

MINUTES OF THE ALDEN CITY COUNCIL MEETING – NOVEMBER 12, 2025

The Regular meeting of the Alden City Council was called to order at 6:00 pm by Mayor Reyerson.

Roll call was read. Members present were Ms. VanEngelenburg, Mr. Reindal, Mr. Wichmann, Ms. Pedersen, and Mayor Reyerson. None were absent. City staff present were City Clerk-Treasurer Knutson, Fire Chief Thunstedt, and Maintenance Worker Scott Myrick. Others present were City attorney Stephanie Haedt and Ben Rosal from Bolton & Menk.

The Pledge of Allegiance was said.

Motion by Reindal and seconded by VanEngelenburg to amend the agenda to include discussion next steps on 326 Euclid Street in the closed session at the end of the meeting. Carried unanimously.

Motion by VanEngelenburg and seconded by Wichmann to approve the minutes of October 8, 2025, regular council meeting as presented. Carried unanimously. Motion by VanEngelenburg and seconded by Wichmann to approve the minutes of the October 29, 2025, special meeting. Carried unanimously.

Motion by Wichmann and seconded by VanEngelenburg to approve the Treasurer's Report as presented. Carried unanimously.

Motion by VanEngelenburg and seconded by Reindal to approve the Hours report as presented. Carried unanimously.

Fire Chief Thunstedt reported that the department had 1 grass fire call, 1 mutual aid corn dryer call, 1 service call for fire prevention, and 8 medical calls in the month of November. The county meeting was in Manchester, where they discussed the auto aid situation and are trying to find a solution for it to work with dispatch software. There is a resident on one parcel in Pickeral Lake Township who is interested in changing their fire protection to Albert Lea, so the auto aid set up may help assure the residents in all areas that other departments are available for back up if needed. Fire prevention week was October 5 -11. Members held an assembly at the school on Friday October 10th. Thank you to Alex Burris, Shane Farris, Parker Hemmingsen, Dan Larson, and Tyler Stadheim for educating the elementary students on fire safety. The fire department received a \$2500 grant from Freeborn Mower Operation Roundup for air pack bottles, and Jim will be applying for the MN DNR 50/50 grant by December 1st. They hope to use that for a Skid unit for the Grass rig, which would cost approx. \$10,000. There is a FEMA grant coming up in January, and they would like to look into hiring a grant writer to position them better to receive that grant. The funds would be used to upgrade the SCBA bottles to a longer lasting bottle. Motion by Reindal and seconded by Wichmann to approve hiring a grant writer at a cost of up to \$2500. Carried unanimously. Motion by VanEngelenburg and seconded by Reindal to approve the Fire report as presented. Carried unanimously.

Maintenance Worker Myrick presented the public works report. Olson Excavating was here Friday October 24 to fix the lake drain. The street patching has been done. Street sweeping will take place once the leaves are all down. The shop heater has been replaced. Scott passed his airbrake & general knowledge test for his CDL. The school session for the CDL will take place December 7-10. Scott will be away for a conference from November 18–20 and on vacation from November 26 to December 2. We received a quote from Minnesota Pump Works for yearly maintenance for the two lift stations. The quote is \$1882 per inspection plus \$175 confined space entry fee per station if needed. Motion by Pedersen and seconded by Reindal to approve the quote from Minnesota Pump Works. Carried unanimously. We received a quote from Southern Lock & Glass to fix the men's bathroom door at the beach house. Motion by VanEngelenburg and second by Reindal to have Southern Lock & Glass repair the door at the beach house. Carried unanimously. Motion by VanEngelenburg and seconded by Pedersen to approve the Public Works report. Carried unanimously.

Correspondence was received from Arcadian Bank detailing their services and fees.

A letter has been sent regarding the Creamery. The owner was not able to come to the meeting to discuss, but is working on plans to have the building demolished. He is hoping to have better information for next month's meeting.

The county building inspector reviewed the progress at 171 N. Powers, and the addition is larger than the original plans specified. A stop work order was issued, and the owner was instructed to come to the city council for approval of the revised plan. He will also need to update his building permit with the county before he continues with the project. This item was added to the agenda in the event he was ready with his revised plans, but the property owner was not present at the meeting to discuss.

Discussion was had regarding the 2 cottonwood trees that overhang the softball field on the first base line. We will get some quotes on having them cut down and try to have it done before softball season.

The water testing fee that appears on all water bills was discussed. There is a fee charged to the city by the Minnesota Department of Health for the state's testing of our water, and the city in turn charges that to the residents. The city currently pays a fee of \$2.42 per household per quarter, but we only charge \$1.60 to the residents. The state is raising the water testing fee to \$3.81 per connection per quarter beginning January 1st. Motion by VanEngelenburg and seconded by Reindal to raise the rate the city charges for the state water testing fee to \$3.81 per quarter, matching what we pay to the Department of Health. Carried unanimously.

Ben from Bolton & Menk presented updates to the city's projects. We received comments from Rural Development on our infrastructure grant application that was submitted in September 2023. This is common, and includes question that we need to answer, which Bolton & Menk will take care of. We are still waiting for the funding to come through, but answering the questions is part of the grant process. He updated the council on the availability of the LRIP grant, which we applied for and didn't receive in 2023. He wanted to know if we would like to apply for it again this time. It would pay for road repairs around the school in conjunction with the infrastructure project. Motion by Pedersen and seconded by Reindal to approve Resolution 2025-11 Authorizing the pursuit of 2025 Local Road Improvement Program funding for the North Broadway and Euclid Street Reconstruction Project. Carried Unanimously. Ben also updated us on the Stormwater Planning Project. Jerry and Heath need to meet with Ben to finalize a stormwater plan.

Motion by Wichmann and seconded by VanEngelenburg to approve Resolution 2025-08 Directing delinquent utility charges be placed on 2026 property tax rolls. Carried unanimously. Motion by Wichmann and seconded by VanEngelenburg to approve Resolution 2025-09 Directing delinquent mowing charges be placed on the 2026 property tax rolls. Carried Unanimously. Motion by Wichmann and seconded by Pedersen to approve Resolution 2025-10 Directing past due charges for nuisance abatement be placed on the 2026 property Tax Rolls. Carried unanimously.

Resolutions 2025-08, 2025-09, 2025-10 and 2025-11 are available in their entirety for review in the city office.

Council member VanEngelenburg asked whether the pavilion painting needs to be done before winter. It was decided that due to the end of the fall season, it would wait until spring.

Discussion was had regarding hiring for the Chief of Police position. Heath had a discussion with candidate #2 regarding the pay and insurance for the position. The big issue the city faces with hiring is health insurance. We will check into the options again. Mayor Reyerson had discussion with the city of Emmons, and they would be interested in contracting half a day per week for police coverage. We are still working on insurance details. We will offer up to \$37.50, and \$1725 per month for health insurance, but

we don't have numbers in place, so there may be changes. This is just a starting point, but negotiations will still be needed.

The Public works position is still open for applications, and it closes on November 19th.

Discussion was had on Scott's job performance and the way he has stepped up to fill the position. We appreciate all he has done to learn the job, and get things done. The city will take this into consideration at the end of the year and adjust his pay accordingly as 2026 salaries are planned.

Motion by VanEngelenburg and seconded by Pedersen to approve the bills and Electronic Fund Transfers. Bills presented for payment \$55,914.45, EFTs of \$6,007.72, and Payroll of \$11,495.35. Carried unanimously.

Pursuant to MN Statute §13D.05, subd. 3(b), under attorney-client privilege, the meeting went into closed session at 7:36 pm to discuss zoning of the former Mayo Clinic Building and the next steps on 326 Euclid St.

The meeting was re-opened at 8:15 pm

Motion by and seconded by Pedersen to adjourn at 8:15pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Kim Knutson
Clerk-Treasurer