

Mayor Tauber called the April council meeting and Local Board for Appeals and Equalization hearing to order at 6:30pm on Monday, April 14, 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, Utility & Maintenance Superintendent Al Fox, and City Attorney Aaron Walton.

Pledge of Allegiance.

Guests present: Andy Brown – Nicollet County Assessor's Office, Doug Hanson – Winthrop Publications, Residents Jessica Tauber – 551 5th Street, Alisha Brown – 511 Pioneer Avenue, Lauren Morson & Nick Morson – 791 5th Street, Nick Klingler – Fire Chief, Mark Dick – Ambulance President, Glenn Hauser – Brickside Growers and Thomas Stang – Pura Properties.

LBA&E Hearing: Mayor Tauber opened the Public Hearing for the Local Board of Appeals and Equalization at 6:30pm. Thomas Stang, Pura Properties, the owner of the Manor apartments, was on hand to formally appeal to the 40 % increase in the valuation of the property for the 2026 tax year. He stated in the past 45 years the highest ever increase was 11%. Mr. Brown from the assessor's office explained that the State requires a median ratio (appraised value divided by actual sale price) to be between 90% and 105%. The values of the apartments had not reflected the actual market values based on the past two sales. The county set the estimated values based on countywide apartment property values. The council was unsure of where to go, whether to pass a 'no change' and have Mr. Stang appeal to the county or to make a decision. Mr. Stang was very persistent to request only an 11% increase. He stated he has had one eviction and is trying to not raise rents any further. He has adjusted all rents to be equal either at \$695 for a 1 bedroom or \$795 for a 2 bedroom, and is trying to save 3% of the rent to set aside for needed future updates. After continued discussion ***Polich motioned to approve a change to \$586,500 for the 2025 valuation set for the 2026 tax year, VanDeest seconded. Ayes: Polich, VanDeest, Reed, Tauber; Hartley was absent. Motion passed.***

The second appeal was for Kassandra Baldwin 531 10th Street. A county appraiser had been through the property with the owner and there were apparent issues with the condition and major repairs needed that would warrant a valuation reduction. Due to the fact that the appraiser was unavailable, the recommendation was for the council to vote a 'no change' and give the county time to discuss necessary value changes. This would also give the property owner a chance to review the updated valuation and appeal to the county if needed. ***Polich motioned for 'no change' to 531 10th Street, it was seconded by Reed. Ayes: Polich, Reed, VanDeest and Tauber; Hartley was absent.*** With no further discussion, mayor Tauber closed the public hearing at 7:08 pm and the council meeting resumed.

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

Motioned by Reed and seconded by VanDeest to approve the Consent Agenda as amended; all ayes, motion carried. Included in the consent agenda were the 3/10/2025 council minutes, bills totaling \$82,404.26, the receipts totaling \$79,797.39. The treasurer's report including the bank reconciliation for March, the 2025 payrolls 6, 7 and Resolution 2025-10- April Donations totaling \$15,100: including; \$10,000 from the Lions for the equipment bond, \$400 Citizens, \$200 Laurie Larson, \$500 Xcel Energy to sponsor 125th Celebration events, and a \$4,000 grant from the Carl & Verna Schmidt Foundation for the update of the Lafayette History Book for the 125th celebration.

Reports:

Fox: Submitted his written report and highlighted information of monthly reports, street sweeper purchased, new brooms delivered and will start sweeping soon, he and Moldan attended a disaster mitigation and recovery training. Quotes for the community center floor cleaning were presented by Service Master \$2,795, and R&S Cleaning \$3,250 ***VanDeest motioned to approve the Service Master quote of \$2,795, seconded by Polich; all ayes, motion carried.*** Wastewater maintenance items are being worked on. Fox requested a purchase of a part to repair the composite sampler for \$1,411, plus shipping. ***Motioned by Reed and seconded by VanDeest to approve the purchase of the part for the composite sampler for \$1,411 plus shipping; all ayes, motion carried.*** In the water department, many samples were taken or will be taken in April. Participated in the ISO Inspection for the Fire Department.

Burger: Submitted a written report and updated a few items to the council on the utility billing, 125th committee events, Zoning map has been updated. Researched the exercise stations at the school and gave the information to Fox for when they are removed.

Tauber: Met again with the Rural Fire Board with Fox.

Klingler: Rural agreement, Relief Ham Dinner sold out, ISO was good, he has timed events to turn in and the results will be 2-3 months – advised the city pumper as a reserve - it does not pay to keep it unless it will drop the rating a tier.

Dick: Ambulance is good, ordered a new Stryker Cot and Lucas III and a power stair chair. Still looking for new members. Looking at approximately 3 years before looking into a new ambulance.

Unfinished Business:

1. **Utility Updates:** RO: Waiting on the bonding bill. **MPCA:** Nothing new. **Stormwater Grant:** All cleaning and televising completed, waiting on final report. **STREAMS:** Tech team met with the MPCA going over permitting requirements of the new facility.

New Business:

1. **Pheasant Forever:** Requesting approval of the LG2200 State gambling form for a gun bingo event. ***Motioned by Polich and seconded by VanDeest approve the LG220 Application for the Pheasant Forever event; all ayes, motion carried.***
2. **2025 Ambulance Officers:** Dick submitted the list of officers: Dick – President, Uhde – Vice- President, Griebel – Secretary, Beranek Data Reporting & Active 911, Maintenance and Supplies C. Goblirsch, Infectious Control – Compton. There was no one for the training position and they will decide that at their April meeting. ***Motioned by Reed and seconded by VanDeest to approve the 2025 Ambulance officers as presented; all ayes, motion carried.***
3. **2025 Cleaning quote:** A quote of \$563.17 based on 10 hours, drive time and mileage per quarterly cleaning session. ***Motioned by Polich and seconded by Reed to approve L&L Handyman & Cleaning for the 2025 quarterly cleaning of the community center; all ayes, motion carried.***
4. **Rural Fire & City Agreement:** Fox shared that they have met with the Rural Fire group to come up with a reasonable solution that they all agreed upon. The city will cover the building and all personnel costs and would take over the truck runner compensation and also the annual \$5,000 to the relief association. Rural would cover all vehicles, equipment, including the city pumper. ***Motioned by Polich and seconded by VanDeest to approve the agreement between the Rural Fire and the City; all ayes, motion carried.***
5. **JPA with Nicollet County:** Burger updated council that she is working with Nicollet County, and the Cities of Nicollet and Courtland to get on the agenda for a County Board work session, scheduled for May 20, to work on a Joint Powers Agreement for the licensing, regulation and compliance of Cannabis business.
6. **MN Small Cities:** Burger asked about joining MN Small Cities, the proposed membership is \$372. They advocate for small cities, whereas League of MN Cities does so for all MN cities. ***Motioned by Polich and seconded by Reed to approve joining the MN Small Cities Advocacy group; all ayes, motion carried.***
7. **Chickens:** Burger shared, in the agenda packet, research that she did on what other cities have done for chicken ordinances. What some of the issues are, how many licenses they actually have per year, a cost factor to writing a new ordinance and adding it to the code, etc. She also shared the New Ulm Chicken Ordinance, New Ulm Chicken application and other New Ulm forms and information, after discussions with a few employees. There was some discussion following her recap and Mayor Tauber suggested to hold a workshop on the possible ordinance. A work session was scheduled for Wednesday, May 7, at 6:30pm.
8. **Remote Meeting:** A quote for a camera/speaker was given for \$699, would need to subscribe annually to Zoom or Teams. In order to do this, all attendees would have to be able to see and hear everyone, including the remote person. There are guidelines if attending as a full voting member, for such things as posting timelines, making any decision by roll call, etc. It would be possible to attend to participate in

discussion, and not voting, if no location was available for the posting guidelines. After discussion it was decided to borrow Winthrop's Owl and use it at the workshop to see how it works.

Adjourn: *Motioned by VanDeest and seconded by Polich to adjourn the meeting at 8:26 pm; all ayes, motion carried.*

Next Meeting: Council will meet on Wednesday, May 7 for a workshop to discuss a chicken ordinance. The next regular council meeting will be held on Monday, May 12, 2025 at 7:00pm, to be held at 791 Main Avenue, Lafayette.

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