MINUTES OF THE ALDEN CITY COUNCIL MEETING – February 11, 2026

The Regular meeting of the Alden City Council was called to order at 6:00 pm by Mayor Reyerson. Members present were Ms. VanEngelenburg, Mr. Reindal, Mr. Wichmann, and Mayor Reyerson. Absent: Ms. Pedersen. City staff present was City Clerk Knutson and Fire Chief Thunstedt. Others present were County Commissioner Nicole Eckstrom, Shirley Newman, Nick Hanke, Don Bryson, and Ben Rosol. Derek Thorson joined later.

The Pledge of Allegiance was said.

Motion by Reindal and seconded by VanEngelenburg to approve the minutes of January 14, 2026, public hearing and regular council meeting as presented. Carried unanimously.

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

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

Fire Chief Thunstedt reported that they had 1 false fire alarm call and 4 medical calls in the month of January. The fire chief meeting was held in Twin Lakes. Discussion was held about ambulance responding during blizzards. The program was about ISO ratings and departments renewing their information. One more member completed their department physical, and 1 member still needs to do that. Chief Thunstedt attended command training at the Albert Lea Fire Department, where the topic was part 1 of incident safety officer training. Fire Safety USA was here to repair the fire truck. They also corrected the issue with a mix up on the title for the new fire truck. Motion by VanEngelenburg and seconded by Wichmann to approve the Fire Report. Carried unanimously.

Public Works Superintendent Myrick was not at the meeting, but his written report was discussed. Scott passed his CDL test and has been attending training courses on smart salting, wastewater, and drinking water, working towards licensure in those areas. He has more training coming up in March. Scott is getting estimates to repair the ventilation at the lift station as well as a portable gas monitor. The payloader was in the shop to fix the wiper motors, and the strobe lights on the snowplow were not working. He is working on finding someone to repair the lights. Motion by VanEngelenburg and seconded by Reindal to approve the public works report. Carried unanimously.

Ben Rosol from Bolton & Menk was at the meeting to discuss projects they are working on with the city. He presented the council with an Agreement for Professional Services, to help the city with the lead and or galvanized service line replacements. The city will receive funding from the state to pay for that project, but we need to pay upfront first and be reimbursed as the project goes forward. Motion by Wichmann and seconded by VanEngelenburg to approve the Agreement for Professional Services with Bolton & Menk. Carried unanimously.

Resolution 2026.01 – Annual Assignments for 2026 was discussed at the last council meeting, but was tabled to allow for all members to be present for input. Assignments will remain the same this year, other than the Mayor Pro-Tem will be changed from Jeff Wichmann to Heath Reindal. Motion by VanEngelenburg and seconded by Reindal to approve the annual assignments with the above change. Carried unanimously.

The 2026 Fee Schedule was reviewed. Changes to this year's schedule include Dock Permits changes from $200 per season to $100 per season, Notary fees change from $20 to $5 per signature, water

reconnect fee changes from $75 to $100, and the snow removal fees at the cemetery have been removed from the fee schedule. Motion by VanEngelenburg and seconded by Wichmann to approve the fee schedule with the noted changes. Carried unanimously.

Resolution 2026.03 192 W. Washington Ave Conditional Use Permit was discussed. If any issues with the property and the CUP come up, they will be addressed at that time. Motion by VanEngelenburg and seconded by Reindal to approve the conditional use permit. Carried unanimously.

Posting of the Public Works Position was discussed. After some discussion, motion by VanEngelenburg and seconded by Wichmann to post the position as Full Time Public Works Maintenance, with a salary range of $24 - $28 per hour, based on qualifications. Carried unanimously.

The candidate for the Chief of Police position was in attendance to discuss the position pay, benefits, and expectations. Motion by Reindal and seconded by VanEngelenburg to offer the position to Derek Thorson at $40.39 per hour, including a family fitness center membership. All other benefits remain as offered to the current employees. Carried unanimously.

Every three years, the Minnesota Department of Management and Budget requires a pay equity report to be filed. This verifies the city is not paying men more than women for equal types of work. The report needs to be approved by the governing body, which is the city council. Motion by Reindal and seconded by Wichmann to approve the Pay Equity Report as presented. Carried unanimously.

The city's health insurance plan is being set up with PEIP, and there are questions about eligibility that need to be included in the plan. It was decided that employees will become eligible the 1st of the month after they begin work. PEIP offers dental insurance, Life Insurance, and Accidental Death & Dismemberment insurance. The life and AD & D insurance through PEIP is cheaper than the insurance offered through USAble. Motion by Wichmann and seconded by VanEngelenburg to offer the dental, life and AD&D insurance through PEIP. Carried unanimously.

Ongoing property issues with 171 N. Powers and the creamery were discussed. Nothing has changed with these properties, and it was decided to have our attorney send letters to them, hoping that it would help things move forward.

Clerk Knutson requested vacation February 19 -23. Motion by VanEngelenburg and seconded by Wichmann to approve vacation request. Carried unanimously.

County commissioner Eckstrom discussed that the county is moving to issuing interim use permits instead of conditional use permits in some cases. This allows more flexibility to change the permits if conditions or ordinances change. She also notified us that the county will be holding a public meeting to discuss allowing rifles during deer hunting in the county. The state allows rifle use for deer hunting if approved by the county, and they are receiving input to help with making their decision on the issue.

A resident asked whether the city carried bond insurance on our employees, and whether that information is submitted to the county. It has been checked into previously, and we do carry that insurance. We will check into whether that and oaths of office need to be filed with the county.

Motion by VanEngelenburg and seconded by Wichmann to approve the bills and Electronic Fund Transfers. Bills presented for payment $24,666.90, EFTs of $6,599.72, and Payroll of $9,581.96. Carried unanimously.

Donations were made to the Alden Fire Department from Bob and Donna Nelson in memory of Phyllis Thomschin, and to the Alden Cemetery from Allen and Donna Schmidt in memory of Steve Sorensen. Motion by VanEngelenburg and seconded by Wichmann to accept these donations with appreciation. Carried unanimously.

Motion by VanEngelenburg and seconded by Wichmann to adjourn at 7:50. Carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Kim Knutson
Clerk-Treasurer