

LAMBERTON CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
November 10, 2025 • 6:30 P.M.

1. CALL TO ORDER/ADOPT AGENDA/CEREMONIAL DUTIES

- Meeting called to order at 6:30 PM November 10, 2025.
- Present: Mayor L. Sik, L. Bittner, D. Irlbeck, A. Cairns, L. Pfarr
- Staff in Attendance: J. Thram, K. Mittelstadt, D. Determan, T. Neperman
- Others in Attendance: Scott Kuhlman (Bollig), Marcheale Walz, Deb Thram, Zoey Mittelstadt, Colby Pack, Allison Sauer, Mindi Hesse, Rebecca Christianson, Jenny Stavness, Chad Stavness, Matt Novak, one not legible.

A. Additions/Deletions to Agenda

1. Citizen Complaints or Concerns – Cassidy Miller Letter
2. Resolution 2025-21 – Approving Variance for Wille's
3. Updated Financial Report – 3 checks added new report furnished
4. Matt Novak requested Closed Session at end of meeting regarding staffing

Motion/Second/Pass (Pfarr/Bittner/unanimous 5/0) to approve the agenda as amended.

2. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Approval of Minutes (can all be done in one motion)

1. 10-14-2025 - Regular Council Meeting Minutes
2. 10-27-2025 – Council Work Session Minutes
3. 10-30-2025 – Emergency Council Meeting Minutes

Motion/Second/Pass (Irlbeck/Pfarr/ unanimous 5/0) to approve the minutes as listed.

3. PUBLIC HEARINGS 7:00PM

Regular meeting recessed at 7:00 P.M. for the Public Hearing on the Wille variance request.

The regular meeting reconvened at 7:03 P.M.

Motion/Second/Pass (Bittner/Pfarr/unanimous 5/0) to approve the variance request for Wille's at 600 S Birch St.

Regular meeting recessed at 7:06 P.M. for the Public Hearing on the proposed change to R1 Prohibited Structures.

Regular meeting reconvened at 7:30 P.M.

Discussion continued on the proposed Ordinance 163. Cairns stated that being he was told wrong or misinformation, and that Stavnes has clearly done the right thing, as much as she would not like the unit next to her property, she would be in favor of changing the proposed ordinance to grandfather the unit in, but include that if the property were to be sold, the unit would have to be removed. Novak stated that would be essentially the variance. Mayor Sik questioned how would that be recorded or kept track of. Stavnes stated that the unit would be considered personal property so to put a stipulation on the title to the property – it's not part of the real estate. More discussion held.

Motion/Second (Bittner/Pfarr) to adopt Ordinance 163 – An Ordinance Amending Section 305.4 of the City Code Relating to Prohibited Structures in R1 District with the removal of paragraph Section 4.

Cairns stated she felt the first sentence should remain as it states existing structures are considered non-conforming. Novak said that would be helpful is there are alterations to the property. Bittner amended her motion.

Motion/Second/Passed (Bittner/Cairns/unanimous 5/0) to adopt Ordinance 163 – An Ordinance Amending Section 305.4 of the City Code Relating to Prohibited Structures in R1 District with Section 4 only containing the first sentence and

eliminate the last two sentences.

4. GENERAL BUSINESS

- A. Council Member Cairns stated that because she was appointed to the council position with no one knowing about her education or career experience or any qualifications, she may have to be a council. Cairns shared her education and career. Cairns stated she wanted to make this aware to people, so they understood from what perspective she looks at things. Cairns stated she felt she had helped with the clinic lease. She is a commercial real estate lender. She works with attorneys and brokers on a daily basis. She works in a very professional, highly regulated environment. Cairns states she is trying to bring accountability and transparency to Lamberton. Cairns then apologized to Mayor Sik for making the statement last month that he had thrown someone out. Cairns stated that she believes when people put their names on complaints, they are not treated well afterwards. Cairns stated she expects to be yelled at but needs to hold herself to a higher standard.
- B. Bollig Engineering – Scott Kuhlman from Bollig was present. Bollig is expecting the intended use report to be published soon and are looking to see where Lamberton's projects are placed on that list for potential funding. Looking to see what the federal government does with appropriations. Grove Street project is working on finding out what criteria were used for assessments in the past.

Action Items needed for Lead Service Line project. First a change order changing the contract from 25 lines replaced to 27. Two more homes were identified from the unknowns and were able to be replaced with current grant funding. Second Item issuing certificate of substantial completion. This sets the dates for things like the warranty. Last item is Pay Application 2 for TE underground for \$178,026.25. The city will ask for reimbursement of these funds.

Motion/Second/Pass (Cairns/Irlbeck/unanimous 5/0) to adjust the final contract quantities.

Motion/Second/Pass (Bittner/Cairns/unanimous 5/0) to issue a Certificate of Substantial Completion.

Motion/Second/Pass (Cairns/Pfarr/unanimous 5/0) to approve Pay Application #2 to TE Underground for \$178,026.25.

Kuhlman noted the service line inventory has been updated and can be found on the U of M website provided for this purpose and people can look up their property.

C. Department Reports

1. Library – Written report submitted
Motion/Second/Pass (Pfarr/Cairns/unanimous 5/0) to approve the Library report as submitted.
2. Ambulance Department – Written report submitted. Council questioned if anyone has signed up for the upcoming EMR class. Mittlestadt stated there are three interested but only one that can take the class now.
Motion/Second/Pass (Bittner/Irlbeck/unanimous 5/0) to approve accept the ambulance report as submitted.
3. Fire Department – Chief Neppermann was present and stated that they are replacing the generator in the rescue rig and will be using donated funds for that. The department will be doing rides and hot dogs for Taste of the Season again this year.
Motion/Second/Pass (Pfarr/Irlbeck/unanimous 5/0) to approve accept the fire report as given.
4. Police Department – Written report submitted.
Motion/Second/Pass (Bittner/Cairns/unanimous 5/0) to approve the police report as submitted.
5. Maintenance Department – Written report submitted. Mayor Sik asked if the water issues have been fixed. Thram stated no they are coming again tomorrow. The council thanked him for his years of service.
Motion/Second/Pass (Bittner/Pfarr/unanimous 5/0) to approve the maintenance report.
 - a. RCA – Water Coverage – Mayor Sik asked if there are thoughts on the coverage. Bittner stated she would like to see what the others come in at. Cairns would like to hear from the other two that would like to come tour. Discussion held. Topic tabled.
 - b. RCA – Expectations & Wages for Public Works Employee - Mayor Sik stated he feels we need to know what direction we need to go before making these decisions. Discussion held. Topic tabled.
6. Administration/EDA Department – Written Report Submitted –

Motion/Second/Pass (Bittner/Irlbeck/unanimous 5/0) to approve the EDA/Administration report as submitted.

a. RCA – Halter Leave – No action needed.

D. Petitions, Request, Communications

1. Citizen Complaints & Concerns

a. Miller Letter – no comments made.

Mayor Sik asked if anyone was here for citizens' complaints or concerns. Council member Irlbeck stated he had one. Irlbeck asked Cairns about her statement of Thram getting kick backs from Keck. Cairns questioned when this was. Cairns stated that coming from the professional job that she does they have annual disclosures of potential conflict of interests that they need to make. Thram stated he has not earned one dollar from Kecks. Cairns stated she did not accuse Thram of that. Thram stated Cairns asked who from the city is involved with Keck's. Cairns stated that any business the city does business with needs to be disclosed if someone from the city or the council is related to that business. Thram stated that it's a small town we help each other. Cairns stated she would like an annual disclosure statement. It doesn't mean you can't do business with them. It's so we are staying above board so the city is clear and transparent. Cairns stated that in her job she has to disclose if a client buys her meal. Cairns stated she was requesting that information because of the money we have paid and that we use Keck's exclusively. Cairns stated her name is on the budget and she is a banker. She always asks for three years worth of financials when looking at loans. Mayor Sik stated there are statutes that regulate the council. Sik stated that meal, as a council person you simply can't take it. It doesn't help to disclose it later. There are differences. Sik stated as far as conflict of interest, if it comes before the council, you are to abstain because of potential conflict of interest. Mayor Sik stated from a previous comment of Cairns and how people are treated, that some of the people that come in come in rather frequently and they are not nice and they do it repeatedly. Irlbeck question Cairns about why she was against Thram selling the stump grinder to the city for what he paid for it when she holds classes at the library for profit. Cairns agreed and said when the city came to her and asked her to do classes there, she asked about it because she does not want to look like she is getting preferential treatment. Cairns stated that it was discussed at the council level where she abstained from the discussion or vote. Cairns stated that the city asked her to hold the classes. Mayor Sik stated that yes we ok'd it as a council. Bittner stated we rewrote the rental contract/facilities use which will need to be redone again. Irlbeck stated now what are we going to do now that we lost an employee that has gone above and beyond. Cairns stated it is unfortunate that Thram has decided to resign.

Novak stated that each person should have three minutes to speak with no interruptions and no comments. Mayor Sik stated that he is aware, but this is grass roots government so if we can answer it, he likes to. But they are a council and if they want three minutes they can. Novak wants to be respectful of everyone's time, but he also does not want to obligate the council to respond.

C. Pack stated he is disappointed that the city is losing someone that has gone above and beyond and will potentially cost the city.

D. Thram stated she is very disappointed with everything that has transpired with Justin's resignation. The why of this in her opinion is the questioning of his work ethic and his integrity by some on the council. The good coming from this, is can plan his family life, his phone will be quieter. Justin liked working for the city, but the last year he did not get support.

A. Sauer read a statement thanking Thram and recognized that he has not been treated with respect and people do not understand the weight of keeping an entire city operating. Sauer stated she appreciates Thram and is sad to see him go, but proud he is standing up for himself. Sauer then stated that Halter is trying so hard to improve and bring growth to the city. Sauer thanked Kim for her service and the stability she has brought to the ambulance and keeping that going. Sauer, recognized Tyler will have a transition. Sauer stated to Alicia that her children love the programs she provides. She thanked Kris for her time and help in the office. She thanked Derick for helping keep Lamberton a safe place to raise children. Sauer thank Mindi for her work at the pool. Sauer then encouraged the Mayor and council to consider the source of each complaint received and its intent before causing more damage to the city. Saueer stated the people you don't hear from are happy. If the council is receiving complaints from the same 5-6 people, maybe it's

not the employees. Sauer questioned the council on what their intention is to be on council. The council sets the tone for the city.

M. Hesse stated she is going to miss Thram for all he knew about the pool and all the work he did there. J. Stavnes stated she is actually scared for what will happen with Thram not here. C. Stavnes stated Thram answers his phone, he goes above and beyond, and he is concerned about the financial damage this will do to the budget. Stavnes stated that if it is Cairns' questioning that has caused all the issues, that Cairns should resign.

Thram thanked everyone for the kind words. Irlbeck apologized to Thram for not supporting like he should have and thanked Thram.

2. Request for Council Action

a. RCA – Accept Resignation of Kelsi Holman

Motion/Second/Pass (Irlbeck/Pfarr/unanimous 5/0) to accept the resignation of Kelsi Holman.

Mayor Sik said we should advertise. Bittner stated we should be more clear on hours. Thram stated he was responsible for cleaning his building and the parks, including bathrooms. Thram stated the person could do the public bathrooms. Discussion held. Topic tabled until it can be discussed at a work session.

b. RCA – Family Health Benefit – Halter suggested doing a benefit schedule to be reviewed annually. Halter wants clarification if the council is continuing the \$500 towards family coverage. It has been what has been done in the past but is not in policy. Discussion held.

Motion/Second/Pass (Cains/Bittner/unanimous 5/0) to approve \$500 towards family health insurance policy.

Cairns stated she does not agree with paying out premiums to those who do not take health insurance through the city. Mayor explained, that the city is paying out the premium to the insurance company because the employees can take the insurance. It's getting paid out either way.

c. RCA – Interview Dates and Budget Work Session Dates – Dates discussed. November 17, 2025 for interviews and council meeting, December 1, 2025 for a work session for budget discussion.

d. RCA – Liquor Licenses

Motion/Second/Pass (Cains/Irlbeck/Sik abstained 4/0) to approve the 2026 liquor licenses as submitted pending all fees paid and required paperwork is completed.

e. RCA – Proposed EDA By-Law Changes – Mayor Sik explained that the EDA has been short members. Since it is difficult to get people on the board and getting a quorum at meeting, the EDA would like to change to quarterly meetings and then a 5 member board with 1-2 council members on the board. Discussion held. Cairns questioned compensation of an EDA agent or members. Novak explained the statutes referenced by Cairns.

Motion/Second/Pass (Pfarr/Cairns /unanimous 5/0) to approve the EDA changing to quarterly meetings with a 5 member board with 1-2 of those members being from the city council with the change under removal to two meetings instead of four.

f. RCA – HR & Novak Recommendations – Novak stated there has been a lot of HR concerns lately and he has some recommendations. The first is to adopt a formal employee performance review policy. Novak presented a policy for review. Second, Novak recommends adding the title of Administrator to the Clerk/Treasurer position. The position description depicts administration duties, and it is graded as that in wages. Mayor Sik questioned the power that gives such as hiring and firing. Novak stated that it depends on the structure of the city. It essentially gives the administrator the power to do the day-to-day activities of the city, so the council does not have to. Any responsibilities that the council wants to keep for themselves, they certainly can. Bittner clarified that the current position is not changing. Novak is also recommending meeting and reviewing all the positions of the city and deciding what is the appropriate staffing needs for the city. Novak also recommends going over what powers the council wants to keep and what powers they do not. Cairns stated that she would like a third party to review all positions and make recommendations to avoid favoritism. Bittner clarified that this would be to look at staffing and positions not the pay structure. The pay would come after that.

Motion/Second/Pass (Cairns/Bittner/unanimous 5/0) to approve the Employee Performance Review Policy as given by Novak.

Novak stated the council could wait for position reviews by the council to add the Administrator title to the clerk/treasurer position. Discussion held. A work session will be set up after the first of the year. Novak also recommends that the Community Center Rental Policy be reviewed and changed to have language that says the fee will be waived for non-profit entities. Discussion held. Library programming should be a third party could come in, but at no cost to the attendees. It was decided that the topic needs to be looked at further.

E. Ordinances and Resolutions (can all be done in one motion)

1. 2025-19 - Resolution Certifying Unpaid Charges to Taxes

Motion/Second/Pass (Bittner/Irlbeck/unanimous 5/0) to approve resolutions 2025-019.

2. 2025-20 – Resolution Accepting Donations – Lion's Club Sheehan Account for \$3,000.

Motion/Second/Pass (Bittner/Pfarr/unanimous 5/0) to approve resolutions 2025-020.

F. Financial Report & Approval of Claims

1. November 2025 Financial Report
2. Approval of Claims

Motion/Second/Pass (Cairns/Irlbeck/unanimous 5/0) to the November 2025 Financial Report and Approval of Claims as presented.

5. MAYOR & COUNCIL REPORTS & COMMUNICATIONS

A. Information for Council

1. Performance Review Sheets for Halter are in your packet and should be returned to the HR Committee as soon as possible.

6. NEXT MEETING DATES

- A. Interviews when scheduled.
- B. Work Session December 1, 2025 at 5:30 PM
- C. Regular Council Meeting December 8, 2025 at 6:30 PM

7. ADJOURNMENT

Motion/Second/Pass (Irlbeck/Cairns/unanimous 5/0) to adjourn the regular meeting at 9:30 PM. The council then moved into closed session with the city Attorney Matt Novak upon his request to discussion a staff matter. No minutes were taken of the closed meeting.

Respectfully Submitted,

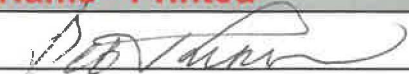


Valerie Halter
Clerk



Lydel Sik
Mayor

Lamberton City Council
Work Session Date: 11-10-2025
Official Record of Attendees

	Name - Printed
1	
2	SCOTT KUHLMAN
3	Kimberly Mittelstadt
4	Kimberly Mittelstadt
5	Colby Bod
6	Allison Sauer
7	Mirai Hesse
8	Mandula Way
9	Harper
10	Rebecca Christensen
11	Kimmy Starnes
12	Kim Starnes
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