1. **CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Wallen called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

2. **ROLL CALL**

Council Members present: Dick Backlund, Seth Hansen, Rose Johnson, Paul Knier, and Mike Wallen. Also present: City Administrator Clay Wilfahrt, Finance Director Deb Wegeleben, Police Captain Matt Hayen, Public Works Director Mike Goebel, Liquor Store Manager Greg Zurbey, Deputy City Clerk Janette Rust, Community Development Director Hanna Klimmek, and City Engineer Layne Otteson.

3. **PROPOSED AGENDA**

Council Member Knier motioned to adopt the proposed agenda as presented. Seconded by Council Member Johnson, unanimous ayes, agenda adopted.

4. **BUSINESS**

4A. **Electronic Deposit Service and Positive Pay Discussion**

Deb Wegeleben presented information on electronic deposit services offered by US Bank. Wegeleben gave a brief overview of the sweep process that the bank performs nightly on the City’s account. Any money left in the account at end of day is swept into the City’s money market account currently earning 2.21%. When checks are presented to the bank, this money is swept back into the City’s checking account to cover those checks. The electronic deposit service would allow the City to actually deposit the checks received electronically and receive immediate credit for the deposit without having to take the physical checks to the bank, allowing the City to increase its interest earning ability. Wegeleben provided a cost comparison of using the electronic deposit service vs. the cost of having an employee drive to the bank each day, showing that by using the electronic deposit service, the City would save approximately $92 in hard cost savings and noted there would be less risk to the employee driving to the bank each day. Wegeleben mentioned that cash deposits would still need to be brought to the bank, but less than 3% of the total deposits are cash and could be brought to the bank once per week. Wegeleben indicated that in addition to Electronic Daily Deposits, staff would like to move to Positive Pay. With this service, the City transmits a file of the checks with the amounts authorized for payment to US Bank after each claims run. With this information, US Bank then only honors the check numbers and amounts authorized. The cost for this service is $105 per
month, but Wegeleben noted that with cybercrime on the rise, this service would offer a layer of protection for the City and is hoping to implement this service in 2020. Wegeleben specified that Staff will need to update the financial policies as well as the internal control if Council wishes to use these services and asked for Council approval to do additional research pertaining to the capability of the current financial software and Positive Pay files.

Council discussed the benefit of the sweep process and dollars gained in interest with this technology. Council inquired of the possibility of educating the public on paying electronically. Staff replied they have been advertising it on the City’s website, Facebook page, and in the newsletter for a few years. Wegeleben added that the number of residents utilizing electronic pay is increasing with approximately 40% of residents using auto pay for their utility bills each month. Council directed staff to proceed with the purchase of the check scanner, electronic deposit service, and Positive Pay service as well as conducting additional research into the capabilities of the current financial software regarding Positive Pay files.

4B. Strategic Plan Review

Clay Wilfahrt presented ideas on how to achieve the 2019-2020 Strategic Plan goals set by the City Council. These ideas were obtained from holding several sessions with City staff and members of City committees. Eight over-arching goals were identified and 89 tasks were developed and broken down into 35 Action Steps that would take staff a couple of years to complete. Wilfahrt explained that these Action Items are high-level subjects, and the tasks get much more specific with a responsible party listed and a deadline given. Wilfahrt asked for Council feedback on the Action Items and the plan in general, noting that staff will bring this back quarterly with updates. Council directed staff to move forward with the plan as outlined.

4C. Legislative Policies Discussion

Clay Wilfahrt presented the Legislative Priority list staff uses as discussion points for the annual meeting with area legislators during legislative sessions. The City is expressing favor of local control issues, continuation of funding economic development efforts, increasing the level of Broadband service across the state, and is opposing unfunded mandates and any efforts restricting local authority in determining who can or can’t sell alcohol. Wilfahrt also discussed the two bills the City is monitoring and wants to start advocating for. The first bill is public safety personnel insurance. Currently, State law mandates the City is responsible to pay for insurance benefits of a police officer, and their dependents, who are injured or killed in the line of duty. The State does reimburse the City for part of that cost, but this year the City is advocating to have the State reimburse the City for all of the insurance cost. The second item is regarding returning Local Government Aid (LGA) amounts to levels of that in 2002. This would be a significant increase in LGA for the City.

Council asked if Wilfahrt had a sense on how these two bills would fair. Wilfahrt stated he would have a better idea after meeting next week with area legislators. Council inquired how much LGA is received and where it was in 2002. Wegeleben stated that currently it is $618,000 and 2002 amounts were approximately $700,000.
Council directed staff to move forward with the priority list as presented and thanked Wilfahrt for his work with this item.

5. OTHER

Mayor Mike Wallen provided a friendly reminder to Council and staff of the guidelines and expectations for communication between elected officials and City staff. With the recent changes to Council, Mayor Wallen felt it would be a good time to review proper communication protocol so everyone has the same information. Wallen also reminded Council that workshops should end early enough to give staff time to set up the room for the Regular Council Meeting. Wallen shared that he would like Council to consider taking 10 or 15 minutes at every Workshop Meeting for idea sharing. Wallen discussed the future of the Volunteer of the Month program and recommended moving to a Volunteer of the Year and a Volunteer Organization of the Year program. Council directed Wilfahrt to proceed with this program. Wallen discussed the Coffee with the Mayor program and suggested changes that would include the City inviting citizens to come share ideas and questions with the full City Council and department heads on a quarterly or bi-annual basis.

Hanna Klimmek stated that the EDA has created a strategic plan and handed out copies to Council.

Layne Otteson shared that he and City Planner Michael Healy presented the City’s trail project at MNDOT along with other cities, noting that Big Lake’s Trail Project came out on top. Otteson explained that it will now be elevated to the next round which is state-wide and includes the metro area.

6. ADJOURN

Council Member Hansen Motioned to adjourn at 5:42 p.m. Seconded by Council Member Knier, unanimous ayes, motion carried.