

City of Blue Lake  
**Public Safety Commission Meeting Minutes**  
**March 3, 2025**



Commissioners in attendance: Alex Ricca, Adelene Jones, Ted Hales

Staff in attendance: Mandy Mager, City Manager

Council Liaison: Mayor Pro-Tem Scafani

Public attendance: Kent Sawatzky, Justin Goad, Terry Bayless, Rebecca Collins, Erin McClure, Michelle Lewis-Lusso, Marianne

**1. Meeting Called to Order: 7:00pm**

Quorum of the commission established.

**2. Approval of the agenda as presented:**

Motion: Commissioner Hales

2<sup>nd</sup>: Commissioner Ricca

No public comment

Vote: Consensus

Motion Summary: Motion carries.

**3. Public Comment: No Comments**

**Public comment closed.**

**4. Road Construction and Traffic Calming Update:** City Manager Mager presents on the status of the Greenwood Road Project. Construction is substantially complete and remaining items will be addressed in the Spring; including landscaping and amenity installations. Staff has received positive feedback from the school and residents on the route regarding traffic calming.

**Commissioner Hales:** Asks about the driveway to City Hall; recommends striping the drive lane.

**City Manager Mager:** Explains that the driveway was narrowed in order to reduce speeds and discourage traffic from entering and exiting from the wrong direction; striping the drive lane would impact drivers from accessing the water payment drop box.

**Commissioner Jones:** Asks staff about the installation of benches and where they would be located.

**City Manager Mager:** Explains that staff is evaluating several locations for the installation of trash cans, planters and benches. These amenities also create traffic calming features and could be installed at the larger bump-outs along the route.

**Commissioner Ricca:** States that the traffic calming is working and it's a very attractive project.

**Public Comment:**

**Kent Sawatzky:** Comments on the municipal code and bikes on the sidewalk.

**Kit Mann:** States that the people that live on Greenwood report that traffic has slowed down.

**Public Comment Closed.**

## **5. Sheriff Contract Presentation/Discussion**

City Manager Mager presents the item; the City has received the cost proposal for Fiscal Year 2025-2026 from the Humboldt County Sheriff. The cost proposal maintains current service levels and includes a \$20,000.00 cost reduction. Costs are based upon the allocation plan that was developed last fiscal year as part of the contract negotiation process. The cost proposal applies cost allocations to each City based upon population and actual costs. Staff is recommending the approval of the contract amount and has concerns about indemnification language in the proposed contract. Staff will work with the City's risk management group to address contract language concerns.

**Commissioner Hales:** Questions what happens if the language cannot be agreed to; supports the Sheriff services.

**Commissioner Ricca:** States his concern regarding the call logs provided by the Sheriff; only 1/3 of the calls are in City limits; \$170,000 on top of what is paid by residents in taxes is unfair to smaller jurisdictions.

### **Public Comment:**

**Kent Sawatzky:** Comments on call volume and State money received by the City to pay for law enforcement services.

**Councilmember Scafani:** States that the City receives State funding to pay for the Sheriff's contract.

### **Public Comment Closed.**

## **6. City of Blue Lake Battery Energy Storage Project Presentation and Update**

City Manager Mager provides an update on the proposed battery project at the former power plant and presents a slide show addressing community questions and concerns and misinformation. The presentation addresses the size of the project, project limitations, battery type, the appraisal process and the demolition and clean up of the site. The presentation addresses questions about impacts to the river and the drinking water source.

**Commissioner Ricca:** Recommends that the fire department be notified when battery systems and solar systems are installed. They present risks to firefighters during fire events. Recommends upgrading the fencing around the power plant property and feels that the public perception regarding the battery project is the biggest hurdle.

**Commissioner Hales:** Questions if checks are being made to the power plant site.

**City Manager Mager:** The site is monitored daily by staff and regular checks are made to the fencing.

### **Public Comment:**

**Kent Sawatzky:** Comments on the safety issues at the plant; the site needs to be cleaned up. States that City staff should have started on this sooner.

**Terry Bayless:** Comments on the presentation and the scope of the project being smaller than what was originally planned.

**Rebecca Collins:** Comments on the presentation and the statement that misinformation is being spread through the community.

**Kit Mann:** Comments on the battery type and the fire standards and compliance; states that safety is a priority for the developer as their insurance requires safety features.

**Marianne:** Comments on the value of the assets at the plant and concerned about a large company taking it over.

**Michelle Lewis-Lusso:** Provides information on sites that can provide scientific data on batteries and BESS projects; including energy.gov, energy.net and sciencedirect.com.

#### **7. Sheriff Call Data Review**

**Commissioner Hales:** States that the call data for the larger area is helpful; the Sheriff can provide the City data.

**Councilmember Scafani:** Comments on the Sheriff report; she'll reach out to the Sheriff about the Blue Lake specific data.

#### **Public Comment:**

**Kent Sawatzky:** Comments on Erin McClure's trespassing issues; promotes Neighborhood Watch.

**Public Comment Closed.**

#### **8. No Agency Check-In.**

**9. Public Safety Council Liaison Report:** Comments on the BESS presentation.

#### **10.Future Agenda Items:**

- Neighborhood Watch
- Update on fencing at Power Plant

#### **Public Comment:**

**Kent Sawatzky:** States that he doesn't support traffic calming on I Street; he likes the wide street; concerned about redwood roots.

**Public Comment Closed.**

#### **11. Motion to Adjourn: (9pm)**

**Motion by:** Commissioner Ricca

**Seconded by:** Commissioner Hales

**Motion Summary:** Consensus