

DECEMBER 1, 2025

The Regular Meeting of the Lake Benton City Council was held on Monday, December 1, 2025 at 5:30 P.M. in the Lake Benton Area Community and Event Center. Mayor Patrick Haynes presided. Trustees Rosie DeZeeuw, Karen Lichtsinn, Jon Olson, and Scott Christensen were present. City Attorney Mike Cable was absent. City Administrator/Clerk Eileen Christensen, Austin Myott, and Curtis and Laura Rethwisch were also present.

Mayor Patrick Haynes called the meeting to order. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all present.

Mayor Patrick Haynes then asked if anyone in attendance had an item, not on the agenda, to bring up during the Open Forum part of the meeting. If so, they had two minutes to state their concern. No items were brought forward at this time.

The minutes of the Regular Meeting of November 17, 2025 were reviewed. **MOTION** by Rosie DeZeeuw, seconded by Scott Christensen to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of November 17, 2025. Motion carried.

CLAIMS PRESENTED AGAINST THE CITY OF LAKE BENTON:

QUARNSTROM-DOERING	\$ 444.50	SANITATION PRODUCTS	\$ 952.66
RETHWISCH & SON	\$ 21.94	TRAVIS LUSTFIELD	\$ 32.00
PAT HAYNES	\$ 366.28	MN LIFE	\$ 4.80
MN DEPT OF HEALTH	\$ 789.00	MIKE OTTO	\$ 2,300.20
TROY NORDMEYER	\$ 32.00	KYLIE ROCHEL	\$ 170.00
JENNIFER NORDMEYER	\$ 910.00	CENTER POINT	\$ 51.54
DANNY/MEGAN KROTZER	\$ 250.00	LINCOLN CTY HWY DEPT	\$ 20,000.00

Administrator/Clerk Eileen Christensen informed the Council the City needs to get new license plates for the snow truck and the charge is \$758.50. Maintenance Supervisor Travis Lustfield can pick them up in Tyler tomorrow if approved.

MOTION by Jon Olson, seconded by Karen Lichtsinn to approve payment of the claims presented against the City of Lake Benton and to approve the purchase of new license plates for the snow truck for \$758.50. Motion carried and the Mayor authorized the City Administrator/Clerk to make payment.

The next item of business was to review/act on adding to existing CDs for the General and Water Funds. The General Fund CDs include \$1,000.00 for City Office Improvements, \$2,000.00 for Parks/Ballfields Lakeside Park Improvements, \$5,000.00 for Street Capital Outlay, and \$10,000.00 for Street Repair/Sealcoating. The Water Fund CDs include \$5,000.00 for Capital Outlay/Water Improvements, and \$5,000.00 for Water Tank Upkeep. **MOTION** by Scott Christensen, seconded by Rosie DeZeeuw to approve the General Fund CDs for \$1,000.00 for City Office Improvements, \$2,000.00 for Parks/Ballfields Lakeside Park Improvements, \$5,000.00 for Street Capital Outlay, and \$10,000.00 for Street Repair/Sealcoating, and the Water Fund CDs for \$5,000.00 for Capital Outlay/Water Improvements, and \$5,000.00 for Water Tank Upkeep. Motion carried.

The Public Works Account has \$2,000.00 remaining in Heavy Equipment/Repair, and \$10,000.00 for the purchase of new Capital Outlay Equipment. **MOTION** by Karen Lichtsinn, seconded by Jon Olson to approve the transfer of \$12,000.00 to the Public Works Account. Motion carried.

The next item of business was to review/act on the delinquent utility bills at 113 S. Cottage Street owing \$407.88, 112 E. Bluff Street owing \$741.32, 209 S. Fremont Street owing \$533.80, 605 Highway 75 owing \$620.36, 304 Garfield Street owing \$440.82, and 114 N. Center Street owing \$182.35; lawn mowing at 112 E. Bluff Street owing \$450.00, and 209 S. Fremont Street owing \$150.00; and replacing new water meters due to property owner negligence at 209 S. Fremont Street owing \$250.00, and 114 N. Center Street owing \$250.00. The individuals will be mailed a letter on December 2, 2025 informing them if payment is not received by December 15, 2025, this amount will be certified as a property tax levy against

their property on December 17, 2025. **MOTION** by Scott Christensen, seconded by Rosie DeZeeuw to submit the delinquent water bills, lawn mowing bills and replacement water meters to the County Auditor to be assessed to the properties if payment is not received by December 15, 2024. Motion carried.

The next item of business was to review/act on a Resolution Accepting Donations to the Library. The Library received a donation from the Fiber Guild for \$66.00, Edel Hudson for \$50.00 and the American Legion Auxiliary for \$20.00 in memory of Lois Crooks. These donations will be designated for collections. Minnesota Statutes state the Library can accept donations for the benefit of recreational services. The Council needs to pass the resolution accepting the donations to the Library. **MOTION** by Jon Olson, seconded by Scott Christensen to approve the Resolution Accepting Donations from the Fiber Guild for \$66.00, Edel Hudson for \$50.00 and the American Legion Auxiliary for \$20.00 in memory of Lois Crooks to the Library. Motion carried.

ADMINISTRATOR/CLERK REPORT:

No report.

MAYORAL REPORT:

No report.

The Council thanked Travis Lustfield and Troy Nordmeyer for putting the holiday decorations up and the Chamber for the holiday display at Lakeside Park. The holiday open houses begin this week.

At 6:00 PM Mayor Patrick Haynes called for a motion to go into the Truth-in-Taxation Hearing. **MOTION** by Rosie DeZeeuw, seconded by Scott Christensen to go into the Truth-in-Taxation Hearing. Motion carried.

Mayor Patrick Haynes reminded the Council that on September 15, 2025 the Council proposed a 10% increase of 214,115 into the General Fund and \$77,000.00 allocated to the USDA-RUS Improvement Fund. Mayor Patrick Haynes then reminded the Council that they cannot raise the percentage, but they can lower it.

Mayor Patrick Haynes then asked if the Council had any comments or questions before he opened the floor to the audience. The Council did not have any comments or questions and the floor was opened to Curtis Rethwisch. Curtis commented that he should have come to the meeting on September 15, 2025 when the Council discussed the proposed levy and until he received his tax notices he stated the increase does not hurt him, but it may have an impact on a lot of residents in the City. Some are not as well off as others and if taxes go up they will need to figure out what to give up – fuel for my vehicle to get to work or food for my family. Curtis then inquired what is behind the need for the 10% increase – is it for the future – new equipment. Curtis understands that equipment breaks down and it needs to be repaired. Curtis asked the Council to consider a different amount than the proposed 10%. The Council informed Curtis that the increase goes towards the increase in propane, insurance, and police coverage, to name a few. Public safety hours were cut to keep the cost down, but it is still a 4% increase over the previous year.

Mayor Patrick Haynes then opened the floor to Austin Myott who informed the Council he and Megan DeWitt live on Harrison Street and they moved here for lower taxes. He looked at his proposed taxes and it is a 31% increase over the previous year. The Council informed Curtis and Austin they may want to attend the County Truth In Taxation Hearing at the Lincoln County Courthouse on Tuesday, December 2, 2025 at 6:00 PM because the City's increase is not close to 31%.

Mayor Patrick Haynes then stated the cost of living is 4% across the board, and perhaps the Council wants to consider a 5% increase. The 2026 Budget amounts are as follows: General Fund: Income-\$578,114.00, Expense-\$555,223.00; Fire Fund: Income-\$90,300.00, Expense-\$96,000.00; Library Fund: Income-\$56,029.00, Expense-\$57,496; Utility Fund: Income-\$416,050.00, Expense-\$442,186.00; USDA-RUS Improvement Fund: Income-\$77,000.00, Expense-\$77,000.00. **MOTION** by Scott Christensen, seconded by Jon Olson to certify the tax levy for the City of Lake Benton with a 5% increase in which \$204,383.00 is allocated to the General Fund. Motion carried. **ROLL CALL VOTE** – Trustee Rosie DeZeeuw – Yea, Trustee Karen Lichtsinn – Yea, Trustee Jon Olson – Yea, and Trustee Scott Christensen – Yea to certify

the tax levy for the City of Lake Benton at \$281,383.00 (5%) in which \$204,383.00 is allocated to the General Fund. Motion carried. **MOTION** by Karen Lichtsinn, seconded by Rosie DeZeeuw to allocate \$77,000.00 to the USDA-RUS Improvement Fund. Motion carried. **ROLL CALL VOTE** – Trustee Rosie DeZeeuw – Yea, Trustee Karen Lichtsinn – Yea, Trustee Jon Olson – Yea, and Trustee Scott Christensen – Yea to allocate \$77,000.00 to the USDA-RUS Improvement Fund. Motion carried.

MOTION by Karen Lichtsinn, seconded by Scott Christensen to return to the regular meeting at 6:26 PM. Motion carried.

The next regular meeting is scheduled for Monday December 15, 2025 at 5:30 pm.

There being no further business to come before the Council at this time, a **MOTION** was made by Scott Christensen, seconded by Jon Olson and carried, the meeting adjourned.

MAYOR

ADMINISTRATOR/CLERK