>nd</sup> Street. He stressed that it is a hazard to the community. He asked that something be done with L&L Granite. The council discussed the issue with Marty and decided the best course of action was to continue documenting the issue. Another letter will be sent to L&L Granite explaining that snow cannot be piled on the corners and cannot block intersections.

Ken Grey was present to participate in discussions on the Cathedral Pines Lease Agreement. At this time the residents of Cathedral Pines had been informed that the \$500.00 original agreement would be modified to cover the cost of the Pine County Property Taxes and legal fees. The Lease Agreement would change the terms of the tax-exempt status with Pine County. This results in approximately \$2,000 of property taxes being charged to the city if the lease agreement deal is signed. Currently, two families have backed out of the lease agreement. The residents of Cathedral Pines have been patrolling it since 2012 at no cost. Ken stated that the Cathedral Pines resident's lease topic is no longer active as of Wednesday, March 27, 2024. However, according to FEMA, the land can be sold, yet the Pine County Auditor-Treasurer and Minnesota Management and Budget Capital Bonding office says it cannot be sold. The City Clerk/Treasurer is going to request a meeting with all parties to get this resolved.

Joseph Pelawa with Widseth shared that he attended the Lead Service Line Inventory training hosted in Hinckley on March 21, 2024. The deadline to have everything submitted is August 15, 2024. He will be asking for the current utility address list from the City Clerk/Treasurer. It is required that a picture of taken of where the line comes into the house with the water meter to show the connection line material type. He will work on helping to coordinate this. It was discussed again that most all of the lines within the City of Sturgeon Lake should be non-lead lines. The question was asked if all lines are fully connected to the house or a well pit. All of the answers to these questions that will be asked of the residents will require no digging. Letters will be sent twice and on the third letter, a physical visit will be required to try to capture the needed information for the Lead Service Line Inventory Sheet. Ownership will need to be determined if it's at the curb stop, main, or meter. If any are identified as lead, a letter will be sent explaining the next steps. Funding options are available if there are any lead lines through PFA for private lines at 100 % grant funding and if a portion needs to be replaced for public lines with a loan that backfills a grant funding option before the first loan payment is due. Councilmember N. Dagel mentioned there might be some possible copper/galvanized lines in the pits on the private side and a handful in houses in town.

Widseth will be on-site with a survey crew shooting curb stops for the Lead Service Line Inventory. They will use GIS tracking through ESRI. The first subscription is covered, after the first year, there will be an annual charge to maintain this subscription. Additional users can be added for an additional charge as well. This is covered by funding from the MN Department of Health for the first year.

### **Approval of Minutes**

The minutes of the February 13, 2024, Regular City Council Meeting were submitted for approval.

[Councilmember A. Langhorst made a motion to approve the minutes for the February 13, 2024, Regular City Council Meeting Minutes, Councilmember N. Dagel seconded the motion. The motion carried with all members present voting in favor, D. Lingle absent.](#)

### **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 A. Langhorst made a motion to approve Claims Paid, seconded by Councilmember N. Dagel. The motion carried with all members present voting in favor, D. Lingle absent.](#)

**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 A. Langhorst made a motion to approve the Unpaid Claims, seconded by Councilmember N. Dagle. The motion carried with all members present voting in favor, D. Lingle absent.

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

Councilmember A. Langhorst a motion to approve the Financial Report/Review, seconded by Councilmember N. Dagle. The motion carried with all members present voting in favor, D. Lingle absent.

### **Reports of Departments**

**Park Committee:** Mayor Helfman has a drinking foundation he is looking at that might be able to be a good drop-in fit for the City Park. He has asked Councilmember N. Dagle to look at it and provide his feedback. Todd Booker stopped at City Hall earlier to get information on the playground equipment as the Sturgeon Lake Lions Club is working to put together a committee to start the discussion on getting the playground set up this year. More information to follow over the next few meetings. Mayor Helfman and Councilmember N. Dagle, along with Ryan Prachar, and Kevin Prachar have expressed interest in volunteering to help with the project as well.

**Public Works:** The city needs to consider long-term goals for the Public Works position and look at the possibility of having a Public Works employee who has a Water/Wastewater license. Would be looking to fill this position in 2025.

**Roads:** Mike Buetow was out plowing. He is doing a good job with the ground not being frozen for having to do plowing. He has been very timely, and people have expressed how they appreciate that. He plowed twice during the recent snowstorm. Councilmember N. Dagle stopped to look at the speed bump at the end of the driveway for the resident at 3237 Cedar Lane. He is concerned that if he was to try to correct this it might do more damage. The roads now have a proper crown on them where they need to be. The city needs to get gravel on the roads in the spring for the corner of Logan and Cemetery. They will get more stable and established mid-summer. The council will review the Snowplow and Road Grading contract as it will be up for renewal this fall. This contract was updated to a two-year term instead of the previous four-year term. More discussions to follow over the next few months.

**Solid Waste:** Need to start working on this in the spring. Focus on several properties. Vehicle round-up is at the top of the list. The council will tackle this as a group. Everyone is to bring back notes of the properties with the top issues they would like addressed.

**Storage Facility:** At this time the area is a disaster, and it is recommended not to drive over there as it is too wet. If no one starts to rent any of the vacant units, Councilmember A. Langhorst suggests we place an ad in the newspaper. No response from the note put on the billing postcard to notify the city of any issues with the storage lockers. Councilmember A. Langhorst will do an inventory in the spring to check the siding and start calling to get bids then.

**Water/Sewer Operator:** Lift Station #3 alarm issues have been fixed. A new flow meter has been installed at the wastewater ponds. It will be tested at the bi-annual inspection. If there are any issues, they will be addressed at that time. Ferguson quote received on pond sludge removal. Waiting for a quote from Nelson's. Dumper Machine schematic information was sent to council members for review.

**Zoning:** There was one new permit approved at Cedar Lane in the last month. Over the next few months will need to look at different ordinances. Need to have something clearly stating that Building and Land Use cannot have multiple campers on the property and that all campers on the property must have current licenses, and registrations and not be used as live-in dwellings. It needs to be simple so that it can be enforced. Will need to do some research to check the actual verbiage. Revisit the topic at the April 16, 2024, meeting.

**City Clerk/Treasurer:** The MCFOA Conference was very informative and learned a lot this year, best conference out of all attended so far. There are 17 users currently using UBPAY, an increase of 4 from the previous month. The City Clerk/Treasurer went over some of the information from the March 5, 2024, Presidential Primary Election sharing that there was some last-minute scrambling due to an election judge quitting the night before, but she was able to pull another judge into a longer shift to ensure coverage was balanced throughout the election day. There was one spoiled ballot out of the 49 cast during the election. There were also some issues with the online training for those who



needed to complete training that way. Additional confusion around the election supplies as a new printer was used for this election, who packed the supplies differently than they had been in the past. The City Clerk/Treasurer is going to work with Pine County to streamline some of these packets and processes. Over the last few weeks, time has been spent learning about the flood of 2012/2013 and the impact it had on the community. It has brought items that had to be addressed with the City Attorney, the Pine County Auditor-Treasurer, Minnesota Management and Budget Capital Bonding, Minnesota Department of Public Safety, Homeland Security and Emergency Management, FEMA, State of Minnesota DNR regarding if the land can or cannot be sold as some groups say it can while others say it cannot. It is believed the space is meant to be used only as green space for conservation programs. A meeting is scheduled to determine the facts of the matter and have it resolved. Farmers Market is in its final stages of planning for a possible start date in May or June. There will be no Community Garden in 2024. Preparations for the CarlsonSV Audit at the end of April continue. Renewal of the LMCIT Workers' Compensation Coverage was completed in March along with the Property Appraisal that was done by HCA Asset Management.

The City Clerk/Treasurer presented the council with the 2024-2026 Pine County Agreement for Law Enforcement Services. It was discussed amongst the council that this does not cover patrol service in the community. This is primarily for support when their services are needed for the management of blight issues after all city attempts have been exhausted.

[Councilmember A. Langhorst made a motion to approve the 2024-2026 Pine County Agreement for Law Enforcement Services, seconded by N. Dagele The motion carried with a roll call vote all members present voting in favor, D. Lingle absent.](#)

The City Clerk/Treasurer shared that Mayor Auchter from Finlayson has reached out asking for the city's support in getting the Munger Bike Trail resurfaced by sending a letter to Senator Jason Rarick and Rep. Nathan Nelson asking for their legislative support for state funding to provide necessary maintenance for the Munger Bike Trail. This 30+ year-old trail has been a recreational centerpiece for our communities and needs funding for necessary maintenance. The DNR determined that the Hinckley to Finlayson 15-mile section of the trail needs resurfacing, and they began an engineering plan in 2024. The plan should be completed this year and ready for reconstruction beginning in 2025.

[Councilmember A. Langhorst made a motion to approve sending letters of support to Senator Jason Rarick and Representative Nathan Nelson in support of resurfacing the Munger Bike Trail, seconded by N. Dagele The motion carried with a roll call vote all members present voting in favor, D. Lingle absent.](#)

**Mayor:** Nothing that wasn't already discussed.

#### **New Business**

Resolution No. 2024-15 Accepting Ken Grey's Resignation and Declaring a Vacancy

[Councilmember N. Dagele made a motion to approve Resolution No. 2024-14 Amending Meeting Schedule for the date of August 13, 2024, to August 20, 2024, as it conflicts with the Primary Election seconded by A. Langhorst. The motion carried with a roll call vote all members present voting in favor, D. Lingle absent.](#)

#### **Old Business**

The Farmers Market is tentatively scheduled to be held on Wednesday evenings in May through October. More information will follow over the next two months. The council asks that the City Clerk/Treasurer reach out to the insurance agent and LMC to confirm the city's Liability insurance plan will provide coverage for this type of event.

#### **Announcements**

The next Regular City Council Meeting will be on Tuesday, April 16, 2024, at 6:00 pm.

#### **Adjournment**

[Councilmember A. Langhorst made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Councilmember N. Dagele. The motion carried with all members present voting in favor, D. Lingle absent. The meeting adjourned at 8:51 pm.](#)

Respectfully submitted,



Sandra Osterdyk  
City Clerk/Treasurer, City of Sturgeon Lake



Scott Helfman  
Mayor, City of Sturgeon Lake