

The City of Lake Forest  
CITY COUNCIL MEETING  
***Proceedings of Monday, December 1, 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, and Alderman Walther.

Absent: None

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE** was recited by all those present.

**REPORTS OF CITY OFFICERS**

**COMMENTS BY MAYOR**

Mayor Tack thanked the community for coming out to the 41<sup>st</sup> Tree lighting in Market Square, it was well attended.

**A. Resolution of Appreciation for retiring City Attorney, Julie A. Tappendorf**

The Mayor read the Resolution of Appreciation and asked for a motion.

**COUNCIL ACTION: Approve the Resolution of Appreciation**

Mayor Tack asked for a motion to approve the Resolution of Appreciation. Alderman Weber made a motion, seconded by Alderman LeVert. Motion carried unanimously by voice vote

Mayor Tack reported on the Pop-Up Shop, to include the partnership with the LF/LB Chamber. This year, the Pop-Up Shop will be at City Hall with 16 local non-profit organizations participating and the proceeds from sales go directly to those organizations. The shop opens Thursday, December 4 and is open Thursdays and Fridays through December 19 from 11 am to 4 pm.

The Mayor stated the 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Winter Market will take place on Saturday, December 13 and Saturday, December 20, from 10 am to 2 pm at Telegraph Road Train Station, 911 Telegraph Road. And gives patrons the opportunity to support local small businesses and artisans while visiting with friends and neighbors.

**COMMENTS BY CITY MANAGER**

City Manager Jason Wicha reported on the timing of the bid opening on January 16, 2026 prior to the next City Council meeting on January 20, 2026 on the upcoming intersection project. City Manager Wicha asked Council to afford staff the discretion to proceed or delay the project based on analysis with the caveat of the pipe's lifespan lasts at least 10 years, then the City would proceed with the project if less than 10, then pausing the project, and doing an even larger project next year. Analysis is made by using new tech to measure the thickness of existing pipes.

The City Council had a lengthy discussion on what could be a binary decision based on the quality and condition of the pipe, the intersection design, the over or under budget, pipe thickness, section loss, and the area east of the pumping station to Waukegan Road. Consensus from the Council was to allow staff to use their discretion.

**OPPORTUNITY FOR CITIZENS TO ADDRESS THE CITY COUNCIL**

Diane offered her appreciation to City Parks and Recreation City Staff.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**FINANCE COMMITTEE**

**1. Gorton Community Center 2026 Budget Presentation**

Will Georgi, Gorton Board Chair, thanked the City for its partnership, noting it added much value to Gorton, and he reported that the board approved the budget in October.

Amy Wagliardo, Executive Director, highlighted Gorton’s story and the new position. Ms. Wagliardo reported that Gorton was able to repair drainage issues and complete the patio, raised \$3 million towards future capital improvements, and that they switched to a customer relationship/ticketing system and implemented a new software program.

Bob Scales, Finance & Operations Chair/City Director, reviewed the budget, noting the new Operations Director position.

The City Council had a discussion on endowment, programming, and Gorton’s long history.

COUNCIL ACTION: It is recommended that the City Council approve the Gorton Community Center 2026 Budget.

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

Alderman Bothfeld made a motion to approve the Gorton Community Center 2026 Budget, seconded by Alderman Notz. 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.

**2. Consideration of an Ordinance Establishing the 2025 Tax Levy (Final Reading)**

Katie Skibbe, Finance Director, reported that this is the fifth time the City Council has seen this item. The Levy has increased by 4.5% in 2025 to phase in debt service for the Police Facility in the second year. She gave a detailed review of the Bond abatement to reduce taxpayer debt supported by property tax.

Ms Skibbe noted that the bond abatement ordinances are on omnibus. She also noted that the general levy is 2%, with this being the fourth year less than CPI 2.9% for 2024. The 4.51% includes the library and is included in the Ordinance of School District 67 as required by our charter.

**A summary of the proposed levy is as follows:**

<b>Fund</b>	<b>Proposed 2025 Levy</b>	<b>2024 Extension</b>	<b>\$ Change</b>	<b>% Change</b>
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	
<b>Total Tax Levy</b>	<b>\$ 43,603,691</b>	<b>\$ 41,722,864</b>	<b>\$ 1,880,826</b>	<b>4.51%</b>

School District 67 - Estimated	43,372,523	41,649,002	1,723,521	4.14%
GRAND TOTAL	86,976,214	83,371,866	3,604,348	4.32%

**Ordinance (Excludes Bond Issuances)** \$ 82,585,609

School District #67 levy amounts are estimates and subject to final approval by the School District Board.

The average increase for an existing homeowner (based on a \$1,000,000 home) is projected to be approximately \$165, or 3.56%.

**COUNCIL ACTION:** Consider final approval of an Ordinance Establishing the 2025 Tax Levy.

Alderman Powers made a motion to grant final approval of an Ordinance Establishing the 2025 Tax Levy, seconded by Alderman Weber. 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 Monday, November 3, 2025, and Monday, November 17, 2025, City Council Meeting Minutes
2. Approval of the Check Register for the Period of October 18 – November 14, 2025.
3. Approval of Ordinances Abating 2025 Tax Levies for Various G.O. Alternate Revenue Bond Issues (Final Reading)
4. Consideration of an Ordinance Approving a Fee Schedule (Final Reading)
5. Consideration and approval of increasing the deductible with the Intergovernmental Risk Management Agency (IRMA) from \$25,000 to \$50,000 and authorization for the City Manager to make the required deductible payments.

6. Award of the contract for 2026 GIS Services to MGP, Inc. in the not-to-exceed amount of \$131,505 and 2026 Plotting Costs in the not-to-exceed amount of \$2,299 for a Total Cost of \$133,804
7. Approval for 3-Year Renewal of Adobe Acrobat Licensing with Hypertec in the Amount of \$29,259.
8. Approval to Waive the Bid Process and Approve Watermain Testing for the Waukegan and Westleigh Intersection Project to the RJN Group and Authorize the City Manager to Execute an Agreement in the Amount of \$49,834 to Include a 10% Contingency in the Amount of \$4,983 for a Total Cost of \$54,817
9. Consideration of an Ordinance Approving a Recommendation from the Historic Preservation Commission in Support of a Building Scale Variance for a Pool House at 1 S. Stonegate Road. (First Reading and if Desired by the City Council, Final Approval)
10. Consideration of Ordinances Approving Recommendations from the Zoning Board of Appeals for 831 Rosemary Road, 1147 Valley Road, and 1450 Old Mill Road. (First Reading, and if Desired by the City Council, Final Approval)
11. Consideration of a Recommendation from the Plan Commission in Support of a Special Use Permit to Authorize a New Real Estate Office, Jameson Sotheby's International Realty, at 1050 N. Western Avenue. (If desired by the Council, Waive First Reading and Grant Final Approval of the Ordinance.)
12. Consideration of Ordinances Approving Recommendations from the Building Review Board for 1124 Fairview Avenue and 1781 Knollwood Lane. (First Reading and if Desired by the City Council, Final Approval)

**CITY COUNCIL ACTION Approve the twelve (12) 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 Walther made a motion to approve the twelve (12) Omnibus items as presented, seconded by Alderman Clemens. 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
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1. Consideration of a recommendation by staff to modify parking regulations in the Central Business District and implement new technology solutions for permit management and parking enforcement.

Keri Kaup, Assistant to the City Manager, reported City staff from multiple departments formed a committee to review parking in the CBD. The Committee established three goals to frame the evaluation process: 1) Simplify parking zones and signage; 2) Ensure customer zones are near shopping and dining destinations, and designate employee parking zones; and 3) Improve permit management and parking enforcement capabilities through technology.

Ms. Kaup discussed concerns with the current system, including interchangeable permits, lack of enforcement, and employees parking in unauthorized or crowded spaces. She also discussed several options for improving parking permit management. The ideas mentioned were issuing permits tied to employee ID's, using barcode or hang-tag systems, or implementing a digital app to track plate numbers and validate parking. Implementing barcode or hangtag permits would make enforcement easier and more consistent. Ms. Kaup mentioned the need for accurate plate number records, as well as clear rules about who is allowed to park in certain lots or spaces. Concerns include overcrowding, employees using spaces meant for others, and the lack of accountability in the existing system. A proposed solution is to require employees to update vehicle information and possibly transition to a digital app that stores plate and permit data. Ms. Kaup highlighted the importance of coordinated enforcement, whether through city staff or a contracted vendor. Overall, the goal is to create a more organized, trackable, and enforceable parking permit process that reduces complaints and operational issues.

City Council had a discussion on the priorities focused on FY26 parking priorities management, and to further explore low-cost solutions. Key issues include parking time limits, employee and business permits, enforcement challenges, and the need for better enforcement, data, and long-term system improvements.

**COUNCIL ACTION:** Approve staff recommendations to modify parking regulations in the Central Business District and implement new technologies in support of the program; and provide Council direction related to lowering the cost of employee permits and pursuing valet permits.

No city council action was taken. City Council gave direction at this time to move forward with the research on a new parking program and provide direction on a low cost/valet program for the City.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **1. Forest Park Beach Concessions - Mayor Tack**

Mayor Tack opened the topic of Beach Concessions for discussion with members of the City Council. City Council had a lengthy discussion on leaving concessions as they are, privatizing the business of concessions, the 5-month window of business opportunity, weather, rental of pavilion, menu expansion, 90-day sustainable business model, food trucks, service hours, incorporating Deerpath Golf Course and fields, alcohol sales, and other enhancements.

No action was taken.

## **ADDITIONAL ITEMS FOR COUNCIL DISCUSSION/COMMENTS BY COUNCIL MEMBERS**

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

Mayor Tack offered to those in attendance to share cake in honor of the retiring City Attorney, Julie Tappendorf.

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 Clemens made a motion to adjourn into executive session pursuant to 5 ILCS 120/2 (c) (1) The City Council will discuss specific personnel, seconded by Alderman Weber. 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 8:07 p.m.**

**Reconvene into Regular Session 9:15 p.m.**

<b>ADJOURNMENT</b>
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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 9:16 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](http://www.cityoflakeforest.com). Click on I Want To, then click on View, then choose Archived Meetings Videos.*