City of Blaine
City Council

September 15, 2025 | 7:00 PM
Blaine City Hall
10801 Town Square Drive NE
Blaine, MN 55449

MINUTES

1. Call to Order by the Mayor

The meeting was called to order at 7:00PM by Mayor Sanders followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and the Roll Call.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Roll Call

PRESENT: Mayor Tim Sanders, Councilmembers Terra Fleming, Chris Ford, Leslie Larson, Chris Massoglia, Tom Newland, and Jess Robertson.

ABSENT: None.

Quorum Present.

ALSO PRESENT: Interim City Manager/Community Development Director Erik Thorvig; Assistant Community Development Director Sheila Sellman; Safety Services Director/Police Chief Brian Podany; Finance Director Jason Zimmerman; Director of Administrative Services Scott Johnson; Director of Engineering Dan Schluender; City Attorney Eric Larson; Communications Manager Ben Hayle; and City Clerk Catherine Sorensen.

Mayor Sanders discussed how many Minnesotans were hurting due to the numerous acts of violence that have occurred in recent weeks. He believed America was in a crisis at this time and from this crisis there comes an opportunity to respond. He urged all Blaine residents and all Minnesotans to choose goodness and love. He hoped residents could make the right decision on how to treat each other. He encouraged residents to treat one another with dignity, honor, love and respect. He asked that everyone in the council chambers join him in a moment of silence.

Motion by Mayor Sanders, seconded by Councilmember Robertson, to adopt the agenda as amended adding Item 4.2 Appointment of the City Manager.

4. Awards - Presentations - Organizational Business

4.1. 2025-211 Police Officer Swearing-in Ceremony

Sponsors: Brian Podany, Safety Services Manager/Police Chief

Safety Services Director/Police Chief Podany stated when new officers successfully complete the field training program and advance to solo patrol, a swearing-in ceremony is performed in front of the city council. This is a special time for new officers and their families to celebrate their accomplishments and be recognized in front of the city mayor, councilmembers, city manager, Police Chief Podany, fellow police staff, and the public. He thanked the council for their continued support of the police department and then introduced new officers Mikael Dahlstrom and Michael Marohnic to the city council.

City Clerk Sorensen administered the oath of office to Officers Mikael Dahlstrom and Michael Marohnic and welcomed them to the Blaine Police Department. Badges were pinned on and a round of applause was offered by all in attendance.

Mayor Sanders stated Blaine had tremendous leadership within the Blaine Police Department and he thanked each of the officers for their sense of duty and service to the community. He stated he was grateful that these two new officers chose Blaine.

4.2 - City Manager Appointment

Motion by Mayor Sanders, second by Councilmember Robertson, to appoint Erik Thorvig as City Manager effective immediately.

Mayor Sanders reported the city received 40 applicants from its nationwide search for a new city manager. He explained this was a highly sought position and he was pleased to see the best candidate rose to the top for Blaine. He appreciated the commitment and steady hand Mr. Thorvig would bring to the city.

A roll call vote was conducted. Motion adopted unanimously.

A round of applause and standing ovation was offered by all in attendance.

City Manager Thorvig thanked the council for the trust they have placed in him first as the interim city manager and now as the city manager. He explained he was looking forward to continuing his relationship with each of the councilmembers, noting they were a great group to work with. He expressed his gratitude to all the employees who work for the city of Blaine stating the employees make this a great community to live and work in. Lastly, he stated he was excited to lead this community into the future.

5. Communications

None.

6. Open Forum

Open Forum is an opportunity for the public to share comments, concerns, or input on other items. While open forum is not intended to provide for response or discussion opportunities, if follow-up is needed, city staff will work to contact the speaker(s) outside of the meeting to arrange for that follow-up. Each speaker will be limited to 3 minutes with a maximum of 15 minutes set aside for open forum.

Mayor Sanders opened the Open Forum at 7:26PM.

Bruce Manthei, 4101 99th Avenue NE, shared comments regarding city ordinance, noting anything over 3 feet is a safety hazard. He disagreed with staff's interpretation of sight line issues at 99th Avenue/Lexington due to the new electrical box. He indicated the new electrical box was 4 foot 9 inches high due to the platform to box was on. He explained this was a tremendous safety concern. He reported he was also has concerned with the fact bicyclists no longer need to stop at stop signs and the potential safety concern this would create.

Susan Nygard, Scooter's Coffee, shared comments regarding her upcoming item for a second reading and adoption to allow off-site directional signage. She discussed the concerns the landlord was having in finding tenants for her building. She explained MAC supported the requested off-site directional signage. She commented further on the reasons for the off-site directional signage and requested council support.

Dana Carlson, 287 117th Avenue NE, shared concerns regarding possible crimes being committed against his family and other concerns.

Brent Nygard, Scooter's Coffee, shared Scooters was the only drive-thru in this area and if the off-site directional signage were approved, the city would not be setting a precedent.

There being no further input, Mayor Sanders closed the Open Forum at 7:42PM.

7. Approval of Consent Agenda:

All items listed under the "Consent Agenda" are considered to be routine by the City Council and will be enacted by one motion. There will be no separate discussion of these items unless a Councilmember so requests, in which event the item will be removed from the Consent Agenda and considered in its normal sequence on the agenda.

Moved by Councilmember Newland, seconded by Councilmember Robertson, that the following items on the Consent Agenda be approved.

Councilmember Massoglia thanked the Blaine Festival for their generous donation for the Aquatore Park basketball court.

Motion adopted unanimously.

7.1. 2025-212 Schedule of Bills Paid
Sponsors: Jason Zimmerman, Finance Director

7.2. 2025-213 Approval of Minutes

Sponsors: Cathy Sorensen, City Clerk

7.3. RES 25-127 Resolution Granting Final Plat Approval to Create Four Lots and Three Outlots to be Known as Lexington Crossing Second Addition at the Southwest Corner of Lexington Avenue and 125th Avenue NE. Blaine Lex Crossings 2025, LLC (Case File No. 25-0039/SAS)

Sponsors: Sheila Sellman, Interim Community Development Director

7.4. RES 25-167 Resolution to Accept a Donation from the Blaine Festival Committee in the amount of $26,632 for the Aquatore Park Basketball Court and Associated Budget Amendments

Sponsors: Jerome Krieger, Sr. Recreation Manager

8. 7:00 PM - Public Hearing and Items Published for a Certain Time

8.1. RES 25-149 Conduct Public Hearing and Adopt a Resolution to Vacate the Drainage and Utility Easements on Outlot B, Lexington Crossing, According to the Recorded Plat Thereof, Anoka County, Minnesota; Vacation No. V25-03

Sponsors: Daniel Schluender, Director of Engineering

Director of Engineering Schluender stated the city received a petition dated July 31, 2025 from Chris Moe representing HJ Development, LLP, requesting the vacation of all the drainage and utility easements lying over, under, and across Outlot B, Lexington Crossing; according to the recorded plat thereof, Anoka County, Minnesota. The property was originally platted as Outlot B, Lexington Crossing. The existing drainage and utility easements are no longer needed and new easements will be platted in accordance to the requirements with the platting of Lexington Crossing Second Addition. Engineering staff has reviewed the request and agrees with the vacation.

Mayor Sanders opened the public hearing at 7:44PM.

There being no public input, Mayor Sanders closed the public hearing at 7:44PM.

Moved by Councilmember Robertson, seconded by Councilmember Massoglia, to adopt a Resolution to Vacate the Drainage and Utility Easements on Outlot B, Lexington Crossing, According to the Recorded Plat Thereof, Anoka County, Minnesota; Vacation No. V25-03.

Motion adopted unanimously.

8.2. ORD 25-2590 First Reading

An Ordinance Amending Sec. 2.07. Salaries of the Blaine City Charter

Sponsors: Cathy Sorensen, City Clerk

City Clerk Sorensen stated council was asked to hold a public hearing regarding the proposed charter amendment and then hold first reading of the proposed ordinance regarding salaries of mayor and councilmembers.

Mayor Sanders opened the public hearing at 7:47PM.

There being no public input, Mayor Sanders closed the public hearing at 7:47PM.

Declared by Mayor Sanders that Ordinance No. 25-2590, "An Ordinance Amending Sec. 2.07. Salaries of the Blaine City Charter," be introduced and placed on file for second reading at the October 6, 2025 Council meeting.

9. Development Business

9.1. ORD 25-2584 Second Reading
Ordinance Approving a Rezoning from Heavy Industrial (I-2) to Heavy Industrial (I-2A) at 2801 101st Avenue NE. Manning Transfer (Case File No. 25-0032/SLK)
Sponsors: Sheila Sellman, Interim Community Development Director

Assistant Community Development Director Sellman stated the applicant is requesting a rezoning from Heavy Industrial (I-2) to Heavy Industrial (I-2A) to allow a reconfiguration of the outside storage/parking of trucks/trailers on two combined lots. Staff provided further comment on the request and reported the planning commission recommended approval.

Moved by Councilmember Newland, seconded by Councilmember Fleming, to adopt the Second Reading of Ordinance No. 25-2584, Approving a Rezoning from Heavy Industrial (I-2) to Heavy Industrial (I-2A) at 2801 101st Avenue NE.

Motion adopted unanimously.

9.2. RES 25-134 Resolution Granting a Conditional Use Permit for the Reconfiguration of the Outside Storage of Trucks and Trailers for the Existing Truck Terminal, Truck Repair Use and Two Buildings on One Parcel in the Heavy Industrial (I-2A) Zoning District at 2775 and 2801 101st Avenue NE. Manning Transfer (Case File No. 25-0032/SLK)
Sponsors: Sheila Sellman, Interim Community Development Director

Ms. Sellman stated the applicant is requesting a conditional use permit (CUP) to allow a reconfiguration of the outside storage/parking of trucks/trailers on two combined lots, and for two buildings on one lot. Staff provided further comment on the request and reported the planning commission recommended approval.

Moved by Councilmember Newland, seconded by Councilmember Fleming, to adopt a Resolution Granting a Conditional Use Permit for the Reconfiguration of the Outside Storage of Trucks and Trailers for the Existing Truck Terminal, Truck Repair Use and Two Buildings on One Parcel in the Heavy Industrial (I-2A) Zoning District at 2775 and 2801 101st Avenue NE.

Motion adopted unanimously.

9.3. ORD 25-2585 Second Reading

Ordinance Considering an Amendment to Section 34.09 of the City of Blaine Zoning Ordinance to Allow for Off-Site Directional Signage. Scooters Coffee (Case File No. 25-0035/ACK)

Sponsors: Sheila Sellman, Interim Community Development Director

Ms. Sellman stated the council is asked to consider the second reading of an ordinance to allow off-site directional signage. Staff provided background information on the request, reviewed the concerns staff had with this off-site signage request and reported the planning commission recommended denial of the ordinance amendment.

Moved by Councilmember Robertson, seconded by Councilmember Newland, to recommend denial of the Second Reading of Ordinance No. 25-2585, Considering an Amendment to Section 34.09 of the City of Blaine Zoning Ordinance to Allow for Off-Site Directional Signage.

Councilmember Larson asked if the amendment would allow for the directional signage requested by the applicant. Ms. Sellman reported this was the case.

Councilmember Larson inquired if the amendment language referring to the airport land would ensure the off-site directional signage could not be replicated elsewhere. Ms. Sellman indicated that was the reason this language was included. However, she noted there was other property along 105th Avenue that abuts the airport.

Councilmember Robertson questioned if there was any language in the current sign ordinance that did not allow them to put up current signage. Ms. Sellman stated the directional signage was not allowed, but as far as the building signage goes, the applicant would have to meet the site plan, but the building owner was not signing off on this permit.

Councilmember Ford reported he supported this request originally, but indicated this request goes against the city's ordinances. He explained he wanted to see small businesses in Blaine succeeding, but he did not want to open the city up to future requests for directional signs so for this reason he would not be supporting the off-site directional signage request.

Councilmember Newland stated he agreed with Councilmember Ford and noted he would not be able to support this exception. He explained he had a problem with the specific language that was written for this property as he wanted all businesses in Blaine to be treated the same. He indicated he would be supporting denial of the request.

Councilmember Larson reported he understood the council's concerns when it came to consistency, however, some requests required additional discussion. She stated with this request, the applicant was asking for assistance in order to thrive in the community.

Motion adopted 6-1 (Councilmember Larson opposed).

10. Administration

10.1. RES 25-152 Resolution Accepting a Bid and Award a Contract to R & K Industries LLC DBA Diversified Paving in the Amount of $242,892.00 for the 2025 Trail Improvement Project, Improvement Project No. P2501.

Sponsors: Daniel Schluender, Director of Engineering

Mr. Schluender stated accept a bid for the 2025 Trail Maintenance Project, Improvement Project No. P2501 and award a contract in the amount of $242,892.00 to R & K Industries LLC DBA Diversified Paving. Bids have been checked and tabulated, and it has been determined that R & K Industries LLC DBA Diversified Paving of St. Augusta, Minnesota is the lowest bidder. The parks department has worked with Diversified Paving on previous contracts. The base bid project plans include maintenance on trails that were identified by the parks trail rating program and includes 1,000 feet of trail within Kane Meadows Park that were damaged during sanitary sewer repairs. Alternate bid #1 project plans include approximately 1,500 feet of trails within Carrara West Park. Alternate bid #2 project plans include approximately 2,100 feet of trail within Territorial Park.

Mr. Schluender reported staff recommends that the low base bid plus the alternate bid #1 be accepted in the amount of $242,892.00, and a contract be entered into with R & K Industries LLC DBA Diversified Paving. The base bid work is identified as 2025 trail maintenance in the parks CIP and will be funded as such. The 1,000 feet of trail within Kane Meadows that were damaged during sanitary repairs will be funded by the 2025 sanitary sewer and storm water maintenance budgets. Staff recommends not awarding the alternate #2 bid as part of the 2025 trail improvement project. This work will be awarded under a separate contract as a separate agenda item through public works sanitary sewer maintenance. City council is also asked to approve a 10% contingency to bring the total project budget to $267,181.20. The funding source for this project is the 2025 parks CIP funds and 2025 sewer operating fund.

Moved by Councilmember Newland, seconded by Councilmember Massoglia, to adopt a Resolution Accepting a Bid and Award a Contract to R & K Industries LLC DBA Diversified Paving in the Amount of $242,892.00 for the 2025 Trail Improvement Project, Improvement Project No. P2501.

Motion adopted unanimously.

11. Other Business

City Manager Thorvig announced Ms. Sellman will now be serving as the Interim Community Development Director.

12. Adjournment

Moved by Councilmember Newland, seconded by Councilmember Robertson, to adjourn the meeting at 8:09PM.

Motion adopted unanimously.

Signed by ______________________

Tim Sanders, Mayor

Signed by ______________________

Catherine M. Sorensen, City Clerk