



BALDWIN CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING

MAY 6TH, 2026

Present – Acting Mayor; Tom Rush, City Council Members; Alan Walker, Scott Case, and Jeff Holm

Absent – Mayor Jay Swanson

Also Present – City Planning & Zoning Administrator; Dan Licht from The Planning Company (TPC)

Call to Order – The May 6th, 2026 regular meeting of the City of Baldwin was called to order by Acting Mayor Tom Rush at 7:00 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance – All present recited the Pledge of Allegiance

Prayer Request from Delmas Hines

Additions/Corrections to Agenda

Approval of Regular Meeting Agenda With/Without Additions/Corrections - Walker/Case unanimous to approve as amended.

May 2026 Preliminary Treasurer's Report – The Clerk/Treasurer reported a beginning balance of \$1,131,766.40, receipts of \$16,808.90, disbursements of \$32,576.23 leaving an unaudited ending balance of \$1,115,999.07.

Sheriff's Report – Deputy Wilson reported a total of 255 calls for service in the City of Baldwin for the month of April 2026. These calls consisted of 1 motor vehicle theft, 5 motor vehicle accidents, 6 dog complaints, 15 medicals, 63 traffic stops and 38 additional patrols were performed. The rest of the calls were miscellaneous calls for service.

Fire Department Report – Rush read the Fire Department report for the month of April 2026. There were 30 calls for service which consisted of 22 medicals, 3 mutual aids, 1 motor vehicle, 2 grass/rubbish fires and 2 alarms. There were 9 calls in Blue Hill Township.

Discuss/Approve/Disapprove Applying for FEMA Grant – Case attended the Sherburne County Hazard Mitigation Meeting. This meeting communicated that there are grants available to upgrade the warning sirens, vegetation removal, rural development for infrastructure and backup power generators. FEMA's Hazard Mitigation Assistance programs provide grants to state, local, tribal and territorial governments to reduce and mitigate future natural disaster losses. The funding is used to complete diverse resilience activities and projects. **Walker/Rush unanimous to approve** applying for FEMA Grant.

Update on Senator Klobuchar's Grant – Case communicated that the grant has been submitted to the Senator Appropriations Committee for funding consideration. Submission of the application does not guarantee that funding will be awarded.

Public Comment Requests - None

Approval of Consent Agenda – Case/Walker unanimous to approve Consent Agenda.

- Approve City Council Meeting Minutes for April 1st, 2026, and April 15th, 2026
- Approve Special City Council Meeting Minutes for April 13th, 2026
- Approve Local Board of Appeal Meeting & Equalization Minutes for April 16th, 2026
- Approve Termination of Seasonal Snowplow Drivers for 2025 to 2026 Season
- Approve One Day On-Sale Liquor License for Fire Department Dance on August 29th, 2026. Rush stated that the application fee of \$100.00 would be waived.
- Approve New Park Committee Member Mark Oleen
- Approve SWCD Tour of Practices of Sandy Lake Project on June 18th, 2026
- Approve Renewal of Tobacco License (July 1, 2026 – June 30, 2027) for Ridgewood Bay Resort
- Approve Ordinance 2026-05; An Ordinance Defining Nuisances, Prohibiting Their Creation or Maintenance and Providing for Abatement and Penalties for Violations
- Approve Clerk Vacation Leave of May 11th, 2026
- Approve Purchase of 20 EMS Signs for \$719.53 Plus Freight

Planning Items:

Discuss/Approve/Disapprove Resolution 26-14; Haugen Variance – Full Planning Report on file in the Clerks' Office or online at baldwinmn.gov under Government/Agenda/Minutes/Agenda Packet. **Walker/Case approved, Rush disapproved, motion carried** to approve Resolution 26-14.

Discuss Code Enforcements:

PID# 01-00020-4100, Waste which is a public nuisance. The Planning Company (TPC) is requesting City Council approval to send step 1 enforcement letter.

PID# 01-00404-0640, Waste which is a Public Nuisance, Dwelling Occupancy of RV. The Planning Company (TPC) is requesting City Council approval to send step 1 enforcement letter.

PID# 01-00553-0305, Motorcycles/Track. The Planning Company (TPC) is requesting City Council approval to send step 1 enforcement letter. If the Council wishes, they can request a citation because this has been a complaint for a couple of years.

Case/Walker unanimous to approve sending a citation to PID# 01-00553-0305.

Case/Walker unanimous to approve above code enforcements for sending step 1 enforcement letters for PID# 01-00020-4100 and 01-00404-0640.

Discuss/Approve/Disapprove Changing Administrative Citation Civil Fine

Amount – Rush is requesting to increase the Administrative Citation Civil Fine Amount. Case asked what the typical fine is for other cities. City Planner, Licht, stated that typically it is \$200.00. **Case/Walker unanimous to table** until the May 20th, 2026 City Council meeting when the City Attorney is in attendance.

Discuss Floor Plan for Remodel/Addition of City Hall, Fire Department and Public Works Building – Case recommends getting quotes for the floor plan drafted by Mayor Swanson so the Infrastructure Committee can proceed on making recommendations to the City Council. **Case/Walker unanimous to approve** going out for quotes using plans Mayor Swanson drafted up for the remodel/addition of City Hall, Fire Department and Public Works building.

Park Committee Report – The Park Committee is working on getting new Park Committee Members. On May 19th, 2026 the Fire Department will be at Young Park doing training. The ballfield is being used a lot this summer by PYSBA and the parking lot has been expanded to avoid cars being parked on County Road 38. The Committee is looking at a scoreboard but installing and trenching could be expensive.

Discuss/Approve/Disapprove Quote for Young Park Trail Signs of \$285.00 -

Case/Walker unanimous to approve Young Park Trail Signs of \$285.00.

Cemetery Update – Rush communicated that there were 3 burials in April of 2026.

Discuss/Approve/Disapprove Additions to Baldwin Cemetery – There is currently only 50 lots left at Baldwin Cemetery. Rush stated that adding to the cemetery is something to think about in the future. Rush also communicated that the markers are really buried in the ground at the cemetery. Rush is working with the Cemetery Sexton on rewriting the rules and regulations. **Case/Walker unanimous to table** until the June 3rd, 2026 City Council meeting.

Tabled Items:

Discuss Layout of New Cemetery Map – **Case/Walker unanimous to table** until the June 3rd, 2026 City Council meeting.

Discuss/Approve/Disapprove Quote for HVAC at Fronter Trails Water Treatment Plant – **Case/Walker unanimous to approve** Hilliard Heating quote for \$3200.00 and the electrical quote of \$700.00 from Bost Boys Electric for a total of \$3900.00.

New Business:

Discuss/Approve/Disapprove Re-Stripping of City Hall Parking Lot – Rush stated this is the same price as previously quoted 2-3 years ago. **Walker/Case unanimous to approve** quote for \$685.00.

Schedule Employee Reviews – Case/Walker unanimous to approve June 8th, 2026 starting at 6:00 p.m.

Discuss/Approve/Disapprove Moving Employee Reviews to December – Case stated that this should be moved to December, so it coincides with the budget.

Walker/Rush unanimous to approve moving employee reviews to December of each year going forward.

Holm arrived at 7:43 p.m.

Discuss/Approve/Disapprove White Paper Stock Paper for Future Newspaper Publications for an Estimated Expenditure of \$278.00 – Holm/Walker unanimous to approve all future additions of the Baldwin Newspaper being on white paper stock with an expenditure of \$278.00 each addition.

Schedule Road Tour – Walker/Holm unanimous to approve May 18th, 2026 at 6:00 p.m.

Discuss/Approve/Disapprove Certificate of Deposit Pre-Renewal Notice – Case/Walker unanimous to approve moving \$137,554.91 interest to money market account and allocating to the appropriate funds. The City Council requested research into a higher interest rate on the \$1,000,000.00 CD investment.

Discuss/Approve/Disapprove Hiring Committees Recommendation for Public Works Maintenance Technician – Walker/Case unanimous to approve offering employment to the top applicant contingent on background and pre-employment testing. The new employee would start June 1st, 2026 at \$29.00 an hour.

Discuss/Approve/Disapprove Rifle Deer Hunting in the City of Baldwin – Holm made a motion to keep the regulations the same as Sherburne County. Holm recommends reviewing the deer hunting firearm regulation after the deer hunting season. Case has concerns of using rifles for deer hunting in the city. Walker recommends reviewing after a year. **Walker seconded the motion, Case disapproved, motion carried.**

Discuss/Approve/Disapprove Procedure for Hiring Fire Chief and Transition –
(Request for this agenda item to be in verbatim format)

Tom Rush – So this one, as you know, Chief Case has put his resignation in effective July 31st. At the last meeting we discussed what the City Council wants to do whether it's the appointments or the same process of elections over there and what are we going to do since this individual will need to be training in the next few months for this position in the interim. We also had our Attorney here at the last meeting, and he says it is not a law but a recommendation that most fire departments are moving from elections to appointments so that's it. I know last meeting we went back and forth for a long time, so I think you know were kinda two City Council's members stand and where two City Council's Members stand. I'll just go onto to say that my intentions are what's best for

the Fire Department. I believe in elections and six months ago there was a show of hands and there was about 65-70% of that. I want what's best for the Fire Department and if the Fire Department wants appointments, I'm for that. I just want what's best for the morale in the Fire Department over there. Yup, go ahead.

Scott Case – So I've been Fire Chief for this department for 9 ½ years. I have always wanted what's best for this department. The department is close to my heart. I also want what's best for the future of this fire department. I've seen the acrimony from these elections and when you have elections and someone is in a spot and somebody else runs against them and they get voted out, that person got demoted, they got voted out, that's a demotion. Anybody look at your job that you have currently and you get demoted, how do you feel? Those are my issues with the election process. The election process also is a for a two-year term, currently, and it takes, I had the advantage having a lot of prior fire experience before I came into the position as a Chief already. The problem is that it takes a year to learn the job and the next year you're just starting to get things going and then you're up for election again. When people run against each other, it creates drama and hurt feels and all that kind of stuff and I've gone through, 15 years I've been there, every election had that. I think you can give the fire fighters a voice by having a hiring committee made up of fire fighters to do a selection and make it work and make them have buy-in on it. I just think that both the League of Minnesota Cities and our own Attorney don't recommend doing elections. I think they are going to be gone and at some point, the city will get away from elections so why don't we control the process and do it right now versus something happening and it getting taken away from the City Council because it's at a state level because someone filed a complaint over the election. It can happen at any time. If someone with a lot more certifications, time and all that loses an election and they could take a complaint, and we could lose control over the process. That is one of the reasons I'm trying, I say we should go to the appointment process, but we control how the appointments go with the fire department picking people to be on the selection committee. I understand you had a show of hands, and they didn't have all the information at the time. I think it would be, you will never get 100% one way or another and at some point we have decide what's best for the city and the fire department and hope the firefighters understand why we do it. Those are decisions I made as a Fire Chief, and some decisions firefighters didn't like but I did it for the good of the department and the good of the firefighters. That's my point.

Tom Rush – I just want to add in that when we became a city, we told the residents nothing would change. The Fire Department has been around since 2002 so the elections, I feel, are vital in that situation. Look at the last meeting, we had resolutions for 17-18 years to do clean up day. The Attorney says we need to do contracts for booster clubs for volunteering. We have to have the Lawyers now look over road projects we have. These are things that we have been doing for a long time. I know it's a recommendation but I'm still sticking, this is just me and I know you and me disagree and I'm not."

Scott Case – I have another point I would like to bring up.

Tom Rush – I would like to stay with elections, Mr. Case.

Scott Case – The other point I would like to bring up so were going to have a vote, a popularity vote, for a position that could possibly be making \$40 grand a year and the City Council isn't deciding that were not doing a hiring process and we are just having a popularity vote for whomever for making a salary like that. Just saying. I don't think that's a good use of the people's money.

Tom Rush – Al, do you have anything to add on this.

Alan Walker – We have been doing the elections how many years?

Scott Case – We've done a lot of things in the past and things change and I will tell you that cities that have appointments you don't hear about fire department drama issues from those cities that have appointments that have gone to the appointment process, don't hear about it and that is my concern. I've got no skin in the game. I'm leaving. I just want what's best for the city in the fire department going on and get some of that drama out of the process, you're gonna have those in there, that's going to be an issue. I will say if you have a Chief and then the Assistant Chief runs against him and beats him out and if Assistant Chief hasn't learned his job, you think the Chief is inclined to assist the Assistance Chief in learning that job? Probably not. Through the appointment process, the Chief will help the Assistant Chief learn the job. It's a smoother process, but when you have people running against each other and the person that's in that job gets beat out, why do they want to help somebody who went after him and in that process probably campaigned for it and that's, in campaigns, we all know things get said that may not be true, that's what you get those hurt feelings.

Tom Rush - Well, I think the last meeting we were kind of a 2-2, the mayor and here with the appointments, and me and Mr. Walker were for the election, so Mr. Holm, you're the X-factor. Sorry to put you on the spot but.

Jeff Holm - We've been down this road before. We've already done this. Same arguments, same League of Minnesota city recommendations, discrimination, all these different things, whatever, and argument of popularity contests and everything. And it was really funny because when we went down, we did do appointments here for a minute. And also, when we did that, all the SOPs got changed. And when that process, it just became kind of like a king-making. It made it where whoever was in the position of power were about the only people that were qualified to be in power. And that was all, it was just a deadlock. And we had drama when we had appointments. We had mutiny over there and the morale was very low. And the thing that the town board did at the time was reinstate the elections. And now we're back at this same thing again where it's being pitched to us to go back to appointments and how it's going to make everything smooth. And we have drama right now. We're going to have drama either way. But I feel that what we're doing here is we're setting the cards for the outgoing chief to control where, who comes in next and how that goes and trying to change things to set it up to that effect. And I think if we go down this road, we are going to have a lot of morale drop

over there. And I think for now, my recommendation would be, is that we stick with elections, whether it's an election now just to get for an interim period or going forward period, but I'm not ready to move to appointments at this time, at this moment. That's where I stand.

Tom Rush - So with that process here, Scott's only got one and a half months left as a chief. So that individual is going to have to get trained on the reporting that you send us on admin hours.

Scott Case - There's a lot, there's a lot that has been learned that hasn't been learned. So not that I've been willing to teach, they just haven't come.

Tom Rush - So that aspect, going forward. What do you want to do there?

Jeff Holm – You asked me about appointments versus elections. That's what's up here. Where are you going now?

Tom Rush – Sounds like with the 3-2 thing; it's in favor of elections at this point. This point

Jeff Holm – We have discuss/approve/disapprove procedure for hiring fire chief and transition - Jay Swanson. I haven't heard what the other than we need to go to appointments, we should do appointments, and then that we should do an interim and use, you know, a good six months or the rest of the year to go through a selection process and have an interim in between that now and then or whatever. If we're not in favor of going to appointments, then it looks like we're on elections. Sounds like we need a special election if there's an abrupt end at January or July 31st due to this resignation. You tell me, what do you think? I'm not—I don't have all the answers. I'm just telling you that I'm not interested in taking the bait on the appointment process.

Tom Rush - What do we want to do? Do we want to have a special election in July or just go with the current next person up, the assistant chief? The election process— we have

Jeff Holm - When was the term going to expire?

Tom Rush – Scott, when was that term, do you know offhand?

Scott Case - The term?

Tom Rush - Yeah, for the

Jeff Holm - Your current term as chief, when does it expire?

Scott Case – I'm thinking

Tom Rush - Every two.

Scott Case - This is a six... I think it expires.

Tom Rush - Was it December this year?

Scott Case - I can't remember if I ran last year or not. December? I didn't run last time.

Tom Rush - I don't think you did.

Tom Rush - Well, December is when we held the elections. December so if you're still on it would be December of 2026. So, have, the, what do we want here, the assistant chief? That's what I'm asking here. He's the next one in command that's already been voted for. Do you want it? I'm asking. We can get trained in because we've got to do reporting here because he's only here for less than three months.

Alan Walker - The assistant chief, I think, should probably, next in line. I mean, he pretty much knows what's going on anyway.

Scott Case - He does not. That is the issue. He's got nine years to learn it, and he has not learned it.

Alan Walker - But he could learn it though, then.

Scott Case - He's had the ample opportunity to learn it in nine years, and I have a personality issue with him currently, partly because he wanted to remove me from my job. That is— it is gonna, I will be ending my— I will move up my resignation if you decide to do that. And that's fine.

Jeff Holm - I'm not gonna be a hostage right here. I'm gonna tell you right now.

Scott Case - You don't have to be hostage.

Jeff Holm - "Profanity word 'F' that, your gonna walk out on us and not even help. You're saying, I don't want anything to do with him, so therefore, if you pick him, I'm gonna walk away and you guys can go eat shit. That's what I think I'm reading here.

Scott Case - Well, you basically told me, I've tried to give you recommendations and you told me the same thing. I'm not gonna use the verbiage. I tried to tell you, we've, we got a letter this week, this week, that all of us got, that apparently nobody's paying attention to either. I didn't know anything about it. I was shocked when I saw it. This is the problems that we're having because of this. And it didn't start until I decided I was done with the job.

Tom Rush - Well

Clerk - Mayor Swanson did request everybody have that letter and I think it should be read.

Tom Rush - Sure, but no one signed the letter, that's hearsay. That's why I look at it with a grain of salt.

Scott Case - And every

Tom Rush - The department morale is low Scott as is.

Scott Case - What's the definition of hearsay? You got an anonymous letter that got sent to all five of us with some statements on it.

Tom Rush - Yep.

Scott Case - I'm not looking to make a big issue about it, but you're putting, you're putting the onus on me to work with somebody who I'm having a huge issue having to work with.

Tom Rush - Well, I read the letter and no one signed it. It was hearsay. It was directed at two city council members.

Scott Case - So you're saying it's hearsay. What is the definition of hearsay?

Tom Rush - Well, hearsay is like if you have a complaint. We've always said, who said it? Who said it? We don't have that. This was just anonymous letters showing up with that individual's um opinion. Opinion.

Scott Case - What's that? I understand it's a group of group. But, it got sent to all of us, I think.

Tom Rush - And it is very well could be the people that are in favor of appointments for all we know. But we had a meeting over there six months ago. I've always said the majority of them wanted the elections in that meeting. I've been the fire department liaison for 16 out of 17 years. And firefighters can call me and they talk to me and I keep that confidential with me. So I'm the fire department.

Scott Case - To me, that's hearsay then too because we're not aware. And you doing that... So I don't have a problem with people calling the liaison, but they should have went through the chain of command to try and work something, see if their issue could get worked out first. And they did not. They did not.

Tom Rush - Well, to me,

Scott Case - It undermined me as the Chief under my chain of command if everybody's calling you every time they have a complaint. That is not how fire departments should work. Well, and that's the problem, Tom. You created that issue.

Tom Rush - Well, don't go there. We're not going to go there. There's a lot more issues like.

Scott Case - Well, I... maybe we should table this till Mayor Swanson is here so all five of us can have this discussion.

Tom Rush - There was also earlier in the year, because I voted no on the ladder truck and I voted no on the piece of equipment, I heard, including from the grapevine, that there was going to be a vote of no confidence on me.

Scott Case - Hearsay again, I'll use your own words, hearsay. Never happened. Did anybody bring up a vote? Never happened.

Tom Rush - Yeah, because I had to talk to the fire department and set them straight. Now I think if that was brought up, you should have ended that right then and there with the fire department, and they had my back on that, but I didn't feel I did. So, but anyways, that's hearsay, I guess. So we have a—so I'm going to go with this. We already know Mayor Swanson, what he wants. It's appointments. Three members have spoke, so I have on here: discuss, approve, disapprove procedure for hiring Fire Chief and transition. Do I have a motion?

Jeff Holm- Motion for what?

Tom Rush- To approve elections.

Jeff Holm - I'll make a motion to remain with elections for the chief and assistant chief position at the Fire Department.

Tom Rush - Do I have a second?

Alan Walker - I'll second that.

Tom Rush – I have a motion and a second, all those in favor signal by saying aye.

Tom Rush, Alan Walker, Jeff Holm – Aye

Tom Rush - Opposed?

Scott Case – Aye

Tom Rush – Motion carried.

Summary of motion - Holm made a motion to remain with elections for the Fire Chief and Assistant Fire Chief position at the Fire Department. **Walker seconded the motion, Case disapproved, motion carried** to remain with elections for the Fire Chief and Assistant Fire Chief.

Discuss/Approve/Disapprove Revisiting Municipal Liquor Store Feasibility Testing – Holm made a motion to disapprove revisiting the Municipal Liquor Store Feasibility Study, **Walker seconded the motion, Case approved, motion carried to disapprove** revisiting the Municipal Liquor Store Feasibility Study.

Discuss/Approve/Disapprove Updating Exhibit A in Ordinance 800 – Holm made a motion for city staff to draft ordinance and have at the May 20th, 2026 City Council meeting and be placed on the consent agenda, **Walker seconded the motion, motion carried.**

Discuss/Approve/Disapprove Public Works Pay Increase – Rush is requesting a market adjustment for Public Works Employees of 15%. The Public Works Supervisor would be increased to \$36.82 an hour and Public Works Technician would be increased to \$31.91. The Clerk does not recommend the market adjustment because this adjustment was not budgeted for in 2025. Rush stated the budget for the Municipal Liquor Store Feasibility Study and Public Works Director should be used for this increase. **Holm/Walker unanimous to approve** 15% market increase for the current

Public Works Department, **Case disapproved, motion carried.** This is a market adjustment and would start May 11th, 2026.

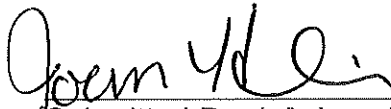
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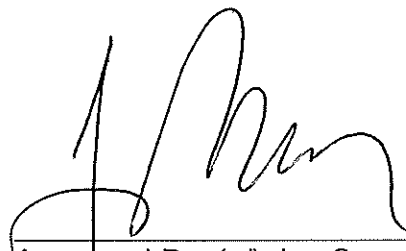
- a. ISD# 477 Special Election Tuesday, May 12th, 2026, Voting is from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.
- b. Special Planning Commission Meeting Wednesday, May 13th, 2026 at 7:00 p.m.
- c. Fire Department Training at Young Park Tuesday, May 19th, 2026 from 5:00 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.
- d. Next City Council Meeting Wednesday, May 20th, 2026 at 7:00 p.m.

Any Other Business – Case/Holm unanimous to approve a total of \$1200.00 donation for Princeton Football Booster club for participating at Baldwin Clean-Up Day. There was a check for \$600.00 signed at tonight's meeting and an additional check for \$600.00 will be signed at the May 20th, 2026 City Council meeting.

Approve Bills for Payment – Walker/Rush unanimous to approve check number 29454 – 29493 for \$37,753.37 and 10 EFT Payments for \$10,962.29 for a total of \$48,715.66.

Adjourn – Holm/Walker unanimous to adjourn at 8:54 p.m.


Submitted By: (s/) Joan Heinen
Clerk/Treasurer
City of Baldwin


Approved By: (s/) Jay Swanson
Mayor
City of Baldwin

6-3-2026
Date

Attendees: Matt Haugen, Delmas Hines, Bruce West, Michelle Cole, Paul & Kathie Miezwa, Sharon Leider, Laura Anderson and Ron Messer