

EAST BETHEL CITY COUNCIL MEETING

March 24, 2025

The East Bethel City Council met on March 24, 2025, at 7:00 p.m. for the regular City Council meeting at City Hall.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Ardie Anderson Suzanne Erkel Brian Mundle
 Tim Miller Jim Smith

ALSO PRESENT:

Eric Larson, City Attorney
Kendra Lindahl, Community Development Director
Mike Jeziorski, Deputy City Administrator/Finance Director
Carrie Frost, Administrative Coordinator

1.0 Call to Order

The March 24, 2025, City Council meeting was called to order by Mayor Anderson at 7:00 p.m.

2.0 Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

3.0 Adopt Agenda

Mundle stated I'll make a motion to adopt tonight's agenda as amended, moving item 6.0 H, Approve the Emergency Operating Procedure, after 4.0 C. Erkel stated I'll second. Anderson asked any discussion? To the motion, all in favor say aye. **All in favor.** Anderson asked any opposed? That motion passes. **Motion passes unanimously.**

4.0 Presentations and Public Hearings

4.0 A 2024 Audit Presentation: Adbo – Resolution 2025-15, Accepting 2024 Audit

Jeziorski stated that the 2024 Annual Financial Report has been prepared, audited and is presented for review and approval. Adbo, the City's Auditor, will present the report to the Council.

Kelsey Larson, Adbo, stated that they are still waiting on PERA to release the fire reports to make the final pension adjustments. Kelsey Larson presented information regarding audit results, general fund balances, general fund balance to actual, general fund revenues by type, capital project fund balances, special revenue fund balances, debt service, water fund, sewer fund, ice arena fund, cash and investments balances by fund type, and key performance indicators.

Erkel asked why their capital assets are decreasing. Larson stated that a chunk of each asset gets depreciated, so they show that expense each year.

Erkel asked about the increase in the ice arena operating expenses, and why they did not decrease when the City took it over. Jeziorski stated that there was an increase because there was an overlap in the Gibson Management contract and transitioning to internally running it. Jeziorski stated that the cash decreased because they bought a scoreboard at the beginning of 2024, and in order to get the operating revenues back in line with expenses they have increased the primetime ice rental fee from \$192/hour to \$210/hour.

Erkel asked what over expenditure is. Kelsey Larson stated that is when your expenditures are over your revenues.

Erkel asked what the Antenna Lease is. Kelsey Larson stated that the City is renting antenna space on water towers and is receiving money for that; they are long leases with extension periods.

Erkel asked how there can be an increase and a decrease simultaneously. Kelsey Larson stated that they do not show it as net, but rather what was added and what was disposed of.

Mundle asked how the City looks financially overall. Kelsey Larson stated that it looks pretty well, the fund balance in the general fund has been increasing exponentially.

Erkel stated I'll make a motion to adopt Resolution 2025-15, Accepting 2024 Audit. Smith stated I'll second. Anderson asked any discussion? To the motion, all in favor say aye. **All in favor.** Anderson asked any opposed? That motion passes. **Motion passes unanimously.**

4.0 B Anoka County Sheriff's Report

Lieutenant Derek Peters presented the February 2025 Sheriff's Report, stating the Sheriff's Department responded to 318 calls for service, 2 thefts, 2 assaults, 23 traffic crashes, 15 arrests, 183 traffic stops, and 29 traffic citations.

Lieutenant Derek Peters introduced 9 deputies and allowed them to say a few words about themselves.

Chief Deputy Jacobson thanked East Bethel and their partnership with the Police Department.

Informational; no action required.

4.0 C Fire Department Monthly Report

Interim Fire Chief Streich discussed the East Bethel Fire Department, his background/achievements, and presented the February 2025 report and noted that they responded to 76 calls, of which 63 were medical, 3 crashes, 3 alarms, 4 burning, 2 others, 0 fires, and 1 mutual aid.

Informational; no action required.

4.0 D Approve the Emergency Operating Procedure

Streich discussed the Emergency Operating Plan, its purpose, training provided, and essential functions in disasters.

Erkel asked what happens if they end up totally disagreeing with something that ends up in the plan, since they have not seen the full thing yet. Streich stated that each of the roles of the Council members is listed in the plan, and if it is something they are not comfortable with, he can discuss it with them and fix it.

Larson stated that the plan must stay confidential so that no bad actors can use it as a tool against public safety and security.

Erkel stated I'll make a motion to approve the updated Emergency Operating Procedure. Smith stated I'll second. Anderson asked any discussion? To the motion, all in favor say aye. **All in favor.** Anderson asked any opposed? That motion passes. **Motion passes unanimously.**

Streich stated that only 2% of medical calls are life-threatening, and they will need to discuss what is important and find a balance for the volunteer firefighters.

4.0 E Public Hearing: Ordinance Change – Dog Licensing

Jeziorski stated that The requirement of a dog license was originally instituted to ensure that animals were vaccinated and could be easily reunited with their owners if lost. Yet, out of 4,000+ households, only a few dozen residents have licenses. Social media and microchips combine to make a highly

effective way to locate lost pets, and most pets are reunited with their owners before City staff is even notified.

Jeziorski added that applying for a license does require the owner to provide proof of a current rabies vaccination, as rabies is far less common today than in the past. Owners already must present vet records to take out pet insurance or enroll in doggy day care. When a dog bite is reported, deputies go directly to the owner to ask about vaccinations rather than checking city records.

Jeziorski stated that the City does not charge for a dog license, so there is no revenue generated from tracking and issuing licenses.

Jeziorski stated that staff is requesting City Council hold a public hearing and at the conclusion, review and consider approval of the proposed ordinance changes to amend Article II – Dogs and Article III – Rabies Control that remove the requirements for residents to register their dogs with the City and obtain City dog licenses, effective January 1, 2026.

Anderson opened the public hearing at 7:55 p.m.

No comments received.

Anderson closed the public hearing at 7:55 p.m.

Mundle stated I'll make a motion to adopt Ordinance 2025-02, amending Chapter 10, Article II and Article III of the East Bethel Code of Ordinances Regulating Dogs and Rabies Control in the City of East Bethel. Erkel stated I'll second. Anderson asked any discussion? To the motion, all in favor say aye. **All in favor.** Anderson asked any opposed? That motion passes. **Motion passes unanimously.**

5.0 Public Forum

Kevin Lewis stated that the Emergency Management Director role that is being advertised is a very big job and encouraged due diligence in making the decision on who to hire.

Krista Vaughn discussed her father, Rod Sanow's, unjust termination and gave facts about his time as Fire Chief and the accomplishments he made. Ms. Vaughn stated that she created a petition to reinstate Rod Sanow as Fire Chief, and it has already received 500 signatures. Ms. Vaughn asked that the Council issue a motion to reinstate Rod Sanow as Fire Chief.

Sharon Metzel stated that she wants peace in East Bethel. Ms. Metzel discussed the creation of the East Bethel Fire Department by her grandfather, Joe Anderson, the first East Bethel mayor. Ms. Vaughn stated that she is amazed by the Fire Department because they are the first on the scene, before ambulances.

6.0 Consent Agenda

Item A: Approve Bills

Item B: Approve Edited Meeting Minutes February 24, 2025 City Council Meeting

~~Item C: Approve Meeting Minutes, March 10, 2025 City Council Meeting~~

Item D: Resolution 2025-16, Approving Application for Raffle Permit for Crush ALS

Item E: Resolution 2025-17, Approve Application to Conduct Off-Site Gambling for Booster Day

~~Item F: Approve Capstone LLC Contract~~

~~Item G: Approve the Advertisement for Fire Chief / Emergency Management Director~~

Item I: Resolution 2025-18, Approving Support for Retention of City Zoning Authority

Mundle requested to pull Item C and F. Erkel requested to pull Item F.

Mundle stated I'll make a motion to approve Consent Agenda as amended. Erkel stated I'll second. Anderson asked any discussion? To the motion, all in favor say aye. **All in favor.** Anderson asked any opposed? That motion passes. **Motion passes unanimously.**

6.0 C Approve Meeting Minutes, March 10, 2025 City Council Meeting

Mundle stated that City Attorney Larson drafted some edits to the meeting minutes. Larson stated that the changes to the minutes proposed include clarification and provide the script from Attorney Saffley given to the Mayor.

Mundle stated I'll make a motion to approve Item C of the Consent Agenda, as edited. Erkel stated I'll second. Anderson asked any discussion? To the motion, all in favor say aye. **All in favor.** Anderson asked any opposed? That motion passes. **Motion passes unanimously.**

6.0 F Approve Capstone LLC Contract

Mundle asked if Streich would be working 40 hours a week, like the previous fire chief. Streich stated the understanding was that he would be working 40 hours/week, but he would not be responding as a firefighter but could respond to the major calls as an advisor.

Mundle asked if this contract falls in line with the amount that Rod Sanow was making. Jeziorski stated that it is roughly the same amount.

Anderson asked if they are paying for the cafeteria plan on a non-full-time job. Jeziorski stated that they took Sanow's complete compensation package minus PERA to give an accurate comparison.

Mundle asked if the contract would be monthly. Streich stated that he is flexible to do whatever works best for them.

Larson stated that he discussed the job duties with Streich and how to fulfill the role.

Erkel stated I'll make a motion to approve Item F of the Consent Agenda. Mundle stated I'll second. Anderson asked any discussion? To the motion, all in favor say aye. **All in favor.** Anderson asked any opposed? That motion passes. **Motion passes unanimously.**

Erkel stated I'll make a motion to pull Item G of the Consent Agenda back onto the agenda for reauthorization. Mundle stated I'll second. Anderson asked any discussion? To the motion, all in favor say aye. **All in favor.** Anderson asked any opposed? That motion passes. **Motion passes unanimously.**

6.0 G Approve the Advertisement for Fire Chief / Emergency Management Director

Erkel asked why it was changed from "U.S. Citizen" to "legally authorized to work in the U.S.". Jeziorski stated that they are following the language in the I-9 form.

Erkel asked why they changed the residency requirement of being within 30 minutes of the fire service area. Streich stated that there are 2 other cities in the area that are posting for the same job, so this will allow more people to apply.

Erkel stated I'll make a motion to approve Item G of the Consent Agenda. Mundle stated I'll second. Anderson asked any discussion? To the motion, all in favor say aye. **All in favor.** Anderson asked any opposed? That motion passes. **Motion passes unanimously.**

7.0 New Business. Commission, Association, and Task Force Reports

7.0 A Planning Commission

7.0 A.1 Variance: Driveway Access, 1670 229th Lane NE

Lindahl stated that the owner has applied for a second driveway on their property. The property is zoned R-1, City Code allows one curb cut only. Lindahl stated that the Planning Commission reviewed the item and held a public hearing at the February 25, 2025, meeting. Other than the applicant, there was no one present to speak on this item. The Planning Commission voted 3-1 to recommend approval of the Variance request for a second driveway, with the condition that the new driveway not exceed 12 feet in width.

Lindahl added that the burden of proof is on the applicant to show that they have a practical difficulty that can only be remedied by the variance.

Smith stated that the property is full of trees, and it does not interfere with anyone else's property.

Smith stated I'll make a motion to adopt Resolution 2025-18, approving the request for a variance for a second driveway on the property located at 1670 229th Lane NE. Miller stated I'll second.

Anderson asked any discussion? To the motion, all in favor say aye. **All in favor.** Anderson asked any opposed? That motion passes. **Motion passes unanimously.**

7.0 B Economic Development Authority

None.

7.0 C Park Commission

None.

8.0 Department Reports

8.0 A Community Development

8.0 A.1 Draft Ordinance Amendment – Barndominiums

Lindahl stated that following the previous City Council meeting, Staff developed the proposed ordinance amendment to allow barndominiums in the A and RR zoning districts., while also allowing more flexibility in materials and design choices throughout East Bethel.

Lindahl stated that in conversations with the Building Official, who remains concerned about allowing barndominiums. He is concerned that the wooden posts tend to rot, so the structural foundation of a barndominium is not the same foundations required under the Code today. He is also concerned about the Energy Code requirements, and it will not be significantly cheaper than standard residential construction.

Mundle asked if they should be including something regarding the energy code and foundation.

Lindahl stated that the Energy Code is already part of the Building Code. Lindahl stated that for the foundation, they could require that barndominiums be constructed on a foundation that is solid for the complete perimeter of the house.

Erkel discussed the 30% and that she believes it is too restrictive. Mundle stated that he has no problem changing that to 20% and would like the Building Official's opinion on this.

Smith stated that all the posts are green-treated and are not different from a slab-on-grade home with a green-treated plate on a block.

Miller asked if the Code calls for the use of green-treated posts. Lindahl stated that she is unsure but will check with the Building Official.

Smith stated that the requirement for a percentage of complementary materials should be for the front-facing side only.

Lindhahl stated there is not a minimum lot size at the moment. Smith stated that he is not for a minimum lot size to give the residents the freedom on what their house can look like.

8.0 B Engineer Report

None.

8.0 C City Attorney

None.

8.0 D Finance

None.

8.0 E Public Works

None.

8.0 F Fire Department

None.

8.0 G City Administrator Report

None.

9.0 – Other Items

9.0 A Staff Report

None.

9.0 B Council Reports

Erkel stated that the Seniors meet every third Thursday. Erkel noted that there will be a Craft Vendor sale at the Community Center on April 26, 2025, and they are still accepting vendors.

Erkel stated that they are having a fix-it clinic on May 3, 2025, at the Community Center.

Mundle stated that July 19, 2025 is Booster Day, Party in the Park at Booster Park. Mundle stated that the parade is back, and any local organizations or businesses can visit the Booster Day website for more information on how to sign up. Mundle also noted that volunteers are needed, and applications for vendors, artists, and crafters are being accepted on the website.

9.0 C Other

None.

10.0 Adjourn

Miller stated I'll make a motion to adjourn. Mundle stated I'll second. To the motion, all in favor say aye. **All in favor.** Anderson asked any opposed? That motion passes. **Motion passes unanimously.**

Meeting adjourned at 8:51 p.m.

Submitted by:

Lilian Rokosz

TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.