

**REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY OF ALBERT LEA
July 14, 2025 – 7:00 P.M.**

PRESENT: Mayor Rich Murray, Councilors Rachel Christensen, Larry Baker, 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.

ABSENT: Councilor Jason Howland

ADDITIONAL STAFF PRESENT: Sergeant-at-Arms-Police Chief Darren Hanson, Finance Director Kristi Brutlag, 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 – None

PUBLIC FORUM - None

CONSENT AND APPROVAL OF AGENDA

- A. Approve Minutes of the June 23, 2025 Regular Council Meeting
- B. Approve Minutes of the June 23, 2025 Work Session
- C. License & Permits
- D. Resolution Authorizing the City of Albert Lea to Submit a Point Source Implementation Grant Application to the Minnesota Public Facilities Authority (PFA) for the Wastewater Treatment Facility (WWTF) Improvement Project

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, Olson, Van Beek, Anderson, and Mayor Murray. Mayor Murray declared the motion passed.

(See Secretary's Original Resolution 25-108
Included with these minutes)

PETITIONS, REQUESTS AND COMMUNICATIONS - None

UNFINISHED BUSINESS - None

NEW BUSINESS

A. Resolution 25-109 Providing for the Issuance and Sale of \$2,020,000 GO Bonds, Series 2025B

Rebecca Kurtz of Ehlers was present and explained per the City Charter, the City of Albert Lea has the authority to issue General Obligation Improvement Bonds to provide assessable public improvement projects undertaken by the City. Staff recommends the sizing of the bond to be \$2,020,000 to finance the assessments for Job 2501 the 2025 Neighborhood Improvement Project, Job 2502 the 2025 State Aid Street Overlay Project and Job 2503 the 11th Street Reconstruction Project. This bond will also include a TIF bond in the amount of \$875,000 and a tax abatement portion of \$620,000 to finance the Freeborn Bank Parking Lot and the Eberhart Street Project. The terms and amounts are summarized below. Rebecca Kurtz from Ehlers & Associates was in attendance and reviewed the bond sale results.

Street Projects (assessments) 5 years	\$ 165,000
Street Projects (assessments) 10 years	\$ 115,000
Street Projects (assessments) 15 years	\$ 245,000
TIF Bond Eberhart/Blazing Star Cleanup 20 years	\$ 875,000
Tax Abatement Bond - Freeborn Bank Parking Lot 10 years	\$ 185,000
Tax Abatement Bond - Eberhart 10 years	\$ 435,000
	<hr/>
	\$ 2,020,000

Kurtz noted a public hearing will be held on August 11th with the bond sale results presented at the August 25th council meeting.

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

(See Secretary's Original Resolution 25-109
Included with these minutes)

B. Public Hearing Regarding Property Disposal (12 parcels)

Mayor Murray opened the public hearing. He called three times. No one spoke. He closed the public hearing.

B1. Resolution 25-110 Declaring No Public Interest in Real Property and Authorizing Real Property to be Sold

Council has engaged in discussions regarding the sale of select properties to encourage business growth and expand the local housing supply. These sites hold strong potential for development, and several proposals are already in place, pending approval of development agreements by Council.

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

(See Secretary's Original Resolution 25-110
Included with these minutes)

C. Resolution 25-111 to Deny Rezoning 310 W. 7th Street From B-2 Community Business to I-2 Industrial District

W&L HOLDINGS LLC d/b/a Chuck & Andy's Big Units applied to re-zone 310 W 7th Street from Community Business (B-2) to Industrial District (I-2) in order to alleviate a non-conforming use issue and also lessen the required building and zoning development standards as it pertains to parking and paving.

The property abuts industrial property to the North, which would eliminate the concern for spot zoning, but also abuts residential property to the West and to the South.

The Planning Commission held a public hearing on July 1, 2025 and after considering the staff report in addition to public testimony the commission recommends denial based on the following:

1. Rezoning the property could have an adverse effect on existing and adjacent residential properties.
2. Rezoning considerations should be made based on the overall best use of the property and the surrounding area.
3. Properties should not be re-zoned based on economic considerations—such as to accommodate or lessen building standards. Planning Commission recommends denial of re-zoning 310 W 7th Street.

Councilor Christensen acknowledged she was unable to attend the Planning Commission meeting, but noted that approximately 15–20 community members were present. She believes their participation and input may have influenced the Commission's decision to deny the application. She emphasized that this serves as a powerful reminder that public engagement truly makes a difference in shaping outcomes.

Councilor Baker inquired about the procedure in the event of a re-zoning denial. In response, the City Manager stated that, in accordance with the code of ordinances, the city would initiate abatement and corrective measures at the property.

Mayor Murray welcomed input from City Planner Megan Boeck, who explained the Commission's approach to decision-making. She noted that public feedback focused less on potential development tied to a zoning change and more on concerns about the area's current conditions.

Motion made by Councilor Baker to approve as read, seconded by Councilor Van Beek. On roll call vote, the following councilors voted in favor of said motion: Christensen, Baker, Olson, Van

Beek, Anderson, and Mayor Murray. Mayor Murray declared the motion passed.

(See Secretary's Original Resolution 25-111
Included with these minutes)

D. Resolution 25-112 Approving Minnesota Employment and Economic Development (DEED) Redevelopment Grant Application

Minnesota Employment and Economic Development is accepting applications for a Redevelopment Grant Program which is designed to help communities with the costs of redeveloping blighted industrial, residential or commercial sites and putting land back into productive use. Grants can pay up to half of the redevelopment costs for a qualifying site, with a 50% local match.

The City of Albert Lea intends to apply for this grant on behalf of the Albert Lea Family Housing project on the Blazing Star Landing.

The application deadline is Friday, August 1, 2025.

- Eligible projects include building and site demolition, infrastructure improvement, soil stabilization, ponding or other environmental infrastructure.

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, Olson, Van Beek, Anderson, and Mayor Murray. Mayor Murray declared the motion passed.

(See Secretary's Original Resolution 25-112
Included with these minutes)

E. Resolution 25-113 Committing Local Match and Authorizing Contract Signature

City Manager Rigg explained the attached Resolution authorizes the City Manager to execute contracts with Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development for the redevelopment grant listed as item 8D above.

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, Olson, Van Beek, Anderson, and Mayor Murray. Mayor Murray declared the motion passed.

(See Secretary's Original Resolution 25-113
Included with these minutes)

F. Ordinance 25-142 Amending Chapter 2, Administration – Departments - Sale of Real Property (1st Reading)

This amendment revises the authorization language to allow the City Manager or a designated representative, rather than the City Manager and the Mayor, to execute deeds and conveyances. This revision does not change requirements of preapproval by Council and is recommended by the City Attorney.

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, Olson, Van Beek, Anderson, and Mayor Murray. Mayor Murray declared the motion passed.

(See Secretary's Original Ordinance 25-142
Included with these minutes)

MAYOR AND COUNCIL REPORTS

First Ward, Councilor Christensen reported:

- Ward Items – Working on a ward item regarding a Rain Garden area.
- Committee Update – The Senior Center is officially opening the process to receive site proposals for its future location. To date, three prospective sites have indicated their intent to submit proposals. The submission window will remain open for a period of eight weeks. The Blue Zones have been active, and the Walking Moais have been reintroduced.
- Public Announcements – Encourages the community to support the local Farmers Market. The Business After Hours is at Wedgewood Cove tomorrow, and on Wednesday, the Hatch is having an Open House. Everyone is welcome.

Second Ward, Councilor Baker reported:

- Ward Items – None
- Committee Update – Attended the ALED/Port Authority meeting on July 1st and reports there are a lot of initiatives under consideration.
- Public Announcements – None

Third Ward, Councilor Howland reported: Absent

Fourth Ward, Councilor Olson reported:

- Ward Items – Working on a couple of ward items. Inquired about “quiet times for railroads”. Asks for input from residents on their thoughts on implementing a quiet zone for railroads.
- Committee Update – None
- Public Announcements – Attended the Corey Goodnature Golf Outing last Sat.

Fifth Ward, Councilor Van Beek reported:

- Ward Items – Working on one Ward item
- Committee Update –
- Public Announcements – Attended the 4th of July activities. On Monday, July 21st, the Nation of Patriots Tour is coming to Albert Lea and will be hosted at Bergdale Harley-Davidson. Lunch will be served with a free-will donation. This inspiring event features a patriotic motorcycle ride through all 48 lower states, carrying the American flag to honor

our nation's heroes. Don't miss this powerful moment, come out and welcome the riders as they roll into town with flags flying high!

Sixth Ward, Councilor Anderson reported:

- Ward Items – None
- Committee Update - None
- Public Announcements – Commented on the fantastic 4th of July events. Relay for Life just threw an ice cream social to kick off its 40th year! And the walking fundraiser's coming back too. A lap around the Fairgrounds track is a quarter mile, so if you knock out 40 laps, you'll hit 10 miles. The idea is to round up a team, hit the track, and raise money with every lap you walk. The Relay for Life is held on August 4, 2025. This is the last year it will be held in August, as it will be held in June beginning in 2026. The Luminary bags are available for \$10 and are available at several locations in Albert Lea.

MAYOR REPORT:

Attended the following events:

- The Isiah meeting, where updates were provided regarding proposed Medicaid cuts
- Thursdays on Fountain
- JD Carlson's retirement party last Friday
- Corey Goodnature event last Sat.
- ALEDA monthly meeting announcements forthcoming in the next 30-60 days
- Attended the 4th of July Parade and car show, and was honored to serve as this year's Grand Marshall
- Met with the Albert Lea High School Activities Director and was introduced to the new Superintendent, Steven Heil
- Meeting at Pro Manufacturing with the ALEDA Director
- Attended the Van Nationals event
- Welcomed new Chief of Police Darren Hanson who is present tonight

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

CITY MANAGER REPORT

- Attended the Human Rights Commission meeting last week, where the discussion focused on an ordinance establishing the Human Rights Commission as well as community outreach.
- Staff have received proposals for redevelopment projects
- Key positions are getting filled within the Police Department, and a new Building Inspector
- Working on the budget
- Working on options for redevelopment and cleanup for the 300 Block
- Cleaning up some minor issues with legal documents related to the property transfer of Kwik Trip
- Staff is working on Ordinance and Policy amendments
- Will be setting up a meeting soon to move forward with the Strategic Plan
- Quarterly meeting is tomorrow with Department Heads and immediate supervisors
- Attended the League of MN Cities meeting last week, and provided highlights of sessions he

participated in.

APPROVAL OF CLAIMS

A. Resolution 25-114 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 Christensen to approve the claims, seconded by Councilor Anderson. On voice call vote, the following councilors voted in favor of said motion: Christensen, Baker, Olson, Van Beek, Anderson, and Mayor Murray. Mayor Murray declared the motion passed.

See Secretary's Original Resolution 25-114
Included with these minutes)

CLOSED SESSION

A. Discussion land purchase under State Statute 13D.05 sub 3(c). Mayor Murray stated that the land under consideration is adjacent to the Waste Water Treatment Plant and includes parcels located on the 300 block.

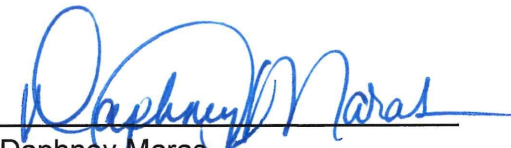
Motion made by Councilor Baker to move into closed session at 7:46 PM, seconded by Councilor Anderson. On voice call vote, the following councilors voted in favor of said motion: Christensen, Baker, Olson, Van Beek, Anderson, and Mayor Murray. Mayor Murray declared the motion passed.

Motion made by Councilor Anderson at 8:25 PM to move out of closed session, seconded by Councilor Christensen. On voice call vote, the following councilors voted in favor of said motion: Christensen, Baker, Olson, Van Beek, Anderson, and Mayor Murray. Mayor Murray declared the motion passed.

Councilor Christensen motioned for adjournment; Councilor Anderson 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, July 28, 2025. On a voice call vote, all councilors voted in favor of said motion.

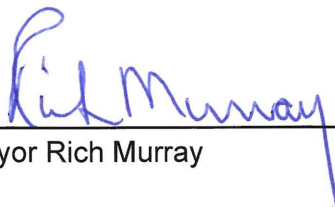
Mayor Murray declared the motion passed and the meeting adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT: 8:25 PM



Daphney Maras

Secretary of the Council



Mayor Rich Murray

