



**Meeting of the City Council
Held at the Elk River City Hall
Tuesday, September 2, 2025**

Members Present: Mayor John Dietz, Councilmember Cory Grupa, Councilmember J. Brian Calva, Councilmember Mike Beyer, Councilmember Jennifer Wagner

Members Absent: None

Staff Present: City Administrator Cal Portner, Business Services Director/Assistant City Administrator Joe Stremcha, Police Chief David Kuhnly, Police Captain Darren McKernan, Police Captain Joe Gacke and City Clerk Tina Allard

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, the meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

3. CONSIDER AGENDA

Moved by Councilmember Wagner and seconded by Councilmember Beyer to approve the agenda. Motion Carried 5-0.

4. CONSENT AGENDA

Moved by Councilmember Calva and seconded by Councilmember Grupa to approve the following consent items as outlined in their respective staff reports. Motion Carried 5-0.

4.1 August 18, 2025, Minutes

4.2 Check Register

4.3 Resolution 25-45 approving Joint Powers Agreement between the Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension and the City of Elk River Prosecutor's Office, Agreements 25-18 and 25-19.

4.4 Agreement 25-20 approving Joint Powers Agreement for Traffic Safety Vehicle Program Among the Cities of Elk River, Big Lake, Becker, and the County of Sherburne.

4.5 Severance Agreement and Waiver of Claims

4.6 Approve Sale of Temporary and Permanent Easement to Sherburne County, Minnesota

4.7 Agreement 25-21: Accept Quote for Dredging of Municipal Pond

4.8 Temporary On-Sale Liquor License: Davis-Darrow-Meyer American Legion Post 112

4.9 Employee Termination

5. OPEN FORUM

No one appeared for open forum.

6. PRESENTATIONS, AWARDS, AND RECOGNITION

7. PUBLIC HEARINGS

There were no public hearings.

8. GENERAL BUSINESS

8.1 Discuss Work Session Items

Mayor Dietz questioned when the discussion about fire station funding would occur. Mr. Portner stated either September 15 or October 6.

8.2 Public Safety Aid for Community Engagement Items

The staff report was presented.

Moved by Councilmember Calva and seconded by Councilmember Grupa to approve the use of Public Safety Aid to purchase community engagement items. Motion Carried 5-0.

9. COUNCIL LIAISON UPDATES

9.1 Council Liaison Updates

The Councilmembers provided updates as outlined in the respective advisory board's minutes.

10. MOTION TO ADJOURN

Moved by Councilmember Beyer and seconded by Councilmember Wagner to adjourn the meeting of City Council. Motion Carried 5-0.

The meeting adjourned at 6:39 p.m.

11. WORK SESSION

11.1 2026 Budget Discussion

Mayor Dietz provided a handout of his budget cut recommendations. He noted the following:

- Take \$450,000 from the liquor store fund instead of \$850,000.
- Take \$200,000 from the General Fund Reserve, which will still leave it at 41–42%.
- \$250,000 in budget cuts in employee-requested positions.
- \$200,000 in items that can be prepaid in 2025. He further stated he could not find many items to prepay.

He noted that, even with all these suggested changes, the city would still be at a 5.4% budget increase. He was hoping for a levy increase of about 4%.

Councilmember Wagner concurred with not adding positions. She was hoping we could prepay more than \$200,000 of any one-time purchases from the 2025 budget. She noted a significant amount of new software and technology being requested and asked if all had to be implemented this year.

The Council asked for a chart listing software charges. Mr. Portner stated it may be difficult to complete before the next budget meeting. Councilmember Grupa stated that he is not in favor of any new technology if the Council can't have the data to make an informed decision.

Councilmember Beyer stated he would like to revisit the liquor store fund balance year-over-year.

Councilmember Wagner questioned the purchase of the Celebrate software and whether staff could work with the county to get the cell phone data needed in less than 72 hours.

Mr. Portner explained the proposed personnel changes. He noted the added accountant cost will be partially offset by moving the parks and rec admin/finance assistant out of the General Fund and to the Liquor Fund to handle liquor invoices. He stated the fire administration assistant is being hired as a part-time employee, which would offset some of the cost of the new fire position. The Council asked for updated data on these positions.

The Council concurred with scheduling a special budget meeting for September 15 at 4:00 p.m.

The Council concurred that a 4 % levy increase would be the goal.

Councilmember Beyer asked Mr. Portner to provide options to reduce the budget to get to 4%.

Moved by Councilmember Wagner and seconded by Councilmember Beyer to adjourn the meeting of City Council. Motion Carried 5-0.

The meeting adjourned at 7:06 p.m.

Minutes prepared by City Clerk Tina Allard.



John J. Dietz, Mayor



Tina Allard, City Clerk