

AITKIN CITY COUNCIL MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING
AITKIN PUBLIC LIBRARY

June 20th, 2023

6:00 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Council Members: Kathy Galliger, Julie Miller, Chris Dotzler

MEMBERS ABSENT: Council Member Jason Henke, Mayor Megan Workman

ALSO PRESENT: Chief of Police Paul Ryan, Lon Nicko, Mike Hills, Brian Fennein

Pledge of Allegiance.

1. **Call to Order.** The meeting was called to order by Councilor Galliger at 6:10 p.m.

2. **Approval of Agenda.**

A motion to approve the agenda was made by Julie Miller, seconded by Chris Dotzler and approved with all in favor.

3. **Consent Agenda.**

The following items were included in the consent agenda: - A motion was made by Chris Dotzler, seconded by Julie Miller, and approved with all in favor.

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- Minutes
 - Minutes – Normal Council Meeting 06-05-2023
 - Accounts Payable:
 - City of Aitkin
Batch Name: CAP06152023 \$81,212.80
 - Liquor Store
Batch Name: LAP06152023 \$81,652.45
 - Financial Reports – Second Meeting of the Month as of 05/31/2023
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4. **Public Hearing:** There was no public hearing this evening.

5. **Mayor's Report:**

- There was no Mayor's report this evening.

6. **Administration Report:**

- REMINDER: Next meeting is Monday, July 17th
- EPA Meeting – Mike and the PUC have been meeting with the EPA to continue providing information for our water tower funding.
- Dispensary Requests – Mike noted that the City has had a couple of requests for dispensary licensing.

• **Old Business:** - There was no Old Business and Committee Reports were moved here.

- INH Update - Mike reported about his meetings with the County and hoping for us to be able to move forward with a sliding scale abatement. He is waiting on updated valuation numbers from the County Assessor to close the funding gap.

7. **New Business**

- Street Supervisor, Lon Nicko; Request to participate in Touch a Truck Event on July 8, 2023 – Councilor Dotzler made a motion to approve the City's participation, seconded by Julie Miller and approved with all in favor.
- Airport – Update to County & City Contract prepared by Henry Brucker – A motion was made by Julie Miller to approve the contractual agreement, seconded by Chris Dotzler and approved with all in favor.
- AFSCME – MOU Comp Time – This was tabled until we receive the updated proposal from AFSCME.
- Special event: Aitkin Chamber/Riverboat Days 8/5/2023 – Sip & Stroll – A motion was made by Chris Dotzler to approve the request, seconded by Julie Miller and approved with all in favor.
- Special event: Aitkin Chamber/Riverboat Days 8/5/2023 – Dump Run 5K & Quarter Marathon – A motion was made by Julie Miller to approve the request, seconded by Chris Dotzler and approved with all in favor.
- Special Event: Aitkin Chamber/Riverboat Days 8/5/2023 – Parade – A motion was made by Julie Miller to approve the request, seconded by Chris Dotzler and approved with all in favor.

- Park Discussion about Community Fieldhouse Bids – Mike provided an update showing Baratto Brothers to be the lowest qualified bidder and stated that they will hold their bid for 60 days to help us align funding.

8. Committee Reports:

- Park – Julie provided us with an update regarding the last park meeting, and we discussed the scheduling issue with Premier Fireworks and that Mike was working on an alternative and Jason was scheduling music and Star-Spangled Banner. We are hoping for the Legion Color Guard and food vendors too. It was also noted that Hugh Janzen and the Keller Foundation are donating funds to replace the timbers around various pieces of playground equipment. Julie noted that she has had requests to see the merry go round be updated and Lon noted that his crew could take care of that. Lon was also asked about the cost to update landscaping for our roundabout, and it was mentioned the Park Committee is working with Dennis VanPortley to maintain the skate park. Julie Miller also updated us on several suggestions that were made by Councilor Henke regarding options for the community fieldhouse:
 - Move forward with the bid and borrow the needed funds.
 - Hold off until funding is secured.
 - Consider scaling down the building to just a warming house with bathrooms.

9. Comments from Visitors.

- Builder and Resident Mike Hills expressed his concern over housing valuations and taxes for residential homes impacting salability of new construction. Council members talked about other ways to increase revenues and also a potential bounty program for new construction.
- The owner of Beartooth Hardware came in and felt the City should look at ways to reduce participation in the State Fiscal Disparities Program. Administrator Skrbich researched this, and it is not an optional program. Mike reached out to Auditor Kathy Ryan with the County, and she requested he speak with Kirk Peyser to see how much Aitken has been putting in and how much we have benefitted from the program.
- Street Supervisor Lon Nicko mentioned that they will be starting sidewalk inspections soon.

10. Adjournment

- Councilor Galliger adjourned the meeting at 7:14 PM after asking repeatedly if there was no more business to conduct.


X _____
Megan Workman
Mayor


X _____
Mike Skrbich
City Administrator