



Blue Lake City Council Minutes

24, February 2026 ~ 6:30pm ~ Regular Council Meeting
Skinner Store Building ~ 111 Greenwood Rd., Blue Lake ~ Behind City Hall

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

2
3 **2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

4
5 **3. ROLL CALL AND ESTABLISH A QUORUM OF THE COUNCIL**

6
7 **COUNCILMEMBERS PRESENT:** City Clerk Samantha Green established a quorum of
8 council members: Present: Mayor John Sawatzky, Council Member Kat Napier, Council
9 Member Terri Bayles, Council Member Michelle Lewis-Lusso

10
11 **COUNCILMEMBERS ABSENT:** Mayor Pro Tem Scafani

12 *(Note: Mayor Pro Tem Scafani arrived immediately after roll call and participated in*
13 *the meeting).*

14 **STAFF PRESENT:** City Manager Jennie Short, City Clerk Samantha Green, Park and
15 Recreation Director Emily Wood, and Videographer Justin Goad.

16
17 **4. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA – Motion by Council Member Napier** to amend
18 agenda and move the consent agenda after agenda item 15 above closed session.
19 **Second by Council Member Bayles.**
20 **Voice Vote: Motion passed unanimously**

21
22 **5. PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS**

23 The following persons addressed Council:

- 24 • Julie Christie: Requesting improvements to audio for council meetings,
25 both in-person and virtually
- 26 • Lin Glenn: Addressed ongoing issues with Verizon users not being able to
27 make calls to city hall, the fire department, the school, or the resource
28 center

29
30 **ITEMS FOR COUNCIL DISCUSSION OR ACTION**

31
32 **6. PARKS AND RECREATION APPOINTMENT**

33 The terms of three (3) of the five City's Park and Recreation Commissioners were set to
34 expire on January 30th 2026, and there are two vacancies for an unexpired term ending
35 January 2027. Two of the three applicants were reappointed during the city council meeting
36 held on Jan 27th 2026. City Council is asked to reconsider Tim Daniels for appointment to
37 the partial term ending January 2027



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40 **Public Comment:**

- 41 • Julie Christie: Commemorated Tim and feels that appointing Tim is a good move.
42

43 **Motion by Council Member Napier** to appoint Tim Daniels to the Parks and Recreation
44 Commission with a partial term ending in January 2027, **Second by Council Member**
45 **Lewis-Lusso.**

46 **Voice Vote: Motion passed unanimously**
47

48 **7. RFP – SEVENTH CYCLE HOUSING ELEMENT – AWARD CONTRACT TO**
49 **PLANWEST PARTNERS**

50 The City is required to prepare an update to the Housing Element of the City’s General Plan
51 for the Seventh Cycle (June 30, 2027 – July 15, 2035). Per a Memorandum of
52 Understanding with the California Department of Housing and Community Development, the
53 City is required to have a consultant in place to assist the City with updating its Housing
54 Element for the Seventh Cycle by March 31, 2026. To comply with this timeline, the City
55 released a request for proposals (RFP) on January 6, 2026. Proposals were due by
56 February 6, 2026 and three proposals were received in response to the RFP
57

58 **Public Comment:**

- 59 • Julie Christie: Asked about CDBG funding, feels that SHN has taken over planning,
60 and would like to see more local consultant outreach. Feels that Gateway Plan in
61 Arcata was a disaster
62

63 **Motion by Mayor Pro Tem Scafani** to authorize the City Manager to negotiate a
64 Professional Service Agreement with Planwest Partners, Inc. for planning services for the
65 Seventh Cycle Housing Element Update. **Second by Council Member Lewis-Lusso.**

66 **Voice Vote: Motion passed unanimously**
67

68 **8. ADOPT RESOLUTION 1254 FOR UPDATE TO PLANNING, ZONING, AND LAND USE**
69 **FEE STRUCTURE**

70 On November 30, 2010, City Council adopted resolution 969 that implemented a cost
71 recovery system with applicants providing deposits against which the costs for processing
72 their applications were billed. When the deposit was used up, the City Manager would
73 supply an estimate of the cost to complete the remaining work, and the applicant would then
74 supply an additional deposit. The existing fee structure and deposit amounts have not been
75 updated by the City for fifteen years. The costs for processing various permits and approvals
76 have since increased significantly. In addition, customers are disgruntled when they find out
77 that the amount they pay under the cost recovery system is significantly higher than the
78 deposit would indicate. Updated deposit rates that are more consistent with the actual cost
79 recovery amounts incurred for those permits are needed to better inform our customers.
80



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81 **Public Comment:**

- 82 • Julie Christie: Understands inflation, urging city to think about the process when
83 inflating rates. Hopes that the city can continue moving forward so that people feel
84 comfortable and confident spending money.

85
86 **Motion by Council Member Lewis-Lusso** to Approve Resolution 1254 "A Resolution of
87 the City Council of the City of Blue Lake Updating Various Deposits to Cover the Cost of
88 Planning, Zoning, and Land Use Approvals, Establishing Other Miscellaneous Charges from
89 Resolution 969 with an effective date of April 1, 2026 with corrections to Appendix A-9. **Second**
90 **by Council Member Bayles**

91
92 **Roll call vote:**

93 **Aye:** Mayor Sawatzky, Mayor Pro Tem Scafani, Council Member Napier, Council Member
94 Lewis-Lusso, Council Member Bayles

95 **Noes:** None

96 **Motion passed unanimously**

97
98 **9. PARKS AND RECREATION FEE UPDATE- STAFF REPORT SUPPLEMENTAL TO**
99 **COUNCIL PACKET**

100 A Parks and Rec draft fee schedule has been created to include fee adjustments and new
101 line items for cost recovery purposes related to special events and recreation programming.
102 Feedback is requested; including consideration for cost recovery items that may not have
103 been included, proposed fees, defining what constitutes a minor/major special event, and
104 evaluating whether the proposed fee schedule sufficiently captures community impact with
105 respect to cost recovery for special events.

106
107 **Public Comment:**

- 108 • Rebecca Collins: Concerned about water/toilets and urging that the city look into
109 the logistics and safety of camping. Would like assigned parking
110 • Lin Glenn: Likes councils' suggestion of looking into the history of events
111 • Julie Christie: Asking that the community is kept in mind to stay affordable.
112 Suggested having a sliding scale. Expressed concerns with parking at Arena and
113 Taylor way. Suggested asking for volunteers to help with clean up needs

114
115 **NO ACTION WAS TAKEN:** Emily, the Parks and Recreation Director, will come back with
116 revisions per councils' recommendations for further discussion at the next council meeting.

117 **Council took a break at 8:20 p.m. and resumed at 8:29 p.m.**
118
119



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120 **10. ADOPT RESOLUTION 1255 IMPLEMENTING THE ADOPTED WATER AND SEWER**
121 **RATE INCREASE FOR 2026 AND UPDATE THE TURBIDITY REDUCTION FEE PASS**
122 **THROUGH**

123 City Council adopted Resolutions 1213 and 1214 on January 24, 2023, containing Exhibit A
124 with 5-year water and sewer rates with 2023 rates effective as of February 20, 2023.
125 Thereafter, each subsequent year's rate will be effective on February 20th of each year.
126 Exhibit A specified that "The turbidity reduction fee from the Humboldt Bay Municipal Water
127 District (HBMWD) will be passed directly to the customer in the form of a fee. This will be
128 determined by the HBMWD and indicated on the customer's bill." The TRF charge from
129 HBMWD has increased, but the pass-through amount was never calculated and increased.

130
131 **Public Comment:**

- 132 • Julie Christie: Suggested having a town hall to address increases.

133
134 **Motion by Mayor Pro Tem Scafani** to approve Resolution 1255 "A Resolution of the City
135 Council of the City of Blue Lake confirming Implementation of the Adopted Water and Sewage
136 Rate Schedule for FY 25-26 and Updating the Turbidity Reduction Fee Pass Through Amount"
137 **Second by Council Member Bayles**

138
139 **Roll call vote:**

140 **Aye:** Mayor Sawatzky, Mayor Pro Tem Scafani, Council Member Napier, Council Member
141 Lewis-Lusso, Council Member Bayles

142 **Noes:** None

143 **Motion passed unanimously**
144

145 **11. PRESENTATION BY AD HOC COMMITTEE REGARDING COMMISSIONS**
146 **STRUCTURE, POSSIBLE CONSOLIDATION, AND MEETING FREQUENCY**

147 The AdHoc Committee has met several times to discuss potential options for commission
148 restructuring and/or consolidation.

149
150 **Public Comment:**

- 151 • Lin Glenn: Believes that there is already existing structure to help with the issues
152 being addressed. Referenced the ordinances and feels there is a lack of
153 consistency across commissions and not enough guidance from council. Feels that
154 further outreach and establishment of goals would help with recruitment of
155 commissioners.
- 156 • Rebecca Collins: Acknowledged lack of goals/objectives amongst commissions.
157 Echoed that council needs to provide more guidance and that consolidation won't
158 help.



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- 159 • Julie Christie: Feels that the need to streamline processes is valid and recruitment
160 of commissions is difficult. Sees potential for consolidation of Arts & Heritage,
161 Parks & Recreation, and Economic Development
- 162 • Justin Goad: Prefers to keep commissions as is. Completely against full
163 consolidation, but open to partial consolidation. Urges council to be careful about
164 appointment/recruitment process.
165

166 **NO ACTION WAS TAKEN:** Will revisit the item for further discussion with potential plan and
167 direction on how to move forward
168

169 **12. COUNCIL CORRESPONDENCE: None**

171 **13. REPORTS OF COUNCIL AND STAFF**

172 **a. Ad hoc Committee Reports**

173 **i. None**

174 **b. Commission Updates**

- 175 i. HWMA: Considering whether to move forward with proposal with studying
176 organics processing. Looking at proposal to build facility to process
177 organics aka food and green waste.
- 178 ii. HCOG: HCD approved arena allocation designations that were submitted,
179 Eureka may be contesting. No timeline. Designated bus stop areas, but
180 may affect future planning for areas.
- 181 iii. REDAC: Cancelled

182 **c. City Manager Report**

- 183 i. NOAA: Mad River reaching critical stages and talked with county about
184 how to try and identify what has been contributing to higher levels of water
185 and flooding
- 186 ii. Cannifest: Not happening this year, hopeful for next year.
187

188 **Public Comment:**

- 189 • Julie Christie: Need support of city to get county to help mitigate water issues.
190

191 **14. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

- 192 a. Building Permit Fee Updates
- 193 b. Amending Blue Lake Municipal Code Chapter 13.12 Regulating Cross
194 Connections
- 195 c. Bring Back Parks and Recreation Fees
- 196 d. Dog House Lease
- 197 e. Update Ordinance in Chapter 13.08 section 050 C Regarding City Clerk and
198 Water & Sewer Billing
- 199 f. Updated JPA for RREDC (potential special meeting)



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- g. Update Signatories on Tri Counties Bank Accounts (potential special meeting)
- h. Closing the Office to the Public on Fridays
- i. Two Meetings Per Month

15. CONSENT AGENDA

- a. City Council Minutes for January 20th, 2026- Special Meeting
- b. City Council Minutes for January 27th, 2026- Regular Meeting
- c. Blue Lake Fieldbrook Little League Lease
- d. Humboldt Fast Pitch
- e. Dog House Lease

Council Member Lewis Lusso requested to pull item 6e for discussion to get clarification about inspection timeframe due to conflicting information on the lease. Council continued discussion regarding terms of lease.

Public Comment:

- Julie Christie: Did not make a request to pull any consent items but commented on fee schedule.

Motion by Mayor Pro Tem Scafani to approve all consent agenda a-d. **Second by Council Member Napier**
Voice Vote: Motion passed unanimously

Motion by Mayor Pro Tem Scafani to amend Dog House contract to M-F leaving it open on weekends for other rentals. **Second by Lewis-Lusso**
Voice Vote: Motion passed unanimously

Public Comment:

- Julie Christie: Suggested making a motion, letting it die, and then starting a new one if necessary. Agrees with Scafani regarding concession stand, as it's historically been available for others to use. Suggested addressing this again in closed session for contract negotiations.

16. CLOSED SESSION AGENDA:

Public Comment:

- Julie Christie: Commented on attorney fees, hoping that issues are being resolved.

Motion by Mayor Pro Tem Scafani to move into closed session. **Second by Council Member Bayles.**
Voice Vote: Motion passed unanimously



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241 Council convened into Closed Session at 10:23p.m for the purpose of:

242 **CONFERENCE WITH REAL PROPERTY NEGOTIATORS**

243 Property: Approximately three (3) acres of land that is a portion of City owned
244 Assessor's Parcel Numbers 312-161-018-000 and 312-161-015-000

245 Agency Negotiator: John Sawatzky, Kat Napier, Jennie Short, City Manager; and
246 Ethan Walsh (attorney for City) and Russ Gans (attorney for City)

247 Negotiating parties: DANCO parties Chris Dart, McKenzie Dibble

248 Under negotiation: Price and terms of payment.

249
250 **a. CONFERENCE WITH REAL PROPERTY NEGOTIATORS**

251 Property: Portions of APN Nos. 312-131-037-000, 312-131-045-0003, 312-131-046-
252 000 and 312-190-010-000, in the unincorporated area of the County of Humboldt,
253 State of California.

254 Agency Negotiator: Jennie Short, City Manager; Ryan Plotz (attorney for the City)

255 Negotiating parties: Erin McClure, Trustee

256 Under negotiation: Price and terms.

257
258 **c. Report Out of Closed Session.** Council reconvened at 12:02a.m at the Skinner Store
259 to report out of Closed Session. No reportable action

260
261 **Adjourn**

262
263 Prepared by: Samantha Green
264 City Clerk, City of Blue Lake