City of Larchwood

City Council Meeting Minutes

July 13, 2026

1. Call to Order

Mayor Ken Kerkvliet called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call
Council Members Present: Ned Hodgson, Candie Medema, Tanner Tracy, Ted Underberg
Council Members Absent: Terry Viereck
Mayor: Ken Kerkvliet
City Employees: Sandi De Smet, Matt Bouwman, Jessica Hoberg, Zach Majeres
Community Members Present: Angela and Toni Merk, Rachel Potter, Shane Reinke, Jen Smit, Traci Wibeto, Steve Simons, Kyle Kramer, Carla Manning, Venus Van Tilburg, Kent Snyders.

Public Hearing – Resolution 2027-1 General Obligation Capital Loan Notes

Mayor Kerkvliet opened the public hearing at 6:00 p.m. regarding Resolution 2027-1 authorizing proceedings for the issuance of General Obligation Capital Loan Notes not to exceed $4,250,000 for the Community Building/Recreation Center project.
No oral or written comments were received.
Mayor Kerkvliet closed the public hearing at 6:02 p.m.

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2. Public Comments

Traci Wibeto provided an update on Family Days. Vendor participation indicated attendance was slightly higher than the previous year despite the heat. Discussion included relocating the inflatable attractions to a shaded area next year and noting that one food truck left early. Mayor Kerkvliet thanked Wibeto for her work organizing the event.

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3. Unfinished / Old Business

A. Community Center Update (Resolution 2027-1)

It was reported bid notices will be published August 3 with bids due August 20. A pre-construction meeting is scheduled for August 13 at City Hall. The City is awaiting notification regarding the CAT Grant application.
Motion: Medema moved to approve Resolution 2027-1.
Seconded by Underberg.
Roll Call Vote: Hodgson—aye; Medema—aye; Tracy—aye; Underberg—aye.
Motion carried unanimously.

B. Delinquent Accounts Update

Council reviewed the monthly delinquent account report. Staff will provide the report monthly. Council directed staff to enforce delinquent utility accounts according to City ordinances. A notice will accompany the July utility bills informing residents of the City's delinquent and late account procedures and encouraged payment plans with City Hall if necessary.

C. Electric Bicycle/Scooter Ordinance

Discussion was held regarding electric bicycle/scooter regulations and educational opportunities. Council discussed partnering with Lyon County EMS, the Fire Department, Sheriff's Office, and Kids Club to organize an e-bicycle/e-scooter safety event. Staff will continue researching the program for implementation next spring.

4. New Business

A. Residents Living on Main Street

Council discussed requests from Kent Snyders and Venus Van Tilburg regarding residential use within commercial buildings on Main Street. Discussion included concerns regarding first-floor residential occupancy, future commercial use of downtown buildings, existing residential units, and the need to clarify the C-1 zoning ordinance. Council agreed the ordinance should be reviewed by the Planning and Zoning Commission.

B. Residential Tax Abatement (Resolution 2026-22)

Motion: Hodgson moved to approve Resolution 2026-22 approving the residential tax abatement application for Randy and Laura Simons.
Seconded by Medema.
Roll Call Vote: Hodgson—aye; Medema—aye; Tracy—aye; Underberg—aye.
Motion carried unanimously.

C. Office Phone System Upgrade

Council reviewed a proposal from Alliance Communications to replace the City's office phone and fax system with a hosted phone system.
Motion: Tracy moved to approve the proposal.
Seconded by Medema.
Motion carried unanimously.

D. PTO for Full-Time Employees

The Council reviewed the City's current PTO policy and discussed updating the personnel policy to include additional benefits, including bereavement and military leave. A revised policy will be presented at a future meeting.

E. Tree Trimming Bill – Willy Underberg

Council discussed reimbursement for a tree removal that was in the City's right-of-way. The tree was removed through a private company and then the bill was presented to the city. Discussion included obtaining Council approval before removing trees located within City property.
Motion: Medema moved to reimburse the expense.
Seconded by Hodgson.
Vote: Motion carried.
Underberg abstained.

F. Venus Van Tilburg – Grate Replacement Request

Venus Van Tilburg requested that the tree grate in front of her business be removed and replaced with concrete due to slippery conditions now that the tree has died and been removed. Council discussed replacing the tree rather than removing the grate entirely. Public Works noted that tree roots on main street have caused damage to the irrigation system. Council will reach out to Stockwell regarding possible alternatives to improve safety while addressing the tree and irrigation concerns.

G. Lyon & Sioux Water

Council reviewed an addendum to the Lyon & Sioux Water purchase contract reflecting updated rates. Staff reported PFM is conducting a utility rate study. Council will review the study before considering future utility rate adjustments.

H. Open Flow Meter Monitoring System

Public Works reported the lagoon flow monitoring system is no longer providing accurate readings.
Motion: Tracy moved to approve replacement of the monitoring system.

Seconded by Medema.
Motion carried unanimously.

I. Carla Manning Wage Resolution (Resolution 2026-23)
Motion: Tracy moved to approve Resolution 2026-23 hiring Carla Manning at an hourly wage of $17.00 effective July 13, 2026.
Seconded by Medema.
Roll Call Vote: Hodgson—aye; Medema—aye; Tracy—aye; Underberg—aye.
Motion carried unanimously.

J. Kyle Kramer – Baseball Improvements
Kyle Kramer requested approval to use remaining budget funds for drainage improvements in the baseball dugouts and railing repairs.
Motion: Medema moved to approve the improvements.
Seconded by Tracy.
Motion carried unanimously.

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5. Reports from Standing Committees / Boards / Commissions

A. Public Works Report
No additional report.

B. Technology Report
Lauren Steers provided the Council with a demonstration of the City's newly launched website. She noted that the website is now live, with additional updates and corrections still to be completed.

C. Northwest Iowa Regional Housing Authority
Underberg reported that the Northwest Iowa Regional Housing Authority has revised its income eligibility guidelines. He also suggested inviting a representative from the Housing Authority to attend a future Council meeting to provide information and answer questions from both the Council and residents.

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6. Consent Agenda

Items approved included:

- Budget Report, Claims Report, Revenue Report & Treasurer’s Report
- Minutes from June 8, 2026 Council Meeting
- Building Permit – Randy Simons, Matt Bouwman & Mitch Van Beek
- Appliance Rebate – Chad Grotewold & Snyder’s Properties
- Approval of Cigarette License – Sports Center, Wildkat Junction, Quick Stop & Venus’s
- Sidewalk Repair Program – Chris Viereck

Motion: Hodgson moved to approve the Consent Agenda.
Seconded by Medema.
Motion carried unanimously.

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7. Comments / Other Matters

Mayor Kerkvliet reported the City of Alvord requested Chislic Fest be moved to a different weekend to avoid conflicts with their community celebration.
Mayor Kerkvliet and Deputy Clerk Jessica Hoberg will attend the League of Cities Conference in Bettendorf this coming September.
Discussion was held regarding the formation of a Park Committee to plan future park improvements in coordination with the Larchwood Community Group.
Mayor Kerkvliet also discussed aligning the City's utility billing cycle with REC's billing cycle for reporting purposes.

Council acknowledged receipt of a thank-you letter from Mid-Sioux.

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8. Adjournment

Motion: Hodgson moved to adjourn.
Seconded by Medema.
Motion carried unanimously.
Meeting adjourned at 7:19 p.m.