



CITY COUNCIL MINUTES

April 6, 2026, ~ 7:00 PM

BOARD OF APPEALS AND EQUALIZATION HEARING- Mayor Condon opened the board of appeals and equalization at 7:00 pm for public comments. Ambrose stated in order to evaluate the accuracy and uniformity of assessments within the state and to ensure compliance with property tax laws, the Minnesota Department of Revenue conducts an annual sales ratio study. The Sales Ratio Study is required by Minnesota Statute 270.12. The study measures the relationship between appraised values and actual sale prices, indicating both of the level of assessment (how close appraisals are to market value on an overall basis) and the uniformity of assessment (how close individual ratios are to the median ratio and each other). As a mathematical expression, a sales ratio is the assessor's estimated market value (EMV) of a property divided by its sales price, as seen here: $\text{Sales Ratio} = \text{Assessor's Estimated Market Value} \div \text{Sales Price}$. The Sales Ratio Study is the accumulation of the ongoing process of collecting and verifying sales information. The State of Minnesota requires the reporting of sales information on an electronic Certificate of Real Estate Value (eCRV) in Minnesota Statute 272.115. Assessors must verify and review sales information reported through eCRV before it can be used in the study. Sales must meet certain criteria to be included in the study. These sales are then summarized and analyzed to make generalizations about the market and the assessment for the Sales Ratio Study. The Department of Revenue's Property Tax Data & Analysis Unit and Property Tax Compliance Officers (PTCOs) perform and review the Sales Ratio Study, working closely with county assessors and staff. Homestead Exclusion Limit \$95,000 and tops out at \$517,200. The city of Lakefield had no sales of commercial property and 22 sales in residential for a 78.03% sales ratio and a 95.41% sales ratio after value adjustment to have a 20% value increase. Several residents attended the hearing with questions regarding the valuation increases. Ambrose tried to explain the reason for the high increase which is mainly due to the real-estate market in Lakefield being on demand and high which caused frustration among some residents present. A concern was brought to the county by a resident who within the last 6 months bought their house and the difference in value is \$70,000 which is unexplainable. The assessor noted that the Assessor's Office cannot sales chase, meaning individual property assessments cannot be adjusted solely based on recent sales data in a selective manner. Instead, assessments must reflect market trends consistently across the jurisdiction. Ambrose recommends to the residents that have discrepancy with value to contact the assessor's office for a walk-through of properties where valuations may not accurately reflect the condition or characteristics of the property. These inspections would help establish proper values moving forward. Mayor Condon closed the board of appeals and equalization at 7:39 pm.

Council Present: Stephen A. Condon, Andrea Monson, Jeff Paplow, Heather Hussong-Reasoner and Brent Pavelko.

Council Absent:

Others Present: Holly Rademacher – City Clerk, Matt Aden- Public Works Foreman, Brent Kavitz- SEH, Dalton Kosek- SEH, Carol Schulz- online, Justin Lessman -Media online, Taylor Dunker- JKSN Appraiser, Whitney Bretzman- JKSN Appraiser, Karla Nordquist- JKSN Assessor, Ashley Stammer- JKSN Appraiser, Joel & Dory Poppe, Loretta Palmer, Joyce Bretzman, Raejean Koep, Joesph Huetink, TD- online, Richard Doescher, Eric Kruger- Stan Sievert Agency, Justin Jass, Jacob & Jackie Olson, Karen Schultz, Diane Hall, Virginia Schank, and Bill Kramme.

CALL THE MEETING TO ORDER – The meeting was called to order at 7:40 pm by Mayor Stephen A. Condon.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

AGENDA CHANGES/APPROVE AGENDA- A motion to approve the agenda as presented made by **Hussong-Reasoner/Monson**, all in favor, motion carried.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES- A motion to approve minutes from Marh 16th, 2026, with change of name on the council present, made by **Paplow/Pavelko**, all in favor, motion carried.

APPROVAL OF FINANCIAL REPORT – A motion to approve financial statements as detailed in packet for a total of \$260,504.89 made by **Monson/Hussong-Reasoner** all in favor, motion carried.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS – Department Reports were presented; no additional questions or concerns were noted.

SCHEDULED/UNSCHEDULED GUESTS (limit 5 minutes each) –

Bill Kramme- Flags on Main Street- Kramme from the Lakefield Summerfest Committee, addressed the Council regarding a request for cost sharing with the City for the purchase of 28 American flags and poles in the amount of \$600, to be displayed along Main Street. This year's theme is "Happy Birthday America" Kramme explained that the flags and poles would enhance the appearance of Main Street during community events and throughout the summer season, while also promoting community pride and patriotism. The Lakefield Summerfest Committee is requesting that the City partner with the committee to help cover the cost of the project. Rademacher informed the council that the City does donate a generous amount every year. Council discussed the benefits of the project, including beautification of the downtown area and support for community events. The Council expressed appreciation for the Summerfest Committee's efforts to improve the community and agreed the display would be a positive addition to Main Street.

AGENDA ITEMS:

1. **Consider cost Share of American Flags for Summerfest-** The Council reviewed a request from the Summerfest Committee for a cost-share contribution to purchase 28 American flags and poles to be displayed along Main Street. The total City contribution would be up to \$300 toward the project. Discussion was held regarding the benefit of the flags in enhancing the appearance of Main Street during community events and throughout the summer season. Council members expressed support for partnering with the Summerfest Committee on the project. **A motion made by Pavelko/Monson**, to approve a cost-share contribution with the Summerfest Committee in an amount not to exceed \$300 for the purchase of 28 American flags and poles to hang on Main Street. All in favor with Hussong-Reasoner abstain. Motion carried.
2. **Appeals to consider (if appeals are present)-** Council reviewed the list of residents who signed up for a property walk-through with the Jackson County Assessor's Office regarding their property valuations. Discussion was held regarding the appeals submitted and the requests for on-site property reviews. Council acknowledged the residents' concerns and agreed that the scheduled walk-throughs by the assessor's office would provide the necessary information for further evaluation of the appeals. A motion to approve recommending the listed residents the Jackson County Assessor office has obtained and a value decrease of \$14,200 at parcel 24.303.0180 to the Jackson County Board of Equalization for further review and decision for appeals made by **Paplow/Hussong-Reasoner** all yes, motion carried.
3. **2026 Street Improvement Final Design-** Kavitz and Kosek with SEH presented the final design for the 2026 street and utility improvement project. In the project area/right of way staff would like to see Ash trees removed which would be an additional cost and around 40 trees. Pavelko asked if there was rebar where the services would be placed to prevent sinking, as a preventive measure due to issues at the Grein addition. Kavitz states when SEH assessed the issues it was determined to be a fluke for the compact tests passed. In the design the turf restoration is different than previous years, Kosek stated there will be 2 rows of sod behind the curb then hydro mulch or seed. This will help establish turf faster, there will also be a payment schedule for seeding. The payment schedule will follow 50% at first application, 75% when the grass reaches a indicated height and 100% at full establishment, Kavitz explained that SEH started doing this to prevent discrepancies. There will be weekly updates sent to the residents, access will be available as construction allows, there maybe times a short walk and parking will be a block away. Kosek also explained saw and seal is in the final design, they have had great reviews from various cities on curb-to-curb cuts. This will control the cracks and seal for the freeze and thaw.
 - a. **Resolution 26-12-** This resolution states the council has consulted engineer retained for the purpose has prepared plans and specifications for the construction for the 2026 Street and utility improvement project, approving plans and specifications and ordering advertisement for bids. Advertisement for bids will be available April 9th with all bids being received by 10am Friday May 1st, at which time they will be publicly opened and read aloud via Microsoft Teams Meeting by the City Clerk and engineer, will then be tabulated, and will be considered by the council at 7:00 p.m. on Monday, May 4, 2026, in the council chambers of the Lakefield City Hall and on the 18th of May bids will be awarded and an assessment hearing will be held. A motion to approve Resolution 26-11 2026 Street and Utility Improvement Project Approving Plans and Specification and Ordering Advertisement for Bids made by **Hussong-Reasoner/Pavelko**. Voice vote all yes. Motion carried.
4. **Crack Sealing Quotes-** Rademacher stated the information in packet was previously emailed out to council for earlier approval due to timing and ordering of crack sealant. Two estimates were provided for crack sealing, one from Midstates in the amount of \$1,912.68 for 1,932 pounds and the second from Home Depot in the amount of \$2,355 for 1,650 pounds. Aden recommended ordering from Midstate due to quantity and quality. Pavelko thanked the public works department and Aden for initiating the maintenance of the roads and trails. A motion to approve ordering crack seal from Midstate in the amount of \$1,912.68 made by **Pavelko/Paplow**. All in favor. Motion carried.

5. **Squad 19 water pump repair quote-** Chief Pohlman stated squad #19 is a 2019 Ford Taurus Police Interceptor with approximately 49,000 miles on the squad. He noticed a anti-freeze leak and also that the vehicle defroster and heater were not getting as warm as they previously did. Higley Ford inspected Squad 19 and reported that the water pump is failing and needs to be replaced. Higley Ford proved an estimate of \$2,274.51 to replace the water-pump in Squad #19. (Joe – Service Manager for Higley, reported that the water-pump is behind the timing belt and takes 11 hours to replace). Pavelko questioned if there was a reason that the squad is going to the dealership verse a local mechanic. Rademacher explained bigger mechanic issues the department tends to take to dealership for warranty reasons. A motion to approve the water-pump repair for Squad #19 in the amount of \$2,274.51 at Higley Ford made by **Hussong-Reasoner**. All in favor. Motion carried.
6. **Consider Purchase of Ten Delineator Post for Bike Rodeo-** Chief Pohlman explained to the council that the Lakefield Police Department will be hosting a Bicycle Rodeo on June 6, 2026, at the North City Park. LPD desires to make the bike rodeo an annual event in an effort to enhance the safety of our community youth, while operating bicycles or foot scooters in our community. LPD has received a Remick Foundation Grant to purchase bicycle safety materials, door prizes, safety trinkets and refreshments. The delineator posts will be utilized to hold traffic signs. While researching bike rodeo websites, the cost for 10 traffic signs and posts was quoted as \$2,000 plus. LPD was able to locate a local vendor to make the aluminum traffic signs, at a cost of \$225, that can be mounted on the delineator posts which are quoted as \$33/post and \$165 shipping (unique size and ten-pound base per sign) for a total of \$496.50 for 10 delineator posts. Hussong-Reasoner would like the LPD to consider incorporating a scooter safety/rodeo. Due to the increase of kids on motorized scooters and not knowing the traffic laws the council is in agreeance to educate the children. A motion to approve the purchase of 10 Delineator Posts from ULINE in the amount of \$496.50 from Police Forfeiture Funds made by **Paplow/Hussong-Reasoner**. All in favor. Motion carried.
7. **MMUA Safety Invoice-** Quarter 2 MMUA invoice in the amount of \$4,698.75 for safety management program and electric job training was submitted. Rademacher stated the safety management program is beneficial to the city and utilities, SMBS also utilizes the safety program and splits the yearly cost. A motion to approve payment of MMUA invoice in the amount of \$4,698.78 with cost sharing with LPU (\$1,655.63) and SMBS (\$2,028.75) made by **Hussong-Reasoner/Monson**. All in favor. Motion carried.
8. **Hawkins Invoice-** Rademacher submitted an invoice from Hawkins for chemicals at the wastewater treatment plant in the amount of \$7,983.87. As prices increase Rademacher recommends increasing the spending limit for purchasing chemicals at the wastewater plant to \$8,000. A motion to approve Hawkin’s invoice in the amount of \$7,983.87 and to increase the spending limit for chemicals to \$8,000 made by **Pavelko/Hussong-Reasoner**. All in favor. Motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

1. **Other Board and Committee Reports**
 - a. **EDA Update –**
 - i. Next meeting April 10th at 12:00 pm
 - b. **LPU Update-**
 - i. Next meeting on April 21st at 4:00 pm
 - c. **Park Update –**
 - i. Next meeting on April 13th at 4:30 pm
 - d. **Planning & Zoning Update -**
 - i. Next meeting on April 27th 4:30 pm

ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. **Next Council Meeting, Monday, April 20, 2026, at 7:00 p.m. in City Hall**

ADJOURNMENT- Motion to adjourn made by **Paplow/Hussong-Reasoner** to adjourn at 8:29 p.m., all in favor, motion carried.

Respectfully submitted: Holly Rademacher

Attest:

Holly Rademacher- City Clerk