

**City of Ottertail  
Regular Meeting  
City Hall Thursday August 21, 2025 – 5:30 PM**

Council Members Present: Mayor Ron Grobeck, Michael Windey, Elizabeth Augustus, and Jerry Martin  
Staff Present: Amanda Thorson, Clerk-Treasurer; Patty Hensel, Deputy Clerk; Justin Lohse, Maintenance and Joe Ahlfs, Fire Chief.

Others Present: Sue & Mike Avelsgaard, Ryan & Ali Hunke, Karen & Gene O'Dell, Bob & Cathy Waters, Rebecca Petersen (WCI), George Myhre, Dennis McIntire, Ed Smith, Kim Ludovissie, Tom & Linda Zurn, and Steve Larson.

Mayor Grobeck opened the regular council meeting at 5:30 pm and all recited the pledge of allegiance.

Mayor Grobeck asked for additions to the agenda. Council Member Windey made a motion to approve the consent agenda with corrections of removing line e, and h; Augustus seconded the motion. All voted in favor, motion carried.

- a. Approve Minutes 7-17-2025 Regular Meeting
- b. Approve Minutes 7-22-2025 Public Hearing Meeting
- c. e. Approve 1-4 Day Temp Liquor License for OT Lions September 24, 2025, Polka Fest
- d. Approve Consumption & Display License for OT Lions September 24, 2025, Polka Fest
- e. ~~Approve LG240B for OTBCA BINGO Otterdazzle~~
- f. Approve Special Evert Permit OT Lions September 4-6, 2025
- g. Approve Resolution 2025-24 Donations to OT Fire Department
- ~~h. Approve new Liquor Application for Woodshed Bar & Grill~~
- i. Monthly Financial Reports
- j. Approve Schedule 1
- k. Monthly Services Sold (Water Fund)
- l. Monthly Permit Report
- m. Approve claims 1581-5216 for \$170,989.15 with additions and approval to pay late coming invoices

**REPORTS**

**Fire Department-1)** Fire Chief Ahlfs reported there were 18 medical calls, 2 fire calls and 1 alarm. **2)** New firefighters will train in Battle Lake this winter.

**City Hall-1)** Community Center Auto-Door Opening Issues: Voltage electric discovered the battery in the emergency lights are over 30 years old and no longer holding a charge. He provided repair costs of \$950 for labor and material. Council Member Martin made a motion to move forward with the repair, seconded by Augustus. All voted in favor, motion carried. **2)** City Populations Signs: Clerk Thorson confirmed with Trudy, that the cost to update each population sign is \$200.00. The City of Ottertail has two population signs: one on Highway 78 coming in from the north and another on Highway 108 coming in from the east. Council Member Augustus made a motion to update the population signs, seconded by Windey. All voted in favor. Motion carried. **3)** Work Session Budget Planning: Clerk Thorson reported that the 2026 preliminary budget must be submitted to the county auditor by September 30. She noted that there will likely be increases in IT, paid leave, roads, the fire hall, and other standard expenses. She recommended setting the budget increase at 15%. Council Member Martin made a motion to set the preliminary budget at 15% and schedule a special meeting in September to review the proposed budget. Council Member Windey seconded the motion. All voted in favor. Motin carried.

**Ottertail Tourism Board** – Nothing to report.

**OTCEPAC**-Windey reported that the City of Ottertail aligns with the county's emergency preparedness plan. Highlighted the importance of GPS technology, referencing its roll during the St. Louis County fires, and noted how the weather radios were utilized to keep Beltrami County residents informed to their recent storm emergency. City of Ottertail is also looking at two emergency sirens.

**Public Forum and Comments** –

- a. Rebecca Peterson – West Central: In 2026, West Central Initiative (WCI) will celebrate its 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of serving our regions. Over the years, WCI has provided \$557,774.79 for grants to the City of Ottertail-helping fund programs, projects, and community growth. WCI is asking the city to consider a \$40 annual increase in the City's contribution to help with ongoing efforts.
- b. Bob Water – Compliant on Lueders Rd, residents expressed concerns about the condition of Lueders Road. Key issues raised included no stop sign at railroad crossing, washboard surfaces, minimal or nonexistent Class 5 material, and the displacement of Class 5 onto road shoulder after grading. Residents believe the road is becoming a safety hazard and inquired about the possibility of paving. Clerk Thorson noted that paving was previously considered in 2021, but at that time, residents opposed the project due to the shared cost by property owners. Residents highlighted that more people now live on Lueders Road year-round, with increased seasonal housing. Clerk Thorson confirmed that Lueders Road will be included in the city's Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) and that the issues will be revisited in the spring.
- c. Steve Larson – Shriners (Parade Request – Close Street): Steve Larson, on behalf of the El Zagal Shriners, requested approval to have a parade on September 13 at 11:00 am. Council reviewed the request and all safety and permit requirements. Motion by Martin to approve, seconded by Windey. All voted in favor. Motion carried.

**OLD BUSINESS**

**Engineer's Agenda/Bob Schlieman: 1) Deer Run Estates Water Easements – Update** – At this time, the Deer Run Estates water easements have been sent over to the surveyor and waiting for the legal description to be written.

**2) Water Tower Warranty Work – Update:** Clerk Thorson and engineer Schlieman have met with Granit Re but have not yet received a request for documentation. Clerk Thorson will follow up on Monday if no reply is received before then. Granit Re has indicated a willingness to work with the city regarding the warranty work needing to be done.

**Otter Tail River – Letter of support** – Clerk Thorson read out loud the requested letter to be sent to stakeholders in the Otter Tail River issue, Council member Martin moved to have Clerk Thorson make the discussed corrections and send the finalized letter of support to the appropriate state representatives and state agency needing to be involved. Council member Augustus seconded the motion. All voted in favor. Motion carried.

**Chickens – Ordinance 2025-02 – Draft** – A first draft of the updated 2025-02 Animal (Chicken) Ordinance was presented to the council. After discussion and suggestions from council members, a revised draft will be prepared and presented in the future, with a proposed public hearing scheduled for December.

**Weather Sirens – Update** – Dan Guzman, from the Federal Warning System, will meet with Fire Chief Ahlfs and Clerk Thorson in the future to discuss the placement and cost for two weather sirens. Clerk

Thorson will also explore the possibility of using the funding the City of Ottetail received in 2023 through the Public Service Grant.

**City Hall Generator – Update** – Clerk Thorson will meet with Tanner Brockfeiler of Lakes Area Generator in the coming week to discuss the type, voltage, and other specifications for a new generator.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**2024 Ottetail City Audit** Clerk Thorson has been in contact with auditor Brian D Koehn, audit is on track to be finished before the extension date.

**OT Family and Recreation Center Call for TIF District Hearing:** A new TIF District was introduced to Council for Ottetail Family and Recreation Center. A special meeting to adopt the district will be held on September 24, 2025, at 5:30 pm. A motion was made by Martin to adopt Resolution 2025-28 calling for the hearing to create the economic TIF district for Ottetail Family and Recreation Center. Motion second by Windey. All voted in favor. Motion carried.

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

- a. Honeybee Swarm – What can you do if you have one
- b. September Council Meeting is Wednesday September 17
- c. City Hall Closed September 1 – Labor Day
- d. September 9 – Habitat for Humanity House will be coming into town

Council member Martin made a motion to close the meeting. Windey seconded the motion. Motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 7:07 PM.

Respectfully,

\_\_\_\_s/s\_\_\_\_\_

Amanda Thorson

Clerk-Treasurer

Prepared by D. Clerk Patty Hensel

\_\_\_\_s/s\_\_\_\_\_

Ron Grobeck

Mayor