

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

Mayor Travis Bartkowicz called the Bowlus City Council meeting to order at 6:03 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, Sarah Seelen, Josh Seelen, Brad Psyck, and Laura Montag. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Consent Agenda: Jessy made a motion to approve the consent agenda, including the financials and the February minutes. Terri seconded the motion, and it passed with all in favor.

Treasurer's Report: Amber gave the Treasurer's report. She explained that she has reinstated the CTAS program on the laptop after it had been deleted by the outgoing Treasurer. After speaking with the OSA, she was advised to inform the Council that this is all considered City property including electronic data and logins and any destruction or deletion is an ethical violation and is unlawful. She recommended an inventory including all electronic data, logins and passwords. Council agreed and asked for a document to be started and stored in the safe with all of this information. Amber looked into the 941 payroll tax including a penalty that the City received last summer. She believes that the penalties were due to the timing of processing and payment, including payroll withholdings. Amber asked that employees turn their timecards in before the end of the month to avoid the late fees. Going forward, she will set up ACH payments through the portal to expedite the process. Amber set up the MN unemployment and PFML portal. This should be a quarterly submission, however this hasn't happened in several years, As the City is being proactive, the penalties have been waived. Amber also looked into MN state payroll withholdings, which she learned had not been reported since 2006. She will be submitting IRS payroll records for 2025 and working to rectify the rest, but did not know how far back they would go. Amber reported that Nicky was working with PERA to set up water/Sewer supervisor, Joe Sobania and will handle the reporting for the prior 3 years of his payroll to determine the owed amounts. Amber will deduct the correct amounts from his payroll going forward. Nicky stated that the current interim positions are exempt, since they are intended to be elected positions. Amber and Nicky will look into Sarah and Josh's payroll to see if they qualify. Amber completed the annual work comp audit by Berkley Risk. She mentioned that any changes to the fire department service area or number of employees needs to be updated with our Work Comp policy holder. Amber asked Brad how he would like the \$63,803.64 CD to be distributed after maturing. Brad would like the funds kept in the regular checking for the next few months as they are looking into a truck purchase and may need the cash.

Fire Department Report: Brad gave the Fire Department report. He is looking into the best option for a replacement for their pickup. He's also working out the final details on the bond for the replacement fire truck, and Nicky has been copied on this to prepare for signing. Brad recognized the retirement of Paul Woidela who was with Bowlus for 23 years.

Utility Department Report: Sarah gave the utility report. She is working on information for the annual cleanup, and asked Nicky to make the poster. She filled out the paperwork for a grant to cover the costs. The Council agreed to keep the times and the costs the same as the previous year. Sarah explained that the mosquito contract was up. The Council decided to get 3 quotes to be presented at the next meeting. They asked Sarah to charge the regular amount for the mosquito spray on the next utility bill.

Maintenance Report: Josh gave the maintenance report. He shared a list of street replacement priorities including a section of 2nd Street, a section of 3rd Street and a few patches that need attention before

Bowlus Day. Travis explained that this would be a first priority when the Public Projects Committee forms and meets. Josh was asked to get quotes on forks for the skid steer to present at the next meeting, as they would be useful for both the City and the Fire Department.

Public Works Report: Joe gave the Water/Sewer report. He has completed and submitted the sanitary survey. He mentioned some electrical issues at the well house and had Ericksons Electrical look into it. Joe said that a few sampling locations were changed, and also noted that the Fluoride pump went out, and was replaced. Joe brought up the old fire department and noted that the 10 year agreement would be up this year, and if the building is not restored, the City would take it over again. He noted that there is an unsealed well at this location.

Community Center Report

Laura Montag turned in \$1,600 from the Community Center. She mentioned that one of the kitchen sinks is dripping, and that a sign behind the facility was broken off.

Scott Saehr submitted a report to the Council asking them to review and submit a public hearing notice, Review the draft Land Usage Ordinance, and Review the draft Zoning district map.

Clerk's Report: Nicky reported Sytek will be bringing in more fiber optics lines to the City, She will be submitting some building permit information for the US Census, and will continue to work in CTAS to have duplicity of financials between the Treasurer and Clerk. She reported leaving on vacation the week of March 16-20. Sarah said she would check the mail and Amber said she could check the voicemail during this absence.

New Business: Jessy requested approval to renew her existing building permit. Travis made a motion to approve, and Terri seconded it. Nicky will collect the fee and issue the permit at the next meeting. Travis proposed a resolution to create a public projects committee.

Jessy made a motion to approve Resolution 26.3.2. And Terri seconded it. The motion passed with all in favor. Joe, Travis, Josh and Sarah were interested in being on the committee.

Travis proposed a mailing separate from the utility bill mailing, seeking citizens to join the council. Nicky will email a draft to the council and it will be discussed further at the April meeting.

Terri made a motion to remove Jake, Jude, and Molly from the safety deposit box at Pine Country Bank, and to add Travis and Nicky. Jessy seconded the motion and it passed with all in favor.

Jessy made a motion to remove Molly and Jude from the Edward Jones investment account and to add Travis, Nicky and Amber. Travis seconded the motion and it passed with all in favor.

Mayor/Council updates: Travis shared some details about the Municipal meeting he attended. He invited others to attend with him next time. He asked Nicky to look into Sourcewell to determine if there are any outstanding grants that can be collected upon or if there are any other ones that we could apply for, potentially for a new laptop for Joe. Travis said the website has been updated and an email was requested for Joe.

Jessy made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:49 p.m. Terri seconded the motion and it passed with all in favor.

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 April 6th at 6:00 pm.

Nicky Lahr

Nicky Lahr
Interim City Clerk