

**Mayor Tauber called the council meeting to order at 7:00pm on Monday, December 8, 2025, at the Lafayette City Council Chambers, 791 Main Avenue, Lafayette.** Present were Mayor Curt Tauber, Councilors: Dave Reed, Tom Polich, Logan VanDeest; Andrew Hartley was absent. Also attending were Clerk/Treasurer Sandy Burger, Clerk-in-training Cori Reinhart, Utility & Maintenance Superintendent Al Fox, and City Attorney Aaron Walton.

**Pledge of Allegiance.**

**Guests present:** Nick Klingler – Fire Chief, Doug Hanson – Winthrop News, Residents Jessica Tauber – 551 5<sup>th</sup> Street, Brennan Moldan – 1091 Lafayette Avenue, Jeff Uhde – 620 Adolph Avenue, John Richter - 651 10<sup>th</sup> Street, Mike Hoffmann 1011 Lafayette Avenue.

Mayor Tauber suspended the council meeting to open the three public hearings at 7:01pm:

- 1) Truth-In-Taxation
- 2) Certify Utilities
- 3) Ord 155 Utility fees

Most council members had residents connect with them on all three of these items; with concern of the increasing utility rates, to lower the levy from double digits, and complaints of the snow removal. Jeff Udhe, Mike Hoffmann, John Richter were all present to share their concerns of the utility rate increase. Burger & Reinhart did not have any specific comments other than the ones they presented at the first truth-in-taxation hearing. There were extensive discussions on all three subjects.

Mayor Tauber closed the public hearings at 7:32pm and resumed the council meeting.

***Motioned by Reed and seconded by Polich to approve the agenda as presented; all ayes, motion carried, Hartley absent.***

***Motioned by Reed and seconded by Polich to approve the Consent Agenda as amended; all ayes, motion carried, Hartley absent.***

Included in the consent agenda were the 11/10 minutes, 11/17 special meeting minutes, 11/17 non-public minutes of the closed meeting, and the 12/2 1<sup>st</sup> Truth-in-Taxation and final budget workshop minutes. Bills totaling \$112,803.47, and receipts totaling \$234,614.51. The treasurer's report including the bank reconciliation for November and the 2025 payrolls 23 & 24. Donations Resolution 2025-29, \$10,000 from the Lions for the playground equipment bond and \$1.00 from Reed to donate to the fire department on behalf of the organization to which the council sold the city pumper for \$1.00. Approved the 2025-26 sump waivers for Hurd, Koval, N. Langhoff, Maffioli, Morson

**Reports:**

**Fox:** Submitted his written report and highlighted: operations for the ice rink have begun, snow removal and compost activities for public works, monthly utility reports completed, will need to notify the owners of the two galvanized lines for the *Lead Service Line Inventories*. The Wellhead Protection Plan passed, and they completed water meter repairs.

**Burger:** Highlighted that all monthly reports completed, ambulance cost collection report submitted, pet tag reminders for 2026 were sent with the billing, OEMS( Office of Emergency Medical Services) report due in February. SCDP (Revolving Loan fund), we sent reminders to about half of the surveys and since we are now over a 60% return rate; more residents live in the bottom four wage categories. Employee paid leave notification forms went out before the December 1 deadline. Will meet with Nicollet County on the 11<sup>th</sup> to discuss a resolution authorizing Nicollet County to do registration & compliance Cannabis businesses.

Tauber, Reed, Polich, and VanDeest all had comments from residents of utility rates, snow, and levy.

**Unfinished Business:**

1. **Utility Updates: RO Project:** PFA – did not meet the IUP list this year. MDH plan approval and is good for two years. **STREAMS:** he will meet Wednesday afternoon. Gibbon pulled out of the project.
2. **Ordinance 155 Amending the Fee Schedule:** There was a lot of discussion during the public hearing and continued into the agenda item. As there was no second to Reed's motion to approve the rate

increases, a special meeting will be held on Monday, December 29, 2025 at 6:30pm to continue this discussion.

3. **Resolution 2025-31 Certify: Motioned by Polich and seconded by VanDeest to approve the list to certify the delinquent utility amounts to Nicollet County for the 2026 tax rolls; all ayes, motion carried, Hartley absent.** Burger has one other account to which the renter was paying and then stopped, there was no mailing address for the owner. He has now been contacted and said he would connect with her. She will prepare a utility lien for the past due amount and send that to the county as well, if he has not.

**New Business:**

1. **Ordinance 156 - Amending Ord. 151 Amending the Zoning Code Regarding Cannabis:** Burger explained that when council adopted the Cannabis Ord. 151 Nicollet County was listed in error as registering a cannabis event; this is a zoning item and the city is authorized for the event registrations. **VanDeest motioned to approve the first reading, Polich seconded the motion; all ayes, motion carried, Hartley absent.**
2. **End of Year Moves were tabled:** After a lengthy discussion and Klingler wanted more discussion on why the fire equipment fund should be dissolved, it was tabled to the December 29 special meeting. The equipment fund was created to save a little each year for a new city pumper and air packs. Due to the updated agreement for 2026 that the Rural Fire takes care of all equipment and the fact that the city no longer has a pumper there is no need for a separate fire equipment fund from the general fund projects savings. And as fire is part of the general fund, any projects needed to the building would be budgeted in the fire building budget.
3. **Resolution 2025-30 2026 Levy and 2026 budget:** There was much discussion on the 2026 levy amount and budget there was a **motion by Reed and seconded by VanDeest**, but after continued discussion, VanDeest withdrew it. The discussion continued with concerns of the budget items of mowing and rate increases for the utility funds. **Finally, Polich, after lengthy discussions, seconded it, there was a vote of Reed and Polich in favor of approving it and Vandeest and Tauber opposing it, the motion failed.** The discussion then continued. Burger suggested to council to approve only the 2026 Levy and 2026 General Fund budget, which does not include the water and sewer enterprise fund, as one of the hang ups was the utility rate increases. **VanDeest motioned to approve Resolution 2025-30, amending it to say 2026 General Fund budget and 2026 Levy**, the discussion stalled as Polich was still unsure of putting the mowing of the city properties on Fox and Moldan on top of their busy schedules even though Tauber and VanDeest have committed to volunteer to mow when it cannot be done in house. The utility increase was tabled until council can get a better understanding. It was a stalemate for quite some time until Reed commented that as long as the in-house mowing was a trial year and was used to gather detailed information and everything was recorded, so an educated decision could be made for next year, he would be okay with it. **Reed seconded the motion on the floor, and after Polich stating his concern of the in-house mowing, the motion proceeded to be approved with all ayes, Hartley absent.**
4. **Cabinet for historical items was tabled until the special meeting on December 29, 2025.**
5. **Bar Name Change:** Reed shared that he had been notified of the name change of the bar from Welsch Properties LLC, DBA Dave's Place of Lafayette to Welsch Properties LLC, DBA My Place, for the gambling license through the state and he wanted to have the proper information for the gambling license. **VanDeest motioned to approve the name change of the bar from Dave's Place of Lafayette to My Place, Polich seconded; ayes, motion carried. Hartley absent.**
6. **Snow Policy:** Council was given the snow policy, winter parking ordinance and Fox's outline of two-years of snow removal time and costs for council to review. After a lengthy discussion on when snow removal should begin and issues of snowplowing, the consensus was that snow removal should be started after a two-inch snowfall, updating that from a three-inch snowfall. **VanDeest motion to update the Snow Removal policy to change snow removal time of after two inches of snowfall, instead of three inches, seconded by Reed, motion carried; Hartley absent.**

7. **Years of Service:** Burger explained that after the Relief Audit has been completed, the Relief Association is allowed to increase the years of service amount, as long as there are enough funds in their retirement fund, to cover all vested firefighters, if they should all leave at once. ***Motioned by Polich and seconded by Reed to approve the years of service from \$3,000 to \$3,250, all ayes, motion carried; Hartley absent.***
8. **3-Month CD:** ***VanDeest motioned to roll over the \$100,000 CD and interest into a new three-month CD with current interest at 3.1% or 3.15% APY, seconded by Reed, all ayes, motion carried; Hartley absent.***

**Adjourn:** ***Motioned by VanDeest and seconded by Polich to adjourn the meeting at 10:06 pm; all ayes, motion carried.***

**Next Meeting:** A special meeting was called for Monday, December 29, 2025 and the next regular council meeting is on Monday, January 12, 2026, both to be held at 791 Main Avenue, Lafayette.

Sandy Burger – City Clerk- Treasurer      Approved by Council on: \_\_\_\_\_