

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

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September 23, 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 Pulford 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 September 9, 2025, City Council meeting. There being none, Councilor Kelly moved and seconded by Councilor Sayre to approve the September 9, 2025, City Council meeting minutes. Motion carried unanimously.

Mayor Gaasch asked if there were any questions on the claims. There being none, Councilor Pulford moved and seconded by Councilor Dains to approve the claims totaling \$20,676.25. Motion carried unanimously.

**Consent**

Mayor Gaasch thanked those involved for the expediency in bringing the solar project together. Councilor Dains moved and seconded by Councilor Kelly to approve the Consent Agenda thereby approving the service agreement with Blue Horizon Energy LLC for installation of solar panels at City Hall. Motion carried unanimously.

**Discussion/Action Item**

A. 2026-2027 Contract Agreement for Policing Services with the City of St. Anthony  
Butkowski explained that when St. Anthony and Falcon Heights reestablished a policing relationship, they spent time crafting a new agreement that is quite different than the previous. The changes were centered around insurance and calculating contract pricing. In the new contract, Lauderdale's liability insurance is primary should there be a claim. Ultimately, both parties are insured by the League of Minnesota Cities who would handle the claim.

Previously, Lauderdale and Falcon Heights paid based on a pay/benefits calculation for the number of officers employed to provide service to each city. That meant Lauderdale and Falcon Heights paid the same amount since each city had one peace officer present 24/7 even though

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Falcon Heights is quite a bit bigger by population. The new contract pricing is based on population and volume of calls for service. Lauderdale has the least in both of those categories. Annually, those two numbers will be calculated and the City will pay that portion of the budget. For 2026, Lauderdale will pay 15% of the policing budget. The contract runs from January 1, 2026, until December 31, 2030.

Councilor Kelly made a motion to enter into the Contract Agreement for Policing Services with the city of St. Anthony as presented. This was seconded by Councilor Sayre and carried unanimously.

B. Resolution No. 092325A – Adopting the 2026 Preliminary Property Tax Levy and Establishing the Budget Meeting Date

Butkowski said that the resolution will set the maximum preliminary levy amount. Since the last meeting, staff added \$2,000 for the Minnesota Paid Leave Premiums that will take effect in January. That means the anticipated local levy would need to increase by \$69,022 or 6.5% to cover costs. The overall levy would increase by 7.8%.

Based on the 5.1% property value increase, the owner of a median valued home in Lauderdale (\$321,900) will pay an additional \$192 in Ramsey County property taxes and \$88.23 in City property taxes in 2026. That number will increase/decrease based on levies set by the school district and other taxing authorities.

Councilor Sayre made a motion to adopt Resolution No. 092325A - Adopting the 2026 Preliminary Property Tax Levy and Establishing the Budget Meeting Date. This was seconded by Councilor Dains and carried unanimously.

**Set Agenda for Next Meeting**

Butkowski stated that an RFP for architecture plans for the cannabis store will be on the next agenda.

**Work Session**

A. Lifestyle Communities Presentation of Updated Concept Plans for Luther Seminary  
Ben Landhauser, Executive Vice President, mentioned that since July, when Lifestyle Communities held an open house at City Hall, they have been revising their concept to develop a senior co-op on land they have under contract to purchase from Luther Seminary. They asked for an opportunity to bring their ideas before the City Council ahead of making a formal application. Tim Nichols, Lifestyle Communities CEO, also attended the meeting to give their presentation and answer questions from the Council. Jennifer Haskamp of Swanson Haskamp attended to clarify items on behalf of the City.

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**B. Community Development Update**

Butkowski shared that BP has submitted their application for reconstruction of their building.

**C. Opportunity for the Public to Address the City Council**

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

Cynthia Ahlgren, 1563 Fulham Street, shared her concerns about the local environmental changes that could be caused by the removal of part of the wooded area on Luther Seminary's property.

Robert Jacobson, 1747 Carl Street, stated that he was worried about water runoff from the Luther Seminary's property to Como Avenue. He expressed apprehensions about parking issues at the Fern. He wondered about parking at the new development in the Luther Seminary area.

Eliza Swedenborg, 2190 Doswell Avenue, St. Paul, shared that she would like to see the development of the project effect the woods as minimally as possible and allow for a public easement to access the area.

Steven Ahlgren, 1563 Fulham Street, pleaded with the Council to protect the woods and believes that it is their obligation to do so.

Michael Russell, 2265 Luther Place, St. Paul, joined the meeting via Zoom. He asked for the natural resources inventory to be provided to the public. The City will do that after they are submitted with Lifestyle Communities land use application. He also said he appreciates how the developers have worked with the community to create a structure that appeases both parties.

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

**Adjournment**

Councilor Kelly moved and seconded by Councilor Pulford to adjourn the meeting at 9:10 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,



Miles Cline  
Deputy City Clerk