

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING  
OF THE FIFTY LAKES CITY COUNCIL  
December 10<sup>th</sup>, 2025

The Regular Monthly Meeting of the Fifty Lakes City Council was held on Wednesday, December 10<sup>th</sup>, 2025, at City Hall at 6:00 pm. The meeting was postponed from Tuesday, December 9<sup>th</sup> 2025 due to inclement weather. The following officers were present: Gary Staples, Mayor; Mark Bradley, Randy Zeigler, Juan Cabrera, Toni Buchite, Council Members; Ann Raph, City Clerk; Jesse Anderson, Fire Chief.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Mayor Staples requested one (1) addition to the December agenda, Great Plains Proposal. **MOTION MADE BY MR. BRADLEY AND SECONDED BY MR. ZEIGLER TO APPROVE THE AGENDA WITH THE ADDITION OF GREAT PLAINS PURCHASE OF FIRE GEAR UNDER FIRE AND RESCUE.** When polled: All members voted aye.

Open Forum: Ms. Raph informed the Council of a phone call she received from residents Gary and Geri Watcher regarding the municipal liquor store. Mr. Watcher stated that he worked for the City of Apple Valley for 40 years and understands that city employees do not often receive compliments. He and his wife wished to express a significant compliment to the City. While visiting the Municipal Liquor Store, they were served by bartender Ella Drewes, whom they described as an outstanding employee. Mr. Watcher noted that Ms. Drewes is friendly, manages the kitchen, on-sale operations, and customer interactions effectively, and stated that the City should make every effort to retain her. Mr. Watcher requested that this compliment be formally shared with the City Council. Ms. Raph reported receiving a text message at 7:06 a.m. today from resident Lorrie Johnson of West Fox Lake Road. Ms. Johnson expressed her sincere appreciation for the roads being plowed early, as she had early morning appointments in Brainerd. She asked that her gratitude be shared with the City's maintenance staff.

Consent Agenda: Mayor Staples requested consideration of the consent agenda. Council reviewed: Council Meeting Minutes from November 10<sup>th</sup>, November 19<sup>th</sup> and November 24<sup>th</sup> 2025; Payment of bills check #52608 to #52698 for \$134,348.46; Fire and Rescue Minutes.

**MOTION MADE BY MR. BRADLEY AND SECONDED BY MS. BUCHITE TO APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA.** When polled: All members voted aye. Motion carried.

New Business/Critical Issues: Mayor Staples presented CD #4211 at First National Bank is at term and requested this be rolled right into the 4M Fund Investments. **MOTION MADE BY MR. BRADLEY AND SECONDED BY MR. CABRERA TO APPROVE ROLLING CD # 4211 AT FIRST NATIONAL BANK INTO THE 4M FUND.** When polled: All members voted aye. Motion carried.

Council reviewed the 2026 budget. Ms. Raph requested adding a fireworks budget of \$3,000 moving funds from office supplies and capital outlay office equipment and furnishings. Election judge wages need to be budgeted with funds being moved by taking \$2,000 from administrative wages and moving to election judge wages. **MR. BRADLEY MOTIONED AND SECONDED BY MAYOR STAPLES TO APPROVE RESOLUTION 2025-20 ADOPTING THE FINAL 2026 TAX LEVY AND BUDGET. General \$ 290,900.00 Road & Bridge \$285,114.00 Fire & Rescue \$130,661.00 Parks \$58,300.00 TOTAL LEVY \$764,975.00** When polled: All members voted aye. Motion carried.

Fire & Rescue: Fire Chief Jesse Anderson reported 4 medicals and 1 fire call and requested approval of the purchase of bunker gear, boots, helmets, hood, mobile rack, wildland gear and duffle bags.

**MOTION MADE BY MS. BUCHITE AND SECONDED BY MR. BRADLEY TO APPROVE THE PURCHASE OF \$23,968 PLUS FREIGHT FROM GREAT PLAINS FIRE AS PRESENTED IN QUOTE.** When polled: All members voted aye. Motion carried.

Liquor Store: Mr. Zeigler reported that the profit and loss of the bar is down with a gross profit of 47.2% and a loss of \$6,014.97. Inventory variance report has improved with the variances listed where staff forget to transfer liquor. Ms. Raph reported the Toast POS system is amazing and tracking inventory has improved. Customer processing has improved immensely with this new system. Lead bartender Kim Tucheck has been taking classes for Toast Management with the intent of being the manager of the system. Mr. Cabrera stated if the system goes offline, you can still process all transactions. Jesse Potz would like to return as a part-time bartender. **MOTION MADE BY MS. BUCHITE AND SECONDED BY MR. BRADLEY TO REINSTATE JESSE POTZ AS A PART-TIME BARTENDER.** When polled: All members voted aye. Motion carried.

**MOTION MADE BY BUCHITE AND SECONDED BY MAYOR STAPLES TO APPROVE HIRING LOON AND BROOM FOR CLEANING SERVICE 7 DAYS A WEEK FOR \$35 PER HOUR.** When polled: All members voted aye. Motion carried.

Cook Carin Anderson has taken on the role of managing the kitchen including scheduling, ordering, menu and prepping. **MOTION MADE BY MS. BUCHITE AND SECONDED BY MAYOR STAPLES TO APPROVE CARIN ANDERSON AS THE LEAD COOK WITH A \$2.00 PER HOUR INCREASE.** When polled: All members voted aye. Motion carried. Mr. Staples stated a job description will be revised for this position.

**MOTION MADE BY MS. BUCHITE AND SECONDED BY MR. CABRERA TO APPROVE ELLA DREWES AS ASSISTANT LEAD BARTENDER WITH A \$2 PER HOUR INCREASE.** When polled: All members voted aye. Motion carried.

Ms. Raph informed council Gary Buysse will be holding an Alcohol “Safe Serve” (Responsible Beverage Service / Alcohol Server Training) class training program at Fifty Lakes for people who sell or serve alcoholic beverages. The goal is to teach safe, legal, and responsible service practices so servers reduce risks like underage sales, overservice, intoxication-related incidents, and legal liability. The cost of this is \$300 which will come out of the bar budget. Mr. Busse suggested that the City extend the invitation to attend the Alcohol Safe Serve training to local bars as well, in order to encourage networking and promote consistent responsible alcohol service practices throughout the community. This training will be held on Sunday, January 18<sup>th</sup> at 9 am.

Annual inventory will be conducted in the bar on January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2026, at 9 am.

Planning and Zoning: Mayor Staples explained that the zoning members should be educated on procedures and zoning laws. **MOTION MADE BY MAYOR STAPLES AND SECONDED BY MR. BRADLEY TO HAVE MANDATORY EDUCATION FOR THE PLANNING COMMISSION MEMEBERS.** When polled: All members voted aye. Motion carried.

Mayor Staples stated there are 2 vacant positions on the planning commission. **MOTION MADE BY MAYOR STAPLES AND SECONDED BY MR. BRADLEY TO FORM AN INTERVIEW COMMITTEE FOR THE PLANNING COMMISSION VACANT POSITIONS. MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE WILL BE ANN RAPH, GARY STAPLES, BOB STANCER AND BETHANY SODERLUND.** When polled: All members voted aye. Motion carried.

Road Construction and Maintenance: Mr. Bradley reported the solar project on the city hall and bar roof began today. The area around the sidewalk on the south end of the building is taped off for safety. There will be a shutdown of all power to the building after installation. The bar heat exchanger is scheduled to be installed on Friday, December 12<sup>th</sup>.

Parks: There will be AA meetings held at the community center every Tuesday at 5 pm.

Purchasing/ Personnel: Council reviewed the Paid Family Medical Leave (PFML) Act that takes effect on January 1<sup>st</sup> 2026. **MOTION MADE BY MS. BUCHITE AND SECONDED BY MAYOR STAPLES TO ADOPT THE PAID FAMILY LEAVE ACT (PFML) EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1<sup>ST</sup>, 2026 WITH 50% CITY AND 50% EMPLOYEE COSTS.** When polled: All members voted aye. Motion carried.

The city received a request for support from the Crosslake Parks and Recreation Department regarding the SS4A grant funded Brainerd Lakes Area Vulnerable Users Plan. **MOTION MADE BY MAYOR STAPLES AND SECONDED BY**

**MR. ZEIGLER TO ADOPT RESOLUTION REGARDING SS4A GRANT-FUNDED BRAINERD LAKES AREA VULNERABLE USERS PLAN.** When polled: All members voted aye. Motion carried.

City hall will be closed on December 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> 2025 and January 1<sup>st</sup> 2026.

Open Forum: Gambling manager Lori Crawford informed council of the origination of Bingo was in December and the bar will be holding a “Bingo Bash” celebrating this.

Adjourn: **MOTION MADE BY MR. BRADLEY AND SECONDED BY MAYOR STAPLES TO ADJOURN.** The meeting adjourned at 6:55pm.

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Ann M. Raph, City Clerk/ Treasurer