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## CITY OF BLUE LAKE CALIFORNIA

111 Greenwood Road  
P.O. Box 458  
Blue Lake, CA 95525

# Blue Lake City Council Minutes

Tuesday, February 20, 2025-City Council Special Meeting  
Skinner Store Building ~ 111 Greenwood Rd., Blue Lake ~ Behind City Hall

### 1. Called to Order: 6:30 p.m.

**2. Quorum Established:** Mayor John Sawatzky, Mayor Pro-Tem Elise Scafani, Councilmember Michelle Lewis-Lusso, Councilmember Katherine Napier, Councilmember Firor

**Staff Present:** City Manager Mager, Ryan Plotz-City Attorney

**Public Present:** Kent Sawatzky, Jean Lynch, Justin Goad, Beckie Thornton, Linda Cooley, Julie Christie, Lori Ponte, Terry Bayless

### 3. Approval of the Agenda:

**Motion:** To approve the agenda as presented

**Motion by:** Councilmember Firor

**Seconded by:** Councilmember Lewis-Lusso

**No Public Comment**

**Motion Summary:** Consensus

### 4. Public Comment on Closed Session Items:

**Kent Sawatzky:** Comments on the election and the City Manager's contract.

**Linda Cooley:** Comments on food permits in the park and battery storage project

**Erin McClure:** Comments on the water tank negotiations

**Jean Lynch:** Comments on the assessor parcel numbers not being listed on the agenda.

**Mackenzie:** Comments on the battery storage project and business outreach.

**Terry Bayless:** Comments on impacts to walking trails and the river from a battery project.

**Dave Ponte:** Concerned about negotiations regarding the battery project.

**Julie Christie:** Comments on the transformer.

**Beckie Thornton:** States she agrees with comments.

**Public Comment Closed.**

### 5. Closed Session

**Motion:** To enter into closed session

**Motion by:** Mayor Pro-Tem Scafani

**Seconded by:** Councilmember Firor

**Motion Summary:** Consensus

**Reconvened to open session at 7:40pm**

**Nothing to report out of closed session.**

1  
2 **1. Meeting Called to Order**

3 **2. Quorum Established**

4 **3. Approval of the Agenda**

5 **Motion:** To Approve the agenda as presented

6 **Motion by:** Councilmember Napier

7 **Seconded by:** Councilmember Firor

8 **Motion Summary:** Consensus

9  
10 **4. Public Comment on Non-Agendized Items**

11 **Adelene Jones:** Comments on the need for affordable housing in Blue Lake; the State is suing cities and  
12 hopes the Council is taking it seriously.

13 **Kent Sawatzky:** Comments on the Emporium Building and converting the space to live/work units.

14 **Mackenzie:** Concerned about food operations at the park.

15 **Julie Christie:** Comments on working together; doesn't support having a land acknowledgment.

16  
17 **Public Comment Closed**

18  
19 **5. Receive Update on Discussion with PT Blue Lake Redevelopment, LLC for a Battery Storage**  
20 **Project**

21 **Mayor Sawatzky introduces the item.**

22 **City Attorney Plotz-**Provides an overview of the discussions and shares a slideshow explaining the  
23 discussion items. PowerTransistions proposes to purchase two acres of land and demolish the existing above  
24 ground structures on the property; they would develop a 20 MW battery storage facility. In the future they  
25 would propose to lease or purchase four acres of land to develop a 100MW battery storage facility. The  
26 100MW facility would require major upgrades to the transmission facilities and would require extensive  
27 permitting; this could take 7-10 years to complete. PowerTransitions seeks a signed option agreement in  
28 March in order to meet the PG&E submission requirements as part of the RCEA request for offers.

29 **Councilmember Lewis-Lusso:** Appreciates the effort that's gone into the negotiations to get to this option.

30 **Councilmember Napier:** Comments on the negotiations and the change to a smaller project; this is more  
31 palatable; recommends reaching out to the businesses on Taylor Way and having a business focused meeting  
32 to discuss.

33 **Mayor Pro-Tem Scafani:** Comments on the formation of the ad-hoc outside of an open session  
34 council meeting in spite of multiple requests to agendize this since December, and the RCEA solicitation  
35 timeline which was inaccurately portrayed to council at the 12-10-2024 meeting. States she feels that  
36 Council was manipulated into approving the negotiation agreement at the new council's first meeting, has  
37 zero trust in the people feeding Council information and is a hard no on this project at this time.

38 **Attorney Plotz:** States that he has talked to RCEA several times regarding the timeline and the process.

39 **Councilmember Napier:** Questions what an approval tonight would obligate the City to?

40 **Attorney Plotz:** States that staff is only asking for direction to move forward; the City would not be  
41 obligated to anything at this point.

42 **Councilmember Lewis-Lusso:** States that she is concerned that comments have been made that she was  
43 railroaded into making a decision; she can make her own decisions and does her own research; she pushed  
44 for this meeting and feels that its informative.

45  
46 **Public Comment**

47 **Lori Ponte:** Comments on the EDC ad-hoc and what their role is in this project; appreciates the opportunity  
48 for the community to ask questions.

49 **Adelene Jones:** States that she is concerned about the structures on the site and the liability; agrees with the  
50 two acre hybrid option.

**Kent Sawatzky:** Agrees that the property needs to be cleaned up; recommends bringing the item back in September.

**Rebecca Collins:** Comments on the project being rushed and the connection to Enron.

**Terry Bayless:** Concerned about TetraTech being involved and the applicability of AB 205.

**Sherri Star:** Comments on the cost of demolition; toured a 10MW and 200MW battery site.

**Erin McClure:** Comments on the cost of the attorney.

**Lin Glen:** Excited that the City has an asset that PG&E is interested in; wants to explore other options and the value of the infrastructure.

**Julie Christie:** Comments on not turning this project into a negative.

**Beckie Thornton:** States that it's going too fast.

**Justin Goad:** Questions the process; if Council directs the attorney to move forward it doesn't bind the City; the site needs to be cleaned up quickly.

**Dave Ponte:** Comments on the assembly bill related to BESS projects.

### **Public Comment Closed**

**Mayor Pro-Tem Scafani:** Comments on other uses of the facility; would rather take too long to make a decision than make the wrong decision.

**Councilmember Firor:** States he supports the March timeline for presenting an option agreement and supports the hybrid project model.

**Mayor Sawatzky:** Asks if PowerTransitions is out if the March deadline can't be met.

**Attorney Plotz:** States that staff will not push to develop an option agreement to meet the March deadline if Council does not want to work toward that deadline.

**Councilmember Lewis-Lusso:** Comments that she doesn't want to halt the process if the March deadline can't be met.

**Councilmember Napier:** Comments on the deadline; chasing the March deadline doesn't commit the Council to anything. She has conducted research in the investors; the attorney has shown his expertise in understanding the structure.

**Mayor Pro-Tem Scafani:** Is there anything preventing the City from looking at demolition options?

**Councilmember Lewis-Lusso:** Questions the PG&E process and timeline.

**Attorney Plotz:** Clarifies the process; August is the anticipated demolition date.

**Mayor Pro-Tem Scafani:** Supports investigating other options that don't impact the ENA.

**Mayor Sawatzky:** Asks Council to provide clear directions to staff.

**Councilmember Napier:** States that Council can give clear direction on February 25<sup>th</sup>; allows time to conduct a tour and to hold the town hall.

**Attorney Plotz:** States that staff will pursue the hybrid model and receive direction from Council on the 25<sup>th</sup>.

### **Motion to Adjourn-9:20pm**

**Motion by:** Councilmember Firor

**Seconded by:** Councilmember Lewis-Lusso

**Motion Summary:** Consensus