

**BIG LAKE CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
JULY 15, 2026**

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Paul Knier called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

3. ROLL CALL

Council Members present: Ken Geroux, Ken Halverson, Paul Knier, Kim Noding, and Paul Seefeld. Also present: City Administrator Hanna Klimmek, City Clerk Gina Wolbeck, Finance Director Deb Wegeleben, City Engineer Layne Otteson, Community Development Director Marie Popp, Police Chief Sam Olson, Liquor Store Manager Greg Zurbey, Streets/Parks/Fleet Superintendent Norm Michels, and Big Lake Student Liaison Adelyn Gosewisch.

Father Mike Kellogg from Mary of the Visitation Catholic Church provided an invocation.

4. OPEN FORUM

Mayor Knier opened the Open Forum at 6:31 p.m. No one came forward. Mayor Knier closed the Open Forum at 6:31 p.m.

5. PROPOSED AGENDA

Council Member Seefeld motioned to adopt the proposed Agenda as presented. Seconded by Council Member Halverson, unanimous ayes, Agenda adopted.

6. CONSENT AGENDA

Council Member Noding motioned to approve the Consent agenda as presented. Seconded by Council Member Seefeld, unanimous ayes, Consent Agenda approved. The Consent Agenda consisted of: 6A. Approve List of Claims, 6B. Approve Council Workshop Minutes of June 17, 2026,

6C. Approve Regular Council Meeting Minutes of June 17, 2026, 6D. Approve Resolution No. 2026-32 Appointing Election Judges for 2026 Elections, 6E. Approve Appointment of Mark Lieberman to the Big Lake Parks Advisory Committee, 6F. Authorize Distribution of Project Woods Environmental Assessment Workshop, 6G. Accept Resignation of Streets/Parks Operator Troy Enebak, 6H. Approve Revised Joint Powers Agreement for the Sherburne County Multi Jurisdiction Emergency Response Unit, 6I. Approve 2026 Music in the Park Updated Sound Technician Contract, and 6J. Accept Resignation of Police Reserve Aaron Lee.

7. BUSINESS

7A. Presentation – Lucas Volna Eagle Scout Project

Norm Michels reviewed staff has received a proposed project from future Eagle Scout Lucas Volna, who would like to complete his Eagle Scout project in the City's River Oaks Park. Volna presented his plan to construct five wooden garbage can enclosures. The enclosures will provide a better aesthetic look and protection from wind and animals. Volna indicated he plans to complete the project this summer and noted the expected cost of the project is \$1,450 which he plans to fundraise to cover the expenses.

Council Member Noding motioned to approve the Lucas Volna Eagle Scout garbage can improvement project at River Oaks Park. Seconded by Council Member Halverson, unanimous ayes, motion carried.

7B. PUBLIC HEARING for a Development Stage PUD Amendment for the Prairie Rose Development, and a Final Plat and Final Stage PUD Development Application for the Prairie Rose Development

Kendra Lindahl reviewed the planners report for the Development Stage Planned Unit Development (PUD) Minor Amendment for the Prairie Rose Development, and a Final Plat and Final Stage PUD Development Application for the Prairie Rose Development. Lindahl noted, at the July 27, 2022 City Council meeting, the Council approved a rezoning, preliminary plat, and development stage PUD for Prairie Rose. On June 14, 2023, the Council approved the applicant's request for a two-year extension of the Preliminary Plat and development stage PUD approval for Prairie Rose. On July 23, 2025, the Council approved an additional two-year extension for the development approvals. The applicant is now requesting minor changes to the approved development stage PUD. Section 1003.17, Subd. 8 allows minor PUD amendments to be approved by the City Council following a Public Hearing. The first addition of Prairie Rose will plat 50 of the 135 lots approved in the Prairie Rose Preliminary Plat, as well as Outlots C and G of Big Lake Marketplace North, and Outlot A of Marketplace Crossing, as Prairie Rose. The remaining 85 lots will be platted in a future addition of the development. The developer did not provide a timeline for the second phase to be

platted. In the final stage PUD plan, the applicant is proposing minor deviations from the approved development stage PUD plan. City Code Section 1003.18 defines a minor change to an approved development stage PUD as any departure from the conditions of development stage PUD plan approval which is not a “major change.” Because the proposed deviations do not meet the major change criteria, the request is a minor change to the approved development stage PUD plan. A minor change to a development stage PUD plan requires a public hearing. The applicant has also requested approval of the Final Plat and Final Stage PUD.

Lindahl discussed the applicant’s request for a development stage PUD was approved on June 14, 2023. PUD flexibility granted include 1) Reduced lot area minimums and lot width minimums as shown on the plans, 2. Side yard building setbacks of 5 feet, 3. Front yard building setbacks of 20 feet, 4. Reduced garage size of 20 feet by 22 feet (440 square feet), 5. Reduced street width of 30 feet (face to face), 6. A private street to serve 4 detached townhome units, 7. Street trees in the public street right-of-way, and 8. No sidewalk required on Streets C or D. In exchange for these flexibilities, the applicant agreed to provide a private park on Outlot A and established an HOA to maintain elements including 1. The private street, 2. Entrance monuments, 3. Common area landscaping, 4. Lawn, 5. Snow removal on the individual lots and the public sidewalks, 6. Maintenance of the trees in the street right-of-way, and 7. Maintenance of Outlot A as a private park. Lindahl also reviewed minor amendments to the approved development stage PUD plans: 1. Eliminate lawn maintenance and snow removal for individual lots from the scope of maintenance provided by the Homeowners Association (HOA). 2. Eliminate maintenance of trees within the street right-of-way from the scope of maintenance provided by the HOA. 3. Eliminate maintenance of entrance monument signs from the scope of maintenance provided by the HOA, 4. Allow the installation of a 64-square foot temporary sign at the primary entrance (168th Street and Marketplace Drive) to the development and a 32-square foot temporary sign at the secondary entrance (Patriot Drive and 166th Street) to the development, 5. Allow Siberian Elm trees to be exempt from tree replacement calculations, and 6. Allow a fence in lieu of a landscape buffer along Marketplace Drive. Lindahl also discussed the applicant’s narrative requests the city be responsible for snow removal and maintenance of the right-of-way of Marketplace Drive. However, because Marketplace Drive is a public collector street, maintenance and snow removal within the Marketplace Drive corridor has always been the responsibility of the city. Staff reviewed the PUD approval resolution and found maintenance and snow removal along the corridor was not a responsibility of the applicant required in the development stage PUD approval. Therefore, the City Council does not need to approve an amendment to the PUD for this request.

Lindahl reviewed the applicant is requesting approval of a Final Plat to create 50 single family home lots and seven outlots on Outlots C and G of Big Lake Marketplace North and Outlot A of Marketplace Crossing. The applicant is proposing to phase the development into two phases. Phase I will include 50 single family home lots and the outlots for the private park (Outlot A), private street (Outlot E), drainage ponds (Outlots B, C and D to be deeded to the city), and future phases of

development (Outlots F and G). The Final Plat is generally consistent with the Preliminary Plat, except for the requested PUD amendments. Lindahl also reviewed various development fees, including park dedication, noting during the Preliminary Plat approval, the City Council agreed to grant park dedication credit for the dedication of Outlot A as a private open space park in accordance with the standards in Section 1108, Subd. 10. Consistent with Resolution 2022-61, approving the Preliminary Plat of Prairie Rose, the 5.59-acre Outlot A will meet the required 3.27 acre (10% of net project area) minimum required for park dedication of land for the project area (phases I and II). The HOA will own and maintain the private park. As land is being dedicated, no park dedication fee will be collected. Lindahl also noted the applicant is also required to submit civil engineering plans as a condition of the resolution.

Council Member Halverson asked the developer if these types of developments are common, noting he doesn't see these small house types being built in surrounding communities. Halverson stated he wonders if they are coming here because we are allowing them. Heather Lorch from Capstone Development responded they have done 30-foot-wide houses on 40-foot-wide lots in multiple areas in the metro. There is a similar style neighborhood down in Farmington. It is something that is more common as it is helping to provide the affordability the market needs right now given high interest rates and the high cost to build homes, noting it is an attractive product. They did wait for a few years before they came back because the market was influx and they weren't quite sure what to do. What they have discovered is the \$200 per month Homeowners Association (HOA) fees were pricing people out of the market so that is one of the reasons they are coming back and asking for that to be eliminated. Where they build these homes now, the HOA's are not obligated for lawn and snow maintenance anymore, noting they haven't done that for the last few years in any of their neighborhoods. Council Member Noding asked what the HOA fees will be. Lorch responded they haven't gone to bid yet but will most likely be between \$300 to \$400 per year instead of \$200 to \$300 per month. They anticipate HOA fees will cover trash and common area maintenance. Halverson asked for confirmation that everyone will be responsible for their own yards and shoveling sidewalks, and Lorch confirmed that is correct. Noding discussed these houses are now planned to be single family homes in an R-2 zoning district but under a PUD, and asked what the price range will be. Lorch stated the price points will range from \$350,000 to \$410,000. Lorch also reviewed housing styles planned for the development, noting they will be multi-level, slab on-grade, 2-car garage housing styles which are much more attractive to buyers than attached townhomes.

Council Member Seefeld asked the developer if they have any concerns with staff's recommendation for the six adjustments. Lorch responded they are grateful to work with staff, noting staff has worked with them every step of the way to meet their timeframe. Lorch discussed they prefer not to put in a white vinyl fence and agree with staff that brown or neutral colored fencing would work best. They also would like to keep up their marketing signs until they sell their last home, but they can work within the 90% requirement if that is the preference of staff.

Mayor Knier stated he feels the project looks good, noting he was happy to hear about the change on tree maintenance in the right of way.

Mayor Knier opened the public hearing at 6:51 p.m. No one came forward. Mayor Knier closed the public hearing at 6:51 p.m.

Council Member Geroux motioned to approve Resolution No. 2026-33 approving the Final Plat and Planned Unit Development of Prairie Rose with Minor Amendments to the development stage Planned Unit Development. Seconded by Council Member Seefeld. Motion passed with a vote of 4:1 with Council Members Geroux, Knier, Noding and Seefeld voting aye, and Council Member Halverson voting against. Motion carried.

Council Member Noding motioned to approve the Prairie Rose Development Contract, contingent upon review and approval from the City Attorney. Seconded by Council Member Seefeld. Motion passed with a vote of 4:1 with Council Members Geroux, Knier, Noding and Seefeld voting aye, and Council Member Halverson voting against. Motion carried.

7C. Setback Variance for a Replacement Septic System at 760 Shady Lane

Kendra Lindahl reviewed the planners report for a setback Variance for a replacement septic system at 760 Shady Lane. The applicant is currently not connected to public utilities and are unable to directly connect to the stub that ends further east on Shady Lane. Their existing system does not meet minimum setback from Black's Lake, and the new drainfield will be replaced in the same location. The applicant is seeking a Variance from Section 1004.03, Subd. 7.2.C for a setback of 68.2 feet for a sewage treatment system where 150 feet is required from the Ordinary High-Water Level (OHWL) of Blacks Lake. After reviewing the Variance application, staff found the Variance meets all 12 Variance standards, and noted the MnDNR had no objection to the request.

Council Member Seefeld motioned to approve Resolution No. 2026-34 approving a variance from Section 1004.03, Subd. 7.2.C for a setback of 68.2 feet for a sewage treatment system where 150 feet is required for the property located at 760 Shady Lane, subject to the conditions identified. Seconded by Council Member Geroux, unanimous ayes, motion carried.

7D. Development Application for Preusse Lake Preserves Addition - Comprehensive Plan Amendment, Preliminary Plat and Development Stage PUD

Kendra Lindahl reviewed the planners report for the Preusse Lake Preserves Development Application, seeking approval on a comprehensive plan amendment, preliminary plat and development stage Planned Unit Development (PUD) application submitted by Zach Brown, of BK Land Development, LLC for a 31-lot subdivision and PUD on the 15.44-acre Outlot A, Big Lake

Marketplace North Addition. The property is located on the northeast corner of Marketplace Drive and 172nd St NW. Lindahl noted the City Council reviewed a concept plan for this project at their November 25, 2025 meeting. The current application has changed from the original concept but incorporates many of the comments made at that time. Since the concept plan review, the city adopted a new shoreland ordinance. The new ordinance processes all PUD's as a rezoning to PUD rather than a conditional use permit. The existing property is currently vacant wooded land with no existing structures on the site. The parcel contains a wetland that overlaps the far east side, and just over half of the site within the shoreland overlay zone of Preusse Lake. The subject application is for a residential development concept with 31 single family homes on varying lot widths and size. The specific applications that are part of this request include 1. Comprehensive Plan Amendment from Medium and High-Density Housing to Low-Density Housing, 2. Zoning Map Amendment from R-2 Medium Density Residential to PUD - Planned Unit Development, 3. Zoning Text Amendment to Table 15 in Section 1003.18, Subd. 10 which lists all PUD's in the City of Big Lake, 4. Development Stage PUD, and 5. Preliminary Plat. Lindahl also reviewed development standards, shoreland density, PUD flexibility, streets, parking access, tree preservation, landscaping, stormwater management and the homeowner's association.

Lindahl also noted the City Council will not act on the Zoning Map or Text Amendments with this application as they do not become official until a Final Plan PUD and Final Plat are submitted for review. Upon approval of the Final Plan PUD and Final Plat, the City Council will also approve and publish the Rezoning Map and Text amendments for the application.

Council Member Geroux motioned to approve Resolution No. 2026-35 approving Preliminary Plat and Development Stage PUD for the Preusse Lake Preserves Addition. Seconded by Council Member Noding, unanimous ayes, motion carried.

Council Member Seefeld motioned to approve Resolution No. 2026-36 approving a Comprehensive Plan Amendment for Preusse Lake Preserves Addition, subject to the findings and conditions identified therein. Seconded by Council Member Noding, unanimous ayes, motion carried.

7E. Call for a Public Hearing on September 16, 2026 for Modification of Municipal Development District No. 1 and Establishment of Tax Increment Financing District No. 1-8

Deb Wegeleben discussed the city is required to hold a public hearing before approving a modification of Development District No. 1 and establishing Tax Increment Financing (TIF) District 1-8. A public hearing will be scheduled for September 16, 2026, at approximately 6:30 pm at Big Lake City Hall. The modified Development District No. 1 is coterminous with the corporate boundaries of the City of Big Lake. The proposed Tax Increment Financing District No. 1-8 consists of approximately 115.32 acres recently approved for annexation into the city by the Big Lake City Council, and is currently under review by the State of MN, Court of Administrative Hearings

(Municipal Boundary Adjustments). Wegeleben noted the cost associated with modifying the Development District No. 1 and establishing Tax Increment Financing District No. 1-8 will be paid by the developer, Packaging Corporation of America (“PCA”), pursuant to the City’s development agreement and application requirements.

Council Member Halverson asked if we have to allow them to do TIF. Wegeleben responded Council is not obligated to approve their TIF request, but they do need to call for a hearing before Council can make an official decision on their TIF application.

Council Member Seefeld motioned to Resolution No. 2026-37 calling for a Public Hearing on Proposed Modification of Development District No. 1, the adoption of a Modified development Program for Development District No. 1, the proposed establishment of Tax Increment Financing District No. 1-8 within the Development District, the proposed adoption of Tax Increment Financing Plan for Tax Increment Financing District No. 1-8 and the proposed approval of a business subsidy. Seconded by Council Member Geroux. Motion passed with a vote of 4:1 with Council Members Geroux, Knier, Noding and Seefeld voting aye, and Council Member Halverson voting against. Motion carried.

7F. Proclamation Commemorating the 250th Anniversary of the Founding of the United States of America

Mayor Knier read aloud a Proclamation commemorating the 250th Anniversary of the Founding of the United States of American, and proclaiming the month of July 2026 as “Celebrate America” month in the City of Big Lake.

Council Member Halverson motioned to approve a Proclamation Commemorating the 250th Anniversary of the Founding of the United States of America, and Proclaiming the month of July 2026 as “Celebrate America” month in the City of Big Lake. Seconded by Council Member Seefeld, unanimous ayes, motion carried.

8. ADMINISTRATOR’S REPORT

City Administrator Hanna Klimmek discussed the city has received the 2025 population and household estimates from the State Demographer. As of April 1, 2025, Big Lake's estimated population was 12,882 with an estimated 4,468 households, representing approximately 1% growth over 2024. By state law, the State Demographer provides these estimates annually. Because the estimates are based on the previous year, they reflect conditions as of April 1, 2025, rather than the city's current population. The estimates are reviewed by cities, townships, and county auditors and are used in the calculation and distribution of state aid. Klimmek also recognized Sandy Petrowski for 30 years of dedicated service to the City of Big Lake. Thirty years of

public service is an incredible milestone and reflects a remarkable commitment to our organization and community. On behalf of the City Council and the entire City organization, she thanked Sandy for her dedication, professionalism, and the countless contributions she has made over the past three decades.

9. MAYOR & COUNCIL REPORTS and QUESTIONS/COMMENTS

Mayor Knier: reviewed the July 7, 2026 Fire Board Meeting. Mayor Knier also noted he has attended design stage meetings for the Public Safety Facility project, noting we are anticipating breaking ground at the beginning of October 2026. The committee has put together a building that will be efficient, cost effective and will do a great job for the community for many years.

Council Member Geroux: discussed multiple Public Safety Facility committee meetings he attended, as well as two union meetings, one labor meeting, and one finance committee meeting.

Council Member Halverson: asked if the Public Safety Facility project will be approved by the Council or the BLEDA, and Knier responded it will come to the City Council.

Council Member Noding: reviewed the June 22, 2026 Parks Advisory Committee Meeting, and the July 7, 2026 Fire Board Meeting.

Council Member Seefeld: discussed the July 6, 2026 Planning Commission Meeting.

10. OTHER

Council Member Seefeld discussed what a great Spud Fest event we had this year. Mayor Knier added a thank you to the Big Lake Spud Fest Organization as well as to all the volunteers.

Council Member Seefeld motioned to recess the regular meeting at 7:15 p.m. to go to Closed Session for item no. 11A. Labor Negotiations Strategy allowed per MN Statute 13D.03 for the Law Enforcement Labor Services contract and 11B. International Union of Operating Engineers, Local 49 AFL-CIO Contract. Seconded by Council Member Noding, unanimous ayes, motion carried.

11A. CLOSED SESSION - Labor Negotiations Strategy for the Law Enforcement Labor Services Contract (allowed per M.S. 13D.03)

Council Member Seefeld motioned to open the July 15, 2026 Closed Session at 7:20 p.m. for labor negotiations strategy for the Law Enforcement Labor Services Contract allowed per M.S. 13D.03. Seconded by Council Member Noding, unanimous ayes, motion carried.

Council Members present: Ken Geroux, Ken Halverson, Paul Knier, Kim Noding, and Paul Seefeld. Also present: City Administrator Hanna Klimmek, City Attorney Soren Mattick from Campbell Knutson, Finance Director Deb Wegeleben and City Clerk Gina Wolbeck.

Soren Mattick reviewed negotiations underway on the Law Enforcement Labor Services Contract.

No action was taken by Council during closed session.

Council Member Noding motioned to close the Closed Session at 7:56 p.m. Seconded by Council Member Seefeld, unanimous ayes, motion carried.

11B. CLOSED SESSION - Labor Negotiations Strategy for the International Union of Operating Engineers, Local 49 AFL-CIO Contract (allowed per M.S. 13D.03)

Council Member Noding motioned to open the July 15, 2026 Closed Session at 7:57 p.m. for labor negotiations for the International Union of Operating Engineers, Local 49 AFL-CIO Contract Negotiations allowed per M.S. 13D.03. Seconded by Council Member Seefeld, unanimous ayes, motion carried.

Council Members present: Ken Geroux, Ken Halverson, Paul Knier, Kim Noding, and Paul Seefeld. Also present: City Administrator Hanna Klimmek, City Attorney Soren Mattick from Campbell Knutson, Finance Director Deb Wegeleben and City Clerk Gina Wolbeck.

Soren Mattick reviewed negotiations underway on the International Union of Operating Engineers, Local 49 AFL-CIO contract.

No action was taken by Council during closed session.

Council Member Seefeld motioned to close the Closed Session and reopen the meeting at 8:10 p.m. Seconded by Council Member Noding, unanimous ayes, motion carried.

11. ADJOURN

Council Member Seefeld motioned to adjourn at 8:11 p.m. Seconded by Council Member Halverson, unanimous ayes, motion carried.

Gina Wolbeck
Clerk

Date Approved by Council 08.19.26