

**CITY OF BALATON**  
**REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING**  
**November 10, 2025, at 7pm**

- 1) **CALL TO ORDER:** The regular meeting of the Balaton City Council was called to order at 7:00 pm on Monday, November 10, 2025, by Mayor Lonnie Lambertus
- 2) **ROLL CALL**
  - a) **Present:** Mayor: Lonnie Lambertus, Council Members: Tracy McCloud, Greg Erickson, Dylan Fricke, Curt Paradis
  - b) **Absent:**
  - c) **Also Present:** Sheriff Eric Wallen; Kasey Holm, Fire Chief; Josh Torgeson – Public Works; Jody Kruger-Deputy Clerk; Stephanie Fricke-City Clerk in Training; Roberta Joehnck-Acting City Clerk; Per Peterson – Headlight Herald; Matt Gross-Attorney; Balaton Residents Mary Timmerman, Kim Wall, Lou Anderson, Joe & Cookie Cooreman, Julie Livingston, Caitland Miller, Theresa Zaske, LuAnn Anderson, Amy Gillinham, Travis Erickson, Tabor Hoeck, Ashley Haroldson, Scott Marquardt
- 3) **Fencing Ordinance No. 2025-04 Hearing:** A motion to open the Fencing hearing was made by Fricke and Seconded by Erickson. Motion Carried. There were no comments from attendees concerning the proposed Fencing Ordinance. Hearing will remain open during the Regular Council Meeting.
- 4) **APPROVE MINUTES:** A motion was made by McCloud and seconded by Paradis to approve the regular meeting minutes of October 13, 2025, and the Special Meeting November 3, 2025. Motion carried by all present.
- 5) **FINANCIALS:**
  - a) **Audit Bills, Claims & Demands:** No questions or corrections. A motion was made by Fricke and seconded by Erickson to approve the bills as presented. Motion carried by all present.
  - b) **CD Investments:** Update report was included in the council packet.
  - c) **Fire Escrow Savings Account:** The Fire Escrow account was opened over 20 years ago under Act 93 so if a municipality holds insurance money after a fire, the original homeowner's rights to claim those funds may be affected by the sale. Typically escrow funds are tied to the property not the seller, especially if ownership has transferred. Clerk Joehnck recommended to the Council to close the account. The balance of the account has been at \$13 and change for 10 years. This year the bank charged the account \$5.00 to keep it open. The current balance is \$8.54. A motion was made by Erickson and seconded by McCloud to close the Fire Escrow Account. Motion carried.
  - d) **City Credit Card:** During the change in City Clerks, the city credit card account was closed. Clerk Joehnck is requesting the city reinstate a city credit card to handle online payments as needed for purchases, seminars, etc. After discussion it was felt only 1 city credit card is needed. Any purchases are to go through the City Clerk for placement on the card. A motion was made By Fricke to reactivate the City Credit card with only 1 card to be handled through City Hall. Motion was seconded by McCloud. Motion carried by all present.
  - e) **EFT Payments:** To help offset the rising cost of postage and the slow postal service delivery, Clerk Joehnck asked the council if the city could begin paying as many vendors as possible online. This would eliminate late fees due to postal delivery delays and cut costs in the office. Paradis requested a list of the vendors that would be involved. Clerks will put together a list of accounts and present it at the December meeting for council's review.
  - f) **REQUESTS AND COMMUNICATIONS:** None
- 6) **PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD**
  - a) Lou Anderson would like a list of the property owners who received notices. Anderson stated the LMC states the citizens have a right to this information. Attorney Gross stated not everything is included within the LMC information. The information requested being a part of a civil lawsuit. Until the matter is satisfied it is nonpublic until the action is completed. Anderson stressed that the citizens need to know what is being done and what properties are involved. Gross asked that she submit in writing the request and Gross will respond further.
  - b) **Cookie Cooreman:** In reference to the choosing of an Engineering firm, Cooreman recommends the city choose the Bollig Group. She felt they encompassed everything needed and will follow through on projects to completion.
  - c) **Travis Erickson:** what can or will be done on the dog issue in town. There is a dog that is constantly on the loose, its home is located by the Rock Lake township hall. Erickson explained in June he was attacked and his dog was attacked by this animal. Sheriff's department has been contacted, but nothing has been done. His children are afraid to go outside. He stated the dog continues to come into his yard. Ashley Haroldson stated the dogs are on a lead/chain outside and they are not fed or watered. Animal Welfare needs to be contacted and have them taken away. The dogs are being neglected. The city is responsible for an impoundment facility. There is no place to take these dogs. Sheriff Wallen stated a citation could be issued to criminally punish owner. Gross stated that the city would need to declare the animal dangerous by a resolution. The owner would need to fulfill specific requirements. If the requirements are not met, the city can have the dog removed or destroyed. The city needs to receive copies of the evidence to move forward. Fricke asked if there were any pounds in the area that would take the animals? Sheriff Wallen stated that Marshall has one and Ghent is tied in with them. Wallen was not sure if they would

take more cities. Anderson asked if we have to wait until someone gets hurt before something is done. Gross stated the council cannot act on its own. The evidence needs to be presented to the council. Erickson can submit his evidence to the City Clerk and then the council can take action. People affected by this dog need to submit it to the council. Gross stated that the owner has due process. Lambertus said the last time this happened an independent person interviewed the owner. This is done if the owner responds to the city.

- d) **Theresa Zaske:** On behalf of Southwest Initiative Foundation and how it has supported the city. SWIF has been back to the City of Balaton \$250,000 to the city. Concerns lie with the Borchert Challenge Fund. Scott Marquardt distributed a memo to the council and explained how the Borchert Fund is an endowment. Marquardt wants to come back and present to the city to explain how the endowment is handled and concerns with funds that are currently with the City. Council agreed a Special Meeting will be held Monday November 17 at 6 pm to discuss this matter.

## 7) **REPORTS – OFFICERS, BOARDS, COMMITTEES**

- a) **Water/Sewer/Garbage Delinquent Accounts:** Delinquent account list was reviewed. 7 to be shut off on Wed.

### b) **City Personnel**

- 1) Employee Hours YTD
- 2) MN Paid Family and Medical Leave (PFML) Policy: A motion was made by Paradis to approve the MN Paid Family and Medical Leave (PFML) Policy 2026. Motion was seconded by Erickson. Motion carried by all present.

### c) **Public Works:**

- 1) MN Dept. Health – Lead & Copper Rule Improvement: Torgeson stated of the 19 properties there are two properties that are uninhabitable. Torgeson verified what the service line is. All 19 have been verified.
- 2) Engineering Company representing the City of Balaton: Lambertus has been in contact with some cities that used both engineers. All had good recommendations for both companies. Erickson also did follow up and received responses that they are both good. ISG was proactive on calling the city on the lead issue. Fricke conclusion is that Bollig is a smaller company and ISG is bigger, he is leaning to ISG. Tracy missed the meeting but did sit in on a meeting with ISG and felt the interaction was good. Paradis commented that ISG would come in and assess what the city needs and then review with city and prioritize projects and go from there. Fricke made a motion to hire ISG as engineering firm for the city at a rate of \$85/hour. Motion was seconded by Paradis. Motion carried by all present.
- 3) Lift Station Pump Testing Status: The pumps and panels were tested in both lift stations. The Auxiliary Lift station is in very poor condition. Pulled pumps, changed oil and checked the OHMS. The Hwy 14 lift station is good.
- 4) Christmas Lighting – Xcel: Torgeson stated he talked to Damon Erickson from Xcel. The city received donations for Christmas decorations. The city can no longer place Christmas decorations on Light poles from Lake Street down Second to Hwy 14. These are transmission lines in addition to providing residential power.
- d) **EDA – Monthly Report:** Baack property house burnt down and now getting bids to get it cleaned up.
- e) **Public Hearing:** A motion to close the public hearing was made by Erickson and seconded by McCloud. Motion carried by all present.
- f) **Zoning:**
  - 1) **Ordinance 2025-04 – An Ordinance Regulating Fences:** Erickson explained the fencing ordinance concerns the materials would have to be new quality materials. Need to remove City Building Inspector. The City only has a zoning ordinance. Set back is 2 feet from property line and be in agreement with the neighbor on placement. Currently there is no fee to put up a fence. There are only fees on structures and if it is changing the footprint of the property. Gross stated that if the council wants to add a fee. A resolution is needed to establish the fee. A motion to approve Ordinance 2025-04 Regulating Fences, with noted changes was made by Paradis and seconded by Fricke. Motion carried by all present. A Resolution establishing the fee at a rate of \$25 through the end of the year will be reviewed at the next meeting.

### g) **Lyon County Sheriff Department**

- 1) The Lyon County Sheriff Wallen handed out the October 2025 incident report. There were 25 calls.

- h) **Liquor Store:** Haroldson is working with the Toast program to get reports cleaned up. Talked to Toast and figured out some things that would affect the till over and under. Any tabs left open and not closed at the end of night does affect this. Open tabs have been eliminated. Have a contract with Toast till end of December. Rykhus has been out with health issues and is currently working 1 day a week to see how it goes. Haroldson is changing the opening hours on Monday to 5 pm. Mondays get the Happy Hour crowd and by 9 pm the bar is empty. After 1<sup>st</sup> of the year propose the bar be closed on Monday. Haroldson explained her overtime is due to Rykhus being gone, she was doing double shifts. All the other employees have full-time jobs elsewhere. Haroldson requested to adjust Bertelson wage to \$16 to eliminate the different pay rates on her time sheet for bartender and manager duties. Council will need to decide.

Haroldson will continue to review business side for hours. Liquor Store is open on Sunday during football season. Pool and dart teams are starting now. Working on ideas to get more people in. Tracy requested Haroldson keep in touch with Fricke and himself. A motion to change the wage for Tori Bertelson to \$16

per hour was made by McCloud and seconded by Fricke. Motion carried by all present. Wage change will be effective pay period 24.

- 1) **MN Wage Increase to \$11.41/hour:** This will change with the first payroll of 2026. This change is mandatory.

- i) **Community Center:** No Updates
- j) **Fire/Ambulance Department:**

- 1) Resolution 2025-29 – Accepting Donation for Steve Miller Trust: Confirm with family where these funds are to be designated, Fire or Ambulance.
- 2) Annual PERA Contribution to Fire Relief: The city did budget \$2,000 to Fire Relief. Clerk requests permission to move these funds to Fire PERA. A motion was made by Paradis and seconded by McCloud to move the budget funds from Fire relief to PERA.
- 3) Holm stated the pump repair has been completed on engine 601.
- 4) Jake Hively will fulfill his term as Ambulance Captain till end of the year. Holm is trying to get 2 people for the position. The annual salary would be split between them.
- 5) LMC Chief's association to change the alcohol and drug use for fire department. Holm will bring the update to council for approval.

#### 8) **NEW BUSINESS:**

- a) Grant Writer: Jessica Whitmore – Daza Development: Her company offers grant writing services. Fricke asked if the monthly payment amount includes monthly meeting and the grant writing. Whitmore stated the fee is all inclusive. They look at all grants that are specific to the client.
- b) Site Lease Agreement – Hoek Outdoors: Tabor Hoek asking to extend the storage lease at the gravel pit for a year or more. Hoek and Torgerson discussed the property to be used. Torgerson stated the location indicated should not be a problem. A motion was made by Paradis and seconded by McCloud to extend rental agreement for 1 year at same rental rate. Motion carried by all present.
- c) 2025 Special Assessments payable on 2026 taxes. A motion made by Erickson and seconded by Fricke. Motion carried by all present.

#### 9) **UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

- a) Special Assessments: A motion approve the special assessments as presented was made Erickson and seconded by Fricke. Motion carried.

#### 10) **MISCELLANEOUS:**

- a) Truth in Taxation Date: December 8<sup>th</sup>, 6:00 pm
- b) City Hall will be Closed November 11<sup>th</sup> in observance of Veterans Day
- c) Motion to close meeting for a security issue was made by McCloud and seconded by Erickson. Motion carried by all present. Meeting closed at 8:12 pm. A motion to close the closed meeting and reopen the regular meeting was made Paradis and seconded by Fricke. Motion carried by all present.
- d) A Special Meeting will be scheduled for Monday November 17<sup>th</sup> at 6 pm to address above issues.

- 11) **ADJOURNMENT:** With no further business, a motion to adjourn was made by Fricke and second by McCloud. Motion was carried by all present. The meeting adjourned at 8:20 pm.

  
Roberta Joehnick, City Clerk-Treasurer

  
Lonnie Lambertus, Mayor