CLEARWATER CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING
FEBRUARY 9, 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, February 9, 2026, at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Members present were Mayor Lawrence, Council Members Crandall and Everett. Members Senn and Schwinghammer were absent. Also present were members of the public, staff, and guests.

2. **Approval of Agenda**

– Due to conflict-of-interest concerns, Member Everett asked to pull a claim payment from the Consent Agenda that is a rental refund to her for $100.
– **MOTION** by Crandall to approve Agenda with the requested change, seconded by Everett, all voted aye. **MOTION CARRIED 3-0.**

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

– None.

4. **Public Forum**
   – James Thiesen, owner of Flinstones Bar, expressed concern about the sheriff's deputies and state patrol targeting local bars for traffic enforcement. He stated traffic calls are way up from years ago and taxpayer resources could be used in better ways.

5. **Consent Agenda**
   a. **Claims/Accounts Payable in the Amount of $ 283,885.25 - $100.00 = $283,785.25**
   b. **Approval of Minutes from 01-12-2026 Regular City Council Meeting**
   c. **Res 2026-05 – Establishing Mail Ballot Precinct**
   d. **Res 2026-06 – Authorizing Fund Transfers and Budget Amendment**
   e. **Res 2026-07 – Approving Temporary Liquor Licenses**
   f. **Res 2026-09 – Approving Temporary Gambling Permit**

– **MOTION** by Crandall to approve Consent Agenda as amended, seconded by Lawrence, all voted aye. **MOTION CARRIED 3-0.**
– **MOTION** by Lawrence to approve $100.00 rental refund to Everett, seconded by Crandall. Voting aye – Lawrence, Crandall. Abstaining – Everett. **MOTION CARRIED 2-0** with Everett Abstained.

6. **Old Business**
   a. **Consider Quotes – Sound Panels for Lions Pavilion**
   – **MOTION** by Lawrence to accept quote from Innovative Acoustics, seconded by Everett, all voted aye. **MOTION CARRIED 3-0.**

7. **New Business**
   a. **Public Hearing – Spring Street Storm Sewer Assessments**
   – Mayor Lawrence opened the public hearing at 7:10 p.m.
   – Bernard Hilla from 845 Spring Street handed out materials highlighting damage to his property from the past flooding. He stated he does not believe assessments are warranted and wanted to know the city's plan for addressing the damage.

- Donna Heaton from 850 Spring Street also asked about runoff damage to her property. She has large areas of erosion and places where the lawn is now missing.
- Administrator Smythe stated the city had received a request for deferment from 925 Spring Street. They have received a deferment for previous assessments as well.
- No written comments were received.
- Public hearing was closed at 7:14 p.m.

b. Res 2026-08 – Adopting Assessments – Spring Street Storm Sewer Improvements

- Mayor Lawrence stated that the plan discussed last summer related to property damage was to wait until the project was completed so the damage would be mitigated, then review and determine an action plan for repairs. Staff will visit properties in the spring and propose a repair plan.
- Members discussed pros and cons of the assessment.
- Smythe reminded Members of staff's concerns about the costs to manage the assessments versus the low dollar amount being assessed and whether there was sufficient benefit to justify the costs.
- **MOTION** by Crandall to decline to adopt Resolution 2026-08, seconded by Everett, all voted aye. **MOTION CARRIED 3-0.**

c. Consider Joining I94 Corridor Coalition

- Smythe gave an overview of the I94 Corridor Coalition, the project goals that include expanding I94 to three lanes to St. Cloud, and the amount of progress to date. The city's estimated dues would be about $1,100 to join and would include a board seat. The project is at a critical stage where more support is needed from the Clearwater to St. Cloud areas.
- **MOTION** by Lawrence to join I94 Corridor Coalition, seconded by Everett, all voted aye. **MOTION CARRIED 3-0.**
- Members wanted more information about meeting dates/times and input from the full City Council before appointing a representative. This item will be revisited in March.

d. Fire Department Annual Report

- Fire Chief Keller gave an overview of the annual report. Calls are continuing to increase. Members had questions about the number of firefighters. Clearwater currently has 24 of an authorized 30 members.
- **MOTION** by Crandall to approve appointed fire department officers, seconded by Everett, all voted aye. **MOTION CARRIED 3-0.**

8. Committee Reports

a. Mayor and Council

- Mayor Lawrence stated that the League of Minnesota Cities (LMC) Day at the Capitol is coming up and asked who would like to go. Members Lawrence, Crandall, Everett, and Administrator Smythe plan to attend.
- Mayor Lawrence also noted that she attended the fire department's annual banquet, which went well.

b. Boards

- EDA – Met and discussed 2026 program goals.
- Sewer Authority – Met and re-hired Chief Plant Operator Forsell.
- Planning Commission – Did not meet.
- Park Commission – Met and discussed the plan for extending the Local Option Sales Tax and reviewed a concept proposal for Depot Park. Some concerns about the ball team and discussion of a Park and Recreation Commission were tabled until next month.
- Fire Relief Board – Had their annual dinner.

- Fire Commission – Would like to meet soon. Member Schwinghammer has been out of town. Smythe asked if someone else could stand in, as the townships want to meet before March. Both Crandall and Everett offered to step in if the meeting is 7:00 p.m. or later.

c. Staff

- Smythe reported on the following:
    - City staff are working on migrating the city to a .gov domain. This will impact city email and other accounts. More information will be coming before the switchover.
    - Smythe attended a roundtable hosted by LMC for Wright County officials to discuss the impacts of ICE activity in local communities and provide insight how to work together cooperatively.
    - Smythe attended a recent I94 Corridor Coalition meeting. Several local legislators spoke at this event and mentioned plans for a possible bonding bill in this year's legislative session.
    - Reported that the Sewer Authority audit is in progress and the city's starts next week.
    - Reported that Mr. Youngdahl's meter history requested at the last meeting was not yet ready due to system issues. Will bring to next meeting.
- Engineer Kannas reported that federal transportation funding was approved, which included the remaining funding needed for the CSAH 7 project, so it is now fully funded.
- Members asked about our next steps on the north segment of T.H. 24. The primary issue is a lack of funding, although there are still some business concerns with the final design from MnDot. Members asked staff to meet with MnDot and assess where things stand.
- Mayor Lawrence reported that the final segment of the Beaver Island Trail also received funding.

9. Other Business

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

- Next meeting date/time confirmed.

10. Adjournment

- **MOTION** to adjourn by Lawrence, seconded by Everett, all voted aye. **MOTION CARRIED 3-0.**
- Meeting adjourned at 7:56 p.m.

ATTEST

Annita M. Smythe, City Administrator

APPROVED

Andrea Lawrence Wheeler, Mayor