

Regular Meeting

**Echo City Council  
Tuesday March 10th, 2025**

The regular city council meeting of the City of Echo Minnesota was called to order by Acting Mayor Dan Larsen at 6:00 pm at the Community Center.

Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

**Present:** Councilman Mark Schettler, Councilman Darren Gjerset, Councilman Wyatt Bendix, Councilman Dan Larsen, Clerk Brian Pitzl, Public Work Supervisor Bryan Nielsen, Fire Chief Matt Dunphy. Absent was Mayor Nichole Kepler.

**Citizens/Guests:** Shannon Sweetman, Paula Busack

**Open Forum:** Shannon Sweetman from Sweetman Sanitation was present to discuss dates for city wide cleanup. Sweetman covers labor with the city paying disposal fees. Last year Sweetman's ended up donating the cost of disposal to Echo Days Celebration. Motion made by Councilman Gjerset, seconded by Councilman Bendix to hold the City-Wide Cleanup on Saturday, April 12<sup>th</sup> from 9:00 am to 12:00 pm. Motion carried. Paula Busack addressed the council regarding the policy for when a councilmember comes to a meeting intoxicated. There is nothing in the city personnel policy. Paula also brought up the condition of some properties with junk vehicles and junk on properties. The city council has addressed these issues before and would need to spend time and money on attorney fees to really enforce the city ordinances.

**Approval of Minutes & Resolutions:**

Motion to approve, February 11th, 2025, Regular Meeting Minutes, was made by Councilman Gjerset, seconded by Councilman Schettler. Motion carried unanimously.

**Reports:**

Matt Dunphy- Fire Chief: Informed the council that Fire Fighter Alec Dirnberger has retired from the department after over 50 years of service. Matt has talked to the Wood Lake Fire Department regarding the water drop tank that was damaged at a recent fire. Wood Lake would like to fix it and keep it as a backup and give their old backup one to Echo. The council had approved replacing the tank at last month's meeting with the City of Echo receiving the damaged one. The council would like to see that the Fire Department does get a tank in return. Looking at adding the First Responders to the Fire Department PERA retirement if this is possible. Still having a few individuals having struggles with the written testing. There are other options for training that the city will look into. Matt talked with a grant writer who is willing to pursue grants to replace equipment and gear. The grant writing fees are around \$600-\$700.

The council encouraged Matt to proceed. SCBA are obsolete and can no longer get parts for them. Has not heard back from the firefighter who was put on temporary leave.

Chastity Kuehn-

Maintenance Supervisor Nielsen- Inquired about summer help. City usually has help for an average of 20 hours per week. There was discussion about getting mowing bids for the cemetery weekly and the ponds for every other week. Resigned with Bollig Engineering regarding the Lead Service Line Replacement phase 2. This is to determine the material type for any remaining 15 unknowns reported the initial service line inventory records. This is at no cost to the city. The old gas station is slated for demolition some time this year. All the curb stops, shutoffs, street valves, hydrants, and hydrant shutoffs have been marked with GPS mapping. Abandoned lines will also be marked. There is a software company that this information will be sent to and will tell you within 6 inches of where the line is located. The yearly fee for this is \$570 with the first year possibly included with the second round of the Lead and Copper Study. Other charges for the equipment to run the software would run about \$3,750, which includes the collector and tablet. Possible state OSHA 50/50 grant for this.

Mayor Kepler-

Councilman Schettler

Councilman Gjerset – Darren went to the cemetery to look at some of the stones that need repair. There hasn't been anything done for a few years. Looking at a cost of around \$350 to \$400 per stone to repair about 10 stones. The city has roughly \$15,000 of the cemetery funds to cover any costs. Motion made by Councilman Schettler, seconded by Councilman Bendix to approve the repairs. Motion carried with Councilman Gjerset abstaining. Working with a homeowner in town to have a house that is in need of repair to do something with it.

Councilman Bendix – Brought up the lack of heat in the city shop office. The maintenance supervisor has to open the door to the shop to get enough heat in the office. Suggested an electric wall mount heater for the office. The city shop has a dirt floor and there is a lot of dust that comes into the office and gets into the office equipment. Recommended digging out some of the dirt and putting crushed granite in to reduce the amount of dust. Bryan will get prices on cement for a section of the shop, heater, and any crushed granite.

Councilman Larsen – Had citizens talk to him about the new mayor and the fact that they do not know who she is. Nichole has been participating in the E.C.H.O. group and would like to get more involved in the community.

Clerk Pitzl – The Appeals and Equalization Meeting will be April 16<sup>th</sup>, 2025, at 6:30 pm. The 2024 Audit should be ready for the April Meeting. The clerk is looking into other options for an insurance agency to handle the city's insurance needs.

**Old Business:**

**New Business:** Noxious Weed meeting is Thursday March 20<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 am in Clarkfield. The city clerk will attend. There was a citizen complaint regarding a couple dogs running at large. The clerk will type up a letter notifying the owners of the ordinance violations and 2 council members will deliver it.

**Consent Agenda:** Motion made by Councilman Schettler, seconded by Councilman Bendix to approve the consent agenda consisting of Bills, Payroll, and Bank Information. Motion carried unanimously.

**Adjournment:** Motion was made by Councilman Bendix, and second by Councilman Schettler to adjourn regular meeting at 7:10 pm. Motion carried unanimously.

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Mayor Nichole Kepler

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City Clerk- Brian Pitzl