

City of Bowlus
February 2nd, 2026
City Council Meeting Minutes

Mayor Travis Bartkowicz called the Bowlus City Council meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Council Members Jessy Lashinski and Terri Trettel, Interim Treasurer Amber Brenny, and Interim Clerk Nicky Lahr were present. Also present were Joe Sobania, Josh Seelen, Brad Psyck, and Laura Montag. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Guests

Ryan Odden from Moore Engineering gave the City's engineering update. He has been working with Scott Saher and Council Members to update the City's zoning map. Council requested a printed map when it is completed. Joe Sobania also requested that the updated maps include hydrant locations. Ryan noted that he is continuing to look for funding sources for the water tower and a secondary water source. There have been no updates on the RDA funding.

Consent Agenda

Jessy made a motion to approve the consent agenda, including the financials and the January minutes, with one correction to the January meeting start time (changing 7:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.). Terri seconded the motion, and it passed with all in favor.

Treasurer's Report

Amber gave the Treasurer's report. She explained that the City needs to designate a carrier for the family and medical leave program implemented by the State at the beginning of the year, and determine what portion the City will pay. Amber discussed the Public Employees Retirement Association (PERA), noting it is a state-mandated program for all public employees who earn or are expected to earn \$425 in any given month. After discussion, it was determined that Nicky will verify which employees are eligible. Eligible individuals contribute 6.5% of their gross income to the pension, and the City contributes 7.5%. A lookback may be required.

Amber received notice that a CD will mature on February 9th. This is the larger Fire Department CD, and Brad recommended rolling it into another CD. Amber noted that the CD was earning a low rate and expressed concern that Pine Country Bank does not insure the full amount of the City's funds. She recommended placing the CD at a different bank to ensure full coverage. She said that both Magnifi and VersaBank currently offer CDs between 3.8%-4.0%. Terri made a motion to withdraw the CD from Pine Country Bank and place \$225,000 into a 7-month CD at Magnifi. Jessy seconded the motion, and it passed with all in favor. Three signatures (Mayor, Clerk, Treasurer) will be required to authorize the transaction.

Amber is obtaining the necessary permissions for State of MN systems and the accounting system to perform her duties. She will try to have a budget prepared for the March meeting.

Fire Department Report

Fire Chief Brad Psyck reported that Bowlus Day will be held on July 5th. The new fire truck is ready to be upfitted, with an estimated completion in October. Brad is working with John Pentze from Stearns Electric on a low-interest loan of \$350,000.

Utility Department Report

Sarah Seelen was not present; however, Josh mentioned that she would be willing to coordinate the City Cleanup scheduled for May 2nd. She will review pricing and make a recommendation to the City Council.

Maintenance Report

Josh replaced the batteries in the plow truck and noted that the deflectors on the top of the plow are cracked and need replacement. Terri made a motion to approve the purchase of the plow parts, and Jessy seconded it. The motion passed with all in favor.

Travis asked Josh to mount the new Community Center signs and the lock box for the Community Center key. Josh agreed to complete the work

Public Works Report

Joe Sobania submitted water samples and turned in a reimbursement request. He also borrowed space heaters for the well house to prevent issues during the extreme cold weather.

Community Center Report

Laura Montag turned in \$1,300 from the Community Center.

Clerk's Report

Nicky reported that she is working with Sytek to update the voicemail system to include an option to forward Community Center calls to Laura's cell phone. She also noted that she will be unavailable for the May meeting due to training; Amber agreed to take minutes for that meeting.

New Business

Travis would like to work on the creation of some Council committees.

Jessy made a motion to approve **resolution 26.2.2.1** to modify ordinance 30.04 Order of business. Terri seconded the motion and it passed with all in favor. After the motion is published, the ordinance will take effect, modification will be made to the order of the City Council agenda.

Jessy made a motion to approve **resolution 26.2.2.2** identifying the State of MN as the family and medical leave insurance provider and to approve the City's portion of the premium to be set at 50%. Terri seconded the motion and it passed with all in favor.

Travis adjourned the meeting at 7:33.

Mayor/Council updates

Jessi said the Engineers will have information ready at the March meeting for approval for an April public hearing for the new zoning ordinances.

Looking forward

The Board of Appeals and Equalization will be on April 10th. City Wide Cleanup will be on May 2nd. Bowlus Day will be July 5th. The next City Council Meeting will be on March 2nd at 6:00 pm.

Nicky Lahr

Nicky Lahr
Interim City Clerk