

**MEETING MINUTES OF THE CITY COMMISSION  
OF THE CITY OF DEVILS LAKE, ND  
JULY 24, 2025**

The special meeting of the Devils Lake City Commission was held on July 24, 2025 with the following members present: President Moe and Commissioners Hach, Uhlenkamp, and Knowski. Commissioner Pierce was absent.

**MEETING ITEMS**

**1) Salary & Benefit Plan**

**a. Public Works Review**

The City Administrator communicated that himself, Mike, and Tanya are making sure that we are in line with the market. They are still working on the finer details with Tanya on the Public Works piece of it. They want to make sure they all agree of the facts before they present it to the Commission.

**b. Cost of Living, Grades & Steps Scale**

The City Administrator communicated that NDPERS has a slight decrease in employer contributions for the public safety plan. We are currently contributing 10.30% and it would go down to 10.04%, a decrease of .26%. He also mentioned that he has been talking to Chief Bennett about transitioning the fire department from the Main NDPERS plan into the Public Safety Plan. The City Administrator communicated that he budgeted for a 5% increase on health insurance. He mentioned that we do not get any documentation on this until later in the year. The cost-of-living raise is budgeted to be 2%, with a step increase in July. It was also proposed to drop a column at the beginning of the pay scale and add a column at the end of the pay scale. This will start new employees higher on the scale and will give people who have been employed at the city for a long time the opportunity to go up a step. Department heads have had permission to hire new employees up to and E and it was proposed to allow department heads to hire up to an F without City Commission approval. Commissioner Knowski asked about compression with the pay scale. The City Administrator mentioned that he did not have an answer at this moment, but Tanya communicated that making sure the scale is wide enough helps with this.

**2) General Fund**

**a. Revenue Projections**

The City Administrator communicated that the budgeted amount is 2% on 2024 actuals (City only) for sales tax and state aid projections were provided by the state. He also went through the allocations for the sales tax. He used 1% of the 3% CAP for property tax levy and said that the mill rate will be going down.

**b. Department Overviews**

**i. Non-Departmental**

The City Administrator gave a brief overview of the non-departmental fund within the general fund.

**ii. Fire Department**

The Fire Chief gave a brief overview of the fire department budget. He mentioned that the large increase they had this year was due to ARFF. They are going to increase the budget for overtime in 2026, but they are trying to track the time better so that they do not use as much. The City Administrator communicated that the SCBA's are a large expense, and they are going to work on getting grant dollars for these, along with working with the volunteer fire department. They have to replace SCBA's every 15 years.

**iii. Police Department**

The Police Chief gave a brief overview of the police department budget. He went through multiple different accounts and mentioned what ones were going to increase, decrease, or stay the same. It was mentioned that overtime is way over budget, but special events and DOT overtime get put into a different fund so that does not reflect. The City Administrator communicated that 2023 and 2024 are going to look different due to us using ARPA funds for police salaries for a few quarters. The City Administrator briefly went through their equipment replacement plan.

**iv. Shade Tree**

The City Administrator proposed moving the shade tree budget out of the general fund (1000) and moving it to a 2000 fund. He mentioned that the water source replacement fee will be proposed to be lowered to \$5.50, from \$9.00, and converting \$3.50 into a forestry fee. This would make it cross neutral for the residents, but then the rates and fees would pay for shade tree, rather than general fund revenue.

**v. Administrative & Other Departments**

The City Administrator went through a few other departments and administrative funds. He mentioned that the only thing that will really be changing is health insurance and cost of living salaries. He mentioned that he will need to get in contact with the City Attorney about the contract, as that expires in the middle of 2026.

**c. Next Steps**

The City Administrator communicated that there is still a \$250,000 difference between revenue and expenses. He mentioned that we do have a healthy general fund reserve, but that does not change the fact that we are going in the wrong direction. He mentioned that the first option would be revenue raising or the max property tax and put the remainder into the general fund. He mentioned that we do not have franchise fees on utilities or natural gas, but this can be revisited if the City Commission feels necessary. The other option is the cap amount that you have to pay local city sales tax. He mentioned that this amount is low compared to the rest of the state.

**3) Debt Service Funds (5000 Funds)**

The City Administrator gave a brief overview of the debt service funds.

**4) Other**

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**SPENCER HALVORSON**  
**CITY ADMINISTRATOR/AUDITOR**

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**JIM MOE**  
**PRESIDENT OF CITY COMMISSION**