

**City of Nashwauk
February 25, 2025
City Council Meeting**

Mayor Heyblom called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers of City Hall. Mayor Heyblom led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Members present: Councilor David Bruns, Councilor Tom Martire, Councilor Sheila Jensen, Councilor Terry Sullivan, Mayor Greg Heyblom.

Also present: Administrator/Clerk April Kurtock, Police Chief Lee Longoria, Public Works & Utilities Lead Jason Martire, Attorney Jackie Simon,

Adoption of Agenda

*Motion by Councilor Bruns, seconded by Councilor Martire to adopt the agenda of the February 25, 2025 City Council Meeting.

Ayes: all present. Motion carried.

Notable Items

Representatives from United Way, CEDA, and Habitat for Humanity representatives were present to discuss the Day of Action, which will be held in Nashwauk on June 13, 2025.

Crystal Royer, United Way, shared information regarding the Day of Action. There would be canvassing efforts in which people would be going door-to-door to ask people if they had projects that they'd like to see completed. She asked for Council involvement during the canvassing, which would be on March 31, April 7 and 10th. People can start referring potential projects to them through the United Way website. Crystal shared how volunteers are obtained and that they are looking to secure 200 volunteers. She encouraged Council to look for volunteers and refer them to United Way. Mayor Heyblom said he spoke to Mesabi Metallics and they're interested in sending some people. Councilor Jensen volunteered for a canvassing date.

Jamie Mjolsness, Habitat for Humanity, said that Habitat has a home preservation program, which is a zero-interest loan program. That program will be shared with participants of Day of Action. She discussed funding sources for Day of Action, which included funds from Habitat and United Way. The focus of Day of Action will be to complete residential projects, but there will be room for community projects as well. Jamie asked for input on any community projects the Council may want to see done. If Council has any specific homes they'd like to recommend, she asked those be brought forward; otherwise, the canvassing will focus on the main corridors.

Jessica Pellinen, CEDA, said that as they conduct the canvassing, some projects can be referred to the Small Cities Development Program, as there is still funding available.

Approval of Consent Agenda

*Motion by Councilor Sullivan, seconded by Councilor Bruns to approve the consent agenda as follows:

a. Approve the minutes of the February 11, 2025, City Council meeting and minutes of the February 18, 2025, Special City Council meeting.

b. Approve claim register #2252025 Claim 1 in the amount of \$108,507.57.

c. Approve claim register #2252025 Claim 2 in the amount of \$6,223.76.

d. Approve Brenden Johnson to attend Fire Officer & Training Officer School in Duluth on March 14-16, 2025, in Duluth; course fee \$235.

e. Approve 2025 off-sale liquor licenses for Nashwauk Investments LLC—DBA Wizard's Sports Bar & Grill, Edwards Oil Inc—DBA Little Brown Jug, Nash's Hideaway—DBA The Saloon.

f. Approve 2025 on-sale liquor licenses for Nashwauk Investments LLC—DBA Wizard's Sports Bar & Grill, Nash's Hideaway—DBA The Saloon, and Mucho Si.

g. Approve 2025 on-sale Sunday liquor licenses for Nashwauk Investments LLC—DBA Wizard's Sports Bar & Grill, Nash's Hideaway—DBA The Saloon.

h. Approve the 2025 3.2 liquor license for E. Milton Latvala—DBA Sinclair Express Mart.

Ayes: all present. Motion carried.

Unfinished Business

Small Cities Development Program

Grant Administrator Jessican Pellinen was present to provide an update regarding the Small Cities program. She stated that the grant is robust, with many compliance conditions. There is room for up to 6 more residential and 3 commercial projects. The grant had been extended through September 2025, and she will continue to do everything she can with the grant, but stated she wasn't sure DEED would agree to another extension. No projects are currently in construction phase, but she is trying to work through them with the time we have left on the grant.

East Itasca Joint Sewer Board Update

Partial Payment Estimate

*Motion by Councilor Bruns, seconded by Councilor Martire to approve Partial Payment Estimate No. 33 for the Wastewater Treatment Improvements project to JK Mechanical Contractors, Inc. in the amount of \$79,211.58.

Ayes: all present. Motion carried.

Mesabi Metallica

Regarding the Mesabi Metallica appeal, the case has been sent to jury trial and the jury will determine the award to Mesabi Metallica due to the anti-trust issue.

Community Development Request

Council discussed the options for the February 2025 Community Development request of Mesabi Metallica. Options included cameras, an updated recording system for the Council chambers, speed signs for the Police Department, welding equipment for the Street Department.

*Motion by Councilor Bruns, seconded by Councilor Jensen to establish the February 2025 Community Development request from Mesabi Metallica be used toward additional City Hall upgrades.

Ayes: all present. Motion carried.

Public Safety Building Follow-up

There will be a listening session next week with ICS.

Hazardous Conditions Buildings

Regarding the hazardous buildings, Administrator/Clerk Kurtcock asked the Council to provide direction on how to proceed with the properties. If the Council intended to move forward with razing them, asbestos testing would need to be complete and quotes for abatement and demolition would need to be obtained in order to apply for grant funding through IRRRB.

*Motion by Councilor Bruns, seconded by Councilor Martire to secure quotes for asbestos testing for 211 Central Avenue, 302 1st Street, 206 3rd Street.

Ayes: all present. Motion carried.

Councilor Sullivan asked for more information related to assessments for abating hazardous conditions, as assessments could make it difficult for someone to purchase the property after. Administrator/Clerk Kurtock said that the costs not covered by the IRRRB grant are invoiced to the property owners, and if unpaid, then it is assessed to the property. Historically most of the properties have gone tax-forfeit and then the City purchased them from the tax-forfeit auction. Councilor Sullivan questioned if it would make sense for the City to purchase the properties from the owners to avoid having to purchase them from the tax-forfeit list. Regarding the 211 Central Avenue property, Mayor Heyblom noted there is a mortgage on that building. Councilor Bruns asked if Attorney Simon could research if purchasing the properties would be legal.

New Business

Auditor Engagement

*Motion by Councilor Sullivan, seconded by Councilor Jensen to approve the proposal from CLA (CliftonLarsonAllen LLP) for professional auditing services, with a fee of \$37,800 for the 2024 audit and a single audit fee of \$5,000.

Ayes: all present. Motion carried.

Department & Committee Reports & Requests

Ambulance Service

Itasca County Public Hearing Update

Administrator/Clerk Kurtock shared that she, Councilor Jensen, and Councilor Sullivan attended the Itasca County Public Hearing in which the County addressed creation of a subordinate service district for the benefit of the Nashwauk Ambulance Service. Four people spoke in support of the County establishing the subordinate service district and one community submitted a letter of dissent. The County ultimately approved the creation of the district. Their next step will be to draft and publish an RFP for an organization to run the ambulance service on the County's behalf. Councilor Jensen stated she was very pleased with the amount of work that the County had done on Nashwauk's behalf. Councilor Sullivan said the City should be willing to provide the existing conditions to the respondent of the County's RFP so that an ambulance service can be retained within City limits.

USDA Ride Along Agreement

*Motion by Councilor Bruns, seconded by Councilor Martire to approve an EMS Local Ride Along Program Agreement with US Department Agriculture Forest Service.

Ayes: all present. Motion carried.

Resolution No. 2025-06

*Motion by Councilor Jensen, seconded by Councilor Sullivan to approve Resolution No. 2025-06 in support of authorizing the City of Nashwauk to sell Ambulance Equipment to the City of Karlstad, Minnesota.

Roll call: ayes—Councilor Bruns, Councilor Martire, Councilor Jensen, Councilor Sullivan, Mayor Heyblom. Resolution approved.

EMT Hire

*Motion by Mayor Heyblom, seconded by Councilor Jensen to approve the recommendation from Administrator/Clerk Kurtock to hire Lea Deroissart as a full-time EMT.

Ayes: all present. Motion carried.

Transfer from Full-Time to Part-Time

*Motion by Councilor Bruns, seconded by Councilor Martire to approve the request from Christian Cappo to transfer from a full-time EMT position to a part-time EMT position effective March 14, 2025.

Ayes: all present. Motion carried.

Police Department

Mayor Heyblom asked Chief Longoria about signage on Highway 65 regulating jake breaking, as he stated that there used to be signage for it, but he did not see it up any longer. Chief Longoria said that he would contact MnDOT to see if signs could be reinstalled.

Councilor Bruns noted there was additional traffic coming into the city around 3:30 p.m., and people have been running the stop sign and cutting through the Safety Complex parking lot. Chief Longoria stated additional patrol would be in the area at that time.

Street Department

Cooperative Road Maintenance Agreement

Public Works & Utility Lead Jason Martire presented a Cooperative Road Maintenance Agreement from Itasca County, which memorialized the terms that were already in place between the City and County.

*Motion by Councilor Martire, seconded by Councilor Bruns to approve a Cooperative Road Maintenance Agreement between the City of Nashwauk and Itasca County.

Ayes: all present. Motion carried.

PW&UL Martire also stated that with the warm weather, ice has deteriorated in the Rec, so as of today, the ice is done.

PW&UL Martire brought up the high school buildings and wanted to know what the City was going to do about them or if they could be saved for city use, as he advocated for a community center. Mayor Heyblom stated that last June the Council determined that they wanted vacant land for the purpose of housing redevelopment. Martire it was a different Council now so they should reconsider. He said the Morton building on the north end of the property could be used elsewhere if it is movable. Councilor Bruns stated that the school district was already building a community center. Administrator/Clerk Kurtock said that the City doesn't necessarily need to be the one owning the gym; the City could ask ISD 319 to keep it and operate it. Jason Martire questioned the terms of the agreement between IRRRB and ISD 319 and asked if the grant required all buildings be demolished. Administrator/Clerk Kurtock shared the history of the demolition grant, which started with a call from IRRRB, who asked if the City would be willing to accept property from the District if the IRRRB funded demolition of the buildings. The IRRRB wanted to see the property developed with a focus on housing. The Council agreed to the offer and stated that they did not want any buildings left on the property when they accepted its conveyance from the District. Next there was a sit-down meeting with the Superintendent in which she was told the City did not want buildings left on the property. That information was then relayed to the School Board. Councilor Sullivan wondered if the YMCA would be willing to partner with the City regarding the building. Administrator/Clerk Kurtock was asked to inquire about the IRRRB grant conditions. Mayor

Heyblom told PW&UL Martire that if he wanted this to be pursued, he needed to obtain quotes for the renovation of the buildings.

Councilor Bruns stated that the last high school basketball game to be held in the high school gym will be on Thursday night and he recommended that the community attend. The game will begin at 7:00 p.m.

Public Comment

Brenden Johnson stated that the Fire Department received a quote from Stryker for an AED. Mayor Heyblom asked that the quote be placed on the next agenda. Councilor Martire asked if the Fire Department had what they needed for first responding. It was confirmed they have the supplies they need.

Adjourn

*Motion by Councilor Jensen, seconded by Councilor Bruns to adjourn the meeting at 7:02 p.m.

Ayes: all present. Motion carried.

City Administrator/Clerk/Treasurer