

City of Eldridge Special City Council Meeting Minutes

The City of Eldridge, Iowa, City Council met in open session at Eldridge City Hall at 6:00 pm on August 12, 2026.

Council Members Present: Brian Dockery, Scott LaPlante, Ryan Iossi, Adrian Blackwell & Jeff Ashcraft. Quorum was met.

Presiding: Mayor Scott Campbell

Also Present: Nevada Lemke, Jeff Martens, City Attorney Allison Wright, Chief Andrew Lellig, Officer Travis Rountree, Cpl. Jack Schwertman, Ryan Gale, Tabbitha Kramer, Josh Haycraft, Judith Gilbert, Jim Perkins, Roy Leonard, Dale Grunwald, Michelle Crawford, Clint Crawford, Marilee Leonard, Linda Vovos, Sarah Sheahan, Kris Elmshauser, Beth Campbell, Melanie Schneckloth, Kelly Dean, Amber Petersen, James Fitzjarrell, Erin Gentz, Janet Haycraft, Heather Terhune, Ray Terhune, Marty Oboyle, Nancy Case, James Brady, Terry Jurisic, Scott Case, Dan Ergh, Dan Schmidt, Shelia Kirby, Kelly Engler, Lisa Engler, Nicole Engler, Dave Engler, Ron Ward, Patricia Snyder, Lynn Sniyder, Jaime Iossi, Lauren White, Ginny Zink, Darlys Dickman, Caroline Eakins, Janelle Dickman, Anna Dickman, Judi Sarafin, JB Ruiz, Scott Dickman, Suzanne Gainer, Patrick Gainer, Jenn Schneckloth, Kevin Schneckloth, Becky Murphy, Andrew Norris, Darren Bousselot, Tisha Bousselot, Jeff VanDeCastele, Angela Reese, Bena Leka, Dave Schnorrenberg, Megan Matthaides, Mindy Martinek, Brenda Hamann, Amy Simpson, Dick Cole, DeWayne L Scott, Jason Daedlow, Lacey Daedlow, Devin Reimers, Marilyn Reimers, Tim Reimers, Amy Meskimen, Chris Lawrence, Justin Walker, Bryan Yanke, Matt Smeltzer, Christa Ashcraft, Ashley Lacey, Riley Webster, Jesse Dvorak, Rebecca Thompson, Chris Boer, Lindsey Doyle, Cassie Gainer, Dave Haycraft, Ashley Atkins, Nathan, Johnston, Diane Hermann

Motion by Iossi approving the agenda. Seconded by Ashcraft. Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

Mayor Campbell opened the floor for public comment.

Resident Josh Haycraft reported that he met with only the fire department and collected 189 signatures on a petition to let the fire department remain independent.

Resident Marilee Leonard voiced concern with response times for the residents and the schools. She asked the council to pause their decision.

Resident Suzanne Gainer urged council to vote against the second reading. She expressed concern over the Ordinance indicating there could be charges for emergency calls. Assistant City Administrator clarified that there could be charges for non-taxpayers.

Resident Jamie Ruiz expressed little faith in the council and is concerned that they have not revealed a plan.

Resident Roy Leonard asked to see the next 2-3 years budget for the fire department.

Resident Janelle Dickman is concerned about costs written in to the ordinance and asked that the charges be more clearly communicated to the public. She also had public safety concerns and asked the council to slow down.

Resident James Fitzjarrell expressed concern for the transition, any possible homeowners insurance increases, and asked the council to pause the deadline imposed by the fire department, share updates via a dashboard, and to have discussions with the volunteers.

Resident Scott Case asked the council to settle the issue and let the firemen run the department.

Resident Amy Meskimen expressed concern about the timeline and asked for an open forum with a mediator.

Resident Mindy Martinek asked for information regarding how the city would have a fire department without equipment, a building or volunteers. She asked the council to pause on the reading of the Ordinances.

Resident Judith Gilbert read a statement about the Ordinance omitting any information about EMS Services and asked the council to slow down.

Resident Michelle Crawford asked for answers regarding taxes and insurance premiums and asked for the council step back and find common ground with the fire department.

Resident Tim Reimers read an excerpt from an article in a March 2024 North Scott Press issue quoting Mayor Campbell about the drama within the city and questioned the city's plans.

Resident Kris Elmshauser thanked the council for their hard work and for handling the social media abuse and asked them to continue moving forward.

Resident Ashley Atkins read meeting minutes from 2007 regarding Sheedy First Addition and asked why the easement is no longer interpreted to mean access for her.

Resident Amber Petersen asked who will respond to calls beginning Oct. 1 and asked for more information about the city's plans.

Old Business

Mayor Campbell asked for a motion on Ordinance 2026-11 Amendment adding Fire Chief and Title B Name to Public Safety. Dockery indicated that he intended to still vote no on Ordinance 2026-11 and 2026-12 due to a fiduciary responsibility to the taxpayers. Blackwell stated he thought there would be a committee of the whole meeting with the fire department and that he was not in favor of moving forward. Iossi shared, despite residents commenting that the fire department was working fine and effectively for 120 years, the fact was that 2 years ago, the fire department came to the council and begged the city to take over due to burnout and lack of volunteers. The department presented the City with two choices and a deadline, so the City made that decision within the time limit mandated by the fire department. He shared that the City has already received 3 very credible and qualified applications for chief. He asked the volunteers to be flexible with the deadline that they imposed on the City. He reported that several residents have reached out in favor of what they decided and that those residents weren't present due to behavior at the last meeting. He reminded the volunteers that the city wants involvement and feedback. Dockery proposed a sit down with Iossi, Dave Engler, and another fire department representative. Engler replied that he would be willing to meet and that the volunteers might be able to move their deadline. Ashcraft stated that he has heard from many residents who are supportive of what the city is doing, but they fear retaliation or further upset in the community, so most choose not to speak out. He reminded the crowd that the deadline was imposed by the fire department; that it was not a choice made by the city. The city decided based on the choices they were given by the fire department. He too is concerned about emergency response, so he feels delaying a decision might set plans back further. Dockery also spoke briefly on the vicious statements that have been made on social media and reminded everyone that nothing will get accomplished by the constant social media posts. Mayor Campbell discussed the transition that the LeClaire fire department went through and that they are now thriving with 2 full-time paid positions, one of them the Fire Chief, and 30 volunteers with a budget of \$561,000 per year. He stated that the city has a budget of \$364,000 and \$120,000 for capital improvements. City Attorney summarized Keith Schneckloth's termination and the reasons behind it-theft and time theft that he openly admitted to. The City cannot ignore misuse of city funds. She discussed the FEMA grant that the fire department received and that Schneckloth had misrepresented his position as the Program Manager, which was supposed to be a full-time position. Due to his termination, he is not re-hirable.

Mayor Campbell reported that a former fire chief and trustee of the Benefitted Fire District #3, Scott Haycraft, indicated that the fire department would agree to a hybrid model. However, City Attorney Wright does not recommend that as it would ultimately allow the fire company unfettered control and supervision, while the city owns the assets the city would be taking on all liability and costs with little to no ability to subject the personnel using that equipment to comply with policies and procedures. Campbell stated that John Maxwell, Scott County Board of Supervisors, said the county would sign a 28-E agreement with the municipal department, resulting in

the city taking over the fire station and apparatus to provide fire protection to Eldridge residents and Benefitted Fire District #3. Campbell summarized a letter he received suggesting the city have control and full oversight of taxpayer monies, where the station upstairs quarters are finished to recruit more overnight and daytime volunteers, and where the existing volunteers continue on as they have for years and years, so that we can continue fire and EMS services as it's been for decades. Campbell stated that is the plan, if the volunteers would just join the city, the plan could move forward in a positive way for the community.

Motioned by LaPlante to approve the second reading of Ordinance 2026-11 Amendment adding Fire Chief and Title B Name to Public Safety. Seconded by lossi. Motion carried on the following roll call vote: Aye – Ashcraft, LaPlante, and lossi. Nay – Blackwell and Dockery.

Motioned by lossi to approve second reading of Ordinance 2026-12 Establishing Fire Department. Seconded by Ashcraft. Dockery requested the verbiage of 15.03 be changed from “at the pleasure of the Mayor” to “at the pleasure of the Mayor and Council.” Campbell requested that Dockery request his changes in writing so the Council members would have time to review them ahead of the next reading. Motion carried on the following roll call vote: Aye – Ashcraft, lossi and LaPlante. Nay – Blackwell and Dockery.

There were no Board/Staff Activity reports.

Motion by Ashcraft to adjourn at 7:39 pm. Second by Dockery. Motion was approved unanimously by voice vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Scott Campbell
Mayor

Tabbitha Kramer
Deputy City Clerk