

**REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY OF ALBERT LEA
February 24, 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 Lake National Law LLP, and City Clerk Daphney Maras.

ADDITIONAL STAFF PRESENT: Sergeant-at-Arms-Public Safety Director JD Carlson.

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 – Bruce ManWarren -

CONSENT AND APPROVAL OF AGENDA

- A. Approve Minutes of the February 10, 2025 Regular Council Meeting
- B. Approve Minutes of the February 10, 2025 Work Session
- C. License & Permits
- D. Resolution Approving Plans and Specification and Ordering of Quotations for the AWOS Replacement (Job 2406)
- E. Resolution Supporting the Local Trail Program Grant Application to the Minnesota DNR for Bridge Replacement Associated with a New Paved Trail Between Fountain Street and Shoff Park (Job 2411)
- F. Resolution Supporting the Freeborn County Regional Trail Program Grant Application to the Minnesota DNR Bridge Replacement Associated with a New Paved Trail Between Albert Lea and Manchester (Job 2411)
- G. Resolution Approving Gambling Permit – Twin Lakes Firemen's Relief Association

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 25-032 through 25-035
Included with these minutes)

PETITIONS, REQUESTS AND COMMUNICATIONS - None

UNFINISHED BUSINESS - None

NEW BUSINESS

A. Public Hearing Regarding Ordering Improvement and Preparation of Plans for the 2025 Neighborhood Improvement Project (Job 2501)

A public hearing was held for public input for 2025 Neighborhood Improvement Project City Job No. 2501.

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

A1. Resolution 25-036 Ordering Improvement and Preparation of Plans for the 2025 Neighborhood Improvement Project (Job 2501)

Rigg said the proposed project has two main components: bituminous mill & overlay in the Crossroads Boulevard area and a portion of Lake Chapeau Drive, and replacement of the bituminous surface on a portion of SE Marshall Street. The streets in the mill & overlay area include:

- Lake Chapeau Drive – City Arena to the west end
- Crossroads Boulevard – TH 65 to the south end
- Betha Larson Lane – Crossroads Boulevard to the east end
- Ross Drive – Crossroads Boulevard to Betha Larson Lane
- Kram Avenue – Betha Larson Lane to the north end

The estimated project cost is \$1,098,887.39 and would be paid for with assessments, sanitary sewer funds, and City bonding funds.

The neighborhood meeting was held February 19, 2025 to discuss the project with the affected residents. Jahnke reported only three people attended. No significant comments were received.

Work in the mill & overlay area will involve milling the existing bituminous street surfacing for a 6-foot width along each concrete gutter line so the new bituminous layer will match with the level of the concrete gutter. A 2-inch-thick layer of bituminous will be laid over the entire width of the street. The project would also involve replacing sections of curb & gutter that have settled and are causing drainage issues.

Work on SE Marshall Street from Prospect Avenue to I-35 will involve bituminous reclamation. This process grinds up the existing asphalt surface in place and mixes it with a portion of the underlying in place gravel base. This will form a new aggregate road base for the new bituminous pavement. One centerline culvert will also be replaced.

There are 69 properties to be assessed as part of this project (39 along Lake Chapeau Dr, 20 in the Crossroads Blvd area, and 10 along SE Marshall St). The assessments for the commercial properties in overlay areas depend on the width of the roadway and range between \$34.45 per

foot to \$37.09 per foot. The preliminary assessment rate for SE Marshall Street is \$52.15 per foot. The preliminary assessment roll is attached to this report.

The assessment terms will be determined by following the City's Assessment Policy. The interest rate will be based on bonding in 2025.

Councilor Howland said he attended this neighborhood meeting. One property owner from his ward was in attendance. He also had one resident contact him with questions which he relayed to city staff who responded.

Motion made by Councilor Howland, seconded by Councilor Christensen. On roll 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 25-036
Included with these minutes)

B. Public Hearing Regarding Ordering Improvement and Preparation of Plans for the 2025 State Aid Street Overlay Project (Job 2502)

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

B1. Resolution 25-037 Ordering Improvement and Preparation of Plans for the 2025 State Aid Street Overlay Project (Job 2502)

This proposed project involves the bituminous mill & overlay and miscellaneous curb & gutter replacement on Garfield Avenue from Fairlane Terrace to Richway Drive. The estimated project cost is \$200,902.08 and would be paid for with assessments, sanitary sewer funds, and City bonding funds. A neighborhood meeting was held February 17, 2025 to discuss the project with affected residents.

Work in the mill & overlay area will involve milling the existing bituminous street surfacing for a 6-foot width along each concrete gutter line so the new bituminous layer will match with the level of the concrete gutter. A 2-inch-thick layer of bituminous will be laid over the entire width of the street. The project would also involve replacing sections of curb & gutter that have settled and are causing drainage issues.

This section of Garfield Avenue was evaluated for Complete Streets improvements such as sidewalks, bike lanes, shared user paths, etc. Numerous constraints including narrow right-of-way and street widths, mature boulevard trees, and steep yard slopes make these improvements unfeasible without narrowing the road and eliminating on-street parking. Complete Streets improvements are not being proposed with this project.

There are 26 properties to be assessed as part of this project. The preliminary assessment rate is \$33.63 per foot. The preliminary assessment roll is attached to this report.

The assessment terms will be determined by following the City's Assessment Policy. The interest rate will be based on bonding in 2025.

A meeting was held on February 17th for public input. Jahnke reported no residents attended the meeting.

Motion made by Councilor Olson, seconded by Councilor Howland. On roll 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 25-037
Included with these minutes)

C. Public Hearing Regarding Ordering Improvement and Preparation of Plans for the 11th Street Reconstruction Project (Job 2503)

Mayor Murray opened the public hearing for public input for the 11th Street Reconstruction Project, City Job No. 2503 and called three times. No one spoke.

C1. Resolution 25-038 Ordering Improvement and Preparation of Plans for the 11th Street Reconstruction Project (Job 2503)

The proposed project calls for the complete reconstruction of the east end of 11th Street (approximately 355 total feet). Proposed work will include complete removal and replacement of the pavement, curb & gutter, sanitary sewer, storm sewer, and watermain. The street description is:

- 11th Street – Margaretha Avenue to the east end

The estimated project cost is \$531,316.24 and would be paid for with assessments, sanitary sewer funds, water funds, and City bonding funds. Because of the small number of parcels, a letter was sent out and staff offered to meet individually with the property owners.

11th Street is 31 feet wide from back-to-back of curb and is proposed to be reconstructed to the same configuration. The watermain has experienced a large and increasing frequency of breaks. The other underground utilities have reached the end of their design life and are proposed for replacement with this project.

Assessments will be levied to the benefiting properties based upon replacing the pavement and curb & gutter. The proposed assessment rate is \$165.79 per foot.

Three commercial properties and one City-owned property are proposed to be assessed with this project. Following the assessment policy, the assessments will be over 15 years. The interest rate will be based on bonding in 2025.

Motion made by Councilor Anderson, seconded by Councilor Baker. On roll 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 25-038
Included with these minutes)

D. Resolution Accepting Bid and Awarding Project for the Eberhart Street & Utility Improvements Project (Job 2413)

Engineering and JHS Engineering have reviewed the bids opened Tuesday, February 28, 2025 for the Eberhart Street & Utilities Improvement Project. This is the construction of approximately 370 feet of roadway including utilities. It also involves construction of a stormwater pond.

Engineering received five bids. Engineering is recommending the low bid of \$802,419.58 from Jensen Excavating & Trucking LLC of Albert Lea, Minnesota. The Engineer's estimate was \$860,000.00. The bid abstract is attached.

Mayor Murray reported no action will be taken on this item tonight and will be advanced to a future council agenda.

MAYOR AND COUNCIL REPORTS:

First Ward, Councilor Christensen reported:

- Ward Items – None
- Committee Update – Blue Zones Project committee continues to look at initiatives and projects to engage the community. The Worksite wellness group continues to meet in various locations in the community. Planning commission will meet on March 4th. Mentioned the Age Friendly Freeborn County group that dovetails with the Senior Center group. She attended the Elected Leaders Institute in Plymouth, MN. She reports the speakers were very good, and helpful information was provided along with great networking opportunities. Gave a shout out to the Albert Lea Tribune for the latest Progress Edition, as well as the people and businesses that were featured.

Second Ward, Councilor Baker reported:

- Ward Items – City staff is working on one of his ward items.
- Committee Update – Attended the City Council Retreat last week and reports there was some good discussion.

Third Ward, Councilor Howland reported:

- Ward Items – None.
- Committee Update – Attended the City Council Retreat last week. Also attended the Neighborhood Improvement Project informational meeting. Mentioned the Youth Fishing Team of 2025.

Fourth Ward, Councilor Olson reported:

- Ward Items –
- Committee Update – Attended the 2025 Neighborhood meeting. Also attended the council retreat last week and his first Airport Advisory meeting. He reported the Weather Automated Observation System is being moved. Bids will be going out for large equipment.

Fifth Ward, Councilor Van Beek reported:

- Ward Items – None
- Committee Update – Attended his first Library Advisory Board meeting. Attended the 2025 Neighborhood meeting. Will be attending the HRA meeting tomorrow.

Sixth Ward, Councilor Anderson reported:

- Ward Items – Has a ward item that is going to the Planning Commission
- Committee Update – Attended the Elected Leaders Institute in Plymouth, MN last Saturday and reported a positive experience. He said he is now be Chairperson of the Relay for Life event.

MAYOR REPORT:

Attended the following meetings:

- ALEDA Board meeting on February 12th
- Backpack dinner and fundraiser at First Lutheran Church. He extended his appreciation for those that support this program
- Girls Hockey Tournament
- ALDEDA Project Review with Phillip Johnson
- Attended the Albert Lea Robotics Team Competition at the High School
- Chamber Business After Hours event
- City Council Retreat last Thursday and noted his appreciation of staff and council input regarding the Strategic Planning discussion.
- Gave a shout-out to the Albert Lea Tribune on the recent Progress Edition.

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

CITY MANAGER REPORT

- Staff Reviews are in draft form
- Working on Federal Grant Requests
- Thanked council for their input and support on moving forward with the Strategic Plan
- Will be meeting with staff to discuss code enforcement and emergency response
- Working on stormwater utility findings
- Met with the Senior Resource Director to discuss collaboration. He also learned from the director that they offer assistance to senior citizens with income limitations in the form of minor house repairs, removing tall weeds and grass, etc.
- Continues to work on the city's legal and financial ability to improve housing options
- Human Rights Commission is looking for applicants

APPROVAL OF CLAIMS

A. Resolution 25-039 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 Anderson, to approve the claims, 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 25-039
Included with these minutes)

Councilor Howland motioned for adjournment; Councilor Anderson seconded. That there being no further business, the Council meeting adjourn until the next regular meeting of the Albert Lea City Council at 7:00 p.m. on Monday, March 10, 2025. On voice call vote, all councilors voted in favor of said motion.

Mayor Murray declared the motion passed and the meeting adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT: 7:29 P.M.

Mayor Rich Murray

Daphney Maras
Secretary of the Council