

AITKIN CITY COUNCIL MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING
AITKIN PUBLIC LIBRARY

February 20, 2024

6:00 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor Megan Workman, Council Members: Jason Henke, Julie Miller, & Kathy Galliger

MEMBERS ABSENT: Chris Dotzler

ALSO PRESENT: City Clerk Jen Thompson, Street Supervisor Lon Nicko, Chief of Police Paul Ryan, Colter Riedel, Jason Dox, Kat Robb of the Aitkin Independent Age.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

- A motion to approve the agenda as presented was made by Jason Henke, seconded by Julie Miller. The motion carried with all voting aye.

CONSENT AGENDA

The following items were included in the consent agenda:

- Minutes – Regular Council Meeting 2/5/2024
- Accounts Payable
 - City
 - Liquor Store

A motion to approve the consent agenda was made by Kathy Galliger, seconded by Jason Henke. Motion carried with all voting aye.

PUBLIC HEARING

- None.

MAYOR'S REPORT

- None

ADMINISTRATION REPORT

- None.

OLD BUSINESS

- None.

NEW BUSINESS

- **None.**

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE

- Draft Meeting Minutes 2/13/2024
- Next meeting 3/11/2024
- Quote; Aitkin Liquor Store Rooftop Heating & Cooling Unit Replacement
 - There are issues with the furnace at the Aitkin Liquor Store that have been reported by manager, Sam Keil. Lon Nicko called McGuire Mechanical to request an inspection of the unit. After inspection, it was determined that a part was needed for repair but was no longer manufactured due to the age. Nicko told the council that the company could manufacture the part but could be over 12 months or more before it was done. Due to the age of the unit and the lead time to get the part it is recommended to replace the rooftop unit that services the off-sale side of the building. It was noted that the second unit that serves the Riverside Pub is the same age but is functioning properly at this time. After discussion it was decided to replace only the one malfunctioning unit and Lon will monitor the second. Two quotes were obtained. One in the amount of \$18,989.75 from McGuire Mechanical and the other from Norther Air for \$29,300.00. A motion to approve the quote provided by McGuire Mechanical was made by Julie Miller, seconded by Kathy Galliger. The motion carried with all voting aye.

PLANNING & ZONING

- Next meeting 2/26/2024

PARK COMMITTEE

- Draft Meeting Minutes 2/13/2024
- Next meeting 3/12/2024

- Declaration of Restrictive Covenants – Aitkin City Park
 - The Declaration of Restrictive Covenants was prepared by City Attorney Henry Brucker. These restrictions, outlined within the document, are a condition of the DNR grant funds that were secured and utilized for the construction of the hockey rink and field house project at the Aitkin City Park. This document will be recorded with the Aitkin County Recorder and become part of the deed to the park property. After review, a motion to approve was made by Jason Henke, seconded by Julie Miller- the motion carried with all voting aye.

LIBRARY BOARD

- Next meeting 3/14/2024

AIRPORT COMMISSION

- Next meeting 2/28/2024

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

- **Police Chief Hiring Recommendation**
 - Three internal candidates submitted applications for the position of Police Chief. Colter Riedel, Shawn Brown, & Drew Boldt. The interview panel was made up of Captain Adam Fulton from the State Patrol and City Clerk Jen Thompson, alongside the personnel committee Mayor Megan Workman and Council Member Jason Henke. The panel conducted interviews with all three candidates. Following a thorough evaluation process, Colter Riedel was selected as the top candidate and is recommended to the City Council for consideration of a conditional job offer. A motion to approve the conditional job offer to Colter Riedel and allow the personnel committee to negotiate was made by Kathy Galliger, seconded by Jason Henke the motion carried with all voting aye.
- Temporary Bookkeeping Services Contract/Jason Dox
 - As an alternative to ABDO Financial Services a contract with Jason Dox for \$5,500 per month was presented for approval. Dox's contract would be effective March 1, 2024 and continue until a full-time Accountant is hired. The contract with ABDO ends on February 29, 2024. Dox is a full-time employee of Aitkin Public Utilities and used the same financial software as the city. The hours worked would be outside of his regular full-time job. City Attorney Henry Brucker and City Auditor Mary Reedy have reviewed the situation and agree that there is no legal conflict of interest. Because Dox is not a legal consulting service it would be difficult to obtain insurance as an independent contract. City Attorney Henry Brucker stated in an email that the Council will need to weigh the risk of no insurance versus the monthly cost of ABDO, if the cost saving is significant enough it may be worth it. The personnel committee reviewed the insurance discussion and believed the cost savings is beneficial, they also took into consideration that Jason Dox is a 12-year veteran of the Aitkin Public Utilities with an excellent work history. A motion to approve the contract and waive the insurance requirement was made by Kathy Galliger, seconded by Jason Henke the motion carried with all voting aye.
- Personnel Policy Update
 - The City Personnel Policy was amended to incorporate the new Earned Sick and Safe Time Policy (ESST) drafted by Madden Galanter & Hansen. The ESST was effective January 1, 2024, and is a requirement of the state of Minnesota. Council Member Galliger asked that the policy be converted to gender neutral terms. A motion was made by Jason Henke to adopt the policy as-is with the clause that an updated gender-neutral version be brought back to the council at a later date for adoption. The motion was seconded by Julie Miller. The motion carried with all voting aye.
- City Administrator Offer
 - An employment offer has been extended to Jen Thompson for the position of City Administrator with a deadline of 2/22/2024 for acceptance.
- Accountant Position
 - The PDQ has been completed and submitted for scoring. The next step is to confer with the Union and draft and MOU accepting the position into the Administration contract. From there, the job description, pay range, and request to post the position will come back to the council for approval.

EDA

- Next meeting 4/25/2024

COMMENTS


- None.

ADOURNMENT

- A motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:40 pm was made by Jason Henke, seconded by Julie Miller. The motion carried with all voting aye.

X 

Megan Workman
Mayor

X 

Jennifer Thompson
City Clerk