CLEARWATER CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING
JANUARY 12, 2026

1. **Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance: 7:00 p.m. at City Hall**

- Mayor Lawrence called the Clearwater City Council to order Monday, January 12, 2026, at 7:01 p.m. in the Council Chambers. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Members present were Mayor Lawrence, Council Members Crandall, Senn, and Everett. Member Schwinghammer was absent. Also present were members of the public, staff, and guests.

2. **Approval of Agenda**

- Staff requested two additions to the Agenda, 1) Late fee waiver request to Public Forum, and 2) addition to claims for $592.00.
- **MOTION** by Everett to approve Agenda with the requested additions, seconded by Senn, all voted aye. **MOTION CARRIED 4-0.**

3. **Wright County Sheriff's Report**

- Deputy Mire introduced himself as a new deputy covering the Clearwater area. He also reported on some local traffic stops, including some for running the stop sign at the Smith Street/Ash Street intersection. A resident from the audience commented that no one stops there.

4. **Public Forum**
   - Resident Brian Youngdahl asked for relief on his water bill due to a softener that went out, causing a water leak.
   - Resident Randee Morgan asked in writing for relief on a late fee due to personal issues.
   - **MOTION** by Lawrence to add these items to New Business, seconded by Everett, all voted aye. **MOTION CARRIED 4-0.**

5. **Consent Agenda**
   a. **Claims/Accounts Payable in the Amount of $ 440,842.66 + $592.00 = $441,434.66**
   b. **Approval of Minutes from 12-08-2025 Regular City Council Meeting**
   c. **Res 2026-02 – Pre-Authorization of Claims Payments**
   d. **2025 Year-end Review**

- **MOTION** by Crandall to approve Consent Agenda as amended, seconded by Senn, all voted aye. **MOTION CARRIED 4-0.**

6. **Old Business**
   a. **Consider Fire Department Policy**
   - Smythe gave an overview of a proposed fire department policy which creates an appeals board to hear appeals of decisions related to annual service credits for the fire department pension plan.
   - **MOTION** by Lawrence to approve, seconded by Senn, all voted aye. **MOTION CARRIED 4-0.**

   b. **Consider Food Shelf Donation**
   - Per the city council's request, Smythe explained the city's financial position at year-end prior to the audit and any audit adjustments. Member Crandall stated it would be nice to be able to tie any donation to a specific "need". Members would like to see year over year statistics for the food shelf and see any trends.
   - **MOTION TO TABLE** by Lawrence, seconded by Crandall, all voted aye. **MOTION CARRIED 4-0.**

- Staff asked to obtain statistical data from the food shelf.

c. Res 2026-03 – Calling for Hearing on Proposed Assessments

- **MOTION** by Lawrence to approve Resolution 2026-03, seconded by Crandall, all voted aye. **MOTION CARRIED 4-0.**
- **MOTION** by Lawrence to set the interest rate at the current state bond sale rate, seconded by Everett, all voted aye. **MOTION CARRIED 4-0.**
- **MOTION** by Crandall to set the term of collection at five (5) years, seconded by Lawrence, all voted aye. **MOTION CARRIED 4-0.**

7. New Business

a. Discussion – Park Commission

- Smythe gave an overview of the parks project report and explained that unless the Local Option Sales Tax is extended, the duties for which the Park Commission was formed are largely at an end. She stated that there was a suggestion to convert this to a Park and Recreation Commission but the current members were not necessarily interested in staying on a new commission with a different agenda.
- Members suggested having the current Park Commission work on a transition plan towards a Park and Recreation Commission along with developing a plan for recruiting members.

b. Res 2026-01 – Approving Annual Appointments

- Members discussed annual board appointments. Most wanted to stay on the same boards. Member Senn stated she would like to drop EDA, as it conflicts with her food shelf duties. Members suggested she stay on and leave meetings early if needed, as no other Members were available to take this position.
- **MOTION** by Lawrence to approve Resolution 2026-01 with the addition of Member Everett to the Planning Commission and re-appointment of Member Schindele to the Park Commission, seconded by Crandall, all voted aye. **MOTION CARRIED 4-0.**

c. Consider Website Quotes

- **Members discussed the staff recommendation on the website quotes.**
- **MOTION** by Lawrence to accept the quote from Catalis, seconded by Senn, all voted aye. **MOTION CARRIED 4-0.**

d. Randee Morgan Late Fee

- Members considered the written request from Randee Morgan to waive the late fee on her utility bill. Members expressed sympathy for her situation but declined to waive the fee.
- **MOTION** by Crandall to decline to waive the late fee due to fairness to other residents and the Council's precedent of not waiving late fees, seconded by Lawrence, all voted aye. **MOTION CARRIED 4-0.**

e. Brian Youngdahl Water Break

- Members considered the request from Brian Youngdahl related to his water break. Members have previously adjusted fees for situations similar to this. Members asked several questions, trying to determine a fair adjustment. Members asked staff to bring back a two-year bill history so they could determine an average.

f. Closed Session – City Administrator Performance Review

- Meeting closed at 7:46 p.m. to conduct the City Administrator's annual performance review.
- Meeting was re-opened at 8:31 p.m.
- Mayor Lawrence provided a brief summary that the City Council was satisfied with the job performance of the City Administrator.

g. Res 2026-04 – Approving Step Increase

– **MOTION** by Crandall to approve Resolution 2026-04, seconded by Everett, all voted aye. **MOTION CARRIED 4-0.**

8. Committee Reports

a. Mayor and Council

– Mayor Lawrence stated that the Wright County Mayor's Association (WCMA) met In December in Maple Lake. There was a lot of discussion about roundabouts. Also learned that Sheriff Deringer is not running for re-election.
– Mayor Lawrence also spoke at Clearview Elementary about the League of Minnesota Cities (LMC) mayor for a day contest.
– Member Everett attended the event held in Becker by LMC, various cities shared information.

b. Boards

– Sewer Authority – Had a special meeting on staffing in December. Meeting again January 22, 2026.
– EDA – Meets January 20, 2026. Had their business social in December. Not as well attended as previous year. Member Crandall is attending a legislative review at the St. Cloud Chamber on January 21, 2026.
– Planning Commission – Did not meet.
– Park Commission – Did not meet.
– Fire Relief Board – Having their annual dinner in January.
– Fire Commission – Hoping to meet late January.

c. Staff

– Smythe reported on the following:
  - Security updates are in progress at city hall.
  - We have received several applicants for the open Public Works position.
  - Annual audits for city and sewer authority are happening mid-February.
  - Noted the perfect liquor compliance results.
  - Provided brief update on splash pad, which is in progress and still tracking for spring installation.
  - Noted various commercial lots that have recently been listed for sale.
  - Informed the city council that 30+ letters were sent regarding snow removal compliance in Cedar South.
– Member Senn noted some changes to state licensing for special events, will forward email message to Smythe.

9. Other Business

a. Next Regular Meeting – February 9, 2026 at 7:00 p.m.

– Next meeting date/time confirmed.

10. Adjournment

– **MOTION** to adjourn by Senn, seconded by Everett, all voted aye. **MOTION CARRIED 4-0.**
– Meeting adjourned at 8:51 p.m.

ATTEST

Annita M. Smythe, City Administrator

APPROVED

Andrea Lawrence Wheeler, Mayor