

**REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY OF ALBERT LEA
May 12, 2025 – 7:00 P.M.**

PRESENT: Mayor Rich Murray, Councilors Rachel Christensen, Larry Baker, Jason Howland, Reid Olson, Keith Van Beek, Brian Anderson, City Manager Ian Rigg, Public Works Director Steven Jahnke, City Attorney Joel Holstad of Lakes National Law LLP, and City Clerk Daphney Maras.

ADDITIONAL STAFF PRESENT: Sergeant-at-Arms-Public Safety Director JD Carlson, and City Planner Megan Boeck.

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL - Mayor Murray called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. City Clerk Maras administered roll call.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE - Mayor Murray asked all in attendance to stand and recite the Pledge of Allegiance.

CEREMONIAL ITEMS

- A. Proclamation Declaring May 11-17, 2025 as National Police Week
- B. Proclamation Declaring May 18-24, 2025 as National Public Works Week

Mayor Murray read aloud each proclamation. Several members of law enforcement were present to receive their proclamation.

PUBLIC FORUM

Robert Fjelbrotten – Spoke of flushing hydrants near his property and the issues it is causing on his property.

Brad Belcher Vice President of the Bayside Ski Team – Shared the latest updates on the Bayside Ski Team and the exciting events they've introduced to Albert Lea. He also spoke of the proposed modifications to the shoreline at the ski show site as noted on the council agenda.

Bruce Manwarren – Said he supports the lights on the wind towers.

CONSENT AND APPROVAL OF AGENDA

- A. Approve Minutes of the April 28, 2025 Regular Council Meeting
- B. Approve Minutes of the April 28, 2025 Work Session
- C. License & Permits
- D. Resolution Supporting the Shell Rock River Watershed District Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council (LSOHC) Funding Request
- E. Resolution Authorizing Bayside Ski Club to Rework Ski Landing Area Shoreline

F. Resolution Not Waiving Monetary Limits on Tort Liability

Motion made by Councilor Baker to approve the consent agenda as read, seconded by Councilor Anderson. On voice call vote, the following councilors voted in favor of said motion: Christensen, Baker, Howland, Olson, Van Beek, Anderson, and Mayor Murray. Mayor Murray declared the motion passed.

(See Secretary's Original Resolution 25-079 through 25-081
Included with these minutes)

PETITIONS, REQUESTS AND COMMUNICATIONS - None

UNFINISHED BUSINESS – None

NEW BUSINESS

A. Resolution 25-082 Accepting Bids and Awarding Contract for Freeborn Bank Parking Lot (Job 2504)

City Manager Rigg said Engineering has reviewed the bids opened Tuesday, May 6, 2025, for the Freeborn Bank Parking Lot Paving Project.

The proposed project involves installing a bituminous surface to replace the existing gravel parking lot. A landscaped space approximately eight feet wide is proposed to be created along the north and west sides of the parking lot. This space could potentially be used for electric vehicle chargers in the future.

Engineering received two bids. Engineering is recommending the low bid of \$152,057.19 from Ulland Brothers Inc. of Albert Lea, Minnesota. The Engineer's estimate was \$153,167.00. The bid abstract is attached.

Motion made by Councilor Baker to approve as read, seconded by Councilor Van Beek. On voice call vote, the following councilors voted in favor of said motion: Christensen, Baker, Howland, Olson, Van Beek, Anderson, and Mayor Murray. Mayor Murray declared the motion passed.

(See Secretary's Original Resolution 25-082
Included with these minutes)

B. Resolution 25-083 Accepting Bids and Awarding Contract for 2025 CIPP Rehabilitation Project (Job 2505)

Engineering has reviewed the bids opened Tuesday, May 6, 2025 for the 2025 CIPP Rehabilitation Project. The project involves installing a cured in place pipe liner inside of the existing sanitary sewer mains in the following locations:

- St. Peter from Sheridan Street to Johnson Street

- St. Peter from Sheridan Street to Johnson Street
- Pillsbury Avenue from Main Street to Johnson Street
- Garfield Avenue from Main Street to Johnson Street
- Garfield Avenue from Johnson Street to Sheridan Street

Engineering received three bids. Insituform Technologies acknowledged the addendum, however they submitted their bid on the original proposal making their actual/correct bid \$184,691 not \$186,175 as submitted. The error in Insituform Technologies bid did not affect the low bid, the low bid was \$143,850.92 submitted by Municipal Pipe Tool Company.

Engineering is recommending the low bid of \$143,850.92 from Municipal Pipe Tool Company, LLC of Hudson, Iowa. The Engineer's Estimate was \$235,093.20. The bid abstract is attached.

Motion made by Councilor Baker to approve as read, seconded by Councilor Anderson. On voice call vote, the following councilors voted in favor of said motion: Christensen, Baker, Howland, Olson, Van Beek, Anderson, and Mayor Murray. Mayor Murray declared the motion passed.

(See Secretary's Original Resolution 25-083
Included with these minutes)

C. Resolution 25-084 Revising the Municipal State Aid Street System

Rigg said this resolution would revise the City's Municipal State Aid Street (MSAS) System to include Blake Avenue, from E. Main Street to SE Marshall Street. The City has been awarded Federal funding through the 2029 State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP), with work scheduled for completion in 2028. This funding will support a mill and overlay project, as well as the construction of a shared-use trail. To utilize this funding, the designated section of Blake Avenue must be added to the MSAS system.

One requirement for designating new roadway segments to the MSAS system is that they must connect at both ends to either another State Aid Street, a State or Trunk Highway, or a County Highway. To meet this connectivity requirement, Engineering is also proposing to add SE Marshall Street, from Prospect Avenue to Blake Avenue, to the MSAS system.

The total length of the proposed additions is 0.80 miles. However, the City currently has only 0.22 miles available for new designations. To account for the difference, the Engineering Department recommends removing several existing segments from the MSAS system. These segments are being considered for removal because they are low-volume and low-speed roadways, do not meet the connectivity criteria, or present challenges for reconstruction or resurfacing under current State Aid standards, such as street width and angle parking requirements.

Segments proposed for removal:

- **Madison Avenue** – Commercial Street to 3rd Street (0.20 miles)
- **Pearl Street** – Front Street to Broadway Avenue (TH-65) (0.30 miles)

- **3rd Street** – Broadway Avenue (TH-65) to Newton Avenue (0.07 miles)
- **College Str** - Washington Avenue to Broadway Avenue (TH-65) (0.05 miles)

Motion made by Councilor Christensen to approve as read, seconded by Councilor Baker. On voice call vote, the following councilors voted in favor of said motion: Christensen, Baker, Howland, Olson, Van Beek, Anderson, and Mayor Murray. Mayor Murray declared the motion passed.

(See Secretary's Original Resolution 25-084
Included with these minutes)

D. Resolution 25-085 Authorizing Support of Greater Minnesota Housing Infrastructure Grant Program and Commitment of Matching Funds

Minnesota Housing is now accepting applications for a Housing Infrastructure program, which will provide \$180,000 of capital costs associated with eligible workforce housing development projects. The city intends to apply for funding on behalf of Tapestry, which proposes to construct a 60-unit apartment complex at Blazing Star No. 2.

The grant program requires a commitment of 50% of the capital costs to be covered by sources other than grant proceeds and that these matching funds include nonstate resources.

The application deadline is Friday, June 12, 2025. Staff recommends approval.

- Eligible projects include construction of public roadways, bike lanes, sidewalks and trails, construction of publicly owned utilities, and geotechnical and environmental testing and site preparation.
- Qualifying housing developments include affordable, workforce, or both, as well as a mix of affordable, workforce, and market-rate.
- Qualifying housing developments may be in any state of planning, pre-development, or development.

Motion made by Councilor Anderson to approve as read, seconded by Councilor Howland. On voice call vote, the following councilors voted in favor of said motion: Christensen, Baker, Howland, Olson, Van Beek, Anderson, and Mayor Murray. Mayor Murray declared the motion passed.

(See Secretary's Original Resolution 25-085
Included with these minutes)

E. Resolution 25-086 Accepting Donations as Presented to the City of Albert Lea

The Friends of the Albert Lea Public Library raise non-profit funds for programs and equipment not covered by the general library budget. The Friends raise the funds through the Fountain Lake Bookstore, two book sales throughout the year, membership fees, and general donations. From January through May 2025, the Friends donated a total of \$1,754.18 to the library. The funds

were used for the programs as presented. Without the generous donations from the Friends, many of the library's programs would not be possible. In addition, Arcadian Bank has donated \$200 toward teen programming being held by the Recreation Department this summer.

Motion made by Councilor Christensen to approve as read, seconded by Councilor Baker. On voice call vote, the following councilors voted in favor of said motion: Christensen, Baker, Howland, Olson, Van Beek, Anderson, and Mayor Murray. Mayor Murray declared the motion passed.

(See Secretary's Original Resolution 25-086
Included with these minutes)

F. Ordinance 25-134 Amending Chapter 50, Article I, Section 50.0018 (1st Reading)

In part of our ongoing attempt to clarify and improve different zoning ordinances, staff presented several different amendments to the Planning Commission on Tuesday, May 6th. It's important to note that most of the proposed ordinance amendments will not increase or worsen the existing requirement; rather, they are meant to correct or clarify existing language.

This amendment removes language pertaining to the "required" front yard setback versus the defined front yard as written in section 50.002. Planning Commission recommends approval.

Motion made by Councilor Anderson to approve as read, seconded by Councilor Howland. On voice call vote, the following councilors voted in favor of said motion: Christensen, Baker, Howland, Olson, Van Beek, Anderson, and Mayor Murray. Mayor Murray declared the motion passed.

(See Secretary's Original Ordinance 25-134
Included with these minutes)

G. Ordinance 25-135 Amending Chapter 50, Article III, Division 8, Section 50.0402 (1st Reading)

As a cost-saving measure, this amendment will allow steel siding with exposed fasteners on buildings that are not substantially visible from a public street. Exposed fasteners will be limited to no more than 60% of the building face to preserve overall aesthetics. Planning Commission recommends approval. Councilor Christensen commented that this particular amendment is applicant-driven reminding residents of the importance of bringing forth their concerns in order to be addressed. Councilor Anderson concurred with Christensen.

Motion made by Councilor Anderson to approve as read, seconded by Councilor Olson. On voice call vote, the following councilors voted in favor of said motion: Christensen, Baker, Howland, Olson, Van Beek, Anderson, and Mayor Murray. Mayor Murray declared the motion passed.

(See Secretary's Original Ordinance 25-135
Included with these minutes)

H. Ordinance 25-136 Amending Chapter 50, Article IV, Section 50.0842 (1st Reading)

This amendment adds a definition for real estate signs and clarifies how far a wall sign may extend beyond the building, eave, or parapet. Planning Commission recommends approval.

Motion made by Councilor Anderson to approve as read, seconded by Councilor Christensen. On voice call vote, the following councilors voted in favor of said motion: Christensen, Baker, Howland, Olson, Van Beek, Anderson, and Mayor Murray. Mayor Murray declared the motion passed.

(See Secretary's Original Ordinance 25-136
Included with these minutes)

I. Ordinance 25- 137 Amending Chapter 50, Article IV, Section 50.0843 (1st Reading)

This amendment adds directional signs, window signs, and real estate signs to the list of signs that are exempt from requiring a permit. Planning Commission recommends approval.

Motion made by Councilor Baker to approve as read, seconded by Councilor Anderson. On voice call vote, the following councilors voted in favor of said motion: Christensen, Baker, Howland, Olson, Van Beek, Anderson, and Mayor Murray. Mayor Murray declared the motion passed.

(See Secretary's Original Ordinance 25-137
Included with these minutes)

J. Ordinance 25-138 Amending Chapter 50, Article IV, Section 50.0846 (1st Reading)

This amendment decreases the number of flag or feather signs allowed per 100 feet of lot frontage while increasing the number of wall signs per site. Due to larger lots along the B-2 commercial corridor. This amendment also adds language regarding the size and height of real estate signs. Planning Commission recommends approval.

Motion made by Councilor Baker to approve as read, seconded by Councilor Anderson. On voice call vote, the following councilors voted in favor of said motion: Christensen, Baker, Howland, Olson, Van Beek, Anderson, and Mayor Murray. Mayor Murray declared the motion passed.

(See Secretary's Original Ordinance 25-138
Included with these minutes)

K. Ordinance 25-139 Amending Chapter 50, Article IV, Section 50.0847 (1st Reading)

This amendment decreases the number of flag or feather signs allowed per site while increasing the number of wall signs allowed per site in industrial districts. It also adds language pertaining to the size and height of temporary real estate signs. Planning Commission recommends approval.

Motion made by Councilor Christensen to approve as read, seconded by Councilor Anderson. On voice call vote, the following councilors voted in favor of said motion: Christensen, Baker, Howland, Olson, Van Beek, Anderson, and Mayor Murray. Mayor Murray declared the motion passed.

(See Secretary's Original Ordinance 25-139
Included with these minutes)

L. Ordinance 25-140 Amending Chapter 50, Article VI, Section 50.0938 (1st Reading)

This amendment requires buildings in the B-2 community business district to have a minimum of 10% of the lineal ground floor of a building in windows. It will also allow windows or glass to be tinted or frosted. In addition, it will prohibit cannabis, hemp products, liquor, tobacco, or related paraphernalia from being visible through windows. Planning Commission recommends approval.

Councilor Christensen inquired whether the ordinance would grandfather in existing tobacco businesses. Rigg suggested deferring the question to the Building/Zoning Official, who was not present, and offered to provide the council with a response via email the following day.

Motion made by Councilor Baker to approve as read, seconded by Councilor Anderson. On voice call vote, the following councilors voted in favor of said motion: Christensen, Baker, Howland, Olson, Van Beek, Anderson, and Mayor Murray. Mayor Murray declared the motion passed.

(See Secretary's Original Ordinance 25-140
Included with these minutes)

M. Ordinance 25-141 Amending Chapter 5, Cannabis Products (1st Reading)

This amendment is in response to recent information from the State of Minnesota Office of Cannabis Management on the process of retail license approvals, the City's role in such approvals, and the fee structure. Given the number of potential business owners, preliminarily approved licenses from the state, and the City's imposed limit, a process needs to be clear on revocation, selection, and other impactful decisions related to cannabis retail.

Councilor Baker inquired about the timeline for issuing cannabis licenses. Rigg explained that, due to numerous variables, he is unable to provide a definitive answer at this point. Meanwhile, Councilor Van Beek requested further exploration into the possibility of permitting smoking and vaping at Cannabis Festivals.

Motion made by Councilor Baker to approve as read, seconded by Councilor Anderson. On voice call vote, the following councilors voted in favor of said motion: Christensen, Baker, Howland, Olson, Van Beek, Anderson, and Mayor Murray. Mayor Murray declared the motion passed.

(See Secretary's Original Ordinance 25-141)

Included with these minutes)

MAYOR AND COUNCIL REPORTS

First Ward, Councilor Christensen reported:

- Ward Items – None
- Committee Update – Blue Zones is seeking a summer coordinator. Meanwhile, a dedicated group continues to assess the programming and policies of the Senior Center, with the Board potentially requesting proposals for facility improvements or a new location. The Planning Commission remains focused on reviewing zoning ordinances, while the Watershed District's response is awaited regarding a potential public outreach campaign to urge the DNR to take action for Bancroft Bay's watershed health.

As warmer weather brings more people and wildlife outdoors, residents are urged to drive cautiously through town. The Chamber Foundation will host the next Business After-Hours event, inspired by Blue Zones. Additionally, Mayor Murray, who takes great pride in his service to the community, will serve as the Grand Marshal for this year's Fourth of July parade.

Second Ward, Councilor Baker reported:

- Ward Items – A ward item in progress
- Committee Update – None

Third Ward, Councilor Howland reported:

- Ward Items – Following up with a resident on a ward item.
- Committee Update – None

Fourth Ward, Councilor Olson reported:

- Ward Items – None. He highlighted how local youth sports serve as a significant economic driver for the community, noting that participants and visitors actively support and engage with local businesses.
- Committee Update – None

Fifth Ward, Councilor Van Beek reported:

- Ward Items – None. He, too, commented on the economic draw youth sports bring to Albert Lea.
- Committee Update – None

Sixth Ward, Councilor Anderson reported:

- Ward Items – One item in progress
- Committee Update - None

MAYOR REPORT:

Attended the following meetings:

- Attended the City Arena groundbreaking on May 1st.
- The National Day of Prayer on May 1st.
- Friday, May 2nd, attended the Cinco de Mayo celebration.
- The May 5th Chamber of Commerce meeting received updates.
- Noted the Inspection Department was recognized for their work at the last council meeting.
- May 7th ALEDA Board meeting. Mentioned that a couple of announcements will be made soon.
- Thanked Councilor Van Beek for agreeing to the liaison of the Human Rights Commission Board.
- High School Awards Banquet. Commended the amazing young students.
- Halverson School hosted the all-school choir.
- Visited the St. John's facility last Friday
- Received updates on current Mayo care.

Mentioned the upcoming events and said they are also listed on the City's website.

CITY MANAGER REPORT

- Thanked Councilor Christensen for volunteering to be part of the Strategic Team interview panel. Twelve proposals have been received, and the hope is to get it down to three or four.
- Thanked the Friends of the Library for all the hours and passion they put into raising funds.
- Recapped a conference he attended last week.

APPROVAL OF CLAIMS

A. Resolution 25-087 Approving Claims

- (1). Presentation of Claims Over \$25,000

The attached resolution directs the Mayor and City Treasurer to issue the payment of claims as presented in the Detail of Claims report. In addition, Maras displayed a list of claims over \$25,000 for the public's viewing, transparency, and education.

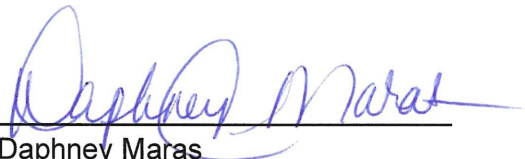
Motion made by Councilor Howland to approve the claims, seconded by Councilor Christensen. On voice call vote, the following councilors voted in favor of said motion: Christensen, Baker, Howland, Olson, Van Beek, Anderson, and Mayor Murray. Mayor Murray declared the motion passed.

See Secretary's Original Resolution 25-087
(Included with these minutes)

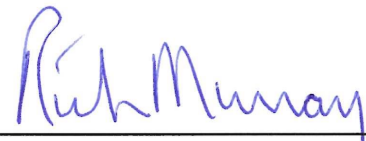
Councilor Howland motioned for adjournment; Councilor Christensen seconded. That there being no further business, the Council meeting adjourns until the next regular meeting of the Albert Lea City Council at 7:00 p.m. on Monday, May 27, 2025. On a voice call vote, all councilors voted in favor of said motion.

Mayor Murray declared the motion passed and the meeting adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT: 7:51 P.M.



Daphney Maras
Secretary of the Council



Mayor Rich Murray