

**REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING  
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY OF ALBERT LEA  
January 13, 2025 – 7:00 P.M.**

**PRESENT:** Mayor Rich Murray, Councilors Rachel Christensen, Larry Baker, Jason Howland, Reid Olson, Keith Van Beek, Brian Anderson, City Manager Ian Rigg, Public Works Director Steven Jahnke, City Attorney Joel Holstad of Lake National Law LLP, and City Clerk Daphney Maras.

**ADDITIONAL STAFF PRESENT:** City Planner Megan Boeck, Sergeant-at-Arms-Public Safety Director JD Carlson.

**CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL** - Mayor Murray called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. City Clerk Maras administered roll call.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE** - Mayor Murray asked all in attendance to stand and recite the Pledge of Allegiance.

**CEREMONIAL ITEMS**

- A. Clerk Maras administered the Oath of Office to Councilors Rachel Christensen – Ward 1, Jason Howland – Ward 3, Keith Van Beek – Ward 5
- B. Mayor Murray read aloud the Proclamation Declaring January as National Mentoring Month in Albert Lea, MN – STARS Mentoring Program Director Watsana Thiravong was present to receive the Proclamation. She provided details of this program and the many benefits to youth.

**PUBLIC FORUM** – Bruce Manwarren suggested deer crossing signs be displayed at the area where two deer were hit by vehicles last year.

**CONSENT AND APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

- A. Approve Minutes of the December 09, 2024 Regular Council Meeting
- B. Approve Minutes of the December 09, 2024 Work Session
- C. Licenses & Permits
- D. Resolution Establishing 2025 Appointments and Designations
- E. Resolution Designating Depositories of City Funds and Signatories for Withdrawal of Funds and Authorizing Credit Card Use, Electronic or Wire Transfers, Investment of Municipal Funds and Collateral Securing Deposits For 2025
- F. Resolution Naming Official Newspaper For 2025
- G. Resolution Ordering Preparation of Feasibility Reports for 2025 Improvements
- H. Resolution Approving State of Minnesota Joint Powers Agreement with The City of Albert Lea on Behalf of its Human Resource Department and Fire Rescue

Motion made by Councilor Baker to approve the consent agenda as read, seconded by Councilor

Howland. On voice call vote, the following councilors voted in favor of said motion: Christensen, Baker, Howland, Olson, Van Beek, Anderson, and Mayor Murray. Mayor Murray declared the motion passed.

(See Secretary's Original Resolution 25-001 through 25-005  
Included with these minutes)

**PETITIONS, REQUESTS AND COMMUNICATIONS** - None

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS** - None

**NEW BUSINESS**

A. Public Hearing Regarding Disposal of Property – 1116 James Avenue

This public hearing is to determine if the property at 1116 James Avenue continues to have a public use. The only continued public use is a narrower easement to access a stormwater sewer line. Ownership by the City is not necessary.

Mayor Murray opened the public hearing. He called three times. No one spoke. Mayor Murray closed the public hearing.

**A1. Resolution 25-006 Declaring No Public Interest in Real Property – 1116 James Avenue**

This property cannot be developed due to easements for utilities and can better serve neighboring property owners for use and setbacks if divided and added to their properties. Staff recommends disposing the property by splitting it and adjoining to the neighboring property.

Motion made by Councilor Christensen, seconded by Councilor Baker. On roll call vote, the following councilors voted in favor of said motion: Christensen, Baker, Howland, Olson, Van Beek, Anderson, and Mayor Murray. Mayor Murray declared the motion passed.

(See Secretary's Original Resolution 25-006  
Included with these minutes)

**B. Resolution 25-007 Approving the Sale of City Owned Real Estate at 1116 James Avenue**

This property cannot be developed due to easements for utilities and can better serve neighboring property owners for use and setbacks if divided and added to their properties. Staff recommends disposing the property by splitting it and adjoining to the neighboring property.

Motion made by Councilor Anderson, seconded by Councilor Howland. On voice call vote, the following councilors voted in favor of said motion: Christensen, Baker, Howland, Olson, Van Beek, Anderson, and Mayor Murray. Mayor Murray declared the motion passed.

(See Secretary's Original Resolution 25-007  
Included with these minutes)

**C. Resolution 25-008 Approving the Sale of City Owned Real Estate at 1211 Newton Avenue S.**

Three parcels the City owns do not meet zoning requirements as does the neighboring property. In an agreement to finish remodeling the property at 1213 Newton Ave, the City agreed to split a portion of the property at 1211 Newton Ave and adjoin to 1213 Newton. With adjustments to the remaining property into two new parcels, the City will have lots that can be better developed without being oversized to the neighborhood. The property owner at 1213 will have a residential lot near zoning compliance. Staff recommends disposing the property by splitting it and adjoining to the neighboring property at 1213 Newton Ave.

Motion made by Councilor Baker, seconded by Councilor Anderson. On voice call vote, the following councilors voted in favor of said motion: Christensen, Baker, Howland, Olson, Van Beek, Anderson, and Mayor Murray. Mayor Murray declared the motion passed.

(See Secretary's Original Resolution 25-008  
Included with these minutes)

**D. Resolution 25-009 Authorizing Broadway Ridge Grant with Susanne M. Crane at 224 S. Broadway**

Susanne Crane submitted a Broadway Ridge Grant for reimbursement up to 50% of costs associated with roof replacement at 224 S Broadway. The total improvement cost is \$32,300 which will provide a matching grant of \$16,150. All improvements have been completed and reviewed by the City's Zoning and Building Official for compliance with application requirements.

The project is conditional that any and all other code violations be completed on or before June 30, 2025.

Motion made by Councilor Baker, seconded by Councilor Howland. On voice call vote, the following councilors voted in favor of said motion: Christensen, Baker, Howland, Olson, Van Beek, Anderson, and Mayor Murray. Mayor Murray declared the motion passed.

(See Secretary's Original Resolution 25-009  
Included with these minutes)

**E. Resolution 25-010 Designating Two "Loading Zone" Stalls on Bridge Avenue (Job 2213)**

Construction and installation of dock and kayak landing along Bridge Avenue is completed with the exception of the dock.

As part of the Cooperative Agreement between the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources and the City, a loading/unloading zone is to be designated along Bridge Avenue adjacent to the landing entrance. This will ensure a kayak can be dropped off or picked up at this location. This resolution would authorize City staff to install signage designating this approximately 50-foot-long area. This would allow for short term parking for loading and unloading along this section of Bridge Avenue to provide safe, convenient access to the boat dock.

Motion made by Councilor Christensen, seconded by Councilor Howland. On voice call vote, the following councilors voted in favor of said motion: Christensen, Baker, Howland, Olson, Van Beek, Anderson, and Mayor Murray. Mayor Murray declared the motion passed.

(See Secretary's Original Resolution 25-010  
Included with these minutes)

**F. Resolution 25-011 Approving Agreement for Professional Engineering Services - Snyder Field Bathrooms and Concession (Job 2317)**

In 2020 the city had a facilities study performed of the J.M. Snyder field. Through this study it was determined that the facility needed improvements to drainage, restrooms, concession areas, parking, walkways, spectator areas, coaching areas, and general park spaces. It was also noted that ADA improvements were needed.

In 2022 drainage improvements were completed and in 2023 fence and dugouts were improved.

The city requested proposals public facilities design. The work involves seeking public input and facility demands to design concession, bathroom, picnic area, playground area, and ADA walkway and parking improvements. A cost estimate for the project was also a requirement of the proposal. All three consulting firms responded with proposals outlining professional planning and design services, as well as a cost estimate. Staff is recommending ISG of St Louis Park Minnesota for this work. The proposal stated a not to exceed fee of \$29,500.

The scope of work in their proposal accurately describes the deliverables sought by the city. The City has budgeted \$185,000 in fund 411 to cover this cost. This is PAR-26-04. A presentation to the Parks Advisory Board on the designs and costs are expected in late spring where they will receive input and direction from City Staff and the Parks Advisory Board. A final report is expected in April. The intent is to have a plan and costs by the summer of 2025 to allow for fundraising with construction scheduled for 2026.

The other two proposals were submitted by Bolton and Menk, Inc. and WSB Inc. The proposals submitted by each firm were impressive and each should be considered for future work.

Motion made by Councilor Howland, seconded by Councilor Olson. On roll call vote, the following councilors voted in favor of said motion: Christensen, Baker, Howland, Olson, Van Beek, Anderson, and Mayor Murray. Mayor Murray declared the motion passed.

(See Secretary's Original Resolution 25-011  
Included with these minutes)

**G. Resolution 25-012 Supporting Active Transportation Application - New Paved Trail from Albert Lea to Manchester (Job 2411)**

The attached resolution is supporting submittal of an active transportation funding application with MNDOT. The application would be for partial funding of the trail from Albert Lea to Manchester.

The application would be submitted at the end of January.

Motion made by Councilor Baker, seconded by Councilor Anderson. On voice call vote, the following councilors voted in favor of said motion: Christensen, Baker, Howland, Olson, Van Beek, Anderson, and Mayor Murray. Mayor Murray declared the motion passed.

(See Secretary's Original Resolution 25-012  
Included with these minutes)

**H. Resolution 25-013 Accepting the Offer of the Minnesota Public Facilities Authority to Purchase a \$1,030,781 Taxable Grant Anticipation Revenue Note of 2025A Providing for its Issuance and Authorizing Execution of a Minnesota Public Facilities Authority Master Loan (Bond Purchase) and/or Grant Agreement and a Lead Service Line Replacement Program Project Order ID Albert Lea\_LSLR\_01 MDH Project ID 124001-4**

The 2023 Minnesota Legislature appropriated \$240 million for lead service line replacements and approximately \$40 million per year in federal funds from the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act is also available. To access these funds, public water systems apply through the Drinking Water Revolving Fund, which is jointly administered by the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) and the Public Facilities Authority (PFA).

In 2023 the City of Albert Lea applied for and received loan and grant funding to replace approximately 150 private and public lead water services. As part of this the City is to issue a \$1,030,781 Taxable Grant Anticipation Revenue Note. This note issuance will be February 5th. The PFA will repay the full amount of the note through a grant and Master Agreement.

Motion made by Councilor Anderson, seconded by Councilor Howland. On voice call vote, the following councilors voted in favor of said motion: Christensen, Baker, Howland, Olson, Van Beek, Anderson. Mayor Murray Abstained. Mayor Murray declared the motion passed.

(See Secretary's Original Resolution 25-013  
Included with these minutes)

**I. Resolution 25-014 Authorizing FY2029 Blake Avenue (East Main Street to Marshall Street) Grant Application**

This resolution authorizes staff to apply for Federal Surface Transportation Funds for fiscal year 2029 via the Minnesota Department of Transportation. The proposed project is a resurfacing project of Blake Avenue from E. Main Street to TH-65. Proposed work includes bituminous mill & overlay, and installation of new sidewalk.

The city has been awarded Federal funding for the resurfacing of Blake Avenue from E. Main Street to TH-65 in fiscal year 2028. If awarded, the entire length of the Blake Avenue resurfacing project would be funded. If awarded, this funding would be advanced so that the entire project can take place in 2028.

Motion made by Councilor Baker, seconded by Councilor Howland. On voice call vote, the following councilors voted in favor of said motion: Christensen, Baker, Howland, Olson, Van Beek, Anderson, and Mayor Murray. Mayor Murray declared the motion passed.

(See Secretary's Original Resolution 25-014  
Included with these minutes)

**J. Resolution 25-015 Approving Preliminary and Final Plat of Blazing Star No. 2**

The Planning Commission held a public hearing on December 3, 2024 to review Preliminary and Final Plat of Blazing Star No. 2 for compliance with Chapter 38 Subdivisions. The layout of the lots and blocks were largely based on areas of contamination and consequent required cleanup as well as grade of the overall property.

The 2040 Comprehensive plan identifies the Blazing Star site as a key development area due to the close proximity to both lakes and the walkability aspects from the property to the downtown and any number of retail or natural amenities. Planning Commission recommends approval.

- Both outlot A and B are plated as outlots due to the floodplain and the likelihood of those areas remaining parks and/or open space.
- The railroad crossing is being platted as outlot D until such time the railroad is willing to sign the Right-Of-Way or crossing access.

Motion made by Councilor Howland, seconded by Councilor Anderson. On voice call vote, the following councilors voted in favor of said motion: Christensen, Baker, Howland, Olson, Van Beek, Anderson, and Mayor Murray. Mayor Murray declared the motion passed.

(See Secretary's Original Resolution 25-015  
Included with these minutes)

**K. Resolution 25-016 Accepting Donations as Presented to the City of Albert Lea**

Waste Management has graciously donated their expenses in the amount of \$4092.25 for the 2024 City Wide Fall Clean-up Event that was held Saturday, October 12, 2024. Waste Management has contributed to the City's clean-up events for years; however, this last event was fully funded by Waste Management for all Waste Management expenses.

Servpro of Albert Lea has donated their expenses in the amount of \$1,785.05 for the dehumidification equipment and monitoring after water damage occurred at the Vitality Center basement in December. Servpro is a newer company to Albert Lea. They work in cleaning, restoration, and construction.

Motion made by Councilor Howland, seconded by Councilor Christensen. On voice call vote, the following councilors voted in favor of said motion: Christensen, Baker, Howland, Olson, Van Beek, Anderson, and Mayor Murray. Mayor Murray declared the motion passed.

(See Secretary's Original Resolution 25-016  
Included with these minutes)

### **MAYOR AND COUNCIL REPORTS:**

First Ward, Councilor Christensen reported:

- Ward Items – None
- Committee Update – January has been busy with several committee meetings. She invites everyone to attend the upcoming Chamber Business After Hours and reminded people that you do not have to be a Chamber member to attend. She is the new representative for the Senior Center and looks forward to working with them. Will be attending the Blue Zones Worksite Wellness Committee meeting this Wednesday, and Planning Commission will be meeting next month. She will also be attending the Building Committee meeting related to potential improvements to the City Hall building.

Second Ward, Councilor Baker reported:

- Ward Items – Will be contacting the City Manager regarding a couple of ward items.
- Committee Update – Attended the recent ALEDA meeting.

Third Ward, Councilor Howland reported:

- Ward Items – None
- Committee Update – None

Fourth Ward, Councilor Olson reported:

- Ward Items – Was working on a question from a constituent regarding a sewer line issue and he has received answers from staff to respond to the resident.
- Committee Update – None

Fifth Ward, Councilor Van Beek reported:

- Ward Items – None
- Committee Update – None

Sixth Ward, Councilor Anderson reported:

- Ward Items – Sent an email to staff regarding a ward item.
- Committee Update – Will be attending the newly created Building Committee related to updates to the current City Hall building.

**MAYOR REPORT:**

Attended the following meetings:

- Oat Mill project
- Health Care meeting with Chamber of Commerce
- Chamber Business After Hours in December
- Special meeting with ALEDA regarding the HRA as well as the monthly ALEDA meeting
- Life Center Christmas Party
- Freeborn County Hazard Plan conference call
- Visited the new Mexican restaurant, Abelardo’s Mexican Fresh

He reminded the community that they are all ambassadors of this community and implores everyone to express support and provide ideas to their council person.

Mentioned the upcoming events and noted the events are also listed on the City’s website.

**CITY MANAGER REPORT**

- Thanked staff for a positive 2024 outcome
- Looks forward to working on housing initiatives
- Exploring city software efficiencies
- Reviewing Capital Investments including the general improvements to the City Hall building
- Blight is an on-going process and staff will be coming to council in the year of 2025 with a significant list of properties that will need correction
- Continue to look at public input and where that input may be put into actionable items
- Continuing to find ways in which the city will be a supportive role to many of the different partners such as ALEDA, the County, CVB, Chamber, HRA, Untied Way, YMCA, etc.

**APPROVAL OF CLAIMS**

A. **Resolution 25-017 Approving Claims**  
**(1). Presentation of Claims Over \$25,000**

The attached resolution directs the Mayor and City Treasurer to issue the payment of claims as presented in the Detail of Claims report. In addition, Maras displayed a list of claims over \$25,000 for the public’s viewing, transparency and education.

Motion made by Councilor Howland, to approve the claims, seconded by Councilor Anderson. On voice call vote, the following councilors voted in favor of said motion: Christensen, Baker, Howland, Olson, Van Beek, Anderson, and Mayor Murray. Mayor Murray declared the motion passed.



(See Secretary's Original Resolution 25-017  
Included with these minutes)

Councilor Howland motioned for adjournment; Councilor Anderson seconded. That there being no further business, the Council meeting adjourn until the next regular meeting of the Albert Lea City Council at 7:00 p.m. on Monday, January 27, 2025. On roll call vote, all councilors voted in favor of said motion.

Mayor Murray declared the motion passed and the meeting adjourned.

**ADJOURNMENT: 7:34 P.M.**

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Mayor Rich Murray

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Daphney Maras  
Secretary of the Council