

The City of Lake Forest
CITY COUNCIL MEETING
Proceedings of Monday, November 17, 2025
 City Council Meeting – City Council Chambers
 220 E Deerpath, Lake Forest, IL 60045

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL: Honorable Mayor Tack called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m., and City Clerk Margaret Boyer called the roll of Council members.

Present: Mayor Tack, Alderman Novit, Alderman Clemens, Alderman Notz, Alderman Powers, Alderman LeVert, Alderman Bothfeld, Alderman Weber (arrived at 7:15 p.m.), and Alderman Walther.

Absent: None

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE was recited by all those present.

REPORTS OF CITY OFFICERS

COMMENTS BY MAYOR

Mayor Tack thanked everyone who attended the ribbon-cutting for the Deerpath Streetscape & Bank Lane Enhancements.

A. 2025-2026 Board & Commission Appointments and Reappointments

CEMETERY COMMISSION

NAME OF MEMBER	APPOINT/REAPPOINT	WARD
Maddie Dugan	APPOINT	3

BOARD OF TRUSTEES POLICE PENSION BOARD

NAME OF MEMBER	APPOINT/REAPPOINT	WARD
Eric Siebert	APPOINT	2

COUNCIL ACTION: Approve the Mayor's Appointments

Mayor Tack asked for a motion to approve the appointments. Alderman LeVert made a motion, seconded by Alderman Powers. Motion carried unanimously by voice vote

COMMENTS BY CITY MANAGER

City Manager Jason Wicha introduced Seamus Collins, President, and Dr. Jeffrey Kopin, MD, Senior Vice President and Chief Medical Officer

A. Community Spotlight

- NM Catherine Gratz Griffin Lake Forest Hospital
- Seamus Collins, President
- Dr. Jeffrey Kopin, MD, Senior Vice President and Chief Medical Officer

President Collins thanked the community for the partnership of being the best in the country. He shared that since they last visited City Council in June 2024, The Hospital improved its ranking from #10 to #8, increased from 3 to 4 nationally ranked specialties, achieved Magnet with Distinction, and was awarded quality leadership recognition from Vizient. He went on to share a timeline of expanding facilities and clinical services since the approval of the Master Campus Use Plan and Special Use Permit in 2014, to the first patients slated to be seen in February 2026. Lastly, he shared the expansion by the numbers: 80 plus physicians joining over the next five years, 3 times larger emergency services with a dedicated emergency imaging suite, 24 additional critical care beds, 150 plus new full-time employees, 260 Inpatient and observation rooms when complete, and 291,588 square feet of new hospital space. He then introduced Dr. Jeffrey Kopin, MD, Senior Vice President and Chief Medical Officer.

Dr. Kopin stated that they understood their patients were not having an ED experience consistent with their expectations, and that they invested in improving it, and it succeeded. The improved ED Experience comes from increased overall staffing, a new role: nurse in waiting area, Care at arrival: EKG in triage, Enhanced training for all employees responsible for ED care and environment. These improved experience scores by more than 8 points. In addition, there is now Medical Oversight for Regional First Responders, which includes Standards of care and in-ambulance consults for EMTs and Paramedics in 10 municipalities, Train new first responders: 165 EMTs and 24 Paramedics/year and Technology to allow treatment on arrival – better stroke and heart attack response.

Women’s Health Care for All Stages of Life was addressed. Noting Obstetrics and Gynecology, OB Hospitalists, Advanced Practice Providers, Maternal-Fetal Medicine, Complex pregnancies, Minimally Invasive Gynecology, and Urogynecology. He noted that bringing Advanced NM Specialty care is bringing World-Class care to Lake Forest. Lastly, he gave an overview of the Academic Medicine, Research, and Teaching at the Hospital, including :

Clinical Trials: Current State- Building trials infrastructure; Hired a dedicated NR Research Coordinator. Four specialties participating in Clinical Trials: Oncology, Cardiology, Gastroenterology and Interventional Radiology, along with participating in 130+ active Clinical Trials.

Clinical Trials: Future State. Specialties soon to be participating: Allergy and Dermatology. With a goal: Ten specialties participating and lastly with a Goal: 20% increase in number of active Clinical Trials.

The City Council stated that having the Hospital in Lake Forest is such a great resource.

OPPORTUNITY FOR CITIZENS TO ADDRESS THE CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE REPORTS

FINANCE COMMITTEE

1. Consideration of an Ordinance Establishing the 2025 Tax Levy (First Reading)

Katie Skibbe, Finance Director, reported the proposed 2025 tax levy reflects a 4.51% increase over the 2024 tax levy extensions for the City and Library operating funds, as well as the City’s pension and debt service funds. This increase includes a 2.90% property tax capped increase applied to the Parks & Recreation and Library levies. The Debt service bond levies previously approved by City Council ordinances, subject to abatements for debt paid by alternate revenue sources. The estimated debt service for the Police Facility project, with a partial abatement of the first-year payment increases attributable to new construction and a 2.00% increase in the General Fund and IMRF pension levies.

Both the Police and Fire pension contributions are determined by independent actuarial valuations and reviewed by the Pension Subcommittee. The average increase for an existing homeowner (based on a \$1,000,000 home) is projected to be approximately \$165, or 3.56%.

A summary of the proposed levy is as follows:

Fund	Proposed 2025 Levy	2024 Extension	\$ Change	% Change
General	17,044,547	16,710,340	334,207	2.00%
Pensions	8,112,826	7,908,269	204,557	2.59%
Parks & Recreation	6,670,558	6,486,086	184,471	2.84%
Capital/Debt	6,090,605	5,237,133	853,472	16.30%
New Growth	308,937	0	308,937	
PTAB/CE Recapture	0	200,136	(200,136)	
Library	5,331,145	5,180,899	150,246	2.90%
Library New Growth	45,073	0	45,073	
Total Tax Levy	43,603,691	41,722,864	1,880,826	4.51%

Ordinance (Excludes Bond Issuances) 39,213,086

School District #67 levy amounts are not yet available and will be included for final reading on December 1. The school district amounts are estimates and subject to final approval by the School District Board.

Mayor Tack asked if there was anyone from the public who would like to comment. Seeing none, he asked for a motion.

COUNCIL ACTION: Grant first reading of an Ordinance Establishing the 2025 Tax Levy (page 28).

Alderman Walther made a motion to grant first reading of an Ordinance Establishing the 2025 Tax Levy, seconded by Alderman Powers. The following voted "Aye": Aldermen Novit, Clemens, Notz, Powers, LeVert, Bothfeld, and Walther. The following voted "Nay": none. 7-Ayes, 0-Nays, motion carried.

2. Approval of Ordinances Abating 2025 Tax Levies for Various G.O. Alternate Revenue Bond Issues (First Reading)

Katie Skibbe, Finance Director, reported the proposed Ordinances provide for the abatement (reduction) of 2025 property taxes levied for the various outstanding general obligation alternate revenue bond issues. The proposed Ordinances are as follows:

- An Ordinance Abating a Portion of the Tax being Levied in 2025 for the Annual Payment of the Principal and Interest on the General Obligation Bonds, Series 2015 Bond Issue
- An Ordinance Abating the Total Tax being Levied in 2025 for the Annual Payment of the Principal and Interest on the General Obligation Bonds, Series 2017 Bond Issue

A summary of the proposed tax levy abatements is provided below:

2025 Debt Service Levy and Abatements

	Levy per County	TIF	TIF Loan*	Water	Net Levy
2015	633,050.00	(361,687.50)			271,362.50
2017	784,352.50			(784,352.50)	0.00
2019	827,962.50				827,962.50
2021	719,800.00				719,800.00
2023	1,271,750.00				1,271,750.00
2025**	1,533,826.00		(230,000.00)		1,303,826.00
Total	5,770,741.00	(361,687.50)	(230,000.00)	(784,352.50)	4,394,701.00
1% L/C	5,828,448.41				4,438,648.01

Mayor Tack asked if there was anyone from the public who would like to comment. Seeing none, he asked for a motion.

COUNCIL ACTION: Grant first reading of the Ordinances Abating 2025 Tax Levies for various general obligation bond issues.

Alderman Walther made a motion to grant first reading of an Ordinance Establishing the 2025 Tax Levy, seconded by Alderman Notz. The following voted “Aye”: Aldermen Novit, Clemens, Notz, Powers, LeVert, Bothfeld, and Walther. The following voted “Nay”: none. 7-Ayes, 0-Nays, motion carried.

3. Consideration of an Ordinance Approving a Fee Schedule (First Reading)

Diane Hall, Assistant Finance Director, reported that staff requests approval of the first reading of the proposed Ordinance. As part of the budget process, all departments are asked to review their user fees. A comprehensive fee schedule is provided as Exhibit A to the Ordinance approving a fee schedule, which clearly identifies the proposed fee increases highlighted in yellow. Lastly, she stated that the annual revenue for the new and increased fees is estimated to be \$3,112 in the General Fund, \$14,600 in the Parks and Recreation Fund, and \$61,903 in the Golf Course Fund.

Mayor Tack asked if there was anyone from the public who would like to comment. Seeing none, he asked for a motion.

COUNCIL ACTION: Grant first reading of an Ordinance approving a fee schedule.

Alderman LeVert made a motion to grant first reading of an Ordinance approving a fee schedule, seconded by Alderman Novit. The following voted “Aye”: Aldermen Novit, Clemens, Notz, Powers, LeVert, Bothfeld, and Walther. The following voted “Nay”: none. 7-Ayes, 0-Nays, motion carried.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE

1. Consideration of an Ordinance Approving a Recommendation from the Environmental Sustainability Committee amending City Code Section 135.108(C) titled “Noise, Generally.”(First Reading and if desired by the City Council, Final Approval)

Keri Kaup, Assistant to the City Manager, reported that the Environmental Sustainability Committee requests consideration of an ordinance amending section 135.108(C) of the City Code to limit the allowable hours for

lawn maintenance equipment noise. At the City Council meeting on October 20, 2025, the Environmental Sustainability Committee provided an overview of the history of the City's landscaping noise hours regulations as well as the most recent discussions regarding gas-powered leaf blowers. After considering the impact any changes would have on residents, landscape contractors, and others, the Committee sought direction from the City Council regarding their recommendation to further limit the allowable hours for landscape equipment noise. The recommendation from the Environmental Sustainability Committee was as follows:

Amend the City Code to generally limit the use of all noise-generating lawn maintenance equipment, including, but not limited to, gasoline powered leaf blowers, as follows:

Monday – Friday:	Permitted Hours 7:30am – 7:00pm
Saturday:	Permitted Hours 9:00am – 5:00pm
Sundays/Holidays:	Prohibited

The proposed amendment includes an exception that allows residents to use landscaping equipment on their own property between the following hours:

Monday – Friday:	Permitted Hours 7:30am – 7:30pm
Saturday:	Permitted Hours 8:00am – 5:30pm
Sundays/Holidays:	Permitted Hours 10:00am – 5:00pm

The Environmental Sustainability Committee also recommended that any changes become effective with ample time to communicate the update to the landscaping companies in order for them to adjust their schedules accordingly for the season.

Mayor Tack asked if there was anyone from the public who would like to comment. Seeing none, he asked for a motion.

COUNCIL ACTION: If determined to be appropriate by the City Council, waive first reading and grant final approval of an Ordinance amending the City Code, Section 135.108(C), titled "Noise, Generally" to amend the allowable hours for the use of noise generating lawn maintenance equipment.

Alderman Novit made a motion to waive first reading and grant final approval of an Ordinance amending the City Code, Section 135.108(C), titled "Noise, Generally" to amend the allowable hours for the use of noise generating lawn maintenance equipment, seconded by Alderman Walther. The following voted "Aye": Aldermen Novit, Clemens, Notz, Powers, LeVert, Bothfeld, and Walther. The following voted "Nay": none. 7- Ayes, 0-Nays, motion carried.

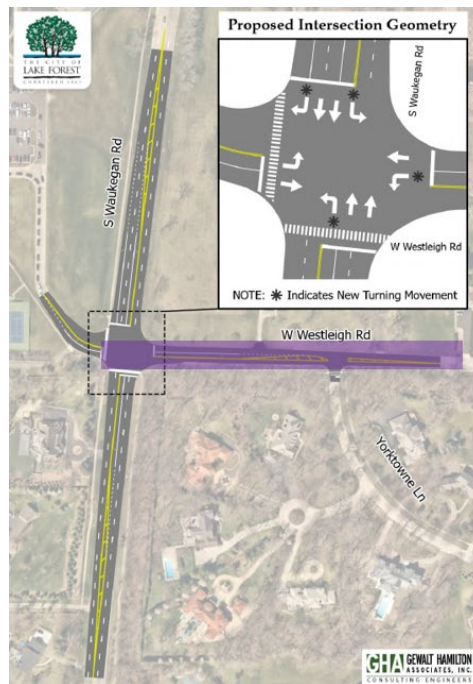
PUBLIC WORKS

- 1. Approval of a Resolution for a Joint Funding Agreement for Federally Funded Construction with the state of Illinois Department of Transportation for Construction of the Waukegan and Westleigh Intersection Project, Section Number 13-00095-00-CH, for a Local Match Estimated at \$982,100, and Authorize the City Manager to Execute Required Agreements and Additional Paperwork as Required by IDOT Related to Work on This Project**

Byron Kutz, P.E., Superintendent of Engineering, reported that the Public Works Committee and Staff request approval of an IDOT resolution for a Joint Funding Agreement necessary for federally funded construction for the Waukegan-Westleigh intersection project. In addition, Staff requests authority to execute required IDOT agreements and any other paperwork for this project. Approval of the Joint funding agreement (completed

and signed Appropriation Resolution, along with the locally executed agreement) is required to proceed with the state bidding on January 16, 2026. The initial design of this project began more than 10 years ago. He briefly reviewed that the Waukegan/Westleigh intersection experiences frequent rear-end and left-turn collisions, along with heavy congestion during West Campus events. To improve safety and traffic flow, the City plans to widen the roadway, add dedicated turn lanes, upgrade traffic and pedestrian signals, and install new sidewalks, crosswalks, and ADA-compliant curb ramps. The project received \$2.62 million in federal STP funding, and final coordination with IDOT is underway for a January 2026 bid letting. Construction is expected to begin in mid-to-late March and reach substantial completion by early August, ahead of the busy fall sports season at the High School West Campus. The Phase III Construction Engineering Services is timed to be awarded at the January 20, 2026 City Council meeting (after construction bids are received). Proposals were opened on 10/6/25 with the selected proposal in the amount of \$398,000 (including 5% contingency). Construction engineering is being funded from FY26 (\$190,000) and FY27 (\$208,00).

In addition, staff is seeking Council direction on the water main topic. Mr. Kutz shared the following slide.



Watermain Discussion

Option	Timing	Risk of Watermain Break	Pros	Cons	Additional Cost
Proceed with intersection now	No delay	Medium	Maintains schedule	Risk of future watermain failure	\$0
Proceed with watermain testing	Potential delay if deterioration found	Low	Data-driven decision	May still lead to future watermain work	\$55,000 plus potential replacement
Delay intersection to line or replace watermain (Westleigh)	1 to 2 years	Very low	Long-term reliability, avoids future disruption	Highest cost and delay	\$450k - \$800k

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The City Council held a detailed discussion on all available options. Topics included the cost differences between replacing the water main, lining it, or further evaluating its condition; pipe size and associated project expenses; and how the water main work ties directly to the planned intersection improvements. Council also reviewed the timing of the IDOT bid letting, potential impacts of repaving or reopening a newly completed intersection, construction duration, water shutoff requirements, rehabilitation methods, and testing procedures—including whether to test now or proceed without additional testing. The conversation also addressed project delays, recent main breaks, the merits of pursuing Option 2 with a return to Council at a later date, and the importance of remaining within the IDOT letting schedule.

Mayor Tack asked if there was anyone from the public who would like to comment. Seeing none, he asked for a motion.

COUNCIL ACTION: Approval of a Resolution for a Joint Funding Agreement for Federally Funded Construction with the state of Illinois Department of Transportation for Construction of the Waukegan and Westleigh Intersection Project, Section Number 13-00095-00-CH, for a Local Match Estimated at \$982,100,

and Authorize the City Manager to Execute Required Agreements and Additional Paperwork as Required by IDOT Related to Work on This Project

Alderman Clemens made a motion to approve of a Resolution for a Joint Funding Agreement for Federally Funded Construction with the state of Illinois Department of Transportation for Construction of the Waukegan and Westleigh Intersection Project, Section Number 13-00095-00-CH, for a Local Match Estimated at \$982,100, and Authorize the City Manager to Execute Required Agreements and Additional Paperwork as Required by IDOT Related to Work on This Project and to proceed with option #2 and will seek direction at a later city Council date, seconded by Alderman Walther. The following voted "Aye": Aldermen Novit, Clemens, Notz, Powers, LeVert, Bothfeld, and Walther. The following voted "Nay": none. 7-Ayes, 0-Nays, motion carried.

- 2. Award of the Low Bid for the McLennon-Reed Bridge Repairs Project to Dunnet Bay Construction and Authorize the City Manager to Execute an Agreement in the Amount of \$1,976,924 and a Contingency in the Amount of \$198,076 for a Total Project Cost of \$2,175,000. Also, Approval of Structural Engineering Construction Assistance Services for the McLennon-Reed Bridge Repairs Project to Wiss, Janney, Elstner Associates, Inc., and Authorize the City Manager to Execute an Agreement in the Amount of \$74,431 to Include a Contingency in the Amount of \$5,569 for a Total Cost of \$80,000**

Byron Kutz, P.E., Superintendent of Engineering, reported that the Public Works Committee and City staff are requesting approval of the repairs for the McLennon-Reed Bridge to Dunnet Bay Construction for a total of \$2,175,000, including contingency. Also, approval of a consultant agreement to Wiss, Janney, Elstner Associates, Inc. (WJE hereafter) for construction assistance for a total of \$80,000, including contingency.

He reviewed the project scope to include Full deck and railing replacement, Spot steel repairs, Slope stabilization and ravine restoration, and Asphalt resurfacing at both approaches. He shared the schedule and communications to include construction in late March to mid-September 2026, full road closure required, and there will be an open house on Thursday, December 4, from 5-7 pm at Gorton Center.



Mayor Tack asked if there was anyone from the public who would like to comment. Seeing none, he asked for a motion.

COUNCIL ACTION: Award of the Low Bid for the McLennon-Reed Bridge Repairs Project to Dunnet Bay Construction and Authorize the City Manager to Execute an Agreement in the Amount of \$1,976,924 and a Contingency in the Amount of \$198,076 for a Total Project Cost of \$2,175,000. Also, Approval of Structural Engineering Construction Assistance Services for the McLennon-Reed Bridge Repairs Project to Wiss, Janney, Elstner Associates, Inc., and Authorize the City Manager to Execute an Agreement in the Amount of \$74,431 to Include a Contingency in the Amount of \$5,569 for a Total Cost of \$80,000

Alderman Walther made a motion to award of the Low Bid for the McLennon-Reed Bridge Repairs Project to Dunnet Bay Construction and Authorize the City Manager to Execute an Agreement in the Amount of \$1,976,924 and a Contingency in the Amount of \$198,076 for a Total Project Cost of \$2,175,000. Also, Approval of Structural Engineering Construction Assistance Services for the McLennon-Reed Bridge Repairs Project to Wiss, Janney, Elstner Associates, Inc., and Authorize the City Manager to Execute an Agreement in the Amount of \$74,431 to Include a Contingency in the Amount of \$5,569 for a Total Cost of \$80,000, seconded by Alderman Powers. The following voted "Aye": Aldermen Novit, Clemens, Notz, Powers, LeVert, Bothfeld, Weber, and Walther. The following voted "Nay": none. 8-Ayes, 0-Nays, motion carried.

ITEMS FOR OMNIBUS VOTE CONSIDERATION

1. **Approval of a Resolution of Appreciation for Retiring Members of Boards and Commissions as follows:**

BOARD, COMMISSION OR COMMITTEE	NAME OF MEMBERS(S)
CEMETERY COMMISSION	Robert Thornbough and Robert Worobow

2. **Consideration of a Request to Waive the Fidelity Bond Requirement in Connection with Holding the Raffles in the City of Lake Forest for School of St. Mary (Approval by Motion)**
3. **Approval of Finance Recommendation to Waive the RFP Process and Authorize a Contract for Credit Card Processing to BS&A for the City's Financial Software, CardConnect for the Recreation Department, and GolfNow for the Golf Department payment operations.**
4. **Approval of a One Year Contract with American Printing Technologies for Processing Vehicle Licenses in an Amount Not to Exceed \$40,000**
5. **Approve a Resolution Authorizing the City Manager to Execute Agreements pertaining to Settlement of the 3M PFAS Class Action Lawsuit**
6. **Approval of a Resolution Authorizing the City Manager to Execute a Settlement Agreement with Monsanto Company Regarding PCB Contamination of Stormwater**
7. **Consideration of a Recommendation from the Public Works Committee to Approve of a Resolution Authorizing the City to Join the Illinois Water/Wastewater Agency Response Network**
8. **Approval of a Purchase for a Toro Dingo TX1000 from Russo Power in the Amount of \$65,000 via the National Sourcwell Bid**
9. **Consideration of a Recommendation from Staff to Approve a Resolution Accepting the Remaining Public Improvements in the Oak Knoll Woodlands Subdivision. (Approval by Motion)**

CITY COUNCIL ACTION Approve the nine (9) omnibus items as presented.

Mayor Tack asked if anyone would like an item removed or taken separately. Seeing none, he asked for a motion.

Alderman Weber made a motion to approve the nine (9) Omnibus items as presented, seconded by Alderman LeVert. The following voted "Aye": Aldermen Novit, Clemens, Notz, Powers, LeVert, Bothfeld, Weber, and Walther. The following voted "Nay": none. 8-Ayes, 0-Nays, motion carried.

Information such as Purpose and Action Requested, Background/Discussion, Budget/Fiscal Impact, Council Action, and a Staff Contact as it relates to the Omnibus items can be found on the agenda.

OLD BUSINESS

NEW BUSINESS

ADDITIONAL ITEMS FOR COUNCIL DISCUSSION/COMMENTS BY COUNCIL MEMBERS
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Mayor Tack wished the community a Happy Thanksgiving

Mayor Tack noted that there will be no further business following the executive session.

Mayor Tack asked for a motion to adjourn into executive session pursuant to 5 ILCS 120/2 (c) ((2) Collective Negotiating matters and (11), Pending litigation.

1. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Alderman Weber made a motion to adjourn into executive session pursuant to 5 ILCS 120/2 (c) 2) Collective Negotiating matters and (11), Pending litigation, seconded by Alderman Walther. The following voted "Aye": Aldermen Novit, Clemens, Notz, Powers, LeVert, Bothfeld, Weber, and Walther. The following voted "Nay": none. 8-Ayes, 0-Nays, motion carried.

Adjournment into Executive Session 7:39 p.m.

Reconvene into Regular Session 8:29 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Mayor Tack asked for a motion to adjourn. Alderman LeVert made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Alderman Powers. Motion carried unanimously by voice vote at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Margaret Boyer, City Clerk

A video of the City Council meeting is available for viewing at the Lake Forest Library and on file in the Clerk's office at City Hall. You can also view it on the website by visiting www.cityoflakeforest.com. Click on I Want To, then click on View, then choose Archived Meetings Videos.