

**City of Ottertail**  
**Public Hearing and Regular Meeting**  
**City Hall Thursday 17, 2025 – 5:30 PM**

Council Members Present: Mayor Ron Grobeck, Michael Windey, Elizabeth Augustus, Jill Carlson, and Jerry Martin

Staff Present: Amanda Thorson, Clerk-Treasurer; Patty Hensel, Deputy Clerk; Justin Lohse, Maintenance Coordinator; and Joe Ahlfs, Fire Chief.

Others Present: Tyler Rupe, Ted Jennings, Jane & Bud Alberts, Martha Robertson, Tom & Caryn Avelsgaard, Sue & Mike Avelsgaard, Kellie Kringlie, Ryan & Ali Hunke, Randy & Joan Hutmacher, Jennifer Moore, Jo Leichter, Karen & Gene O'Dell, Michael Leichter, John Carlson, Mick Thorsland, Dustin Uselman, Dustin Olsterman, and Jim Jones, and un-legible signature.

Mayor Grobeck opened the Public Hearing at 5:30 pm and all recited the pledge of allegiance.

Tax abatement-Myles Curtis @ 415 2<sup>nd</sup> St E- Clerk Thorson presented a Housing Tax Rebate application submitted by Myles Curtis for the property located at 415 E 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, Parcel ID 74-000-99-0794-000. After Council review of the application, there were no questions.

Rezone Southern Portion of 74-000-14-0028-000 from Public to Commercial- Ottertail Community Center LLC requested to rezone the property located at 217 S Maple Ave, PID 74-000-14-0028-004, from public to commercial to allow for a proposed multi-use recreation center. Council reviewed the staff-prepared Findings of Fact and discussed the ownership, potential impact, and suitability of the rezoning.

Deer Run Estates 4<sup>th</sup> addition- preliminary plat- Randy and Joan Hutmacher submitted a request to approve the preliminary plat of Deer Run Estates 4<sup>th</sup> addition as the final plat, with corrections made by the city engineer, including dedication of public street right-of-way and naming of the new public street as Hoot Lane. Discussion was held regarding compliance with city street specifications. Clerk Thorson confirmed the street meets city standards. Clerk Thorson also informed the applicants of their responsibility to meet NPDES (National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System) permit requirements through the MPCA (Minnesota Pollution Control Agency).

After hearing no other comments from the council or the public, Mayor Grobeck requested a motion to close the public hearing, Council member Carlson made a motion, council member Augustus seconded, all voted in favor. The Public Hearing was closed at 5:38 P.M.

The council had no further discussion regarding the Tax abatement for Myles Curtis @ 415 2<sup>nd</sup> St E. Motion by Carlson, seconded by Windey, to approve Resolution **2025-20** authorizing a property tax abatement for Myles Curtis at 415 E 2<sup>nd</sup> Street and for Clerk Thorson and Mayor Grobeck to execute the Tax Abatement Agreement. All voted in favor. Motion carried.

The council had no further discussion regarding rezoning the southern portion of 217 S Maple Ave, 74-000-14-0028-000. Motion by Windey, seconded by Carlson, to approve the rezoning of the southern portion of 217 S Maple Avenue, Parcel ID 74-000-14-0028-000, from Public to Commercial. All voted in favor. Motion carried.

The Council had no further discussion regarding Deer Run Estates 4<sup>th</sup> Addition. Motion by Carlson, seconded by Augustus, to approve Resolution **2025-21** accepting the preliminary plat as the final plat for

Deer Run Estates 4<sup>th</sup> Addition, including the dedication of public street right-of-way and the naming of Hoot Lane, to be entered into the official street name register. All voted in favor. Motion carried.

Mayor Grobeck asked for additions to the agenda, Council Member Augustus made a motion to approve the consent agenda; Windey seconded the motion. All voted in favor, motion carried.

- a. Approve Minutes 6-18-2025 Regular Meeting
- b. Approve LG220 Gambling Permit for Heartland Mountain Foundation on 12/5/25
- c. Approve Renewal for 2am liquor sales for The Otter Supper Club and Lodge
- d. Approve Resolution 2025-22 Remove Parcel from TIF 1-3
- e. Approve Special Event Permit to OTBCA for Otterfest on August 9, 2025
- f. Approve Special Event Permit for The Otter Supper Club on July 26, 2025
- g. Approve Resolution 2025-23 Donations to Ottertail Fire Department
- h. Monthly Financial Report
- i. Monthly Schedule 1
- j. Monthly Services Sold Report (Water Fund)
- k. Monthly Permit Report
- l. Approve claims 5141-5180 for \$154, 095.43 with additions and approval to pay late coming invoices

## **REPORTS**

**Fire Department-1)** Fire Chief Ahlfs reported the following activity: 11 medical calls, 1 carbon monoxide, 1 vehicle accident, 1 assistance fire call (canceled in route), and 1 fire call. **2)** Training – Clerk Thorson read aloud a thank you note received from a resident at 107 Lynn Road for the department’s response to a medical emergency. The letter was provided to Fire Chief Ahlfs to share with the department.

**City Hall-1)** Community Center Auto door issue- An electrical issue is currently affecting the Community Center. When both the security light and the automatic door opener are in use, the circuit breaker trips. The breaker has been temporarily disconnected until the correction can be made. City Maintenance Coordinator Lohse has contacted Voltage Electric for repair. **2)** Clerk Thorson requested permission to send Deputy Clerk Hensel to LMC Clerks Academy scheduled for September 4-5 in Staples MN. Motion by Carlson, seconded by Windey, to approve Deputy Clerk Hensel’s attendance at the LMC Clerks Academy on September 4-5 in Staples, MN. All voted in favor. Motion carried. **3)** Clerk Thorson requested permission to attend MCFOA Region 1 meeting on August 14 in Grygla MN. Motion by Augustus, seconded by Carlson, to approve Clerk Thorson’s attendance at the MCFOA Region 1 meeting on August 14 in Grygla, MN. All voted in favor. Motion carried. Augustus also emphasized the importance of Website Accessibility Compliance. The city has until 2027 to ensure full compliance with accessibility standards. Clerk Thorson confirmed she is meeting with Christian Torkelson on August 13 to review compliance. Initial assessment indicates the updated city website meets current standards. **4)** Clerk Thorson reported an estimated cost of \$200 for updated population signage, based on discussion with Trudy at MNDOT, it is unclear if this cost applies per sign or for all four signs. The matter was tabled pending clarification.

**Ottertail Tourism Board** – No meetings have been held at this time. Advertising efforts are ongoing.

**OTCEPAC**-Council Member Windey reported no meeting was held in July. An Evacuation Planning and Strategies Training is scheduled for September 3 at the LCSC in Fergus Falls. Windey also attended a Toward Zero Deaths (TZD) seminar. Which included statistical safety information.

**Public Forum and Comments** – no comments

**OLD BUSINESS**

**Engineer's Agenda/Bob Schlieman: 1) Deer Run Estates Water Easement**– Clerk Thorson offered Council for review, the Apex proposal for services related to preparing the easement of water distribution infrastructure of Deer Run Estates. Carlson motioned to accept the proposal from Apex Engineering to prepare permanent easement documentation the city can utilize to secure permanent easements for the in-place water distribution infrastructure and to allow Mayor Grobeck to sign the proposal, Augustus seconded. All voted in favor. Motion carried.

**Water Tower Warranty Work** – Clerk Thorson presented a quote to the Council from Slack Painting for the necessary warranty work on the water tower, originally requested by Schlieman. Clerk Thorson advised that, due to Osseo Construction no longer being in business and no recent communication regarding the outstanding two-year warranty work, it would be in the City's best interest to proceed against the project bond. A letter was previously mailed to both Osseo Construction and the bonding company affirming that the City remains within the warranty period, having provided notice in September 2024. Clerk Thorson will send a formal letter to the bonding company requesting directions on how to proceed with the warranty claim. Following discussion, the Council agreed to table the bid proposal from Slack Painting at this time.

**Habitat of Fergus Falls- Dollar Lot withdrawal of purchase** – Habitat for Humanity of Fergus Falls would like to formally withdraw its application for the proposed home at Happy Acres for this year. Due to a series of unforeseen roadblocks and challenges, they have found it necessary to reconsider the timeline and approach currently. They plan to resubmit an updated application later this year, proposing the relocation of a home onto a lot with the construction of a garage, with the goal of starting the project in 2026.

**2025 Otter Tail County Seal Coat Bid/Project** – Council reviewed the preliminary seal coat bid submitted by Asphalt Surface Technology for improvements on Shores Road, River View Road, and Otter Drive. The project is tentatively scheduled to begin in August. Maintenance Coordinator Lohse reported that Performance Paving will be evaluating street issues near Periwinkle, and the Council requested that the corners of Otter Drive also be reviewed as part of the assessment.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**Otter Tail River Management Letter** – Per request from homeowners who live past the man made cut of the Otter's Tail, the Otter Tail River Management discussion was moved from Old Business to New Business on the agenda, It was also requested to remove OTRM as attendance at this evening's council meeting was not represented by this group. This adjustment was made to reflect that a new group of individuals is now coming forward with a request for action regarding the state of the river. Extensive discussion took place concerning the current state of the water, lack of and the large amount of wild rice and muck that prevents a solid flow to the original opening. A signed letter was presented to Mayor Grobeck from concerned citizens addressing the deteriorating condition of the river from the south manmade outlet to the natural outlet. Minutes from the Village of Ottertail dated May 27, 1963 and a reference to Minnesota Statute 105.42 were addressed. Clerk Thorson noted that this statute was repealed in 1990 and replaced with the current statute, Minnesota statute 103A.201(3). A letter from City Attorney Sam Felix was shared with the Council, in which Attorney Felix strongly recommended that the City take no action on the matter. He emphasized that the property in question is privately owned and that oversight of the river lies with the State authorities. Clerk Thorson echoed this

recommendation, advising the Council to follow the attorney's guidance. Council Member Martin made a motion directing Clerk Thorson to compose a letter to be sent to the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and other dignitaries, stating that the City supports and encourages collaboration with citizens, requesting a resolution concerning the issues with the Ottertail River that abuts private property located within Ottertail City Limits. Motion was seconded by Windey. Council requested that the drafted letter be presented for review at the next regular meeting on August 21 before being sent to the intended recipients. Upon vote, the motion passes with four in favor and one opposed (Council Member Augustus). Motion carried.

**DFL Application Olson Farms of Basswood, Inc.** – Motion made by Council member Martin, to approve the Deferred Loan Application submitted by Olson Farms of Basswood with conditions being met for the release of funds; Carlson seconded. All voted in favor. Motion carried.

**Water connection at Laundry Mat:** Council reviewed the history and current status of the water service at 219 Main Street. Following review, it is confirmed that the business may continue to utilize the private well for the laundromat until the entire city is connected to city water but will continue operating on municipal water for the car wash and office space/salon.

**Landscaping at Otter Statue** – Carlson motioned to approve payment to Dave Hawes and Ed Smith for the landscaping materials/supplies purchased to update the Otter Statue flower bed, Windey seconded. All voted in favor. Motion carried. Clerk Thorson will compose a letter to accompany the payment, emphasizing the importance of obtaining prior approval before purchasing materials or supplies for any city project and thanking them for their work.

**Flagpole Proposal in City Park – Ted Jennings** – appeared before the Council to request permission to place a flagpole in Otter Tail City Park in recognition of the upcoming 250<sup>th</sup> birthday of the United States. Jennings stated that he and his wife would cover all costs associated with the project, including the bronze flagpole, a solar lighting pad, six flags and any installation expenses. Carlson motioned to accept the donation of the flagpole for the city park by Ted Jennings, Augustus seconded. All voted in favor. Motion carried. Council suggested a resolution be made to thank the Jennings for their donation of flagpole, including associated materials and installation costs, and be placed on the August consent agenda. Jennings discussed with Council the placement of a park bench in memory of Sammy Jennings at Ottertail City Park.

**Deferred Loan Amended Rules** -Clerk Thorson recommended amending the Commercial Rehabilitation Deferred Loan Program guidelines. The proposed changes include but are not limited to establishing a minimum project cost of \$2000, full legal description, limiting eligibility to one loan per property owner within a five-year period, and capping approvals at three loans per year. These revisions are being considered due to a limited amount of funds available in the program's account. The council also suggested including a non-city member on the review committee for the evaluation of Commercial Rehabilitation Deferred Loan applications. Motion made by Carlson to approve Resolution 2025-24, approving the Amended Commercial Rehabilitation Deferred Loan Program Guidelines, Windey second. All voted in favor, Motion carried.

July 17, 2025

**Correspondence/Meetings/Training/FYI-reminders/Local Events**

- a. Public Hearing Tuesday July 22, 2025 @ 3:00PM
- b. OTBCA Annual Auction July 19, 2025
- c. Otterfest August 9<sup>th</sup>, 2025
- d. Ottertail Rod & Gun Club Demo Derby August 8, 2025
- e. Music in the Park July 22, 2025-Rick Adams
- f. Music in the Park August 12, 2025-Tainted Vibes
- g. On the Map Metric Report-Otter Tail County

Carlson made a motion to close the meeting. Augustus seconded the motion. Motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 7:10 PM.

Respectfully,

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s/s  
Amanda Thorson  
Clerk-Treasurer  
Prepared by D. Clerk Patty Hensel

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s/s  
Ron Grobeck  
Mayor