

LAUDERDALE CITY COUNCIL
MEETING MINUTES
Lauderdale City Hall
1891 Walnut Street
Lauderdale, MN 55113

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September 9, 2025

Call to Order

Mayor Gaasch called the Regular City Council meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Roll Call

Councilors present: Sharon Kelly, Evan Sayre, Duane Pulford, Jeff Dains, and Mayor Mary Gaasch. Councilors absent: None.

Staff present: Heather Butkowski, City Administrator; Jim Bownik, Assistant to the City Administrator; and Miles Cline, Deputy City Clerk.

Approvals

Mayor Gaasch asked if there were any additions to the meeting agenda. There being none, Councilor Kelly moved and seconded by Councilor Dains to approve the agenda. Motion carried unanimously.

Mayor Gaasch asked if there were corrections to the minutes of the August 26, 2025, City Council meeting. There being none, Councilor Pulford moved and seconded by Councilor Sayre to approve the August 26, 2025, City Council meeting minutes. Motion carried unanimously.

Mayor Gaasch asked if there were any questions on the claims. There being none, Councilor Kelly moved and seconded by Councilor Dains to approve the claims totaling \$160,945.24. Motion carried unanimously.

Consent

Councilor Sayre moved and seconded by Councilor Pulford to approve the Consent Agenda thereby approving Motiv Excavating & Site Works LLC pay request No. 1 for the 2025 sanitary sewer structure repair project and acknowledging the August Financial Report.

Discussion/Action Item

A. Blue Horizon Energy Proposal for Solar Array at City Hall

Butkowski said that Blue Horizon's roofing contact said the roof at City Hall can handle solar panels with no additional work needed. Hal Kimball from Blue Horizon Energy is preparing the materials for the federal and state solar tax credits and grant. Hal joined the meeting remotely to answer questions from the Council. He recommended that the Council approve submission of the applications so that he can send the completed application to the state in the next week or so.

Councilor Kelly made a motion to authorize Blue Horizon Energy to complete any necessary applications to apply for state and federal grants to support installation of solar panels on City Hall. This was seconded by Councilor Sayre and carried unanimously.

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B. Consulting Agreement with Baseline Technologies, Inc. for Integration of SolarApp+
Per the State of Minnesota website:

Butkowski explained that Rum River is integrating the SolarAPP+ permitting software with their software platform for issuing building permits. The cost for the integration can be paid through the State of Minnesota's SolarAPP+ Solar Permitting Software Incentive. The cost for Rum River/Baseline to perform the integration will be paid via the grant. The grant provides a \$5,000 base incentive, plus additional bonuses if certain criteria are met.

Lauderdale qualifies for two of these bonuses:

- Bonus 1: History of issuing Residential Solar or Solar Plus Energy Storage permits. Two permits were issued in 2024.
- Bonus 2: Participation in a sustainability program (Lauderdale is a GreenStep Cities member).

With the base incentive and these two bonuses, Lauderdale should qualify for a total of \$15,000. If the grant is awarded, \$5,000 would be payable to Rum River/Baseline for setting up and implementing SolarAPP+, leaving the city with a net benefit of \$10,000. If only the base incentive is awarded, the amount due to Rum River/Baseline would be \$2,500. If no funds are awarded, no payment would be due to Rum River/Baseline.

Councilor Pulford made a motion to approve the consulting agreement with Baseline Technologies, Inc. for the integration of SolarApp+ as provided. This was seconded by Councilor Dains and carried unanimously.

C. Draft 2026 Budget and Proposed Levy

Butkowski said that the City will receive an additional \$26,738 in fiscal disparities revenue in 2026. Based on this new information, the local levy would need to increase by \$67,022 or 6.3% to cover costs. The overall levy would increase by 8.3%. Staff will have materials for adoption of the preliminary levy prepared for the next meeting.

Lauderdale's property values went up 5.1% year over year. This is on the higher end compared to the rest of the Ramsey County cities. Based on this increase, the owner of a median valued home in Lauderdale (\$321,900) will pay an additional \$192 in property taxes in 2026 based on the County's proposed property levy increase. That number will increase based on levies set by the city and other taxing authorities.

Set Agenda for Next Meeting

Butkowski stated that the police contract will be on the next agenda. She continued to say that the budget and levy discussion will resume at the next meeting. Finally, there will be a contract with Blue Horizon for solar power on the roof of city hall.

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Work Session

A. 2026-2030 Police Contract

The new police contract with St. Anthony will be discussed at the next meeting.

B. Community Development Update

Butkowski shared that the Environmental Commission will be touring Seminary Pond with Capital Regions Watershed District staff next Tuesday. Also on September 16, Falcon Heights will be hosting an open house regarding Les Bolstad golf course at 7:00 p.m. Finally, the sidewalk is sinking by the Korean Service Center. Staff are working on a solution to fix it.

C. Opportunity for the Public to Address the City Council

Mayor Gaasch opened the floor to those interested in addressing the Council.

Wayne Sisel, 1567 Fulham Street, shared his appreciation for the green space at Luther Seminary and hopes that it can be preserved as much as possible.

There being nobody else interested in speaking, Mayor Gaasch closed the floor.

Adjournment

Councilor Sayre moved and seconded by Councilor Pulford to adjourn the meeting at 7:51 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,



Miles Cline
Deputy City Clerk