



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
8 Present: Mayor Sawatzky, Mayor Pro Tem Scafani, Councilmember Napier,
9 Councilmember Bayles, Councilmember Lewis-Lusso

10
11 **Councilmembers Absent:** None

12
13 **Staff Present:** City Manager Short, City Clerk Green, and Park and Recreation Director
14 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
25 urges 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.**
38 **Second by Councilmember Napier.**
39 **Voice vote: Motion passed unanimously.**



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Consent Agenda item 6f was pulled by Councilmember Bayles

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

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

Motion by Councilmember Napier to Adopt Resolution 1259 titled "Resolution of the City Council of the City of Blue Lake Updating Signatories on the Tri Counties Bank Accounts"

Second by Councilmember Lewis-Lusso.

Voice vote: 4:1 with Councilmember Bayles dissenting.

ITEMS FOR COUNCIL DISCUSSION OR ACTION

7. Proclaim April 2026 as Sexual Assault Awareness Month.

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

Public Comment: None received.

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

Voice vote: Motion passed unanimously.

8. Proclaim May 2026 as Older Americans' Month

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

Public Comment: None received.

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

Voice vote: Motion passed unanimously.



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

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

Public Comment:

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

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

Voice vote: Motion passed unanimously.

10. Appointment to Public Safety Commission

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

Public Comment:

- Julie Christie: Voiced support for the applicant

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

Voice vote: Motion passed unanimously.

11. Public Safety Commission: Update from the Chair

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

Public Comment:

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

No action was taken on this item; however, the City Manager Short will come back with recommendations regarding the problem areas identified and prices for speed tables.



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

The City Attorney suggested re-starting the process with a further first reading due to structural issues relating to the ordinance format. The proposed ordinance amendment is administrative in nature and does not change the regulatory requirements of the City's Cross-Connection Control Program. It removes fixed fee amounts from the code and authorizes the City Council to establish and adjust fees by resolution. The amendment also updates Section 13.12.020 (Definitions) to include "User Supervisor" and "Cross-Connection Control Specialist," and amends Section 13.12.050 to include authority of a City designated Cross-Connection Control Specialist.

Public Comment: None received

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

Roll call vote:

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

Motion passed unanimously.

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

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

Public Comment:

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

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



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

167
168 **Roll call vote:**

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

170 **Motion passed unanimously.**
171

172 **14. Fee Schedule Update – Parks & Recreation**

173 The City's recreation fee schedule was last updated in 2023. The first draft of the 2026 fee
174 schedule was presented at the February 24th, 2026, Council meeting and March 4th, 2026,
175 Parks & Recreation Commission meeting. The second draft of the fee schedule was presented
176 at the March 24th, 2026, Council Meeting. Director Wood has met with the Council's ad hoc
177 committee and City Manager Short to make further revisions and present this final draft to
178 Council on April 28th, 2026.
179

180 **Public Comment:**

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



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

212
213 **No action was made, however a community workshop with the parks and rec fee**
214 **schedule ad hoc was scheduled for May 12th at 5:00 p.m. Community members**
215 **expressing interest in being part of a solution were encouraged to come.**
216

217 Council took a break and reconvened at 8:55 p.m.
218

219 **15. Bill Nessler Car Show Parks & Recreation Donation Plan**

220 The 21st Annual Bill Nessler Car Show is scheduled for August 9th, 2026, and is organized by
221 City staff. Event sponsorships have recently been introduced as line items within the proposed
222 Parks and Recreation Fee Schedule, which will be presented to the City Council for
223 consideration on April 28th, 2026.
224

225 Public Comment:

- 226 • Rebecca Collins: Asked about the presence of older model cars.
- 227 • Julie Christie: Asked whether the money went to the City or the Chamber of
228 Commerce.
- 229 • Emily Wood: Clarified that Annie & Mary day is put on by the Chamber of
230 Commerce and the car show is put on by the city, hence the fees will go to the
231 city.
232

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

235 **Voice vote: Motion passed unanimously.**
236

237 **16. Dell Arte Pre-Festival Report**

238 Dell' Arte is required to submit a pre-festival and post-festival report to the City every year that a
239 festival is proposed to take place between June 19 and August 23. Dell' Arte is not proposing
240 any major changes to the festival relative to what is allowed by the Conditional Use Permit. In
241 accordance with condition of approval 9 of Resolution No. 9-2014, the Humboldt Folklife
242 Society has submitted a separate Facility Rental Agreement (Prash Hall for the barn dance)



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243 and applications for a Special Event Permit and Encroachment Permit (closure of H st for the
244 all-day free festival) These applications are for ministerial permits that are processed by City
245 staff.

Public Comment:

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

250
251 *Councilmember Bayles recused herself due to conflict of interest at 9:03 p.m before the item*
252 *was announced by Mayor Sawatzky and returned at 9:10 p.m. after a vote was taken.*

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

256 **Voice vote: 4:1 with Councilmember Bayles Abstaining.**

17. Cal PERS Health Insurance [Resolution 1260]

258 In November 2025, the City Council Approved Redwood Empire Municipal Insurance Fund
259 (REMIF) as the City's health insurance provider beginning January 1, 2026. On April 2, 2026,
260 the City was notified that there would be a 48% increase in prices under the PRISM/CIRA
261 policy. In an effort to find a more affordable and stable health insurance provider, CalPERS was
262 contacted by City Manager Short to determine whether or not the contract with CalPERS for
263 health insurance could be renewed. CalPERS provided health insurance benefits from 1993-
264 2002.

266
267 Public Comment: None received.

268
269 **Motion by Councilmember Napier** to Adopt Resolution 1260 titled "Electing to be Subject to
270 the Public Employees' Medical and Hospital Care Act at an Unequal Amount for Employees
271 and Annuitants – All Employees" and to Authorize the City Manager to sign all documents
272 necessary to implement the new health insurance program. **Second by Councilmember**
273 **Lewis-Lusso.**

Roll call vote:

275
276 **Aye: Sawatzky, Scafani, Napier, Lewis-Lusso, Bayles**

277 **Motion passed unanimously.**

278
279 **Councilmember Bayles** made a motion as stated by City Manager Short that "the city will pay
280 for the PERS gold premium for employees only in the amount of \$1,020.58 for FY 26/27 and a
281 maximum of \$2,050 per month for two party or family" **Second by Lewis-Lusso.**

282 **Voice vote: Motion passed unanimously.**



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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 beneath City Manager and emphasized the importance of 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 a half (1 ½) to two (2) full-time Administrative Account Specialists.

Second by Councilmember Napier.

Voice vote: Motion passed unanimously.

19. Authorize City Manager to Execute Contract with Humboldt County Sheriff's Office for Fiscal Year 2026-27 for Law Enforcement Services

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

Public Comment:

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

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

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

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



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324 by the County to cover the increase in direct costs for the services.

325
326 **Public Comment:**

- 327 • Julie Christie: Supports additional coverage if affordable. Suggested promoting
328 spay and neuter clinic with microchipping by collaborating with local organizations.

329
330 **Motion by Mayor Pro Tem Scafani** to Authorize the Mayor and the City Manager to sign the
331 First Amendment to the Agreement to Provide Animal Shelter Services for the City of Blue
332 Lake. **Second by Councilmember Bayles.**

333 **Voice vote: Motion passed unanimously.**

334
335 **21. Council Correspondence – None received.**

336
337 **22. Reports of Council and Staff**

- 338 a. Ad hoc Committee Reports
- 339 b. Commission Updates
- 340 c. City Manager Report: The City Manager provided additional information and
341 updates on report items as requested by the Council.

342
343 **Public Comment:**

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

347
348 **23. Future Agenda Items by Requested by Council**

- 349 1. **Bike Park Financial Report and Corrective Action Plan**
- 350 2. **Parks and Rec Fee Schedule**
- 351 3. **Housing Element Public Workshop**

352
353
354 **24. Closed Session Agenda:**

- 355 a. **Public comment on closed sessions items:** None received
- 356 b. Council convened into Closed Session at Skinner Store at 11:19 p.m. for the
357 purpose of: **CONFERENCE WITH REAL PROPERTY NEGOTIATORS**

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

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

362 **Negotiating parties: DANCO parties Chris Dart, McKenzie Dibble**

363 **Under negotiation: Price and terms of payment.**



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c. Report Out of Closed Session. Council reconvened at 11:59 p.m. at the Skinner Store to a 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

DRAFT