MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING IN THE CITY OF LITTLEFORK IN THE COUNTY OF KOOCHICHING AND STATE OF MINNESOTA INCLUDING ALL ACCOUNTS AUDITED BY SAID COUNCIL

Thursday, September 17, 2026

Call to Order

Deputy Mayor Lehman called the regular meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. at City Hall.

Roll Call

Members Present: Councilor Wendt, Councilor Sims, Deputy Mayor Lehman

Members Absent: Mayor Fort, Councilor Thydean

Staff Present: Holly Hoy, City Administrator; Carlie Anderson, Deputy Clerk; Justin Marty, Maintenance Supervisor

Public Present: Preston Hoy, Laura Polkinghorne, Mike Polkinghorne, Jerry Anderson, Sue Williams, Greg Williams, Kory Williams, Duane Street, Bruce Grotberg
The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Approval of Agenda

A motion was made by Councilor Wendt, seconded by Councilor Sims, to approve the agenda with the following additions:

- **Public Hearings:** Sue Williams and Kory Williams
- **New Business:** Minnkota Power Substation

Motion carried.

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Councilor Wendt, seconded by Councilor Sims, to approve the following minutes:

- August 20, 2026 – Regular Meeting
- September 8, 2026 – Special Meeting

Motion carried.

Consent Agenda

A motion was made by Councilor Wendt, seconded by Councilor Sims, to approve the Consent Agenda. Motion carried.
Items approved:

- Monthly bills for August
- Water and sewer service terminations
- Koochiching Technology Initiative – August meeting minutes
- Voyageur Country ATV Fall Ride 2026

Public Hearings: Sue and Kory Williams chose to speak during New Business item #7, **Review and Discuss Agreements for Sewer Dumping**.

Petitions, Requests, and Communications

- ***Kootasca Community Action – CAV Advisory Committee:*** Kickoff meeting on September 18, 2026, at the International Falls Public Library. The City Administrator is approved to participate in the four-to-six-month advisory commitment.
- ***Wellhead Protection Plan:*** Staff have been working with Crystal Mathisrud (MN Department of Health) and Councilor Sims to update the plan.
- ***MN DOT:*** Project Manager Ellie Sin and other MN DOT representatives will attend the October 15th council meeting to discuss the 2031 TH 217 project. A transportation survey was distributed by Bryan McCoy for all council members and the mayor to complete.

Reports of Officers, Boards, and Committees

Ambulance Department

Ambulance Chief McClellan was absent. Bruce Grotberg provided the update:

- Repairs to Truck #305 are completed.
- Several members completed EMT certification after six months of training.
- Councilor Wendt reiterated the request to receive regular monthly meeting minutes from the department.

Fire Department

Fire Chief Wendt was absent. Bruce Grotberg reported:

- August 10th regular meeting minutes were submitted.
- The August financial statement was provided and placed on file.

Maintenance Department

Maintenance Supervisor Marty presented the monthly report:

- A sewer pond structure overflowed due to a blockage; JR Wastewater was called to jet the line and utilize a reversible pump.
- Russell Fischer will begin employment September 24th as Heavy Equipment Operator/Maintenance.
- Marty will attend an MRWA refresher course in St. Cloud in late October and take the Class D certification exam.
- The main lift station at the sewer ponds blew a fuse. Estimated dredging cost is $2 million. Councilor Sims will consult MPCA contacts regarding grant funding. Retrofitting options were also discussed.
- The water softener is nearing the end of its useful life; replacement may be required.
- A plan to clean sewer veins was discussed. Possible discounts through the League of MN Cities will be explored.

Financial Report

The financial report was presented by City Administrator Hoy.
Motion to approve by Councilor Sims, seconded by Councilor Wendt. Motion carried.

Unfinished Business

Little Fork River Watershed

Councilor Sims and Deputy Mayor Lehman will attend the Policy Committee hearing on September 24th in Cook, MN. Additional public comments may be submitted at the hearing or in writing by September 22nd.

International Falls Chamber Advertising

Council discussed switching from a full-page to a half-page advertisement in the Borderland Area Resource Guide. The half-page cost is $475. New photos will be used.
Motion by Councilor Wendt to approve the half-page ad using Economic Development funds, with final proof approval required before printing, seconded by Councilor Sims. Motion carried.

New Business

Sealed Propane Bids

Bids were opened by Deputy Mayor Lehman as follows:

- Lakes Gas – $1.29/gal
- Rainy Lake Oil – $1.29/gal
- Northern Star Coop – $1.54/gal
- Ferrellgas – $1.28/gal

Motion by Councilor Wendt to continue with Lakes Gas for one year and reevaluate after one year, seconded by Councilor Lehman. Motion carried.

International Property Maintenance Code (IPMC)

International Falls follows the IPMC; however, after review, it was determined that the code does not fit Littlefork's needs regarding blight, mowing, nuisance, and abatement procedures. Motion by Councilor Wendt not to participate in the IPMC, seconded by Councilor Sims. Motion carried.

Resolution 2026-16: Certifying Unpaid Bills to Property Taxes

Motion by Councilor Wendt to approve Resolution 2026-16, seconded by Councilor Sims. Motion carried.

Lofgren Park Caretaker Deposit

Motion by Councilor Wendt to retain the deposit due to required cleaning, seconded by Councilor Lehman. Motion carried.

Hand Dryers at Community Building

Hand dryers are losing power due to age. Installation of foaming soap dispensers was also discussed.
Councilor Wendt will research options. Item is tabled until October.

Laboratory Services – RMB vs. Pace

RMB Environmental Laboratories submitted a simplified sampling paperwork process compared to current provider Pace Analytical.
Motion by Councilor Sims to switch to RMB if the city is not contractually obligated to Pace, seconded by Councilor Wendt. Motion carried.

Review & Discuss Agreements for Sewer Dumping

Williams Portables and Crandall Septic have long-standing agreements for sewer pond dumping. Agreements were reviewed.
Motion by Councilor Wendt to update agreements annually and clarify that dumping must occur only at the sewer ponds, not at the main lift station, seconded by Councilor Sims. Motion carried.

Resolution 2026-17: LRIP Grant Application

The city may resubmit its 2025 Local Road Improvement Program grant application with updates. SEH Engineer Jason Chopp is available to assist if needed.
Motion by Councilor Wendt to resubmit, seconded by Councilor Sims. Motion carried.

Minnkota Power – New Littlefork Substation

Minnkota Power plans to construct a new substation with line expansion and a 30-foot height increase. Ordinance requirements were reviewed.
Motion by Councilor Wendt to route all applications through the Planning & Zoning Commission for required permits, including:

- Conditional use permit (height)
- Land use permit
- Fence permit

Motion was seconded by Councilor Sims. Motion carried.

Miscellaneous

None.

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn by Councilor Wendt, seconded by Councilor Sims. Motion carried.
Meeting adjourned at 5:36 p.m.

Attest: **Approved:**

Holly Hoy, City Clerk Mayor Mike Fort