

Dassel, MN

Regular City Council Meeting

Minutes

Monday, March 17, 2025 at 6:00 pm

1. Call to Order

Minutes:

Meeting called to order by Mayor Lalone at 6:02 p.m.

a. Pledge of Allegiance

Led by Mayor Lalone

b. Roll Call

Council members Gaertner, Landrus, Suchy, Thurn & Mayor Lalone

Minutes:

Members present: Gaertner, Landrus, Suchy, Thurn & Mayor Lalone
Members absent: none

2. Approval of Minutes Closed City Council meeting March 27, 2025, DAHS February 25, 2025, City Council meeting March 17, 2025

Minutes:

Motion by Suchy, seconded by Gaertner to approve the minutes as presented. Motion carried.

3. Public Hearing(s)

4. Open Forum

(The City Council invites residents to share new ideas or concerns related to city business; however, individual questions and remarks are limited to three (3) minutes per speaker. No City Council action will be taken, although the Council may refer issues to staff for follow up or consideration at a future meeting. The Mayor may use discretion if speakers are repeating views already expressed or ask for a spokesperson for groups of individuals with similar views. Speakers should state their name and home address at the podium before speaking.)

5. Additions or Omissions to Agenda

Minutes:

Motion by Landrus, seconded by Suchy to approve the agenda with the change of moving the Sheriff's report from 8h to 8a. Motion carried.

6. Consent Agenda

Minutes:

Motion by Landrus, seconded by Gaertner to approve the Consent Agenda. Motion carried.

a. Payment of Claims \$349,462.89

b. Motion to approve the City mileage rate \$.70 cents per mile effective January 1, 2025, through December 31, 2025 .

c. Motion to approve Wine/Strong Beer license application for Cokato Dassel Lions at Saints Field for April 1, 2025, to Sept. 30, 2025 pending the receipt of all required paperwork and signatures.

- d. **Motion to Approve Resolution 2025-010 Appointing the City Assessor and City Building Official for 2025**
- e. **Motion to Approve Resolution 2025-011 Accepting a Donation to the City of Dassel**

7. Council & Committee Reports

a. Dassel Area Historical Society Meeting February 25, 2025 - Eckerly

Minutes:

Administrator Eckerly reported there was a meeting on February 25, 2025, she reported on a discussion regarding the Ergot project and setting up a little theatre exhibit. There are some technology issues which the History Center staff are working to resolve.

b. Fire Advisory Meeting - February 26, 2025 - Councilmember Thurn

Minutes:

Council member Thurn reported the 2026 budget and contracts were approved. Josh Johnson, City of Darwin was elected the Chair and Kari Amundson, Dassel Township was elected as the Vice Chair.

c. Small Business Group Meeting - March 3, 2025 & March 10, 2025- Councilmember Gaertner

Minutes:

Council member Gaertner reported the Small Business Group met twice this month and has decided to go in a different direction. They would like to have every other month meeting with a meeting the opposite months being a lunch meeting. The next meeting will be a lunch meeting on April 7th at City Hall at noon with lunch provided by the Tea Shoppe. The intention of this group is to help promote the local businesses in Dassel. The group has gone from 18 members to about 5 because the focus was put on events and not the businesses. There will be a subcommittee for those businesses who would like to plan events.

Council member Landrus urged business owners in town to reach out to the group or attend a meeting and speak at the open forum if there is anything they need help with or would like to promote.

d. Planning Commission Meeting - March 10, 2025 - Councilmember Landrus

Minutes:

Council member Landrus reported at the Planning Commission meeting the Cannabis Retail Business zoning ordinance was on the agenda for approval. Clint Scherping came to speak to the commission about the DG Market building not being in compliance with the facade portion of the City Code. The commission discussed how to handle this situation, so it doesn't continue to happen it was recommended to add a section on the building permit stating the person applying for the permit is aware of the ordinances and what is expected. The Commission would also like to explore having a code compliance officer come it to see what it would take to have a company take over the compliance of the ordinances. Administrator Eckerly will reach out to a company that she has worked with in the past to have them come speak with Council.

e. Red Rooster Committee Meeting - March 11, 2025 - Councilmember Gaertner

Minutes:

Council member Gaertner reported that the committee discussed where they would be purchasing the chicken from now that Red Rooster Foods will no longer be an option. A refrigeration truck has been donated to the committee for use to store the chicken on site from someone Max Johnson knows. The Knights of Columbus are no longer going to be doing the brat feed and are willing to hand that over to another organization since it is a profitable fundraiser. Kyle Moy and Ron Hungerford are going to meet to go over what needs to be fixed at the pits.

8. Staff Reports

a. Museum Director

Minutes:

Director Holje reported they are working on a new ergot exhibit which is a little theatre. Painting of the history center was completed on March 17th. Events scheduled include Ken Kubash – April 12, Meet Your Growers and Producers, April 15, 6:30, Abigail Johnson and Isaac Meza, JaneAnn Settergren – Music April 27, 2:00 pm., Super Sleuth – Education Committee. May 10, Airborn – June 12, 6-9, Jerry Nelson Concert – June 20, 7:00 pm, Sue Davies – July 19, Airborn – Aug. 7, 6-9, Crow River String Band, Aug. 16, 7:00 pm, Red Rooster Program - Aug. 30, 10 am. Galen Johnson, Reading of Our Town –?? Aug. 31, 2:00 pm, Red Rooster Weekend, (140% 2 sides), the exhibit “Our Town” and Lydia Henry – Manhole Cover Rubbings – Sept. 19.

b. Liquor Store Manager

Minutes:

Manager Moy reported sales were down again for the month, but the number of customers were up for the month some. She is working on promotions for Spring. Staff is starting on cycle counts on inventory in March. MMBA is coming up at the end of April.

c. Fire Chief

Minutes:

Chief Johnson reported 41 calls for the month of February 23 within city limits and 102 year to date, this is 29 calls more than last year this time. Johnson stated the demonstration on the new extrication equipment won't start until 6:30 pm on the March 24th for any members of council who would like to see it being used.

d. Public Works Director

Minutes:

Director Moy reported Street Department: We have been salting and plowing as needed. We have been clearing drain covers of leaf and winter debris. Depending on the weather, He is hoping to start street sweeping in April. We are just waiting to see if we are getting more snow. He has ordered and received pothole patch. We again are just awaiting weather. We have begun

grading gravel sections. Water Dept: We did receive the report from our sanitary survey/audit that we had with MDH on 2/12. I have attached the report. It went very well, we just had to do some updating of contacts and sampling points. He is continuing to work on the MPARS conservation report. Will have completed and included for next month's meeting. We had Their Well out to have the wells and high service pumps inspected. As expected, they are all sitting in great shape. Continuing to do sampling and testing as needed. Sewer Dept: We have been continuing to sample and monitor ponds. He is lining up to have a company come out in the spring to have the ponds sonar. This will let us know the condition of the sludge in them. We should be able to treat the sludge instead of needing to have them dredged. We will be doing ground well sampling and soil sampling next month. The Irrigator pump and motor should be getting installed end of the month or early April. Equipment: We are beginning to get summer equipment out and serviced for the year. We will be cleaning up and getting snow and winter equipment ready for storage. Personnel: Nolan and Kyle attended the MRWA annual conference. It was quite informative for both of us. We also had the opportunity to tour the St. Cloud Water Treatment Facility. He attended a disaster course put on by FEMA with Renee and Tracey. Again, it was very informative. Have utilized Stan for plowing and had him help while Nolan and I were in training. We will be bringing him back part time when the weather cooperates. Parks: We have closed the skating rink down for the year and have begun draining the water out. He has had Nolan working on an estimated cost for Public Works to rehab the restroom at Breeds Park. We have received some pet waste stations for all the parks. We will be installing them once the frost is out.

e. City Engineer

Minutes:

Engineer Lease met with City staff along with one of their architects to review the restroom structure at Breeds Park. After reviewing it was determined that the structure is sound enough to be kept in place. So, we would be looking to redoing the structure with maintenance free materials. The estimated cost of this would be between \$80,000 to \$90,000, using the existing structure and maintaining 2 separate bathrooms. Public Works Director Moy states they can do the work, but he is worried about the timeframe with manpower. They would be looking at a 3–4-week timeframe and would need to hire out the plumbing, concrete and tree removal. Lease stated they are close to being ready with the plans they have to go out for bids, need to have plumbing and electrical plans laid out.

Administrator Eckerly addressed Council stating there have been a couple of business owners who would like to have the holes back in the sidewalks along 3rd Street for flags, that use to be there. After speaking with the contractor who did the work, they stated it would void the warranty in those sections of the sidewalk. Council agreed not to put the holes back in the concrete.

The Open House for the MNDOT project along Hwy 12 is scheduled for May 20, 2024, from 4:00-5:30, would like a sit down with MnDOT about the project to see what can be done about closing down the entire highway during the project.

f. City Administrator

Minutes:

Administrator Eckerly reported upcoming events include Annual Audit, Monday, March 24 – 26, 2025, DAHS meeting, Tues. March 25, 2025, 10:00 a.m. History Center, Small Business Group meeting, Mon. April 7, 2025, at noon at City Hall, Board of Review & Equalization Meeting, Wed. April 9, 2025, 6:00 p.m. at City Hall, Department Head meeting, Tues, April 15, 2025, 7:00 am at City Hall, City Council Meeting, Monday, April 21, 2025, at 6:00 p.m. City Hall, DAHS meeting, Tues. April 22, 2025, 10:00 a.m. History Center. If anyone plans to attend the LMC Annual Conference in June in Duluth or the Coalition of Greater MN Cities Summer Conference in Bemidji in July rooms need to be booked ASAP.

Tracey, Kyle & I attended a Emergency Management training in Waite Park for 2 days and learned a lot about reviewing if Dassel is prepared for an emergency and how to handle the situation. I filed for the cities State Fire Aid. I attended the following meeting: MN Housing Crisis, Fire Advisory, Attended 2 Small Business meetings, a Breeds Park Restroom meeting, MN Housing grant webinar, DocuWare meeting, Planning Commission meeting, Meeker in Motion and Red Rooster Committee. Administrative staff is preparing to launch the H2O Analytics application for residents to monitor their own water usage in April 2025. Tracey Bergum, City Clerk and I have been working on gathering documents for the audit. The annual audit with Sara Oberloh has been scheduled for March 24-26, 2025. Handle a variety of complaints and inquiries. Duane Heier continues to request and send plans for a new pickleball court in Sellards park and Breeds Park. I forgot to post the proposed new fee schedule in the paper for public comment. It will be on your April calendar for action. Sarah Swedburg, City Planner and I met with a couple of developers that are interested in building housing. Grant for \$640,000 is available and one of the possible upcoming projects in the city is a good candidate for this grant. Swedburg is willing to write this grant for \$3,500.00. Eckerly believes the housing project for 6-4 plex's is a good candidate for it, being workforce-based housing.

Motion by Landrus, seconded by Gaertner to move forward with the Tier 2 Small Cities grant. Motion carried.

Eckerly has asked that the DocuWare proposal under Business Items be tabled so more information can be gathered.

City Hall has had numerous requests for a Wells Fargo ATM be placed within city limits. Eckerly has reached out to Wells Fargo, and they are encouraging customers to call the Litchfield branch and speak with Kim if they have any questions or concerns.

For the council members who would like to reply to the email from Mr. Deiter from Howard Lake, you could forward your comments to Eckerly she will forward them to him to avoid violating the open meeting law.

Date for the joint meeting with the library April 15, 2024 at 6:00 pm.

g. City Attorney

Minutes:

Attorney Greenley changes that were made include pg. 9b. 3rd paragraph remove the portion that mentions designating city official. Pg. 10e Cannabis

Event moved from zoning to ordinance. Sarah Swedburg, City Planner stated the section inserted in 10 gives the city authorization to review the details of the event. Pg. 11 vi. Hours of operation for an event Mon-Saturday 10:00 am - 5:00 pm and Sunday 11:00 am - 4:00 pm, Section 7 the hours of a dispensary be Monday - Thursday 9:00 am - 9:00 pm, Friday -Saturday 9:00 am - 10:00 pm and Sunday 11:00 am - 4:00 pm. Section 8, remove paragraphs 2-6. Section 10 remove everything add extra verbiage to reference the MN Clean indoor air act and local ordinances.

h. Sheriff's Department

Minutes:

Deputy Kelly reported there were 155 calls for service including 1 theft and 118 traffic stops. Sgt. Coates was also in attendance and discussed with council the ongoing parking issue on 2nd St. with Alman Auto. Council member Suchy questioned the 30-minute parking signs and why they are not permanent, Suchy also would like to see the 400 block of 2nd St. N. be no parking due to location of the fire department and the issues parking in that block may cause for the department. It was asked if there was a better pickup and drop off location for Jefferson Lines bus and Eckerly stated she would reach out to them. Landrus suggested speaking to Alman again to discuss the ongoing parking issues.

9. Business Items

a. Motion to approve bid from K.A. Construction for the replacement of the doors and locks in the amount of \$6,516.00.

Minutes:

Motion by Lalone, seconded by Suchy to approve bid from K.A. Construction for the replacement of the doors and locks in the amount of \$6,516.00. Motion carried.

b. Motion to approve Ordinance No. 01-2025 Regulating Cannabis Businesses and Retail Cannabis Dispensaries

Minutes:

Motion by Landrus to approve Ordinance No. 01-2025 Regulating Cannabis Businesses and Retail Cannabis Dispensaries with the following changes: 6b 3rd paragraph removing designated city official be notified. 6e changing the hours for a Cannabis event to Monday - Saturday 10am - 4pm and Sunday 10am - 5pm. Removing paragraphs 2,3,4,5 and 6 from Section 8 and removing parts a, b and c from Section 10 replacing it with the reference to the MN Clean indoor air act and local ordinances. Seconded by Gaertner. Motion carried.

c. Motion to approve Ordinance No. 02-2025 Dassel Cannabis Ordinance (zoning) and Buffer Map

Minutes:

Motion by Gaertner, seconded by Suchy to approve Ordinance No. 02-2025 Dassel Cannabis Ordinance (zoning) and Buffer Map. Motion carried.

- d. **Motion to approve purchasing DocuWare product from Metro Sales Inc in the amount of for an annual cost of \$5,569.40 and one time cost of \$3,920.00 to process and store documents digitally.**

Minutes:

Administrator Eckerly asked that this item be tabled until future meeting to get more references.

- e. **Motion to approve Option 1 with the MN Department of Transportation Street Sweeping Agreement (2025) and authorize the Mayor to sign.**

Minutes:

Motion by Landrus, seconded by Gaertner to approve Option 1 with the MN Department of Transportation Street Sweeping Agreement (2025) and authorize the Mayor to sign. Motion carried.

- f. **Motion to approve Resolution 2025-012 Approve City of Dassel Official Seal**

Minutes:

Motion by Gaertner, seconded by Thurn to approve Resolution 2025-012 Approve City of Dassel Official Seal option 1. Motion carried.

10. Adjourn

Minutes:

Motion was made by Landrus, and seconded by Suchy to adjourn the meeting at 8:45 p.m. Motion was unanimous.