

The City of Lake Forest
CITY COUNCIL MEETING
Proceedings of Tuesday, February 17, 2026
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, and Alderman Weber.

Absent: Alderman Walther

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE was recited by all those present.

REPORTS OF CITY OFFICERS

COMMENTS BY MAYOR

Mayor Tack reported that the new pavilions at Lake Forest Hospital were open, including an enlarged emergency department with a new entrance adjacent to Westmoreland Road, and noted that the old entrance is now closed. He said Lake Forest is fortunate to have a quality hospital in the community.

COMMENTS BY CITY MANAGER

A. America 250 Lake Forest Celebration
- Mike Wick, Director of Parks & Recreation

City Manager Jason Wicha introduced a report on the City's America 250 celebration, noting that 2026 marks the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence. Former Alderman Ara Goshgarian, Chairman of a newly formed resident advisory group, addressed the Council and highlighted the group's community-oriented planning approach, thanking members Mark Gorman, Jackie Greca, Steve Hill, Adam Mancuso, Debbie Saran, and Jeff Erso. He proposed that the Mayor and City Council author a time capsule document reflecting on the state of the city and their hopes for its future.

Director of Parks & Recreation Mike Wick then outlined the July 2–5 core celebration weekend, including a Concert in the Square and Taste of Lake Forest event on July 2, a ticketed dinner at Elawa Farm on July 3, a festival and fireworks at Deer Path Park on July 4 featuring bands Fletcher Rockwell and the Freddie Jones Band and a patriotic 250th-themed fireworks show, and an ice cream social at the beach on July 5.

Communications Director Dana Olson noted that partner organizations—including Ragdale, the History Center, the Chamber of Commerce, Gorton Drama Studio, Lake Forest College, and the Lake Forest Library—have planned complementary events running, and that both a physical and digital time capsule are being explored.

B. Community Spotlight
- Ragdale
-Paul Sacaridiz, Executive Director

City Manager Jason Wicha Introduced Paul Sacaridiz, Executive Director at Ragdale. Mr. Sacaridiz reported that the Ragdale Foundation, which is celebrating its 50th anniversary as a residency program in 2026, is listed

on the National Historic Register as a surviving example of Howard Van Doren Shaw's architecture. He described Ragdale's programs, including approximately 150 competitive residencies per year across disciplines such as writing, dance, music, and visual arts, noting that this year's application pool was the highest in the organization's history. Key anniversary initiatives include a May 16 gala, a brand refresh and new website launching in May, the return of the Ragdale Ring Design-Build Competition, a preservation symposium with the Lake Forest Preservation Foundation, and a partnership exhibition with the History Center of Lake Forest, Lake Bluff. Sacaridiz also announced that Ragdale received a \$368,000 Save America's Treasures grant from the National Park Service for the rehabilitation of its arts and crafts garden, which required a matching \$300,000 that was successfully raised in January, with work expected to be completed in late 2027.

City Council commented that Ragdale had long been a hidden gem in the community and expressed enthusiasm about the organization's efforts to increase public awareness and encouraged collaboration with Lake Forest's four garden clubs.

OPPORTUNITY FOR CITIZENS TO ADDRESS THE CITY COUNCIL

Three youth titleholders from the Lake Forest Lake Bluff community pageant—Teen Miss Issabelle Paulsen, Little Miss Olivia Grace Paulsen, and Junior Miss Johnny—addressed the Council, speaking about the pageant's focus on community service, confidence, leadership, and civic engagement, and noting their work with organizations such as Feed My Starving Children and Bernie's Book Drive

COMMITTEE REPORTS

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE

- 1. Report on Bottle Fill Stations**
 - **Nancy Novit, Chairman, Environmental Sustainability Committee**

Alderman Novit, Chairman of the Environmental Sustainability Committee, reported that the committee was recommending the purchase and installation of eight bottle fill stations at park locations across the city—including Elawa Farm, Everett Park, Waveland Park, Kinderhaven, South Park, and Northcroft Park—to replace standard drinking fountains. She noted the stations reduce single-use plastic consumption, include dog bowl attachments, and include traditional drinking fountains at two heights. This item is part of the omnibus vote.

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE

- 1. Approval of a Resolution for a Joint Funding Agreement for Federally Funded Right-of-Way with the state of Illinois Department of Transportation for the Waukegan & Everett Project, Section Number 11-00091-00-CH, for a Local Match Estimated at \$218,860, and Authorize the City Manager to Execute Required Agreements and Additional Paperwork as Required by IDOT Related to Work on This Project**

Byron Kutz, Superintendent of Engineering, presented the request for approval of a Joint Funding Agreement with IDOT for federally funded right-of-way acquisition at the Waukegan and Everett intersection, a project with origins dating to 2009 that aims to address traffic congestion, accommodate future development, and improve railroad crossing safety through the addition and lengthening of multiple turn lanes. The total estimated right-of-way cost is approximately \$1,094,300, with the City's 20% local match estimated at

\$218,860, available beginning May 1, 2026; actual costs will not be known until after appraisals and negotiation are completed.

City Council had a discussion on Fire vehicles navigating the proposed median, and IDOT bid opening.

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

Alderman Notz made a motion to approve a Resolution for a Joint Funding Agreement for Federally Funded Right-of-Way with the state of Illinois Department of Transportation for the Waukegan & Everett Project, Section Number 11-00091-00-CH, for a Local Match Estimated at \$218,860, and Authorize the City Manager to Execute Required Agreements and Additional Paperwork as Required by IDOT Related to Work on This Project, seconded by Alderman LeVert. The following voted "Aye": Aldermen Novit, Clemens, Notz, Powers, LeVert, Bothfeld, and Weber. The following voted "Nay": none. 7-Ayes, 0-Nays, motion carried.

ITEMS FOR OMNIBUS VOTE CONSIDERATION

1. **Approval of January 20, 2026, City Council Meeting Minutes**
2. **Approval of February 2, 2026, City Council Meeting Minutes**
3. **Consideration of an Ordinance approving a Fee Schedule Adjusting Water Rates for FY2027 (Second Reading)**
4. **Consideration of a Request to Waive the Fidelity Bond Requirement in Connection with Holding the Raffles in the City of Lake Forest Country Day School (Approval by Motion)**
5. **Approval of a Resolution Reallocating 2026 Volume Cap to the Village of Buffalo Grove, Illinois**
6. **Approve a One-Year Extension to an Existing Contract with Vogue Printers for Dialogue Newsletter Printing Services in the amount of \$26,076 and a 5.0% contingency in the amount of \$1,304 for a grand total of \$27,380.**
7. **Approve the purchase of eight bottle-fill stations from Most Dependable Fountains in the amount of \$33,720 to be installed in various parks throughout the City.**
8. **Consideration to Waive the Bidding Process and Authorize the Purchase of a Pre-owned 2014 J70 sailboat in the amount of \$40,000.**
9. **Award a Contract for the Installation of Watermain at the Waukegan and Westleigh Intersection to DiMeo Brothers, Inc., and Authorize the City Manager to Execute an Agreement in the Amount of \$49,000 to Include a 10% Contingency in the Amount of \$4,900 for a Total Cost of \$53,900**

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 Novit made a motion to approve the nine (9) Omnibus items as presented, seconded by Alderman Bothfeld. The following voted "Aye": Aldermen Novit, Clemens, Notz, Powers, LeVert, Bothfeld, and Weber. The following voted "Nay": none. 7-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

- 1. Grant final reading of the Ordinance amending Chapter 78 of the City Code related to Parking and Loading Schedules and approve the zones depicted in the map provided titled “Central Business District Parking Zones.”**

Keri Kaup, Assistant to the City Manager, provided a brief update on changes made to the ordinance since first reading, including the addition of enforcement hours of 6:30 AM to 6:30 PM in Schedules IX, X, and XI, and the reinstatement of four 30-minute quick-stop spaces in the North Train Depot Lot in response to community feedback about the importance of short-term parking for train depot businesses. General housekeeping updates to ensure consistent titling and formatting were also made

Mayor Tack asked if there was anyone from the public who would like to comment.

Diane expressed appreciation for the Council's responsiveness and the work of staff.

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

COUNCIL ACTION: Grant final reading of the Ordinance amending Chapter 78 of the City Code related to Parking and Loading Schedules and approve the zones depicted in the map provided titled “Central Business District Parking Zones.”

Alderman Novit made a motion to grant final reading of the Ordinance amending Chapter 78 of the City Code related to Parking and Loading Schedules and approve the zones depicted in the map provided titled “Central Business District Parking Zones.” *As amended*, seconded by Alderman Powers. The following voted “Aye”: Aldermen Novit, Clemens, Notz, Powers, LeVert, Bothfeld, and Weber. The following voted “Nay”: none. 7-Ayes, 0-Nays, motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS

ADDITIONAL ITEMS FOR COUNCIL DISCUSSION/COMMENTS BY COUNCIL MEMBERS

Mayor Tack asked Council members if they had any additional items. Seeing none. He stated that there will be no further business following the executive session. He then asked for a motion to adjourn into executive session pursuant to 5 ILCS 120/2 (c) (11). The City Council will discuss pending or threatened litigation.

1. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Alderman Weber made a motion to adjourn into executive session pursuant to 5 ILCS 120/2 (c) (11). The City Council will discuss pending or threatened litigation, seconded by Alderman Powers. The following voted “Aye”: Aldermen Novit, Clemens, Notz, Powers, LeVert, Bothfeld and Weber. The following voted “Nay”: none. 7-Ayes, 0-Nays, motion carried.

Adjournment into Executive Session 7:30 pm

Reconvene into Open Session 8:55 pm

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Mayor Tack asked for a motion to adjourn. Alderman Novit made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Alderman Notz. Motion carried unanimously by voice vote at 8:56 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.