



# City of Big Lake Summer 2025 Newsletter



## Outstanding Citizen of the Year

### Samantha Vansteenwyk

Congratulations to Samantha Vansteenwyk, the City of Big Lake’s 2025 Outstanding Citizen of the Year! Samantha’s volunteer journey began back in 2007–2008 as a Big Lake Ambassador. Since then, she’s made a lasting mark on the community. She was a part of the Big Lake Lions Club for eight years, where she led the charge on the Little Hole on Big Lake Ice Fishing Contest. She continues her dedication to the community as an active member of Big Lake Spud Fest. Samantha’s passion for giving back is a great reminder of the power of community involvement. Thank you, Samantha, for all that you do. Your contributions truly make Big Lake a better place.



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## Music in the Park

Help us celebrate 13 years of music in 2025 at beautiful Lakeside Park!

Select Thursdays

June - August

7:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.

- ⇒ Live Music
- ⇒ Free Parking
- ⇒ Food Trucks
- ⇒ Car Show

Find updates on the City’s Facebook or at [biglakemn.org](http://biglakemn.org).

### Upcoming Music Schedule:

July 3: Shane Martin Band

July 10: Sir Psycho

July 17: Sawyer’s Dream

July 24: Maiden Dixie

July 31: Shirts and Skins

August 7: Mick Sterling

August 14: Stuck in the Middle



# Celebrating the Grand Opening of Goldenrod Glen in Big Lake



A new chapter of community and opportunity has begun in Big Lake with the grand opening of Goldenrod Glen, a vibrant 55+ community developed by Aeon. On May 29th, city leaders, chamber members, future residents, and community members gathered to commemorate this milestone. As Mayor Paul Knier expressed at the event:

*"This isn't just the unveiling of a new development; it's the result of hard work, dedication, and a shared vision for a stronger community. This milestone reflects the collaborative efforts of so many—planners, builders, local and state leaders, and the future residents who will soon call this place home. Their presence and contributions are what make our city thrive, and I couldn't be more proud to welcome them into this space."*

Goldenrod Glen reflects Big Lake's commitment to thoughtful growth, bringing together community values and forward-looking development. Projects like this not only enhance our city but also create meaningful opportunities for residents to connect and LIVE BIG!

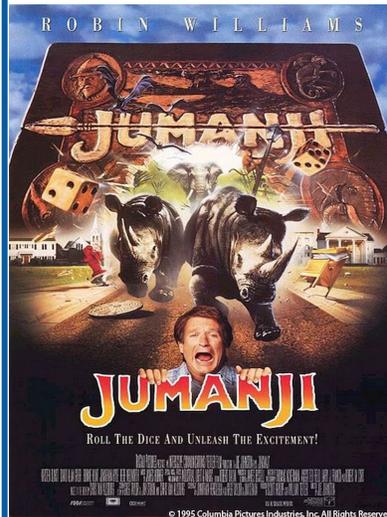
## Summer Photo Contest

Calling all photographers; amateur or professional! Submit your photos that highlight what you love about Big Lake for the 2025 Summer Photo Contest! Winners will receive a City of Big Lake beach towel and swag.

Submission of a photo will release the photo to the City of Big Lake. They may be used on the City website, Facebook page, and any other marketing material. Photos can be submitted to [cscott@biglakemn.org](mailto:cscott@biglakemn.org) by September 1, 2025.



## Movie in the Park September



**Friday, Sept. 5, 2025**

**Featuring: Jumanji**

Free Drive-in movie

First come first served

Parking 7 - 8 p.m.

Movie at Dusk: 8 p.m.

Food Trucks Onsite:

-Hotdog Bar selling hot dogs and nachos

-Mason's Sno & More selling tropical sno, dole

soft serve and dippin' dots

Thank you to our sponsors: Sherburne Wright Cable Commission and Big Lake Spud Fest.

\*\* If there is inclement weather, the movie will be re-scheduled for Friday, Sept. 19, 2025.

View details and weather updates on Facebook.

## Property Maintenance

Properties are required to maintain a certain level of appearance. Please be mindful of the following:

Lawns must be mowed on a regular basis and cannot exceed 12 inches or go to seed.

Yard waste (i.e. grass clippings, leaves, logs and brush) can be disposed at the Big Lake compost facility located at 18041 198th Ave. A key card is required to gain access to the site and can be obtained free-of-charge at City Hall. Compost facility details are provided on the city website.

Yard parking is not allowed. If you are interested in installing a parking pad on your property, please consult the Planning & Zoning webpage or the Planning & Zoning Department at 763-251-2971 to learn about this option.

## Zoning Permits

Do I need a zoning permit for that? Zoning permits are required for the following residential improvements to ensure they are in compliance with the City Code:

- ⇒ Fences
- ⇒ Accessory structures (i.e. sheds, chicken coops, greenhouses) 200 square feet or less (\*If over 200 square feet a Building Permit is required)
- ⇒ Driveway expansion and replacement
- ⇒ Parking pads
- ⇒ Swimming pools and spas

Zoning permit applications and the zoning regulations associated with these improvements are available for download from the Planning & Zoning webpage or can be picked-up at City Hall. Contact the Planning & Zoning Department at 763-251-2971 with any questions.

## Coffee with the Mayor

Enjoy free coffee and conversation with your Mayor Paul Knier about happenings in the City of Big Lake. This series takes place on select Saturdays throughout the year at Ember Coffee Company (450 Jefferson Blvd, Suite 1, Big Lake, MN) between 9 a.m. - 10 a.m.

**Upcoming Dates:**

July 12 | September 13 | November 8



## Coffee with the Chief

Enjoy free coffee and conversation with Police Chief John Kaczmarek about happenings in the City of Big Lake. This series takes place on select Wednesdays throughout the year at Ember Coffee Company (450 Jefferson Blvd, Suite 1, Big Lake, MN) between 9 a.m. - 10 a.m.

**Upcoming Dates:**

August 6 | October 1 | December 3

# Night to Unite: Neighbors Joining Together



Night to Unite is a national event that brings together our citizens and public safety to promote safer communities and address safety concerns. This year’s Night to Unite festivities will take place on Tuesday, August 5, 2025.

Neighborhoods across the community celebrate with block parties, cookouts, and visits from the Big Lake Police Department, Big Lake Fire Department, and elected officials. Night to Unite has proven to be an effective, inexpensive, and enjoyable opportunity to promote neighborhood spirit and police community partnerships in pursuit of safer communities.

Communities often benefit from this event as neighbors continue to get to know each other, and residents feel more comfortable speaking to officers about safety concerns. If you would like to host a gathering in your neighborhood and request a visit from your local Police and Fire Departments, register on the City’s website at [biglakemn.org](http://biglakemn.org) by Friday, August 1, 2025.

*John Kaczmarek – Chief of Police*

## When is a Permit Needed?

- Removal of underground fuel storage tanks
- Replace roofing or siding
- Replace windows/exterior doors
- Egress windows
- Finish basement
- Shed over 200 square ft.
- Garages
- Building additions/remodels
- New construction
- Gazebo over 200 square ft.
- Construct/replace porch or deck
- Demolition
- Retaining walls over 4 ft.
- Gas connection
- Gas appliance replacement
- Sewer and water connection

## No Permit is Needed for the Following:

- Paint
- Wallpaper
- Carpet/linoleum/tile
- Decorative landscaping
- Tree planting (except when in the boulevard)

**Questions?** Contact the Building Official at 763-251-2936.

# Big Lake Community Lakes Association



The Big Lake Community Lake Association’s primary mission is to help keep our lakes safe, fun, and free from Aquatic Invasive Species. Boaters, remember to travel in a counter clockwise direction while towing or going more than 5mph. Keep a close eye out for paddlers and kayakers. Use proper etiquette when navigating the channel, making no wake and taking turns entering the channel. Remember to “Clean, Drain, Dispose and Dry” when leaving the lake. If you are interested in joining as a member, contact [blclapresident@gmail.com](mailto:blclapresident@gmail.com)

## Pet Vaccination Clinic & Nitrate Testing

Saturday, September 6, 2025 | 9 a.m. - 12 p.m.

Lions Park | 21960 County Rd. 5, Big Lake

Dogs must be on a leash with secure collars or harnesses.

Cats must be in a carrier. Only cash accepted.

Canine one-year: Rabies: \$15, DHPP: \$20, Lymes: \$40

Feline: PRC \$20, Rabies \$15, FELEUK \$40

Thank you to Barrington Oaks Veterinary Hospital!

### Free Nitrate Testing for Well Water

⇒ Allow water to run 5-10 minutes before filling a container with at least a 1/2 cup of water.

⇒ All samples should be kept cold.

⇒ You can bring more than one sample to compare water treatment process.

Thank you to Sherburne Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD) & Minnesota Department of Agriculture!

Questions? Contact Big Lake Township at 763-263-8111.



## Meet Community Development Director Marie Pflipsen



Marie Pflipsen joined the City of Big Lake at the end of January 2025 as the Community Development Director. Her position oversees planning and zoning, economic development, and building permits:

⇒ Planning and Zoning: Think of a city like a big puzzle. Planning decides where different pieces go from homes, schools, parks, to stores so that everything fits together nicely. Zoning is like the rules that say, "This piece is for houses, this one is for businesses, and this one is for parks." That way, noisy factories don't end up next to quiet neighborhoods.

⇒ Economic Development: This is the process of strengthening a community's economy by attracting businesses, creating jobs, and improving infrastructure. Cities achieve this by supporting local businesses, investing in

infrastructure, and fostering innovation to drive growth. The goal is to enhance the overall quality of life, ensuring a thriving economy where residents have access to stable employment and essential services. Attracting local investment also helps grow the tax base to ensure stable property tax rates.

⇒ Building Permits: When someone wants to build a house or a business, they submit an application to the city. The city checks to make sure the building is safe and won't cause problems for neighboring property owners.

What Marie enjoys most about her job is working with a great team of City staff. She also loves watching a project go from concept to completion with lasting benefits to the whole community. When she isn't working, Marie is spending time with her family. She loves watching her daughter who is learning to go from crawling to walking, and trying new foods. With summer upon us, Marie loves to spend time on walks and visiting family members. Next time you see Marie out and about, be sure to say hello! She is always willing to discuss your creative ideas on how to make Big Lake an even greater community.

# Thoughts from your Finance Department



While the summer months can be a relaxing and leisurely time for many, the summer season is when the City’s Finance Department really kicks into high gear. As we move into July, our staff starts looking forward to 2026 and beyond; we’re preparing preliminary budgets, reviewing the City’s Capital Improvement Plan, assessing the City’s Long-Term Financial Plan and exploring potential investment opportunities. If you are unfamiliar with the City’s annual budget planning process, we encourage you to connect with staff and attend our budget workshops held

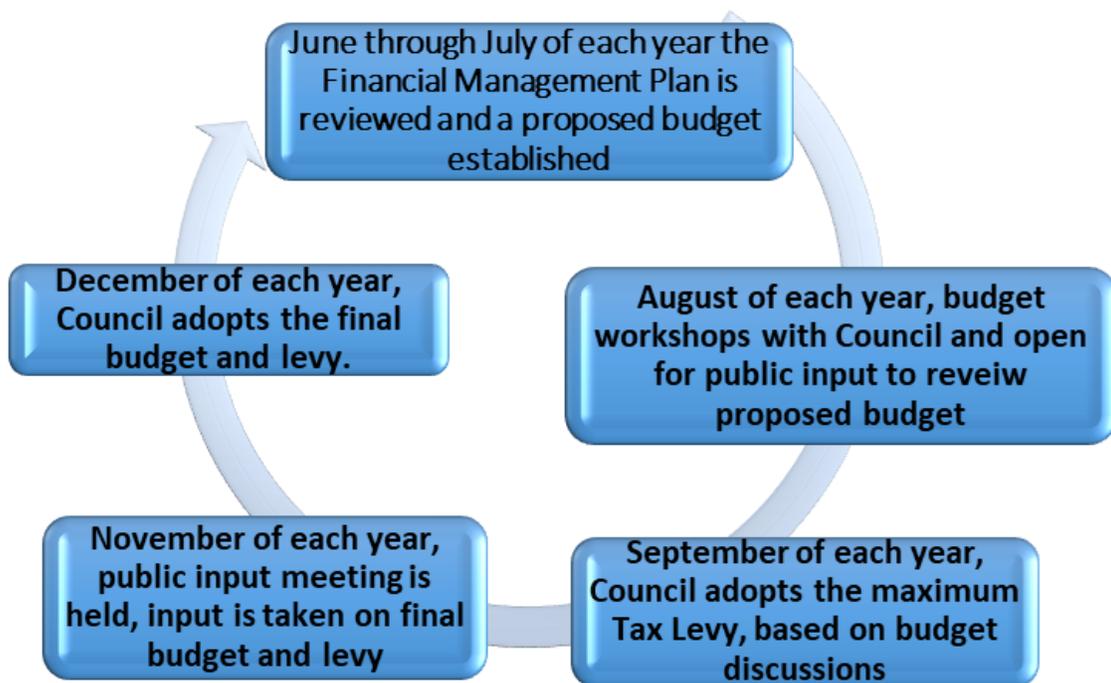
throughout the summer and fall months. These sessions offer a chance to share your views on service levels and spending priorities, and allow staff to address your questions directly.

You can access financial information on the City’s website under the Finance Department tab or by scanning the QR code on this page. This will provide access to the General Fund Analysis from 2015 through 2024, along with details on water and sewer rates. This analysis demonstrates the City’s ongoing commitment to responsible fiscal management and proactive community investment. Paper copies of the report are available at City Hall or by contacting the Finance Director at [dwegeleben@biglakemn.org](mailto:dwegeleben@biglakemn.org).



Details on upcoming workshops will be regularly updated on the City’s website. We invite you to engage, share your perspective, and help shape Big Lake’s future. We look forward to seeing you there!

## 2026 Financial Planning and Budget Calendar



## Municipal Liquor Store

Lake Liquors is keeping up with the trends by stocking the store with new items every week. We have seen a growing interest in ready-to-drink wine, malt, and spirit based beverages as well as THC/CBD beverages. With these being newer to the market, we are always welcoming suggestions on what to bring into stock next! Monthly raffles continue to be a hit as well! Customers get one chance to win per visit with no purchase necessary. Prizes are featured on the Lake Liquors Facebook page along with our monthly in-store specials. Also, remember if you're in a hurry, you can order online for easy pickup. Thank you for supporting Lake Liquors and have a safe Summer!



### 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:

- ⇒ Thursday, July 4th: 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
- ⇒ Monday, September 2nd: 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

## Big Lake Chamber Block Party

Save the date for the 15th Annual Big Lake Block Party!  
 Saturday, September 13, 2025 from 11am - 2pm at McPete's  
 Unlimited bowling and mini-golf | Entertainment  
 Raffles | Bean bag tournament | Car parade | Concessions  
 Dunk Tank | Bouncy house | Bike giveaways | Music



## Now Recruiting Police Reserves!

The City of Big Lake is currently recruiting Police Reserves! The Police Reserves are an extension of the Police Department. A Police Reserve is a non-sworn volunteer who assists the Police with certain emergencies or critical events, Spud Fest, Night to Unite, Music in the Park, and other community engagement activities. Applicants must be 18 years of age and live within 30 minutes of the City of Big Lake. **Visit the City of Big Lake for the Reserve Officer Application.**

## City Staff Length of Service Recognition

- ⇒ Nic Prigge: 10 years with the Police Department
- ⇒ Gina Wolbeck: 25 years as the City Clerk





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Big Lake, MN 55309

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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](mailto:pknier@biglakemn.org)

**Ken Geroux, Council Member**

763-238-0182; [kgeroux@biglakemn.org](mailto:kgeroux@biglakemn.org)

**Ken Halverson, Council Member**

763-286-8152, [khalverson@biglakemn.org](mailto:khalverson@biglakemn.org)

**Kim Noding, Council Member**

763-238-1875, [knoding@biglakemn.org](mailto:knoding@biglakemn.org)

**Paul Seefeld, Council Member**

612-801-7731, [pseefeld@biglakemn.org](mailto: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](http://biglakemn.org/list.aspx).

### Contact the City

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:** July 9, 23 | August 13, 27 | September 10, 24  
(6:00 p.m. in Council Chambers)

**Planning Commission:** July 7 | August 4 | September 2  
(6:00 p.m. in Council Chambers)

**BLEDA:** July 14 | August 11 | September 8  
(5:30 p.m. in Council Chambers)

**Parks Advisory Committee:** July 28 | August 25 | September 22  
(6:00 p.m. in Council Chambers)

### Connect with City of Big Lake



[www.biglakemn.org](http://www.biglakemn.org)

Like us on Facebook, [facebook.com/BigLakeMN/](https://facebook.com/BigLakeMN/)

Follow the Big Lake Police Department on Facebook



## Big Lake Farmers Market

LAKESIDE PARK

WEDNESDAYS | JUNE-AUGUST | 3:00-7:00 PM

WEDNESDAYS | SEPTEMBER | 3:00-6:00 PM