

**Mayor Tauber called the council meeting to order at 7:00pm on Monday, September 15, 2025, at the Lafayette City Council Chambers, 791 Main Avenue, Lafayette.** Present were Mayor Curt Tauber, Councilors: Dave Reed, Tom Polich, Andrew Hartley and Logan VanDeest; Also attending were Clerk/Treasurer Sandy Burger, Utility & Maintenance Superintendent Al Fox, and City Attorney Aaron Walton.

**Pledge of Allegiance.**

**Guests present:** Nick Klingler – Fire Chief, Mark Dick – Ambulance President, Resident Jessica Tauber – 551 5<sup>th</sup> Street, Brennan Moldan, 1091 Lafayette Avenue, and Doug Hoffmann – Winthrop News.

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

**Motioned by VanDeest and seconded by Polich to approve the Consent Agenda as presented; all ayes, motion carried.** Included in the consent agenda were the 8/11 council minutes, 8/18 and 8/26 special meetings with workshops that followed, and the 9/8 minutes. Bills totaling \$57,220.92, and receipts totaling \$48,313.78 The treasurer's report including the bank reconciliation for August, and the 2025 payrolls 17 & 18. Donations Resolution 2025-23 – totaling \$18,003.00; including \$500 to the Ambulance fund, \$700 to the Fire fund, \$10,000 to the Lions Playground bonds, \$6,803 donations to the 125<sup>th</sup>; a complete list of donors are included on the resolution.

**Reports:**

**Fox:** Submitted his written report and highlighted that the ice-skating rink reshaping quote is \$3,270 and is in the budget. After discussion it was tabled, council thinking it was too high. Even though the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter results for the THM, HAA5 were under the '80 threshold', MDH deems that the violation in 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter is ongoing and we need to send a letter with the September billing. Lead and Copper samples will be done this week.

**Burger:** Submitted a written report and with no questions, reminded council of the training for the Local Board of Appeals and Equalization; Tauber and Reed are certified until July 1, 2027.

**Dick:** All AED pads are replaced. Driving training is taking place tonight, will apply for a grant for new EMTS that would cover tuition for people interested in joining our ambulance service and the MN ambulance reporting is due in November; will work with Burger to complete.

**Klingler:** He, M. Voges and S. Clemon will attend the Chiefs conference. He and Clemon will attend a NERIS training for a new fire reporting system that will begin in December. He inquired about getting the TV set up in the fire hall.

**Polich:** Connecting Nicollet County as a speaker along with Mayor Tauber.

**Unfinished Business:**

1. **Utility Updates:** EPA has accepted the updates to the application this week, approval should be completed by September 2025. **PFA:** Waiting on PSIG grant application status. **MPCA:** working on the packet, verification and additional submittals - should have the results by the end of September.

**Bond:** Discussed the short-term bond, which is due December 1, 2025 \$254,687.50. Option 1 was getting a 1-year extension, Option 2 was refinancing with a new three-year term with a \$1,500 reimbursable bond fee, both rates would be about 4.75%. **Polich motioned to go with the three-year refinancing, Option 2, Hartley seconded the motion; all ayes, motion carried.** This option would give the city more time just in case the current funding does not happen.

**STREAMS:** Meeting with SEH on September 17 from 1-2 pm in Winthrop. The meeting was posted in case a quorum is present. Tauber will attend, Reed and Polich via Teams. On October 22, 2025 at 8 am the Capital Budget bus tour will meet in Winthrop for the four-million-dollar bond grant request.

**New Business:**

1. **Ord. 154 - Enacting and Adopting a Supplement to the Code:** With no discussion, **Reed motioned to approve Ord. 154 Enacting and Adopting Supplement 2025-S8 to the Code of Ordinances for the City of Lafayette as presented; VanDeest seconded; all ayes, motion carried.**

2. **Rezone application:** An application was submitted for a re-zone of an industrial property to an agriculture zone. **Polich motioned to set the public hearing for the October 13, 2025 council meeting, Seconded by Reed, all ayes, motion carried.**
3. **Liability Coverage Waiver Form:** **Motioned by VanDeest and seconded by Polich to approve the option: Member does not waive the monetary limits on municipal tort liability established by Minn. Stat. §466.04. All ayes, motion carried.**
4. **Resolution 2025-22 – A Resolution to approve the Preliminary 2026 budget and adopt the 2026 Preliminary Property Tax Levy:** **Reed motioned to approve resolution 2025-22 as presented and VanDeest seconded; all ayes, motion carried.** The preliminary levy was set at a \$55,056 increase, or 19.80%. A few items affecting this preliminary increase are property & casualty and health insurance, purchasing a lawn mower, hiring seasonal personnel to mow vs contracting, in-house elections vs mail in and things that could lower it would be by selling the city pumper thus not needing a repair budget for it. Council will make these decisions prior to the final budget/levy approval in December. After approval Burger read the following statement: **"The final 2026 budget workshop and first Truth in Taxation hearing will be held on Tuesday, December 2, 2025 at 7pm, in the city council chambers. The second Truth in Taxation hearing will be held during the Monday, December 8, 2025 council meeting at 7pm, in the city council chambers. The 2026 budget and levy will be discussed at both meetings and will allow public input prior to the final approval of the 2026 budget and levy as listed on the December 8, 2025 agenda."**
5. **City Pumper:** Klingler shared that the city pumper is rarely used and that removing it from service, will save repair costs and only affect the ISO rating by about a quarter of a percent. He recommended the council try to sell it, as the value is not that great and the only thing that they could use is some of the equipment on the truck. A resolution declaring surplus equipment and authorizing the sale will be on the October agenda.
6. **Park Fencing:** Council had previously approved to fix the fence on the first base line. Polich had met with H. Portner prior to the second budget workshop and had a better understanding of the project. The proposed fence update would remove the walkway between the ball fields and build a common fence, so the fixing the first base line would not be needed. H. Portner was present to answer questions from the council. **There was a motion by Polich and seconded by Hartley to rescind the motion to repair the fencing on the first baseline at the June 9, 2025 council meeting; all ayes, motion carried.** Portner also shared that their bingo fundraiser was a success and they have more bingo events lined up and have five tournaments scheduled for 2026, all raising funds for the project. They are also looking into multiple grants. She noted that they take cans from the trailer at the gas station in about four times a year and receive about \$350 each load.
7. **Courtland Fire-Dispatch agreement:** Klingler shared that this is for structure fires. Nicollet, Courtland, New Ulm, Lake Crystal and Lafayette Fire departments have worked with the Nicollet County dispatch that when a structure fire occurs, the fire department covering the area would be paged and the nearest second fire department will respond with an engine company and water tender, unless further assistance is required. This helps save critical time from the need to call mutual aid separately. It also would help ISO ratings for the area. **Motioned by Reed and seconded by Polich to approve the agreement as presented; all ayes, motion carried.**
8. **Hiring Committee:** Tauber explained that the committee consisting of Tauber, Reed, Fox and Burger met and reviewed all qualified applications, rated them and scheduled the top four scores for interviews. One withdrew their application. The remaining three were interviewed and scored based on experience and the committee recommended top applicant, Kim Thomas. **VanDeest motioned to approve the committee's recommendation and to offer Kim Thomas the position of Clerk/Treasurer, pending the background check; all ayes, motion carried.**
9. **Investments:** Burger presented a chart of our current CD and adding another short-term CD that would be staggered with the maturity date of the long-term one. Due to the flux in the current interest rates, she requested that council allow her to choose the best term and interest available at the time of maturity on November 9, 2025 and to purchase a new three-month CD at 3.5% AYP, our current savings is at 2%. **Motioned by VanDeest to approve Burger rolling over the current CD to the higher rate and best term and start a new three-month CD, it was seconded by Hartley; all ayes, motion carried.**

**Adjourn:** *Motioned by Hartley and seconded by Reed to adjourn the meeting at 8:28 pm; all ayes, motion carried.*

**Next Meeting:** The next regular council meeting will be held on Monday, October 13, 2025 at 7:00pm, both to be held at 791 Main Avenue, Lafayette.

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

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