

**City of Menahga**  
**Special Meeting/Work Session City Council Minutes**  
**Monday, March 31st, 2025**

**1. Call to Order**

The Menahga City Council held a Special Meeting/Work Session on Monday, March 31, 2025.

Mayor Jody Bjornson called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

**2. Roll Call**

Comprising a quorum of the Council, the following members were present:

Mayor Jody Bjornson                      Keith Waaraniemi                      Mike Netland  
  
Bill Hodge                                      Durwin Tomperi

Administrative staff: Brett Gagnonpalick

**3. Pledge of Allegiance**

**4. Department Reports**

• **Greenwood Connections Administrator – Laura Ahlf**

Laura Ahlf presented a proposal for a professional service agreement with ICS to explore the cost and feasibility of expanding Greenwood Connections. The proposal included a fee of \$8,500 for Phase 1 planning, which would be reimbursed if the project moved forward to Phase 2. Ahlf explained that the goal was to have preliminary plans and cost estimates ready by August for the facility's 60th anniversary.

Council members discussed the proposal, including the potential need for 20 additional apartments based on a market study. Concerns were raised about bond ratings and financing options. After discussion, the council agreed to move forward with Phase 1 planning.

**Main Motion: To approve GWC to move forward with ICS for phase one planning for \$8500.00**

Moved by:	Waaraniemi
Seconded by:	Tomperi
Action:	Motion carried by a 5-0 voice vote
In favor:	Waaraniemi, Netland, Bjornson, Tomperi, Hodge
Opposed:	None

- **Liquor Store Manager, Heather Shepersky**

1. **Monthly Report** – Heather Shepersky reported that liquor store sales were on track with the previous year. She mentioned that March total sales were down by approximately \$900, primarily in off-sale. Shepersky also provided an update on THC sales, noting that they had generated about \$275 in 12 days, which was 37% of the initial investment.

The council discussed scheduling a liquor store committee meeting for April 18th at 3 PM at the liquor store. They also briefly touched on plans for the upcoming Midsummer event.

- **Police Department – Chief Amy Lane**

1. **Monthly Report** – Chief Amy Lane reported on police department activities from March 6 to March 26, including 153 calls for service. She explained various activity codes, including property watches and special service details. Lane also mentioned upcoming training sessions and her new role as regional representative for Region 5 chiefs.

Lane highlighted a recent successful response to an overdose incident and announced that she would be taking over the "Hooked on Fishing" program for fourth graders.

The council agreed to schedule a police committee meeting in the coming weeks.

- **Public Works/Streets – Ron Yliniemi**

1. **Monthly Report** – Ron Yliniemi presented updates on water usage reports, including the DNR report and water conservation report. He noted that the difference between pumped and metered water was about 5%, which is within the normal range.

Yliniemi also discussed the final inspection report for the drinking water

revolving fund project, which included the installation of a new 100,000-gallon water tower. He mentioned that the new mixer in the tower has been beneficial for water quality.

Yliniemi addressed issues with the automatic generator and stated that technicians from Cummins would need to be on-site to resolve the problems with VFD defaults.

He presented two quotes for repairing the shop floor, which had experienced sinking. The council discussed the quotes and decided to move forward with the repair.

**Main Motion: To accept bid for \$6218.00 from Schmidtz Concrete for shop floor repair**

Moved by:	Waaraniemi
Seconded by:	Tomperi
Action:	Motion carried by a 5-0 voice vote
In favor:	Waaraniemi, Netland, Bjornson, Tomperi, Hodge
Opposed:	None

- **Fire Department**

1. **Monthly Report** – Chief Berttunen was out of town.

- **Park/Beach/Building Maintenance - Bryan Soukup**

1. **Monthly Report** - Bryan Soukup discussed plans for park maintenance and improvements, including raising the road in flood-prone areas of the campground. He mentioned the need for equipment to pack down sand on the new pads and roads.

Soukup reported issues with illegal dumping at the compost pile and burn pile areas. The council discussed potential solutions, including implementing operating hours and using game cameras to monitor the area.

Soukup also mentioned plans to reinstall RV water stations and address erosion damage on buildings caused by salt.

- **Administration - City Clerk/Treasurer, Brett Gagnonpalick**

- 1. Budget YTD – REV-EXP**

Budget year-to-date revenue and expenses report, noting some coding errors that had been corrected.

2. Motion to formally approve a previous raise given to the previous deputy clerk

**Main Motion: To formally approve the raise previously given to the Deputy Clerk, ensuring proper documentation and transparency in accordance with city procedures.**

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Moved by:	Waaraniemi
Seconded by:	Hodge
Action:	Motion carried by a 5-0 voice vote
In favor:	Tomperi, Hodge, Bjornson, Netland, Waaraniemi
Opposed:	None

3. Renewal of Minnesota Rural Water Association membership:

**Main Motion: To approve the continuation of the City’s membership in the Minnesota Rural Water Association for \$554.80 (MRWA) to ensure ongoing access to resources, training, technical assistance, and advocacy for the effective management of the City’s water and wastewater systems.**

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Moved by:	Tomperi
Seconded by:	Waaraniemi
Action:	Motion carried by a 5-0 voice vote
In favor:	Tomperi, Hodge, Bjornson, Netland, Waaraniemi
Opposed:	None

4. Chief of Police Evaluation and Raise Proposal

**Main Motion: To approve the advancement of Police Chief Amy Lane from step 14 to step 15 on the City of Menahga pay scale, in recognition of her successful evaluation and outstanding service to the community, effective on her hire anniversary date.**

Moved by:	Waaraniemi
Seconded by:	Hodge
Action:	Motion carried by a 5-0 voice vote
In favor:	Hodge, Netland, Bjornson, Tomperi, Waaraniemi
Opposed:	None

5. A proposed resolution about the Pleasant Pines TIF district transfer was reviewed. The council weighed proceeding with it in light of ongoing legal negotiations. Concerns were noted regarding the TIF's complexity, warranting the need for both litigation and TIF attorneys' review. Prioritizing thorough resolution of underlying legal and financial issues, the council chose to defer until both parties' remedies are met. Council member Mike Netland made the motion to defer, seconded by Durwin Tomperi, passing unanimously 5-0.

**Main Motion: To defer the resolution until all remedies are satisfied by both parties.**

Moved by:	Netland
Seconded by:	Tomperi
Action:	Motion carried by a 5-0 voice vote
In favor:	Hodge, Netland, Bjornson, Tomperi, Waaraniemi
Opposed:	None

6. Hireclick renewal – The City of Menahga recognizes the value of maintaining our membership with Hireclick, as it serves as a valuable resource in our hiring process. With several upcoming positions to fill, continued access to Hireclick will greatly support our recruitment efforts and ensure we attract qualified candidates efficiently. Part of the discussion was speaking with GWC Connection administrator about collaboration with the program.

**Main Motion: To approve the continuation of the City of Menahga's membership with Hireclick for \$99.00/month annual subscription to support the city.**

Moved by:	Tomperi
Seconded by:	Waaraniemi
Action:	Motion carried by a 5-0 voice vote
In favor:	Hodge, Netland, Bjornson, Tomperi, Waaraniemi
Opposed:	None

**7. Consideration of Bills**

Invoice copies were sent to the City Council members for the following batches.

**a. Batch #033125PAY - \$65,255.69**

**b. Batch #033125EFT - \$88,854.28**

**For a total of \$154,109.97**

**Main Motion: To approve Batch #033125PAY - in the amount of \$65,255.69; Batch #033125EFT for \$88,854.28 for a total amount of \$154,109.97, as presented.**

Moved by:	Waaraniemi
Seconded by:	Hodge
Action:	Motion carried by a 5-0 voice vote
In favor:	Hodge, Bjornson, Netland, Tomperi, Waaraniemi
Opposed:	None

**8. Meeting Adjournment**

**Main Motion: To adjourn the meeting at 7:24 p.m.**

Moved by:	Bjornson
Seconded by:	Waaraniemi
Action:	Motion carried by a 5-0 voice vote
In favor:	Hodge, Bjornson, Netland, Tomperi, Waaraniemi
Opposed:	None

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City Clerk/Treasurer Brett Gagnonpalick

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Mayor Jody Bjornson