

**MEETING MINUTES OF THE CITY COMMISSION
OF THE CITY OF DEVILS LAKE, ND
DECEMBER 15, 2025**

The regular meeting of the Devils Lake City Commission was held on December 15, 2025, with the following members present: President Moe and Commissioners Hach, Pierce, Knowski and Uhlenkamp.

MEETING ITEMS

- 1) Call to Order
- 2) Approval of Minutes – December 01, 2025

Commissioner Pierce made a motion to approve the minutes of the December 1 2025, City Commission meeting. Commission Uhlenkamp seconded the motion, and the motion was approved unanimously.

AWARDS AND PROCLAMATIONS

PUBLIC HEARINGS – 5:30 PM

BID OPENINGS – 5:30 PM

VISITORS OR DELEGATIONS

COMMISSION PORTFOLIOS

Commissioner Pierce – The Fire Chief said that they were contacted by NDSCS to see if they would be willing to participate in an internship for their fire science program. They are looking into the requirements and what they would need to do to get something going by this summer.

Commissioner Pierce said that the LEC meeting is on Wednesday.

Commissioner Uhlenkamp – The City Engineer said there is nothing to report for the Street Department. Commissioner Pierce asked if there is any way to get signs put up on College Drive that say the center lane is a turning lane or something that states it is no longer a four-lane road. The City Engineer said that there are signs up, but he will review it.

The City Engineer mentioned that the new Christmas decorations that were purchased are very noticeable compared to the older ones that we are also using. It was mentioned that there a few more can be purchased in 2026.

Commissioner Hach – The City Engineer said that there is nothing to report for the Sanitation Department. The Engineering Department is working on plan developments for the 2026 construction projects.

The City Assessor said that he will be sending out letters for the homestead property tax credit at the end of this month. He also said that the property tax credit application will open on

January 1, 2026. Letters to businesses that have temporary greenhouses have been sent out with a notice that the greenhouses need to be taken down. He said there will be future discussions regarding conex containers which are noncompliant and becoming an issue.

Commissioner Knowski – The City Engineer said that the Utility Department was working on a water break by Tractor Supply. They also worked on a water leak by Duke's Car Wash and they will get that cleaned up.

President Moe – The Police Chief said he had a couple officers do some defensive tactics training last week. They still have one opening for a police officer.

The City Administrator said they are working on a few software updates and that the financial report for November will be sent out by the end of the week and posted to the next City Commission agenda under Informational Items.

The City Attorney said that there are five ordinances on the agenda for a second reading and also an extension of letter of intent.

OLD BUSINESS

CONSENT AGENDA

NEW BUSINESS

1) Second Reading – Ordinance 1028 – NDTC Franchise Agreement

Commissioner Pierce made a motion to approve Ordinance 1028 NDTC Franchise Agreement. Commissioner Knowski seconded the motion, and the motion was approved unanimously.

2) Second Reading – Ordinance 1029 – NDTC Franchise Agreement

Commissioner Knowski made a motion to approve Ordinance 1029 NDTC Franchise Agreement. Commissioner Uhlenkamp seconded the motion, and the motion was approved unanimously.

3) Second Reading – Ordinance 1030 – NDTC Franchise Agreement

Commissioner Pierce made a motion to approve Ordinance 1030 NDTC Franchise Agreement. Commissioner Knowski seconded the motion, and the motion was approved unanimously.

4) Second Reading – Ordinance 1031 - NDTC Franchise Agreement

Commissioner Uhlenkamp made a motion to approve Ordinance 1031 NDTC Franchise Agreement. Commissioner Hach seconded the motion, and the motion was approved unanimously.

5) Second Reading – Ordinance 1032 – NDTC Franchise Agreement

Commissioner Pierce made a motion to approve Ordinance 1032 NDTC Franchise Agreement. Commissioner Uhlenkamp seconded the motion, and the motion was approved unanimously.

6) Pay Estimate #4 Final – Curb Gutter & Sidewalk

Commissioner Uhlenkamp made a motion to approve Pay Estimate #4 Final – Curb Gutter & Sidewalk. Commissioner Knowski seconded the motion, and the motion was approved unanimously on a roll call vote.

7) Homestead Tax Credit 2023 and 2024 Application Denial – 1115 6th St NE

The City Administrator said that the residence that lives at 1115 6th St NE submitted an application for the 2023 and 2024 homestead tax credit. They were granted these credits and the state came back and alerted the County, who then alerted the City, that the application was denied due to the property being technically owned by an irrevocable trust. The total amount due from the owner to the respective political subdivisions is \$4,479.34. Ramsey County wants the City to remit payment to the County, and they will distribute the funds to the proper political subdivisions, and the City would have to come to terms with the owner of the property.

The City Administrator said that he suggested that this be resolved through the County's delinquent tax process. The County Treasurer stated that should the City not give the County the funding, the County will withhold it from future property tax allocations. The City Attorney stated that it is not the City's place to pay someone else's property taxes.

Commissioner Pierce asked what responsibility the state owns for approving it for 2023 and 2024 and then all of a sudden denying it. The City Assessor said that in April of 2024 they completed the 2023 application with an abatement and then the application for 2024. These were approved, not knowing that this property was in an irrevocable trust. The County processed this and issued the abatement and awarded the tax credit for 2024 and then in April 2025 was when the City Assessor was notified about the application being denied.

Commissioner Knowski made a motion to reject paying Ramsey County \$4,479.34. Commissioner Hach seconded the motion, and the motion was approved unanimously on a roll call vote.

8) Biannual Update of City Policy Manual

The City Administrator said there were a few grammatical and minor language updates to the Employee Policy Manual. He went through a few sections and stated what had changed. The City's cell phone reimbursement policy, or lack thereof, was mentioned and said there will be something brought to a future meeting regarding this. A conversation ensued about the

importance that the Library and Airport Authority follow the same policies even if they are governed by a separate board. Commissioner Pierce made a motion to approve the updated Employee Policy Manual. Commissioner Hach seconded the motion, and the motion was approved unanimously.

9) 2026 Capital Improvement Plan

The City Engineer said that the Commission had previously reviewed the capital improvement plan as part of the City's budget process and that there have since been some updates to the plan. City Engineer and City Administrator gave a brief overview of the plan. Commissioner Pierce made a motion to approve the 2026 capital improvement plan. Commissioner Uhlenkamp seconded the motion, and the motion was approved unanimously on a roll call vote.

10) Police Department Facility Cost Estimate Report

The City Administrator reviewed the reports from the architectural firms and provided the conclusions that the working group came up with after analyzing the reports.

For the prospect of moving the Police Department to the Western Equipment Finance building, the report showed the Police Department using just the northeast corner of this building with estimates for renovation and acquisition totaling a range of \$3.9 to \$4.9 million. It was determined by the working group that unless there are other public safety partners on board prior to the purchase, like the Sheriff's Office and 911/dispatch, this building does not make sense for the City of Devils Lake to purchase.

The report for the Traynor Law was reviewed with estimates for renovation and acquisition totaling a range of \$2.6 - \$3.6 million. The biggest cost driver is whether or not it would be appropriate or cost effective to include a renovation of the basement with the City's upgrades to the facility.

The City Administrator said the estimates to build new on a downtown City-owned parking lot would cost \$3.5 to \$5 million depending on square footage. He said the working group's consensus was that if a full renovation of the Traynor Building was what the City felt was most appropriate, then it would probably make the most sense to just build new.

Questions and discussion continued on the police department facility. President Moe said he'd like to see a modest fix up to the Traynor Building occur to get the Police Department downtown in a financially responsible manner. He did say that it appeared the consensus of the full City Commission was that the city builds new, unless they can get other departments/agencies to join than the Western building would be more beneficial. The City Commission asked that the Mayor and City Administrator inquire about the County and Law Enforcement Center's interest in partnering and if there is a path forward that is possible at that location.

11) Extension of Letter of Intent – Stride Development

The City Administrator and City Attorney reviewed a proposed extension of the prior Letter of Intent with Stride Development. The provided extension would extend the Letter of Intent to March 31, 2026. Commissioner Pierce made a motion to improve the extension of letter of intent for Stride Development. Commissioner Uhlenkamp seconded the motion, and the motion was approved unanimously.

12) Tree Purchase Order with Landscapes Unlimited

Commissioner Pierce made a motion to table the tree purchase order with Landscapes Unlimited. Commissioner Knowski seconded the motion, and the motion was approved unanimously.

CITIZEN COMMENT

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

- 1) November 2025 Financial Report

LIST OF BILLS

Commissioner Knowski made a motion to approve the list of bills as submitted. Commissioner Pierce seconded the motion, and the motion was approved unanimously on a roll call vote.

SPENCER HALVORSON
CITY ADMINISTRATOR/AUDITOR

JIM MOE
PRESIDENT OF CITY COMMISSION