

AITKIN CITY COUNCIL MINUTES

REGULAR MEETING

AITKIN PUBLIC LIBRARY

November 18, 2024

6:00 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Interim Mayor Gary Tibbitts, Council Members Chris Dotzler, Jason Henke, Julie Miller & Kathy Galliger

MEMBERS ABSENT: None.

ALSO PRESENT: Street Supervisor Lon Nicko, Police Chief Colter Riedel, Kat Robb, Mark Jeffers, Phil Martin, Morgan Salo, Dave Cluff, & Stan Gustafson.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

CONSENT AGENDA

The following items were included in the consent agenda:

- Minutes – Regular Council Meeting 11/04/2024
- Accounts Payable
 - City
 - Liquor Store

A motion to approve the consent agenda was made by Chris Dotzler, seconded by Julie Miller. Motion carried with all voting aye.

PUBLIC HEARING

- None.

MAYOR'S REPORT

ADMINISTRATION REPORT

OLD BUSINESS

- None.

NEW BUSINESS

- **Water Tower Bid Summary & Award Recommendation**
 - Phil Martin and Morgan Salo from Bolton and Menk presented the bid summary for the water tower construction project. Two bids were submitted: Rice Lake Construction Group at \$4,264,800 and Caldwell Tanks, Inc. at \$5,674,111. Salo informed the council that the bids were competitive and expressed confidence in Rice Lake Construction Group's qualifications to complete the project. Based on the base bid of \$4,264,800, Salo recommended awarding the contract to Rice Lake Construction Group. A motion to award the contract to Rice Lake was made by Kathy Galliger, seconded by Chris Dotzler. The motion carried with all voting aye.

The water tower project will be funded through a combination of sources: a \$2.32M EPA Community Grant, a \$400,000 IRRRB Grant, and the remaining funds will be covered by a low-interest loan from the Minnesota Public Facilities Authority (PFA). Future loan repayments will be made from the 617 Utility Replacement Fund.

- **Water Tower Bolton & Menk Engineering Construction Services Proposal**
 - Phil Martin and Morgan Salo presented a proposal for engineering scope and construction services. The estimated cost is \$266,500, billed on an hourly basis, and will not exceed this amount without prior approval from the City of Aitkin. A motion to approve was made by Chris Dotzler, seconded by Julie Miller. The motion carried with all voting aye.
- **Aitkin County Economic Development Update**
 - Aitkin County Economic Development Coordinator, Mark Jeffers, provided updates on various economic development initiatives happening in the county, including efforts in recreation and tourism, broadband expansion, and childcare. He shared that the next phase of the Naturally Better marketing plan will focus on business attraction and retention. Additionally, Aitkin County has recently established a housing trust fund to support developers.

- **Resolution No. 2024-11-18A**
 - Resolution No. 2024-11-18A, authorizing the closure of the Certificate of Deposit (CD), account ending 0245, at Neighborhood National Bank and the investment account at Charles Schwab/Kodiak Investment, account ending 7314. The total balance, including any accrued interest, will be transferred to a new 12-month CD at Security State Bank of Aitkin, with an interest rate of 4.25%. The City Administrator is authorized to initiate the transfer, and the resolution is effective immediately upon approval. A motion to approve the transfer was made by Jason Henke, seconded by Chris Dotzler. The motion carried with all voting aye.
- **Street Dept. Resignation; J. Kohlgraf**
 - A resignation letter from Street Maintenance Worker, Jacob Kohlgraf, has been received. Kohlgraf has been employed by the city for approximately two years. A motion to accept his resignation was made by Julie Miller and seconded, with regret, by Kathy Galliger. The motion carried with all voting aye.
- **Street Dept. Post/Hire Street Maintenance Worker**
 - Following the acceptance of Jacob Kohlgraf's resignation, Street Supervisor Nicko requested permission to post the vacancy. A motion to approve the posting and job description was made by Jason Henke and seconded by Chris Dotzler. The motion carried with all voting aye.
- **Liquor Store Reduction in Hours Request**
 - Liquor Store Clerk Stephanie McConnell has requested to reduce her hours. She is currently working in a union position with 32 hours per week or less. The union was consulted, and the change was confirmed with Les Kundo of Teamsters. It is understood that with the reduction in hours, McConnell will no longer be eligible for benefits under the union contract, but she will retain her earned benefits until the balance is depleted. A motion to approve the change in position was made by Kathy Galliger, seconded by Jason Henke. The motion carried with all voting aye.
- **PUBLIC WORKS**
 - 11/12/2024 Meeting was canceled.

PLANNING & ZONING

- None.

BUDGET COMMITTEE

- None.

PARK COMMITTEE

- 11/12/2024 Draft Park Mtg. Minutes
- The dog park within the Tibbetts Park is installed and open.

LIBRARY BOARD

- None.

AIRPORT COMMISSION

- None.

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

- On November 14, an interview panel conducted interviews with five candidates for the City Clerk position, selected based on their applications. The panel has shortlisted two candidates, who will be interviewed by the Personnel Committee on November 25.

EDA


- None.


COMMENTS

- None.

ADJOURNMENT

- A motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:45 pm was made by Jason Henke, seconded by Chris Dotzler. The motion carried with all voting aye.

X 
 Gary Tibbitts
 Mayor

X 
 Jennifer Thompson
 City Administrator