



Blue Lake City Council Minutes

April 22, 2025~ 6:30 p.m. ~Council Meeting
Skinner Store



1 **These minutes were generated by AI from the original meeting recorded April 22, 2025.**
2 **The minutes were presented to Council at their regular December 23, 2025 Council**
3 **Meeting where corrections to the makers of the motions were revised.**

4 **1. CALL TO ORDER** Mayor Sawatzky called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

5 **Pledge of Allegiance** Council, staff and public stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

6 **Establish a Quorum of the Council** City Manager Mager established a quorum of Council
7 members. **Present:** Mayor Sawatzky, Councilmember Napier, Councilmember Lewis-Lusso.

8 **Absent:** Mayor Pro Tem Scafani*, Councilmember Firor.

9 *(Note: Mayor Pro Tem Scafani arrived shortly after roll call and participated in the meeting).*

10 **2. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA** Councilmember Napier raised a question regarding Item 12
11 (City Clerk Recruitment), inquiring if the discussion would cross privacy thresholds requiring a
12 Closed Session. City Manager Mager clarified that a general update on the process and
13 position would not meet the threshold for Closed Session, provided specific individuals were not
14 discussed in a way that violated privacy.

15 **Motion:** To approve the agenda. **Moved: Councilmember Lewis-Lusso Second:**
16 **Councilmember Napier Vote:** Ayes: Sawatzky, Napier, Lewis-Lusso, Scafani. Nays: None.
17 **Absent:** Firor. **Motion Carried 4:0**

18 **3. ADOPT PREVIOUS COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES a. March 25, 2025 – Regular Meeting**
19 Councilmember Napier requested a spelling correction for "Katheryn" on page 1, line 28. Mayor
20 Pro Tem Scafani requested a correction on page 3, item 7, to clarify that she withdrew a motion
21 before it died for lack of a second. She also requested the minutes reflect her strong opinion
22 regarding the need for a facilitator during the goal-setting discussion on page 3, item 8.
23 Councilmember Napier requested extensive additions to page 5 regarding the wastewater
24 treatment plant discussion. Specifically, she requested the minutes reflect Planner Rees's
25 statement that the plant has a plan to add 180 residential equivalent units, and anything beyond
26 that would require expansion. She also requested the inclusion of the statement that new
27 projects would be charged impact fees for improvements.

28 **Moved** To bring the March 25, 2025¹, regular meeting minutes back to the next meeting with
29 the corrections and additions stated by Councilmembers Scafani and Napier. **Motion by:**
30 **Councilmember Lewis-Lusso Second: Councilmember Scafani Vote: Unanimous.**

¹ The March 25, 2025 minutes were introduced at the August 26, 2025 meeting. Corrections to be made were introduced by Council to the Deputy City Clerk. Finalization of those minutes were completed.



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31 4. REPORTS OF COUNCIL AND STAFF

32 a. City Council Reports

- 33 ● **Councilmember Napier** Reported on attendance at "Elected Officials for Protecting
34 America" regarding offshore power; HWMA director evaluation and budget; RCEA rate
35 model meeting; and City website updates.
- 36 ● **Mayor Sawatzky:** Reported on the Chamber of Commerce meeting, RCEA
37 presentation, Summer Mixer planning (June 26), Dog House reopening, and Annie &
38 Mary Day planning.

39 b. City Manager Report:

- 40 ● **Town Square:** The project is substantially complete, pending the installation of the
41 shade trellis by volunteers (Old Crows) and final amenities like the bulletin board. A
42 handicap-accessible restroom is being ordered, with hopes for delivery by May 1.
- 43 ● **Sheriff Contract:** The City is waiting for a meeting with CIRA (risk management) and
44 other city managers to discuss indemnification language in the contract.
- 45 ● **Calgon Carbon:** The demolition permit process is underway, overseen by the Air Quality
46 Board to ensure hazardous materials (asbestos/lead) are handled correctly.
- 47 ● **Power Transitions:** Manager Mager clarified the timeline regarding the PG&E study.
48 The Council previously chose not to sign an option agreement by March, but PG&E
49 accepted the existing Exclusive Negotiating Agreement (ERN) as sufficient proof of site
50 control to allow the project into the study queue. This study will evaluate distribution
51 capacity and upgrade costs.
 - 52 ○ **Terri Bayles** has questions regarding the City Manager's report – specifically
53 Power Transitions, PG&E and the connection letter is available to public.
 - 54 ○ **Rebecca Collins** asks about ERN

55 5. PUBLIC COMMENT

- 56 ● **Adelene Jones:** Expressed strong disappointment that three council members voted
57 against adopting the Housing Element at a previous meeting. She warned of potential
58 lawsuits from the State, citing the historical cost of the Barkley lawsuit, and urged the
59 Council to reconsider and adopt the element to secure funding and avoid litigation.
- 60 ● **Terri Bayles:** Commended the Public Works crew for their quick response and overtime
61 work repairing a collapsed sewer pipe near her home. She expressed concern regarding



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62 the Power Transitions ERN, noting the original document specified 312.5 MW, while
63 recent discussions mention 20 MW, and asked for clarity on how changes are
64 documented.

- 65 ● **Linda Cooley:** Thanked the new Council for pausing to make informed decisions. She
66 requested that future updates on the battery plant and Calgon Carbon cleanup include
67 plain language explanations for the public, specifically regarding who is involved in the
68 hazardous material cleanup.
- 69 ● **Jean Lynch:** Clarified her perspective on the Barkley lawsuit, stating it was due to
70 unpaid bills and improper repairs, not the State. She reiterated her belief that the City,
71 not the State, should decide on low-income housing under Article 34.
- 72 ● **Julie Christie:** Due to Zoom issues, suggested moving reports to the beginning of the
73 meeting and requested "Manager Highlights" for better public visibility. She commended
74 Councilmember Napier's work on HCAOG.
- 75 ● **Beckie Thornton:** Encouraged Council to review the bingo ordinance. She commented
76 on commercial kitchen expenditures from 2022, specifically questioning a \$500 charge to
77 a kayak company.
- 78 ● **Barbara Russell** – inquired about options for the power plant site.
- 79 ● **Lin Glenn**-clarifies that Council wanted to meet with Planning Commission, not that they
80 were refusing to approve Humboldt housing element.

81 **6. CONSENT AGENDA a. Warrants and Disbursements** Councilmember Napier asked for
82 clarification on the status of RAO Construction payments (truck route). Manager Mager
83 confirmed the project is substantially complete with ~\$26,000 remaining for final punch list
84 items like drainage and striping. Council also asked about the \$13,000 PG&E invoice, which
85 Mager confirmed covers all city facilities and pumping. Mager clarified that the "Kayak Trinidad"
86 charge mentioned in public comment was for a summer camp field trip.

87 **Motion:** To approve the Warrants and Disbursements. **Moved: Councilmember Scafani**
88 **Second: Councilmember Lewis-Lusso Vote: Unanimous.**

89 **Motion Carried.**

90 **7. COMMISSION APPOINTMENTS** The Council considered an application from Lin Glenn for
91 the Public Safety Commission. Ms. Glenn was present via Zoom and answered Council
92 questions. She expressed a desire to integrate her experience with CERT (Community
93 Emergency Response Team) into the commission's work and facilitate better communication
94 between the two bodies. Councilmember Scafani voiced strong support for the appointment,
95 citing Glenn's steadfast community involvement.

96 **Public Comment:** Rebecca Collins endorses and supports Lin Glenn for her work in the
97 community.



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98 **Motion:** To appoint Lin Glen to the Public Safety Commission. **Moved: Councilmember**
99 **Scafani Second: Councilmember Lewis-Lusso Vote: Unanimous.**

100 **Motion Carried.**

101 **8. INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCE NO. 545-2025 – CALFIRE SEVERITY MAP ADOPTION**

102 City Manager Mager introduced the first reading of Ordinance 545-2025, which adopts updated
103 state-mandated Fire Hazard Severity Zone maps. She explained the City has little discretion as
104 this is a state mandate. The new maps show moderate fire zones encroaching into areas like
105 Northfield Terrace. **Council Discussion:** Councilmember Napier asked whether there was a
106 mechanism for residents to communicate their concerns about the criteria insurance companies
107 use and how this impacts residents. Mager noted that while Blue Lake is not in a "High" severity
108 zone, insurance companies use these maps combined with other data. She highlighted the
109 City's good water pressure and local fire department as mitigating factors.

110 **Public Comment:**

- 111 ● **Jennifer Coarse:** Noted that the State Insurance Commissioner has stated these maps
112 are for planning, not insurance, though insurers use their own risk stratification.
- 113 ● **Barbara Russell:** Asked if the City could partner with the State to get loans for residents
114 to upgrade to fireproof roofs.
- 115 ● **Julie Christie:** Expressed concern that the map does not accurately reflect wind
116 patterns or vegetation risks in town and urged focus on creating fire breaks.
- 117 ● **Alex Ricca:** Stated the two most effective actions for homeowners are installing metal
118 roofs and Hardie plank siding, and suggested the City look for funding sources to assist
119 low-income residents with these upgrades.

120 **Motion:** To accept the first reading of Ordinance 545-2025. **Moved: Councilmember Scafani**
121 **Second: Councilmember Lewis-Lusso Vote: Unanimous.**

122 **Motion Carried.**

123 **9. APPOINTMENT OF COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES TO REAL PROPERTY**

124 **NEGOTIATIONS** The Council discussed appointing representatives for active negotiations
125 (Corporate Yard, PowerTransitions, Baduwa't Project).

126 **Council Discussion:** Councilmember Scafani expressed a preference for having two council
127 members assigned to each negotiation to share the burden and ensure coverage.
128 Councilmember Napier supported this for continuity and representation. **Public Comment:**

- 129 ● **Barbara Russell:** Supported having Councilmember Scafani on the negotiating team.



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- 130 ● **Rebecca Collins:** Supports more involvement by Council and information for public on
131 this real property
- 132 ● **Alex Ricca:** Raised a concern about a potential "political conflict of interest" regarding
133 one of the properties, suggesting it limits who should be appointed.
- 134 ● **Julie Christie:** Supported distributing the work among different council members and
135 using ad hoc committees to avoid Brown Act violations while ensuring representation.

136 **Motion:** To designate the Mayor and Mayor Pro Tem as the interim Council representatives to
137 property negotiations and meetings until the full Council can revisit specific assignments.

138 **Moved: Councilmember Napier Second: Councilmember Lewis-Lusso Vote: Unanimous.**

139 **Motion Carried.**

140 **10. ESTABLISH AD-HOC COMMITTEE TO ADDRESS POWER PLANT ISSUES** Mayor Pro
141 Tem Scafani requested an ad hoc committee to address the 22-acre power plant site, citing its
142 complexity and safety concerns. **Council Discussion:** Mayor Sawatzky asked if the scope was
143 limited to safety. Scafani clarified that safety is the priority, but the scope could expand to
144 maintenance and development. Napier requested that the ad hoc first define its scope and
145 purpose before fully forming. Scafani offered to work with Councilmember Lewis-Lusso to
146 define that scope. **Public Comment:**

- 147 ● **Barbara Russell:** Expressed excitement, noting much could be done with volunteers to
148 clean up the "mess."
- 149 ● **Lisa Hoover:** Supported the committee, particularly to look at environmental safety and
150 cumulative effects.
- 151 ● **Alex Ricca:** Advised against having more than two council members to avoid Brown Act
152 issues and suggested the Public Safety Commission should have a seat at the table.
- 153 ● **Julie Christie:** Supported the ad hoc and suggested collaborating with existing
154 community groups or commissions.
- 155 ● **Justin Goad:** Requested clarification on the scope of the ad hoc
- 156 ● **Rebecca Collins:** People are concerned about the site and would like updates on the
157 site.

158 **Motion:** To appoint Councilmember Lewis-Lusso and Councilmember Scafani to form an ad
159 hoc committee to define a scope, purpose, and ways to have community participation for
160 purposes of the power plant. Mayor Sawatzky would like the purpose and scope to be more
161 defined. **Moved: Councilmember Napier Second: Mayor Sawatzky Vote: Unanimous.**

162 **Motion Carried.**

163 **11. COMMISSION AGENDA COORDINATION** Council discussed a draft proposal to improve
164 coordination between Council and Commissions.



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165 **Council Discussion:** Mayor Sawatzky introduced the item, aiming to align commission
166 agendas with Council goals and timelines (e.g., budget season). City Manager Mager cautioned
167 about the workload this might create for volunteer commissioners and suggested relying on
168 annual work plans, which has worked for the Public Safety Commission. Councilmember Lewis-
169 Lusso recommends scheduling reports from commissions. **Public Comment:**

- 170 ● **Alex Ricca:** Warned against over-planning agendas weeks in advance but supported
171 the referral system to empower commissioners.
- 172 ● **Barbara Russell:** Supported better communication and collaboration between
173 commissions (e.g., Arts supporting Economic Development).
- 174 ● **Lori Ponte:** Noted that liaisons often miss meetings, leaving commissions without
175 Council direction, and suggested commission chairs report directly to the Council.
- 176 ● **Julie Christie:** Emphasized that the Council, elected by the public, should dictate wishes
177 to the commissions, not staff.

178 **Action:** Councilmember Napier and Mayor Sawatzky will refine the draft proposal based on
179 feedback and bring it back to Council. Staff will implement a process to notify alternates if a
180 liaison cannot attend a commission meeting.

181 **12. CITY CLERK RECRUITMENT** The ad hoc committee (Napier/Lewis-Lusso) reported on five
182 interviews. They identified one qualified candidate who is available for limited hours (approx.
183 30/month) to handle minutes and agenda prep but has a full-time job and cannot serve as a full-
184 time City Clerk during business hours. **Council Discussion:** Councilmember Napier proposed
185 hiring this candidate for the specific tasks needed immediately (minutes/agendas) while
186 continuing to recruit for a full City Clerk. Mayor Pro Tem Scafani suggested hiring the candidate
187 as a temporary administrative assistant and suspending the full City Clerk recruitment until the
188 budget process is complete in June to better understand resources. **Public Comment:**

- 189 ● **Salina Rain:** The City Clerk position is an important one.
- 190 ● **Rebecca Collins:** Stated the City deserves a proper City Clerk for checks and balances.
- 191 ● **Je:** Agreed that the position is crucial for the balance of power.
- 192 ● **Terry Bayless:** Stated that if the City wants an administrative assistant, they should hire
193 one, but a City Clerk is a "big job" requiring more than 20 hours a month.
- 194 ● **Julie Christie:** Suggested a special meeting to interview applicants transparently if the
195 process is in "limbo."

196 **Motion:** To hire the lead candidate as a temporary Administrative Assistant, suspend
197 recruitment for a City Clerk while the ad hoc committee works with the City Manager to fully
198 flesh out the job description and recruitment plan, with the intention to begin recruitment again
199 at the end of the budget cycle (end of June). **Moved:** Councilmember Scafani **Second:**
200 Councilmember Napier **Vote:** Unanimous.



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201 **13. FISCAL YEAR 25-26 BUDGET PLANNING** Council requested a more in-depth budget
202 process than in previous years.

203 **Council Discussion:** Councilmember Scafani expressed that the Council needs more time to
204 dive into the budget before adoption in June. She requested a workshop to review the current
205 year's actuals and major funds. City Manager Mager confirmed staff could provide an overview
206 of major funds and year-to-date actuals. **Public Comment:**

207 ● **Julie Christie:** Supported the workshop and requested itemized disbursements to better
208 understand where funds are going.

209 **Action:** Council directed staff to schedule a budget workshop for Saturday, May 3, 2025
210 (tentative pending staff availability).

211 **14. BIKE AND SKATE PARK FINANCIAL REPORT** City Manager Mager presented a report
212 on the Bike Park.

213 ● **Status:** City donated land. Substantially paved; work to resume in spring.

214 ● **Finances:** Fundraising is being done by RCMBA and Humboldt Skate Collective.
215 Approximately \$50,000 raised in cash sponsorships, plus significant in-kind donations
216 (materials, labor). The City did not receive the Clean California grant.

217 ● **Discussion:** Councilmember Napier asked for a tally of in-kind donations to show the
218 true value of the project.

219 ● **Public Comment:**

220 ○ Linda Cooley asked how future maintenance and insurance would be funded.
221 Julie Christie noted a recent request for \$10,000 at a Parks & Rec meeting and
222 raised concerns about CEQA and liability/surveillance. Manager Mager clarified
223 the project has a CEQA exemption and is covered by the City's risk management
224 insurance.

225 ○ Brian Coarse requests that the City explain how this process has been and how
226 much more is needed. Manager Mager thinks the bike parks is rideable right now
227 and does not have an idea of how much more money is needed.

228 **Action:** Report received.

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231 15. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

- 232 ● Discussion on potentially shortening the public speaker timer (requested by
- 233 Councilmember Sawatzky).
- 234 ● Revenue generation ideas (suggested by Julie Christie).
- 235 ● Project Transparency/Community Engagement Task Force (continuation requested by
- 236 Julie Christie).

237 16. COUNCIL CORRESPONDENCE None.

238 CLOSED SESSION on three items:

239 Public Comment on Closed Session agenda item(s).

- 240 ● **Brian Coarse:** Questioned the rush to sell the power plant property after only owning it
- 241 for four months and suggested leasing or other revenue-generating options
- 242 (solar/storage) instead of selling assets.
- 243 ● **Julie Christie:** Commented on the PowerTransitions item, stating the entity is willing to
- 244 facilitate cleanup costs and urged the Council to report out to the public afterward.
- 245 Requests that Council have a way to share report out of closed session post meeting,
- 246 not in the minutes that are seen the following month.

247 A. PROPERTY

248 (McClure) Property: Portions of APN Nos. 312-131-037-000, 312-131-045-0003, 312-
249 131-046-000 and 312-190-010-000, in the unincorporated area of the County of
250 Humboldt, State of California. Under negotiation: Price and terms.

251 B. Property

252 (PowerTransitions Operations, LLC) Portions of APN Nos. 025-161-003-000 and 312-
253 161-016-000. Under negotiations: Price and terms of payment.

254 C. Employee Performance Evaluation

255 **Employee:** City Manager.

256 **Motion:** To adjourn to Closed Session. **Moved Scafani/Seconded Lewis-Lusso. Vote:**
257 Unanimous. **Meeting Adjourned to Closed Session at:** 10:33 p.m. (approximate).

258 **Report Out of Closed Session:** Not available.

259 Presented by:

260 Source transcription by AI (December 2025)

261 Video review by Michelle Lewis-Lusso and Jill Duffy (December 23, 2025)

262 Revision preparation by Jill K Duffy, Acting City Clerk