

# EAST BETHEL CITY COUNCIL MEETING

June 23, 2025

The East Bethel City Council met on June 23, 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:               Matt Look, City Administrator  
  Jacob Saufley, City Attorney  
  Jeff Cielocha, Fire Chief

## 1.0 Call to Order

The June 23, 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 with the addition of the Supplemental Payment Summary as Item I under the Consent Agenda. 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 Anoka County Sheriff's Report

Lieutenant Derek Peters presented the May 2025 Sheriff's Report, stating the Sheriff's Department had a total of 446 calls for service, 5 thefts, 4 assaults, 1 damage to property, 42 arrests, 200 traffic stops, and 39 traffic citations.

Peters stated that they have seen traffic increase on their lakes and an increase in severe traffic crashes on Highway 65 and reminded residents to be careful when driving.

Mundle stated that a piece of Highway 65 got very hot and a joint buckled. Peters stated that his deputies handle it, and it has been repaired.

Smith asked if everything at Nexus has slowed down. Peters stated that Nexus is stabilized, but it does ebb and flow.

**Informational; no action required.**

### 4.0 B Fire Department Monthly Report

Fire Chief Cielocha presented the May 2025 report and noted that they responded to 57 calls, of which 70% were medical, 13 of them being intent, and the others falling somewhere in there.

Cielocha stated that they received 8 applicants for the Fire Department, and now they will have an interview with him to see which ones get recommended for probationary hire.

Cielocha noted that they received the final bids for the Fire station floors, and he will bring them to the Council in July.

Erkel asked what the percentage of applicants were kept after the one-on-one interviews. Cielocha stated that he does not have that number, and this will be his first opportunity to conduct this. Look noted that they also do a background check.

**Informational; no action required.**

**4.0 C Public Hearing: Off-Sale Liquor License for Last Stop Liquor (formerly Wayne's Liquor), New Owner**  
Look stated that this is a public hearing regarding an Off-Sale Liquor License for Last Stop Liquor. Look noted that at the conclusion and close of the public hearing, the Council will be requested to consider the approval of an Off-Sale Liquor License for Last Stop Liquor, Inc. located at 21340 Aberdeen Street NE.

Look stated that the applicant is the new owner of the property, which previously held an identical license. All application materials, completed background checks, and fees have been submitted for the Off-Sale Liquor License.

Anderson opened the public hearing at 7:13 p.m.

Anderson closed the public hearing at 7:13 p.m.

**Mundle stated I'll make a motion to approve an Off-Site Liquor License for Last Stop Liquor, Inc. dba: Last Stop Liquor located at 21340 Aberdeen Street 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.**

## **5.0 Public Forum**

Erkel stated that her comments regarding the murders and murder attempts were made after seeing a series of different posts. Erkel stated that she was worried that political retaliation might occur; unfortunately, her message did not come across as she intended. She made it clear that she never once threatened anyone and was investigated by the authorities.

Erkel stated that the messages she and her family have received are unacceptable. Erkel stated that she will not respond to cold, cruel insults that come to her.

Diana Saenger stated that regarding item 8 on the agenda, she thanked the Planning staff and development team. She stated that she is looking for Council approval for an accessory unit.

Kevin Lewis stated that it is good to see what they are doing regarding having a Resolution on the agenda to discuss and get to the end of the matter regarding Mundle Sr. Mr. Lewis also stated that he knows Erkel is a good person and tougher than nails, he wants people to realize that Erkel's heart was nowhere near what people are accusing her of.

Tammy Gimpl stated that they do have a 6-horse IUP, and they are going to have 6 horses. Ms. Gimpl stated that she can provide her 6-horse IUP.

Ms. Gimpl discussed her history with Look and specific emails that were sent out in 2024.

Denise Lashinski stated I just have a couple of items, I'd like to call attention to Suzanne Erkel's continuation of using her second term as a council on the reputation on the City of East Bethel. I can attest to the damage and stress the rhetoric causes to families of tragic circumstances. People would say that the Hortmans were public figures so it should be expected; while Suzanne will get a pass once again for her antics by council members both present and past, who have called past and present commission members names in this very chamber. Unprofessional and abhorrent behavior. You know who doesn't get a pass for this? The parents, the kids, the extended family members, as

well as the friends and neighbors. You should be ashamed of yourself. Instead, as precedent from your first term suggests, you will be caught playing a victim.

Lashinski continued: Number two, councilperson Miller has referenced or alluded to polling of half, or more than half, of East Bethel citizens not knowing what is going on. Are we talking approximately 5500 residents? Are we talking about approximately 1000 registered voters? I can't find a poll anywhere, where the original contract is, where are the minutes of the meetings where this is discussed. This is looking more and more like intimidation of citizens and businesses. Where are the facts? Thank you councilperson Mundle, who by the way, was not part of the original contract or negotiating; thank you for your continued professionalism and what must be trying times. That's it.

Jennifer Bloomquist discussed the contents of Erkel's social media post and stated that her public communications should be held to a higher standard because they reflect on the community as a whole. Ms. Bloomquist stated that the Council could benefit from a media literacy course.

Christine Dahlman stated that Ms. Gimpl is trying to drag this out. Ms. Dahlman stated that IUPs are on file at the Courthouse, and her 6-horse IUP is nowhere to be found.

Brian Mundle Sr. presented a synopsis of a purchase agreement for the money that BDM has contributed to the East Bethel budget. Mundle Sr. stated that they pay \$438,000 per year to Anoka County, and another \$207,000 will be given to the City Budget when the next 38 homes are completed.

Mr. Mundle Sr. stated that he has overpaid \$25,000 to the City. Mr. Mundle Sr. asked where the interest was for the \$2,000 deposits that he was paying.

Linda Linder stated that she came to the public forum last year asking for help with her green algae pond across from her home, and nothing was ever done about it, so she is coming back to ask for help again from the new Mayor.

## 6.0 Consent Agenda

Item A: Approve Bills

Item B: Approve Meeting Minutes June 9, 2025 City Council Work Meeting

Item C: Approve Meeting Minutes, June 9, 2025 City Council Meeting

Item D: Approve Meeting Minutes May 28, 2025 City Council Work Meeting

Item E: Resolution 2025-38, Approving Temporary Liquor License for SFYHA Event

Item F: Approve Tobacco License Application: Last Stop Liquor, New Owner

Item G: Successful Completion of Probationary Period – Paid On-Call Fire Fighter

Item H: Accept Recommendation to Appoint Kristina Pagnac to the Planning Commission

Mundle requested to pull Item H.

**Erkel stated I'll make a motion to approve Consent Agenda as amended. 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 H Accept Recommendation to Appoint Kristina Pagnac to the Planning Commission

Mundle asked to know why the Council is not going with the Planning Commission's recommendation of appointing both of the applicants.

Smith stated that his concern with Mr. Holmes is that he is badmouthing the Council in his emails.

Miller stated that he has the same opinion as Mr. Holmes; he cannot justify putting someone on the Planning Commission who has called him and other Council members a liar to try to be transparent.

Erkel stated that she was not going to vote for Mr. Holmes because she researched his history on the Planning Commission, and he was Chair when he indebted the City to millions of dollars for the water sewer system.

Mundle asked if Mr. Holmes would like to respond.

Eldon Holmes stated that as for Mr. Smith, I don't know what his problem is, he's always been against me for some reason. He said last time at this meeting, that there was numerous reasons why. Well, I would like to know what the numerous reasons why, you don't have the numerous reasons why. And as far as Mr... Excuse me I have the floor. (Mayor interjects "lets be respectful"). As far as Mr. Miller, he tells me that people that are going for the planning and zoning have better credentials than I do. None of them have been on the commission at all, and I've been on it for 14 years, so he's lying to me.

Miller: Point of order, I'd like to make a point here.

Holmes: I have the floor, excuse me.

Miller: I can make-

Holmes: According to Roberts Rules of order, I have the floor until I release it, read the Roberts rules of order.

Miller: This I not a public forum

Holmes: I didn't say it was.

Mayor: We are going to be respectful or this is gonna be cut off.

Holmes: I'm trying to be respectful, but they keep interrupting me.

Mayor: Be respectful, or it's going to be cut off.

Holmes: Now the people on planning and zoning have given me a unanimous decision to go back on the board. I've been on the board for 14+ years, I sat as chairman for a few times, and yet you guys for some reason just don't want it, because it might jeopardize what you are saying or doing or whatever. I'm sick of it. The residents of East Bethel deserve a lot better than what you guys are putting out. This is ridiculous and if it wasn't for the three here, I'd be on the planning and zoning a long time ago. It's always something, I just don't know what I did, and if you can tell me just what the heck I did besides one simple little email or whatever it was, that's really got you upset Mr. Smith, bring it out now or zip it as far as I am concerned. Thank you for your attention.

**Smith stated I'll make a motion to approve the appointment of Kristina Pagnac to the Planning Commission. 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.**

**Smith stated I'll make a motion to deny the appointment of Eldon Holmes to the Planning Commission. Miller stated I'll second.** Anderson asked any discussion? To the motion, all in favor say aye. **Erkel, Anderson, Miller, Smith - Aye.** Anderson asked any opposed? **Mundle – Nay.** That motion passes. **Motion passes.**

Mr. Holmes gave Look the Planning Commission Agenda for the June 24, 2025, meeting.

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

### **7.0 A Planning Commission**

None.

**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 Site Plan Review: Detached Accessory Structure on Vacant Lot**

Gerard stated that James and Diana Saenger have applied for a Site Plan to allow a detached accessory structure to be constructed as a principal structure on a vacant parcel adjacent to their property at 447 Dogwood Road NE.

Gerard noted that the property is zoned and guided Coon Lake and is within the Shoreland Overlay District.

Gerard stated that the applicant acquired the eastern portion of the lot from the City in January 2024 and combined lots to create a 1.54-acre parcel. Gerard added that the vacant parcel cannot be combined with the parcel where the applicant resides, as the parcels are divided by Longfellow Drive.

Gerard stated that the applicant is seeking approval from the City Council to construct an accessory structure on this vacant lot as the principal use.

Gerard noted that the applicant intends to build a 30 x 48-foot garage on the northern portion of the lot with a driveway extending to Cedar Road.

Gerard stated that staff has found that the proposed structure meets the Ordinance standards for accessory structures in this zoning district.

**Erkel stated I'll make a motion to adopt Resolution 2025-39, approving a site for a detached accessory structure as a principal use on a vacant lot on a property located east of Cedar Road NE and south of Longfellow Drive NE (PIN: 36-33-23-31-0010). Miller stated I'll second.** Anderson asked any discussion?

Erkel stated that multiple people have one garage structure on their property, and she does not think one person should be denied one if others have it.

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

**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**

Look gave a Legislative update and stated they were not successful in their bonding request for the water tower, water treatment, piping, etc.

Look stated that they have a lot of old files in the vault that need to be transferred over to digital. They have an intern who is interested and will be coming in to interview and asked for any volunteers to reach out. They will also set up a process for getting these into a digital format.

Look updated that the Senior Center locks have been completed, and the HVAC was installed in the City Hall.

Look stated that Frost figured out how to stop the clicking from occurring during the Council meetings.

**9.0 B Council Reports**

Smith stated that he has known Erkel for years, and the things she said were taken out of context.

Erkel stated that the Seniors meet every third Thursday at 10:30 a.m. Erkel noted that there will be a bake sale and pancake breakfast to go along with Booster Day. Erkel also asked if a liquor license could be added to a future agenda or work meeting.

Erkel noted that Joan Major was awarded the Lions Lifetime Achievement Award.

Mundle noted that Booster Day is coming up on July 19, 2025, and highlighted things that will be occurring that day.

**9.0 C Other**

None.

**10.0 Adjourn**

**Erkel 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 8:10 p.m.

Submitted by:

Lilian Rokosz

*TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.*