CITY COUNCIL PROCEEDINGS
BEMIDJI, MINNESOTA
Regular Meeting – September 2, 2025

Pursuant to due call and notice, a regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Bemidji, Beltrami County, Minnesota, was held on Tuesday, September 2, 2025, at 6:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers of City Hall, Mayor Prince presiding.

Upon roll call, the following Councilmembers were declared present: Prince, Fiskevold Gould, Peterson, Dickinson, Rivera, Eaton, Thayer.

Staff Present: City Manager Rich Spiczka, City Engineer Sam Anderson, City Clerk Michelle Miller

<u>AMENDMENTS TO AGENDA</u>
Mayor Prince called for any amendments to the agenda. **Motion by Peterson, seconded by Thayer, approving the agenda as presented. Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.**

<u>MINUTES</u>
The following minutes were presented for approval:
July 28, 2025 Work Session
August 4, 2025 Council Meeting

Motion by Eaton, seconded by Rivera to approve the minutes as presented. Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

<u>CONSENT AGENDA #1</u>
Mayor Prince called for any amendments to be made to Consent Agenda. Rivera requested that the Amendment to Lease Agreement and Purchase Agreement with BNSF for Rail Corridor Parcel be removed for discussion. The following Consent Agenda items were presented for approval. **Motion by Eaton, seconded by Dickinson, to approve Consent Agenda #1 as follows:**

1. Claims Submitted by Finance Officer in the Amount Of $2,102,239.60
2. Claims Submitted by ASM Global for the Sanford Center in the Amount of $44,540.01
3. Approve July Financials from ASM Global for the Sanford Center
4. 2025 Business License Approvals
5. Approve Special Event Permit for Blue Ox Marathon
6. Approve Temporary 1-4 Day Liquor License for Bemidji State University (September 13, 20, October 4)
7. Approve Temporary 1-4 Day Liquor License for Bemidji Jaycees (October 11)
8. Approve Change Order #3 for the Cameron Park Building Project
9. Authorize Grant Application to Region 2 Arts Council (Recreation Department)
10. Approve Purchase of Refuse Containers
11. Approve Professional Services Amendment #2 for WWTF Final Clarifier Project - City Project 23-03
12. Approve Amended Bylaws for the Sustainability Commission
13. **RESOLUTION NO. 6640**: Amending Taxicab Fares for First City Taxi

Motion carried by the following roll call vote: Yeas: Peterson, Thayer, Fiskevold Gould, Prince, Rivera, Eaton, Dickinson.

<u>CONSENT AGENDA #2</u>
Mayor Prince called for any items to be pulled from consent agenda #2. The following Consent Agenda item was presented for approval. **Motion by Fiskevold Gould, seconded by Rivera, approving Consent Agenda #2 as follows:**

1. Claims Submitted by Finance Officer for Visit Bemidji in the Amount of $75,686.99

Motion carried by the following roll call vote: Yeas: Prince, Rivera, Thayer, Dickinson, Eaton, Fiskevold Gould. Abstain: Peterson due to his role as the Executive Director of Visit Bemidji.

<u>CITIZENS WITH BUSINESS NOT ON AGENDA</u>
- No Appearance

<u>NEW BUSINESS</u>
<u>Consider Sanford Center Storm Restoration Bids and Quotes</u>
The council discussed the Sanford Center storm restoration bids and quotes in detail. Staff and the construction manager explained that the project scope was assessed, and a comprehensive bid package was assembled and sent to trusted trade partners. Bids were qualified, and the recommended contractors were selected based on competitiveness and approval from the League of Minnesota Cities Insurance Trust. The construction manager will oversee the project, with contracts administered directly by the city and a mix of local and out-of-town contractors involved.

Coordination with Sanford Center staff was emphasized, with weekly meetings planned to leverage institutional knowledge. The project aims to have suites ready by the first week of October, with a contingency for minor change orders. All costs are covered by insurance, and the timeline is driven by the need to avoid lost revenue from event delays. Councilmembers asked about contractor selection, deposits, subcontractors, and coordination with existing staff.

Motion by Fiskevold Gould, seconded by Eaton, approving the bids and quotes for the Sanford Center storm restoration project. Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

<u>Consider Amendment to Lease Agreement and Purchase Agreement with BNSF for Rail Corridor Parcel</u>

Councilmember Rivera sought clarification about the map included in the agreement, specifically whether it was the original or updated version, and sought clarification on what the green and shaded areas represented. Rivera inquired about the new fencing requirements, the location of berms, and who prepared the map. Rivera wanted to ensure that the city was not agreeing to anything unintended and confirmed with staff that the only significant change was related to the fencing, with no other major amendments to the sale agreement.

Motion by Peterson, seconded by Thayer approving the Amended Lease Agreement and Purchase Agreement with BNSF for the Rail Corridor Parcel. Motion carried by the following roll call vote: Yeas: Eaton, Prince, Peterson, Thayer, Dickinson, Rivera, Fiskevold Gould.

<u>COUNCIL COMMITTEE UPDATES</u>

- Councilmember Fiskevold Gould reported on the Parks and Recreation Commission meeting, where there was discussion about the recent separation of parks and trails from recreation and plans to revisit the strategic plan.
- Councilmember Peterson had not report.
- Councilmember Thayer stated that the Downtown Business Association meeting was rescheduled.
- Councilmember Rivera discussed an upcoming public arts meeting focused on funding for a mural at the wastewater treatment plant, highlighted the importance of public art, and reported on an HRA meeting where significant grants were received for housing and plumbing projects. Rivera raised a question about the scope of councilmember event reporting during the council committee updates.
- Councilmember Eaton reported on progress with the animal ordinance rewrite committee, updates from the Airport Authority (including budgeting, marketing, and upcoming events), and the City Library Board (increased usage, security measures, and a successful book sale).
- Councilmember Dickinson had not report.
- Mayor Prince reported on the Minnesota Cities Board of Directors meeting (noting a 5% fee increase for cities), Sanford Center Advisory Board meeting (bylaw changes and committee structure, budget, and business plan from the Sanford Center), and had a meeting with Jess Frenzel regarding the joint meeting with Northern Township.

<u>CLOSED MEETING</u>

Prince stated that council will need to discuss in closed session for pending litigation, pursuant to Minnesota Statutes Section 13D.05, Subd. 3(b) concerning the consolidated boundary adjustment proceedings involving Northern Township and the City of Bemidji, Minnesota Office of Administration File Numbers OAH 71-0330-40846 and OAH 71-0330-40869. Prince read into the record that the need for confidentiality outweighs the purposes served by the open-meeting law in this case based on the following:

- The City Council and legal counsel need to have a candid and open discussion of strategic considerations regarding the pending litigation.
- The only business to be discussed in the closed session is the pending litigation.
- An open session would be detrimental because it may take place in the presence of individuals or parties involved in the litigation and thereby divulge legal strategy that may be detrimental to the interests of the City and taxpayers.
- A closed session would benefit the public because the ultimate outcome of the threatened litigation may impact the finances, operations, future growth, services, economic development, and rights of the City.

Motion by Eaton, seconded by Dickinson to close the meeting pursuant to Minnesota Statutes Section 13D.05, Subd. 3(b) regarding pending litigation concerning the consolidated boundary adjustment proceedings involving Northern Township and the City of Bemidji, Minnesota Office of Administration File Numbers OAH 71-0330-40846 and OAH 71-0330-40869. Motion carried by unanimous voice vote. Meeting closed at 6:41 p.m.

Those in attendance: Rich Spiczka, Sam Anderson, Robert Kringler, Chad Arnesen, and Michelle Miller.

REOPEN MEETING
Having completed their business in closed meeting, Prince reopened the City Council meeting at 7:38 p.m.

UPCOMING MEETINGS
- September 8 (5:30 pm) - Work Session
- September 15 (6:00 pm) - Council Meeting
- September 22 (5:30 pm) - Work Session

ADJOURN
There being no further business, motion by Peterson, seconded by Eaton, to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried by unanimous voice vote. Meeting adjourned at 7:39 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle R. Miller

Michelle R. Miller
City Clerk