

City of Big Lake Winter 2025 Newsletter



Congratulations Council Members Elect!

Paul Knier (Mayor Seat, 4-year term)

Paul Seefeld and Ken Geroux (Council Member Seats, 4-year terms)

Congratulations to Mayor Elect Paul Knier and Council Members Elect Paul Seefeld and Ken Geroux who will be sworn in at 4:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers prior to the January 8, 2025 City Council Meetings.

Outstanding Citizen Nominations

Do you know of a Big Lake resident who strives to make a positive impact in your community? Someone who enhances the City of Big Lake and its citizens or who addresses and/or fulfills a community need or concern? The City of Big Lake is accepting nominations for the 2025 Outstanding Citizen Award through April 1, 2025. You can find nomination forms at City Hall or on the City's website at biglakemn.org. Nominate someone special today!

Sidewalk Snow Removal



The City will send out Public Works staff after each snowfall to ensure that all sidewalks are being cleared in accordance with the City's Snow Removal Ordinance. Property owners who are out of compliance will be billed for the service per the adopted City Fee Schedule.

Public Works will wait at least 24 hours after a snowfall has completed before performing a scheduled sidewalk sweep. The day before a sidewalk sweep, the City will post on its Facebook page. You can also sign up to receive a text or email alert by scanning the QR Code or visiting the City website. Questions? Contact Streets, Parks, and Fleet Superintendent Norm Michels at 763-251-8011 or nmichels@biglakemn.org.



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City Offices Closed

- ⇒ Wednesday, January 1 - New Year's Day
- ⇒ Monday, January 20 - Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
- ⇒ Monday, February 17 - Presidents' Day

Municipal Liquor Store

Even with major changes in 2024 for both the industry and the economy, Lake Liquors has remained steady with sales. We continue to offer the best selection, service, and pricing possible in an ever-changing marketplace. The store is stocked and arranged with a goal to serve our customers, so if we don't have something you are looking for, be sure to let staff know! In the New Year we will continue to offer monthly raffles and be sure to save the date for the Annual Spring Wine Sale happening April 6 - 12, 2025. Thank you for supporting local and purchasing from Lake Liquors as our profits are poured right back into growing the community!

Discount Days:

- ⇒ Monday: Senior Discount (age 62+) - 10% off regular priced items
- ⇒ Tuesdays: Wine Day - 10% off regular priced wines

Regular Store Hours:

- ⇒ Monday - Saturday: 9:00 a.m. - 10:00 p.m.
- ⇒ Sunday: 11:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Holiday Hours:

- ⇒ Tuesday, December 24: 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
- ⇒ Wednesday, December 25: Closed
- ⇒ Wednesday, January 1: 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
- ⇒ Sunday, April 20: Closed



Length of Service Recognition

We would like to thank the following for their years of service to the community:

- ⇒ **Brandon Greenwald:** 5 years with Streets and Parks Department
- ⇒ **Brett Johnson:** 5 years with Streets and Parks Department
- ⇒ **Dana Mattson:** 5 years with Water and Wastewater Department
- ⇒ **Norm Michels:** 10 years with Streets, Parks, and Fleet Department



Coffee with the Mayor

Enjoy free coffee and conversation with Mayor Paul Knier and Chief John Kaczmarek about happenings in the City of Big Lake at Ember Coffee Company (450 Jefferson Blvd, Suite 1, Big Lake, MN) between 9 a.m. - 10 a.m.

Coffee with the Mayor

January 11 | March 8 | May 10

Coffee with the Chief

February 5 | April 2 | June 4



City of Big Lake Community Gardens

Now accepting applications! Garden plots can be leased for \$30 from May - October. Plots are 10'x20' and located next to Public Works at 18041 198th Ave.

Interested in a plot? Contact Corrie Scott at cscott@biglakemn.org or 612-297-6331. Applications available at biglakemn.org and City Hall.

Big Lake Police Department Safety Kit



Winter is here! The Big Lake Police Department would like to express the importance of having a Winter Safety Kit for your personal vehicle. During the next few months, temperatures and roadway conditions will begin to decline. Inevitably, winter conditions will cause significant problems regarding transportation and vehicle maintenance. It is important to prepare yourself and your loved ones with the tools and supplies necessary to keep safe. We strongly suggest you create a vehicle safety kit to help if you find yourself or others stranded on a roadway during hazardous conditions.

You can prepare yourself by storing a kit in your trunk containing items such as a blanket, hat, gloves, scarf, hand-warmers, protein bars, water, flashlight, and a phone charger. It can also be helpful to store a small handheld shovel and quart of kitty litter in your vehicle in the event you find yourself stuck in deep snow. The shovel will assist you in clearing the snow away from your tires. Kitty litter can be poured directly around your tire to assist with traction. Stay up to date with media outlets regarding weather conditions. If it is reported that conditions are unsafe, please refrain from traveling. Your safety is most important! We wish you safe travels this Winter Season!

John Kaczmarek, Chief of Police

Snow Season Reminders

- ⇒ Please keep in mind property owners are responsible to clear snow around their mailbox. The City will consider making repairs only if the snowplow equipment *physically* hits the mailbox or post, and only if the mailbox conforms to City Ordinance installation requirements. Contact Big Lake Public Works at 763-263-2268 with mailbox complaints.
- ⇒ To prevent damage to lawns, landscape, irrigation heads or other items that will get buried under the snow along the curb or edge of the road, it is recommended that residents clearly mark these areas with reflective stakes.
- ⇒ It is illegal to deposit snow on any City street.



Winter Parking

Parking is not allowed on any City street or roadway between November 1 and April 15 of each year during the hours of 12:01 a.m. and 8:00 a.m.

- ⇒ After a snowfall of two inches or more, all streets in the City will be cleared of all motor vehicles for snowplowing and/or snow removal.
- ⇒ If your vehicle should have mechanical failure and cannot be removed from the street during the required dates/times, please contact the Big Lake Police Department at 763-251-2996 and advise the officer on duty. This may help in avoiding a citation and/or your vehicle being impounded.



Water Shutoffs Begin April 30, 2025

Beginning April 1, 2025, the City of Big Lake will be mailing out notices to property owners for delinquent water bills. Only one notice will be given. If your account is delinquent on April 30, 2025, your water service may be disconnected. Pay online at biglakemn.org or by phone with Invoice Cloud at 866-342-9267. No longer want to receive the paper bill in the mail? Opt out of the paper bill to receive an email bill and also a 50¢ credit monthly.

Community Tap Water Sampling

**WAS YOUR HOUSE
BUILT DURING THE
YEARS 1983-1985?**



Big Lake is updating a sampling program to test for lead/copper in drinking water. We are looking for volunteers to collect samples at their residence. The ideal home for testing would have been built in 1983, 1984, or 1985 and does not have a water softener. This is an opportunity to have your home water tested by an accredited laboratory for free. There is no cost to you and we will let you know your results.

What does volunteering involve?

Before you take the sample, you will need to let the water sit unused for 6 to 12 hours. Samples should be taken from a kitchen or bathroom tap regularly used for consumption. After receiving instructions, you will collect the sample yourself and arrange a time to have the sample picked up, or you will set a time for one of our water system employees to come and collect the sample. After collecting the sample, you will fill out the Community Tap Water Sample Form confirming the plumbing materials in your home and how you collected the sample.

Why are we sampling for lead and copper?

This sampling helps us make sure our drinking water is safe and meets the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) requirements for lead and copper.

How do I volunteer?

If you are willing to volunteer or have questions on the program, please contact Water, Wastewater Superintendent Dan Childs at 763-251-8010 or dchilds@biglakemn.org. We will verify if your residence meets the requirements to be a sample site. Thank you for helping to ensure the safety of the City's drinking water!

Big Lake Fire Department Winter Training



The Big Lake Fire Department is spending the next three months conducting annual mandatory training. Training subjects being covered include: employee right-to-know, blood borne pathogens, respect in the work place, and a first responder EMT medical refresher. The Department will also spend the winter attending state sectional fire schools held at technical colleges across the state. Members who attend outside training classes share the information they learn with the rest of the membership.

Seth Hansen, Fire Chief

Meet Your City Clerk Gina Wolbeck



Gina Wolbeck was hired by the City of Big Lake in July of 2000 as the assistant to the Economic Development Director and was appointed as City Clerk in June of 2003. This year will mark her 25th year working for the City of Big Lake! The City Clerk's office is located at Big Lake City Hall and her position holds a number of responsibilities. Some of Gina's duties include maintaining the City's legislative actions and proceedings, serving as administrative support to the City Council, coordinating all national, state, and local elections, managing the City's records, ensuring residents have access to public information, managing the City's Code of Ordinances, issuance of all business licenses, and much more! She also serves as the Vice-Chair of the Sherburne Wright Cable Commission. Gina has managed 27 elections for the City of Big Lake and although it is the most stressful part of her job, she finds it the most fulfilling. She loves being part of the history of Big Lake!

Gina and her family own 120 acres of land in Cushing, MN that has a beautiful wooded camping area they have built. She says that if you're looking for her on weekends during the summer months, that's where you can find her! Gina and her late husband Dennis share 2 sons (Dan [Liz] and Jake [Brynn]), and she adores their 3 grandchildren (8-year old Mia, 2-year old Cora, and 4-month old Braxton). Gina's family moved to Big Lake in 1995 and she has considered this community home ever since. Her years of working for the City have helped her to build lasting relationships with her fellow community members and coworkers, and has given her many valued friendships, too! Next time you are at City Hall or you attend a City Council meeting, be sure to say hello to Gina!

Help Protect Big Lake's Wetlands, Rivers, and Lakes



Fertilizers, leaves, grass clippings, eroded soil, animal waste and chemicals (oil, paint, etc.) are all sources of pollution. When they wash into the street and storm sewer pipes, they end up in wetlands, lakes, and rivers and this is considered an "illicit discharge". The State defines illicit discharges to include any discharge into a storm drain system that is not entirely composed of storm water. Illicit discharges are a problem because, unlike wastewater, which flows to a treatment plant, storm water generally flows to waterways without any additional treatment.

Illicit discharges often contain pathogens, nutrients, surfactants, and various toxic pollutants. If you see this activity, please report it to the City Engineer. Please help protect water quality by doing the following:

- ⇒ Follow Minnesota's phosphorus lawn fertilizer laws.
- ⇒ Recycle or properly dispose of products that contain chemicals such as insecticides, paint solvents, soaps and used motor oil. Prevent release into ground or storm drains.
- ⇒ Don't blow grass clippings or leaves into street as they contribute to algae blooms.
- ⇒ Pick up pet waste promptly.
- ⇒ Control soil erosion in yard and driveway areas. Bare soil easily washes away.

Additional information can be found at biglakemn.org/182/Storm-Water-Information. If you have questions or comments, please contact City Engineer Layne Otteson at 763-251-2984 or LOtteson@Biglakemn.org.

City Summary Budget Statement

The purpose of this report is to provide summary 2025 budget information concerning the City of Big Lake to interested citizens. The budget is published in accordance with Minn. Stat. Sec. 471.6965. The budget below is not complete; however, residents can request the complete budget by visiting City Hall or by contacting the Finance Director via email at dwegeleben@biglakemn.org. The City Council approved this budget on December 11, 2024.

General Fund 2025 Adopted Budget

	2023	2024	2025
	Actual	Budget	Adopted Budget
Revenues			
Property Taxes	\$ 4,121,504	\$ 4,415,208	\$ 4,887,540
Special Assessments	834	3,000	1,000
Licenses & Permits	723,587	644,497	713,445
Intergovernmental	591,371	477,790	497,579
Franchise Fees	461,496	450,303	451,263
Charges for Services	284,446	246,411	248,078
Fines & Forfeitures	42,097	47,100	49,250
Investment Income	445,332	37,000	64,534
Contributions/Donations	27,270	1,500	1,500
Miscellaneous Revenue	97,366	2,500	2,500
Transfer In from other Funds	450,000	450,000	450,000
Total - Current Year Revenues	\$ 7,245,303	\$ 6,775,309	\$ 7,366,689
Prior year donations - Designed Fund Balance	9,546	3,566	-
TOTAL GENERAL FUND REVENUES BUDGET	\$ 7,254,849	\$ 6,778,875	\$ 7,366,689
Expenditures			
General Government			
Mayor/Council	\$ 32,811	\$ 33,426	\$ 33,681
Planning	203,895	223,568	238,666
Elections	305	36,100	2,000
Administration/Finance	577,153	558,845	588,655
IT - Computer/Software	139,175	139,399	160,539
Big Lake Community Service Center/Library	129,120	72,966	73,661
Economic Development	153,112	172,166	183,411
Building	229,553	238,921	223,104
Engineering	90,537	110,854	137,914
Fleet/Equipment Maintenance	249,677	216,396	232,182
Streets	612,279	680,547	765,234
Parks	623,760	688,855	692,430
Police	2,333,170	2,693,421	3,104,124
Fire	364,614	337,478	348,918
Community - Recreation (other)	106,192	120,322	121,309
Transfers Out to other Funds	820,267	455,611	460,861
TOTAL GENERAL FUND EXPENDITURE BUDGET	\$ 6,665,620	\$ 6,778,875	\$ 7,366,689
Increase (Decrease) In Fund Balance	\$ 589,229	\$ -	\$ -
Property Tax Levy Requirement to Fund This Budget	\$ 4,118,078	\$ 4,542,990	\$ 5,042,703
		Cost per Capita of 12,524	\$ 402.64

Enterprise Funds 2025 Adopted Budget

	Adopted 2025 Budget			
	Water	Sewer	Storm Sewer	Liquor
Sales and Cost of Sales				
Sales- net Loyalty Program				\$ 5,472,139
Cost of Sales (COS)				(4,126,071)
Gross Profit				\$ 1,346,068
Operating Revenues				
Utilities Revenues	\$ 2,228,003	\$ 3,508,025	\$ 274,853	
Total Gross Profit and Operating Revenues	\$ 2,228,003	\$ 3,508,025	\$ 274,853	\$ 1,346,068
Operating Expenses				
Personnel	906,562	910,195	160,569	889,218
Professional Services	63,750	47,500	3,000	8,100
Operations	732,881	709,217	30,348	280,730
Depreciation	954,005	1,435,595	181,700	73,190
Total Operating Expenses	2,657,198	3,102,507	375,617	1,251,238
Operating Income (Loss)	(429,195)	405,518	(100,764)	94,830
Nonoperating Revenues (Expenses)				
Interest Earnings	11,000	11,000	9,000	35,400
Debt Service Interest and Charges	(10,001)	(151,915)	-	-
Total Nonoperating Revenues (Expenses)	999	(140,915)	9,000	35,400
Income (Loss) before operating Transfers	(428,196)	264,603	(91,764)	130,230
Operating Transfer In (Out)	(568,000)	(100,000)	(30,000)	(485,000)
Net Income (Loss)	\$ (996,196)	\$ 164,603	\$ (121,764)	\$ (354,770)
2025 Principal Debt Payment	\$ 97,505	\$ 1,172,495	\$ -	\$ -

2026 Financial Planning and Budget Calendar

The yearly budget schedule is listed below, please watch for information pertaining to the City’s 2026 budget on the City’s website and social media and join us. Your feedback is welcomed!

Meeting Dates	Discussion Topics
June	Financial Management Plan review provided to departments
July	Meeting with departments regarding needs and discussion at Council workshops
August	Council workshops to review preliminary budgets
September	Council adopts Maximum Tax Levy
October	Council workshops on the budgets to find additional savings or services continue
November	Public Input Meeting regarding final levy and budgets for upcoming year
December	Council adopts final tax levies and budgets



160 Lake Street North
Big Lake, MN 55309

Dated Material

Postmaster: Time Sensitive Mail

The Big Lake City Newsletter is published quarterly to update Big Lake residents and businesses on city government news.

City Council

Paul Knier, Mayor

612-817-6758, pknier@biglakemn.org

Ken Geroux, Council Member

763-238-0182; kgeroux@biglakemn.org

Ken Halverson, Council Member

763-286-8152, khalverson@biglakemn.org

Kim Noding, Council Member

763-238-1875, knoding@biglakemn.org

Paul Seefeld, Council Member

612-801-7731, pseefeld@biglakemn.org

Notify Me

Looking for updates on events, meetings, jobs, or emergency alerts? Sign up for text or email alerts at: biglakemn.org/list.aspx.

Contact City Hall

Phone: 763-263-2107

Office Hours: Monday - Thursday: 7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Friday: 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

View Meetings

Live on Channel 180 | On-demand video link at city website

City Council: January 8, 22 | February 12, 26 | March 12, 26
(6:00 p.m. in Council Chambers)

Planning Commission: January 6 | February 3 | March 3
(6:00 p.m. in Council Chambers)

BLEDA: January 13 | February 10 | March 10
(5:30 p.m. in Council Chambers)

Parks Advisory Committee: January 27 | February 24 | March 24
(6:00 p.m. in Council Chambers)

Connect with City of Big Lake

 www.biglakemn.org

 Like us on Facebook, facebook.com/BigLakeMN/

 Follow the Big Lake Police Department on Facebook



Big Lake Winter Farmers Market

Third Saturday
Big Lake City Hall
10 AM - 1 PM

*November 23 | December 21

January 18 | February 15

*March 15 | April 19

*November Market RESCHEDULED

**March Market at BLHS from 10 AM - 2 PM