

CITY OF BALATON
REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING
October 13, 2025, at 7pm

1) CALL TO ORDER: The regular meeting of the Balaton City Council was called to order at 7:01pm on Tuesday October 13, 2025, by Mayor Lonnie Lambertus

2) ROLL CALL

- a) **Present:** Mayor: Lonnie Lambertus, Council Members: Tracy McCloud, Greg Erickson, Dylan Fricke, Curt Paradis
- b) **Absent:**
- c) **Also Present:** Sheriff Eric Wallen; Kasey Holm, Fire Chief, Josh Torgeson – Public Works; Jody Kruger-Deputy Clerk; Stephanie Fricke-City Clerk in Training; Roberta Joehnck-Acting City Clerk; Per Peterson – Headlight Herald; Matt Gross-Attorney; Balaton Residents Mary Timmerman, Kim Wall, Lou Anderson, Joe & Cookie Cooreman, Julie Livingston, Caitland Miller

3) APPROVE MINUTES: A motion was made by Erickson and seconded by Fricke to approve the regular meeting minutes of September 15, 2025, Special Meeting September 15, Emergency Meeting of September 16, 2025 and the Special Meeting of September 22, 2025. Motion carried by all present.

4) FINANCIALS:

- (a) **Audit Bills, Claims & Demands:** No questions or corrections. A motion was made by Fricke and seconded by Erickson to approve the bills as presented. Motion carried by all present.

5) REQUESTS AND COMMUNICATIONS:

- a) **Street Repair** – Mary Timmerman/Cookie Cooreman: Concern about the status of the street repair schedule. \$90,000 was allocated in 2025 budget and again for 2026. Public Works Manager Torgeson recommends the areas that need to be repaired. Fricke and Erickson explained the current status and plans. Timmerman asked about the \$300,00 in undesignated funds and can that be allocated to street repair. Cooreman commented that there are federal grants available, the city could get a grant writer. This expense would need to be budgeted. Cooreman commented that Currie did a large infrastructure project using grant funds. The City needs to show need, pictures, infrastructure, pictures, etc. Grant writer could do this. An Engineering firm needs to be the grant writer. Citizens want to see a plan of 1 year, 5 years, 10 years.

6) PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

- a) Lou Anderson is concerned about cleaning up the city. There are many yards with garbage, swimming pools, etc. Citizens need to be responsible for their properties. Anderson feels this makes the city look shabby and junky. Ordinances need to be enforced. Can the time frame be shortened. Mary Timmerman commented on mowing, trimming trees, bushes, etc. Gross stated the property owner is responsible for these things to be done. Attorney Gross stated the City has identified properties. There is an abatement process to take care of these situations. City notifies the homeowner, a specific time period must lapse, City then must to pass a resolution to move forward, then further steps are taken. It takes up to 3-5 months minimum, and it is expensive. Torgeson voiced what the city will do and encourage homeowners to go to their churches, etc. to get the violations taken care of. Many homeowners don't want help. Offers have been made to citizens to contact the city for use of city equipment to assist. Sheriff Wallen asked if there was an ordinance so they could write citations. This total nuisance process is 12 months. City Attorney Gross explained that city employees cannot go on private property. Gross clarified the city employees can go on a property to mow and then assess the fees. Anything else needs a court order. Cooreman suggested setting a deadline that this would be accomplished. Fricke clarified what the city is doing. Erickson stated EDA is taking care of the Baack home on Maple. House will be removed and cleaned up.

7) REPORTS – OFFICERS, BOARDS, COMMITTEES

- a) **Water/Sewer/Garbage Delinquent Accounts:** Delinquent account list was reviewed. Deputy Clerk Kruger reviewed the status of each of the outstanding delinquent accounts. Torgeson stated that account 160-006 they cannot find the curb stop. The resident knows the city can't shut him off. Overdue portion of the bill can be assessed. Question was asked if the city can put in a curb stop and assess it? There would need to be a special meeting to assess and then certify it to taxes. This gives the citizen a time frame to respond. Curb stop could be put in for \$3000. The property owner would be assessed for the cost. Paradis and Fricke agreed about putting together a plan to put in a curb stop.
- b) **City Personnel**
 - 1) MN Paid Leave Update – information in packet. Legislature passed MN Paid Leave law and it will be effective January 1, 2026. It requires all cities and employers to implement Paid Leave for eligible employees. Employee must earn a minimum of \$3900 per year. MN Paid leave only for serious health conditions, family leave, or medical leave up to 12 weeks. The maximum an employee can receive is \$1124 per work week. There is a cap on total earnings for Paid Leave. City pays premium .44 percent to the State and the employee pays .22%. Requests for Paid Leave require proof. City needs to determine if leave is to be full days or partial days. Policy needs to be set. Attorney Gross will have policy ready for November Meeting. Motion to appoint City Clerk to be plan administrator was made by Fricke and seconded by Erickson. Motion carried by all present.

c) **Public Works:**

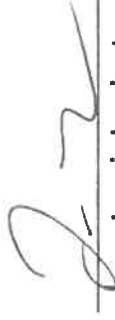
- 1) **Payloader:** A motion was made by Paradis to trade the payloader and use undesignated funds for funding of the payment. Motion was seconded Fricke. Motion carried by all
- 2) **MN Dept. Health – Lead & Copper Rule Improvement:** 19 Sites are affected in Balaton: Removal needs to be done by 2033. City has no lead lines but does have 10 galvanized that will need to be updated by 11/1/2027. Dept of Health dropping acceptable levels from 15 milligrams to 10 milligrams. A plan must be submitted by 12/1/25. Torgeson contact ISG. They found a grant to help with the report to MDH. Received a call from Bollig Engineering out of Willmar to help write grants. Learned there would be funds for a tree removal grant. Torgeson wants to get 2 engineering companies to meet with Council in November and get a list of needs ie. Relining current sewer lines or dig up and replace sewer lines. Water plant was built in 1980 and needs to be upgraded. Storm sewers also need upgrading. Torgeson will set a meeting with Engineers in November. Need a proactive engineering group.
- 3) **Well #4 Motor Replacement** Thein Well: Replaced motor in Eastbay. Cost \$6000.
- d) **EDA:** EDA purchased the Baack property. Fire department waiting for Advanced Securities to give the all clear to do a controlled burn. Target date of November 1 for cleanup.
- e) **Zoning:**
 - 1) **Ordinance Update – Fencing:** Need to set a public hearing for the November meeting. Fee will be added to the Zoning Permit fees. A motion was made by Erickson and seconded by Paradis to set Public Hearing on the Ordinance for November 10, prior to the Council meeting. Motion carried by all present.
- f) **Lyon County Sheriff Department**
 - 1) The Lyon County Sheriff Wallen handed out the September 2025 incident report. There were 25 calls. Quiet month.
- g) **Liquor Store:** Working with the Toast program to get reports cleaned up.
- h) **Community Center:** Booked for the month of October and almost every weekend to end of year.
- i) **Fire/Ambulance Department:**
 - 1) Fire Hall Furnace Replacement Update: Completed
 - 2) Ambulance: Fire Chief Holm has put together prices for pagers, radios and replacement of the unit radio. The Unit radio needs to be replaced every 5-7 years. \$24,000 comes out of state money that was received first of year, plus the furnace upgrade will leave balance of \$392 in fund. A motion was made by Paradis and seconded by Fricke to purchase the pagers, radios and unit radio through state funds. Motion carried by all present.
 - 3) Pumpers tested last month. Both failed. Over \$8000 to replace the pumps. Holm wants to repair the main pumper 601 at a cost of \$4033. The Fire account has funds left in the budget. Move funds from testing to repairs to do upgrade. Plan to repair 603 at a cost of \$4500 after the first of the year. A motion was made by Erickson and seconded by Paradis to repair the pump on 601 now and 603 after the first of year. Motion carried by all present.

8) **MISCELLANEOUS:**

- a) **American Red Cross – Shelter Survey Form:** The American Red Cross would like to designate the Community Center as an emergency shelter in case of a disaster. Torgeson is also working on upgrading the generators. They are from WWII. Horn stated there is a plug on the side of the Community Center. It's by the Air Conditioner. There is no transfer switch. Need to find a grant to complete the upgrade. Need to budget generator upgrades for all areas: Community Center, Wells and Lift Stations.
- b) **Fall clean-up day / Fall newsletter:** There will be no Fall Clean Up. Newsletter was sent Friday, October 10th.
- c) **City Hall Office Chair Replacement:** The office chairs need replacement. A motion was made by Paradis to replace the office chairs with a maximum expenditure of \$350. Motion was seconded by Erickson. Motion carried by all present.
- 9) **ADJOURNMENT:** With no further business, a motion to adjourn was made by Erickson and second by Paradis. Motion was carried by all present. The meeting adjourned at 8:09 pm.



Roberta Joehnck, City Clerk-Treasurer



Lonnie Lambertus, Mayor