



Blue Lake City Council Minutes

Tuesday, April 28, 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 Green established a quorum of council members- Present:
8 Mayor John Sawatzky, Mayor Pro Tem Elise Scafani, Council Member Kat Napier, Council
9 Member Terri Bayles, Council Member Michelle Lewis-Lusso

10
11 **Councilmembers Absent:** None

12
13 **Staff Present:** City Manager Jennie Short, City Clerk Samantha Green, and Parks and Recreation
14 Director Wood

15
16 **4. Approval of the Agenda:**

17 **Motion by Councilmember Bayles** to approve the agenda as is. **Second by**

18 **Councilmember Lewis-Lusso.**

19 **Voice vote: Motion passed unanimously**

20
21 **5. Public Comment on Non-Agenda Items**

- 22 • Jean: Addressed ADA compliance at the parks
- 23 • Noah: Announced the dates for an upcoming show: Khan the Musical
- 24 • Anne: Expressed confusion regarding events and the proposed fee increases and urges
25 more research into fee schedule.

26
27 **6. Consent Agenda:**

- 28 a. City Council Minutes for March 3, 2026 – Special Meeting
- 29 b. City Council Minutes for March 11, 2026- Special Meeting
- 30 c. City Council Minutes for March 24, 2026 – Regular Meeting
- 31 d. City Council Minutes for April 7, 2026 – Special Meeting
- 32 e. March Disbursements Report
- 33 f. Update Signatories on Tri-Counties Bank Accounts [Resolution 1259]
- 34 g. Authorize City Manager to execute Memorandum of Mutual Understandings with the
35 North Coast Resource Partnership

36
37 **Motion by Councilmember Lewis-Lusso** to approve the consent agenda items a-e, and g. **Second**
38 **by Councilmember Napier.**

39 **Voice vote: Motion passed unanimously**

40
41 *Consent Agenda Item 6f was pulled by Councilmember Bayles*



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42 **6f. Update Signatories on Tri-Counties Bank Accounts [Resolution 1259]**

43 Councilmember Bayles requested further discussion regarding item 4 of Resolution 1259, which
44 requires two signatures for all checks valued at \$1,000 or more. City Manager Short explained that
45 requiring two signatories for smaller frequently issued checks can create logistical challenges and
46 noted that the proposed modification is intended to alleviate this issue.
47

48 **Motion by Councilmember Napier** to Adopt Resolution 1259 titled “Resolution of the City
49 Council of the City of Blue Lake Updating Signatories on the Tri Counties Bank Accounts”

50 **Second by Councilmember Lewis-Lusso.**

51 **Voice vote: 4:1 with Councilmember Bayles dissenting.**
52

53 ITEMS FOR COUNCIL DISCUSSION OR ACTION

54 **7. Proclaim April 2026 as Sexual Assault Awareness Month.**

55 April is nationally recognized as Sexual Assault Awareness Month, serving as an opportunity to
56 increase public awareness, support survivors, and promote education and prevention efforts within the
57 community. A representative from North Coast Rape Crisis Team was present to accept the
58 proclamation and announced their 2nd annual Dancing in the Rain Gala on May 2, 2026.
59
60

61 **Public Comment:** None received
62

63 **Motion by Councilmember Lewis-Lusso** to Approve the Proclamation Recognizing April as
64 Sexual Assault Awareness Month. **Second by Councilmember Bayles.**

65 **Voice vote: Motion passed unanimously.**
66

67 **8. Proclaim May 2026 as Older Americans’ Month**

68 In previous years, Area 1 Agency on Aging (A1AA) has partnered with the City of Blue Lake during the
69 month of May, Older Americans’ Month, to discuss the agency’s and the city’s efforts to help older
70 adults promote healthy aging. A representative from Area 1 Agency on Aging was present to accept
71 the proclamation and shared more about the services they offer.
72

73 **Public Comment:** None received
74

75 **Motion by Mayor Pro Tem Scafani** to Approve the Proclamation Recognizing May as Older
76 American’s Month. **Second by Councilmember Lewis-Lusso.**

77 **Voice vote: Motion passed unanimously.**
78

79 **9. Acceptance of Mad Scramble Donation to Bike Park by RCMBA**

80 The Redwood Coast Mountain Bike Alliance held the annual Mad Scramble in February 2026. The
81 proceeds from this event were designated as a fundraiser for the Blue Lake Bike park. RCMBA
82 Collected \$5,090 and presented a check to the City Council for acceptance.
83



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84 **Public Comment:**

- 85 • Julie Christie: Suggests distinguished funds ear marked for the bike park specifically.
86

87 **Motion by Mayor Pro Tem Scafani** to accept the donation and to approve the expenditure
88 towards the invoice for GLJ. **Second by Councilmember Lewis-Lusso.**

89 **Voice vote: Motion passed 3:2, with Mayor Sawatzky and Councilmember Napier dissenting.**
90

91 **10. Appointment to Public Safety Commission**

92 On February 25, the City Clerk received a resignation from a recently appointed member of the Public
93 Safety Commission, creating a vacancy for a term ending in January 2028. Notice of the vacancy was
94 announced at the March 24 2026 meeting as well as posted at the Post Office, on the City Hall
95 bulletin board, and on the City's website. Cynthia Carlson attended the Public Safety Commission
96 meeting on April 6 and expressed continued interest in serving on the Commission.
97

98 **Public Comment:**

- 99 • Julie Christie: Voiced support for the applicant
100

101 **Motion by Councilmember Napier** to appoint Cynthia Carlson to the Public Safety
102 Commission term expiring in January of 2028. **Second by Councilmember Lewis-Lusso.**

103 **Voice vote: Motion passed unanimously.**
104

105 **11. Public Safety Commission: Update from the Chair**

106 In December, the Public Safety Commission conducted a survey regarding street traffic on I Street.
107 Based on the findings, the Commission developed recommendations, which were presented to the
108 City Council by Chair Ted Hales.
109

110 **Public Comment:**

- 111 • Noah: Asked if there were added costs for LE stakeouts of problem areas.
112 • Julie Christie: Thanked Ted and the Commission. Recommended painting cross walks near tot
113 lot.
114

115 *No action was taken on this item; however, Council discussed numerous traffic aids/solutions*
116 *including; speed limit signs, painting/re-painting curbs and cross walks, and targeted enforcement by*
117 *HCSO. City Manager Short will come back with recommendations regarding the problem areas*
118 *identified and prices for speed tables.*
119

120 **12. First Reading and Introduction of Ordinance No. 550 Amending Chapter 13.12 of the**
121 **Blue Lake Municipal Code Relating to Cross-Connection Control**

122 The City Attorney suggested re-starting the process with a further first reading due to structural issues
123 relating to the ordinance format. The proposed ordinance amendment is administrative in nature and
124 does not change the regulatory requirements of the City's Cross-Connection Control Program. It
125 removes fixed fee amounts from the code and authorizes the City Council to establish and adjust fees



Blue Lake City Council Minutes

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126 by resolution. The amendment also updates Section 13.12.020 (Definitions) to include “User
127 Supervisor” and “Cross-Connection Control Specialist,” and amends Section 13.12.050 to include
128 authority of a City designated Cross-Connection Control Specialist.

129
130 **Public Comment:** None received

131
132 **Motion by Mayor Pro Tem Scafani** to waive further reading and introduce Ordinance No. 550,
133 entitled “An Ordinance of the City Council of the City of Blue Lake Amending Chapter 13.12 of Title
134 13 of the Blue Lake Municipal Code Relating to Cross-Connection Control,” and set the ordinance for
135 second reading and adoption at the next regular meeting. **Second by Councilmember Lewis-**
136 **Lusso.**

137
138 **Roll call vote:**
139 **Aye: Sawatzky, Scafani, Napier, Lewis-Lusso, Bayles**
140 **Motion passed unanimously.**

141
142 **13. First Reading and Introduction of Ordinance No. 551 Amending Chapter 15.04 of the**
143 **Blue Lake Municipal Code Relating to Building Permit and Inspection Fees**

144 The City Attorney suggested re-starting the process with a further first reading due to structural issues
145 relating to the ordinance format. The proposed ordinance is administrative in nature and seeks to
146 amend Section 15.04.030 to clarify that building permit, inspection, and related fees shall be
147 established by resolution of the City Council and may be amended from time to time as deemed
148 necessary. The amended ordinance also repeals Section 15.04.060, which was previously reserved
149 for fees addressed within the building code. Following adoption of this ordinance, staff will return to the
150 City Council with a proposed resolution establishing updated fees.

151
152 **Public Comment:**

- 153 • Julie Christie: Agrees with ordinance change and asked for a description of what was redacted
154 to be included in the packet

155
156 *City Clerk Green clarified and confirmed that the red line changes were included in the packet that was*
157 *provided to council and the public.*

158
159 **Motion by Mayor Pro Tem Scafani** to waive further reading and introduce Ordinance No. 551,
160 entitled ‘An Ordinance of the City Council of the City of Blue Lake Amending Chapter 15.04 of
161 Title 15 of the Blue Lake Municipal Code Relating to Building Standards Fees,’ and set the
162 ordinance for second reading and adoption at the next regular meeting. **Second by Councilmember**
163 **Bayles.**

164
165 **Roll call vote:**
166 **Aye: Sawatzky, Scafani, Napier, Lewis-Lusso, Bayles**
167 **Motion passed unanimously.**



Blue Lake City Council Minutes

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14. Fee Schedule Update – Parks & Recreation

The City's recreation fee schedule was last updated in 2023. The first draft of the 2026 fee schedule was presented at the February 24th, 2026, Council meeting and March 4th, 2026, Parks & Recreation Commission meeting. The second draft of the fee schedule was presented at the March 24th, 2026, Council Meeting. Director Wood has met with the Council's ad hoc committee and City Manager Short to make further revisions and present this final draft to Council on April 28th, 2026.

Public Comment:

- Patrick Clearly: Helps organize Buddy Brown Festival with Humboldt Folklife. Understands the need to increase fees. With the proposed fees, concerned about sustainability of event as costs would go from "\$550 to \$2,200"
- Lin Glenn: Worried about the future of these events. Suggests pausing the fee increase and creating a committee.
- Jackie: Talked about creative place making as economic measure rather than increasing fees. Feels that Blue Lake provides great opportunities for economic growth
- Julie: Thanked Emily for drafting this and for the platform it's created for discussion. Blue Lake brings people in, but city not getting much in sales tax back. Feels food truck prices are below average.
- Bettina: Fees have tripled, but okay with that since it's a big event. Happy that non-profit discount has remained. Talked about positive economic impact on local businesses.
- Resident: Waits every year for certain events and schedules vacations around these events. Feels this is part of the quality of life.
- Kit Mann: Feels adopting fee schedule tonight would be premature. Concerned about viability of events. Feels that there are too many admin fees for various items and questions cost recovery on certain items.
- Darci Lima: Likes that Blue Lake is a party town. Feels some of the increases are astronomical. Feels that park rentals should include bathrooms.
- Noah: Recognizes times are hard and that everyone needs money, not sure if this is the best way. Would like to be a part of more conversations to fine tune this.

Council and staff discussed the financial sustainability of City-supported events, emphasizing that there is no intent to eliminate or discourage community events, but rather to address the gap between event-related costs and revenue. It was noted that current fees do not fully recover City expenses and that local sales tax revenues provide only limited funding. Council expressed appreciation for strong community interest and participation and indicated a desire for additional time to consider options and gather further input. The importance of community involvement through sponsorships, donations, and volunteer support was highlighted as a way to help offset costs. It was also noted that at least one event has already been canceled due to insufficient revenue. Staff encouraged the public to provide specific, detailed feedback on the proposed fee schedule to better inform future revisions.



Blue Lake City Council Minutes

Tuesday, April 28, 2026 ~ 6:30pm ~ Regular Council Meeting
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No action was taken, however a community workshop with the parks and rec fee schedule ad hoc was scheduled for May 12th at 5:00 p.m. Community members expressing interest in being part of a solution were encouraged to come.

Council took a break and reconvened at 8:55 p.m.

15. Bill Nessler Car Show Parks & Recreation Donation Plan

The 21st Annual Bill Nessler Car Show is scheduled for August 9th, 2026, and is organized by City staff. Event sponsorships have recently been introduced as line items within the proposed Parks and Recreation Fee Schedule, which was presented to the City Council for consideration at this meeting.

Public Comment:

- Rebecca Collins: Asked about the presence of older model cars.
- Julie Christie: Asked whether the money went to the City or the Chamber of Commerce.
- Emily Wood: Clarified that Annie & Mary day is put on by the Chamber of Commerce and the car show is put on by the city, hence the fees will go to the city.

Motion by Mayor Pro Tem Scafani to approve the draft with possible suggested additions as delivered. **Second by Councilmember Lewis-Lusso.**

Voice vote: Motion passed unanimously.

16. Dell Arte Pre-Festival Report

Dell' Arte is required to submit a pre-festival and post-festival report to the City every year that a festival is proposed to take place between June 19 and August 23. Dell' Arte is not proposing any major changes to the festival relative to what is allowed by the Conditional Use Permit. In accordance with condition of approval 9 of Resolution No. 9-2014, the Humboldt Folklife Society has submitted a separate Facility Rental Agreement (Prash Hall for the barn dance) and applications for a Special Event Permit and Encroachment Permit (closure of H st for the all-day free festival) These applications are for ministerial permits that are processed by City staff.

Public Comment:

- Kash: Wasn't notified of item on the agenda.
- Patrick: Clarified that the Humboldt Folklife event is part of the Mad River Festival

Councilmember Bayles recused herself due to a conflict of interest at 9:03 p.m. before the item was announced by Mayor Sawatzky and returned at 9:10 p.m. after a vote was taken.

Motion by Councilmember Napier to Accept the Pre-Festival Report from Dell' Arte. **Second by Councilmember Lewis-Lusso.**

Voice vote: 4:0 with Councilmember Bayles Abstaining.



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17. Cal PERS Health Insurance [Resolution 1260]

In November 2025, the City Council Approved Redwood Empire Municipal Insurance Fund (REMIF) as the City's health insurance provider beginning January 1, 2026. On April 2, 2026, the City was notified that there would be a 48% increase in prices under the PRISM/CIRA policy. In an effort to find a more affordable and stable health insurance provider, CalPERS was contacted by City Manager Short to determine whether the contract with CalPERS for health insurance could be renewed. CalPERS provided health insurance benefits from 1993-2002.

Public Comment: None received

Motion by Councilmember Napier to Adopt Resolution 1260 titled "Electing to be Subject to the Public Employees' Medical and Hospital Care Act at an Unequal Amount for Employees and Annuitants – All Employees" and to Authorize the City Manager to sign all documents necessary to implement the new health insurance program. **Second by Councilmember Lewis-Lusso.**

Roll call vote:

Aye: Sawatzky, Scafani, Napier, Lewis-Lusso, Bayles

Motion passed unanimously.

Councilmember Bayles made a motion as stated by City Manager Short that "the city will pay for the PERS gold premium for employees only in the amount of \$1,020.58 for FY 26/27 and a maximum of \$2,050 per month for two party or family" **Second by Lewis-Lusso.**

Voice vote: Motion passed unanimously.

18. Finance Department Restructure Phase 1

With the resignation of the City Accountant and the difficulty staff has experienced in trying to find a replacement, staff is requesting the expansion of our half-time Administrative Accountant Specialist to a full-time position.

Public Comment:

- Rebecca Collins: Advised the City Council that the ordinance would have to be changed to put the City Clerk under the City Manager as proposed in the restructure and emphasized the important of the Clerks role in finance matters.
- Julie Christie: Concurs with Rebecca, looking for restoration of productivity and balance of power.

Motion by Mayor Pro Tem Scafani to modify the Finance Department's Organizational Chart to increase from one and half (1 ½) to two (2) full-time Administrative Account Specialists. **Second by Councilmember Napier.**

Voice vote: Motion passed unanimously



Blue Lake City Council Minutes

Tuesday, April 28, 2026 ~ 6:30pm ~ Regular Council Meeting
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294 **19. Authorize City Manager to Execute Contract with Humboldt County Sheriff's Office for**
295 **Fiscal Year 2026-27 for Law Enforcement Services**

296 The City of Blue Lake has contracted with the Humboldt County Sheriff's Department for
297 many years to provide law enforcement services within the City of Blue Lake. Each year the
298 Sheriff's Department provides the City with new calculations for the cost of services for the
299 next year. A reasonable increase in rates is proposed by the County to cover the increase in
300 direct costs for the units providing services.

301
302 **Public Comment:**

- 303 • Julie Christie: Suggests supporting sheriff's office through budget because without it costs of
304 coverage will continue going up. Supports renewal of contract.
305

306 **Motion by Mayor Pro Tem Scafani** to Authorize the Mayor and City Manager to sign the
307 agreement with the Humboldt County Sheriff's Department to provide Law Enforcement
308 Services within the City of Blue Lake. **Second by Councilmember Bayles**

309 **Voice vote: Motion passed unanimously**
310

311 **20. Authorize City Manager to Execute Contract with Humboldt County Sheriff's Office for**
312 **Fiscal Year 2026-27 for Animal Shelter Services**

313 The City of Blue Lake has contracted with the Humboldt County Sheriff's Department for many years to
314 provide Animal Shelter Services for the City of Blue Lake. Each year the
315 Sheriff's Department provides the City with new calculations for the cost of services for the next year
316 based upon the previous fiscal year. A reasonable increase in rates is proposed by the County to cover
317 the increase in direct costs for the services.
318

319 **Public Comment:**

- 320 • Julie Christie: Supports additional coverage if affordable. Suggested promoting a spay and
321 neuter clinic with microchipping by collaborating with local organizations.
322

323 **Motion by Mayor Pro Tem Scafani** to Authorize the Mayor and the City Manager to sign the
324 First Amendment to the Agreement to Provide Animal Shelter Services for the City of Blue Lake.

325 **Second by Councilmember Bayles.**

326 **Voice vote: Motion passed unanimously.**
327

328 **21. Council Correspondence- None received.**
329

330 **22. Reports of Council and Staff**

- 331 a) Ad hoc Committee Reports
332 b) Commission Updates
333 c) City Manager Report: The City Manager provided additional information and updates on
334 report items as requested by the Council
335



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Public Comment

- Julie Christie: Suggested bringing reports back as agenda items for itemized discussion and requested relevant staff, including Public Works and the City Engineer, be present to provide updates.

23. Future Agenda Items Requested by Council.

- Bike Park Financial Report and Corrective Action Plan
- Parks and Rec Fee Schedule
- Housing Element Public Workshop Update

24. Closed Session Agenda:

- Public comment on closed session items: None received

Motion by Mayor Pro Tem Scafani to move into closed session. **Second by Councilmember Lewis-Lusso.**

Voice vote: Motion passed unanimously.

- Council convened into Closed Session at Skinner Store at 11:19 p.m. for the purpose of:
CONFERENCE WITH REAL PROPERTY NEGOTIATORS Property: Approximately three (3) acres of land that is a portion of City owned Assessor's Parcel Numbers 312-161-018-000 and 312-161-015-000 Agency Negotiator: John Sawatzky, Kat Napier, Jennie Short, City Manager; and Ethan Walsh (attorney for City) and Russ Gans (attorney for City) Negotiating parties: DANCO parties Chris Dart, McKenzie Dibble Under negotiation: Price and terms of payment.
- Report Out of Closed Session:** Council reconvened at 11:59 p.m. at the Skinner Store to report out of Closed Session. The City Council directed the City Manager to sign and deliver a notice of termination to Danco Communities

Adjourn at 11:59 p.m.

Prepared by: Samantha Green, City Clerk