

AITKIN CITY COUNCIL MINUTES  
REGULAR MEETING  
AITKIN PUBLIC LIBRARY

October 6, 2025

6:00 p.m.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Mayor Gary Tibbitts, Council Members Chris Dotzler, Jason Henke, Julie Miller, Justin Cartie

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** None.

**ALSO PRESENT:** Fire Chief Brian Pisarek, Street Supervisor Lon Nicko, Beth Lundgren, Jared Lundgren

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Addition under New Business:

- Change Order No. 1 – Thelen Roofing

A motion to approve the agenda as amended was made by Chris Dotzler, seconded by Justin Cartie. The motion carried with all voting aye.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

The following items were included in the consent agenda:

- Minutes – Regular Council Meeting 9/15/2025
- Accounts Payable
  - City
  - Liquor Store
- 25.08.19 PUC Minutes
- 2025/2026 MnDOT Snow Removal Agreement

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

**PUBLIC HEARING**

- None.

**MAYOR'S REPORT**

- Proclamation – Declaring September 21-27, 2025 to be Minnesota Women of Today Week.
- Attended IRRR State of the Range 2025 on September 17<sup>th</sup>, 2025 in Virginia, MN. Over 350 participants attended.
- Sgt. Gresens, a Korean Veteran found 75 years after the Korean War was buried on September 22, 2025 in Hill City. Thank you to the Aitkin Fire Department for attending.
- Attended Walk to End Alzheimer's on September 27, 2025.

**ADMINISTRATION REPORT**

- Roncon Paving completed the 430' trail North of the Pedestrian Bridge at the Aitkin City Park. It was widened from 6' to 10' and it looks amazing!
- The AEOA Grant was approved to install a new rooftop heating/cooling system that serves the Riverside Pub. The total cost of the project is \$25,377. The grant totaled \$8,459, leaving the City balance at \$16,918. The unit is on order and should be installed before the end of October.
- The City has received the first Cannabis Retail Store registration. The initial review shows that the identified location meets the zoning requirements. An interim use permit is required. The Public Hearing will be at the 10/15/2025 Planning Commission meeting and be presented to City Council for final consideration on 10/20/2025.
- The Aitkin Fire Department is hosting their Annual Open House on 10/7/2025 from 5-7 pm at the Fire Hall. All are invited to attend.

**OLD BUSINESS**

- None.

**NEW BUSINESS**

- **Community Business Partnership (CBP) Application for RE/MAX NORTHLAND**

- RE/MAX NORTHLAND submitted an application for a CBP Loan in the amount of \$15,000 for a roof repair. The roof was replaced before application was submitted due to an emergency situation that resulted in significant water leakage in the building. In the past, the EDA denied applications for work that was completed prior to application approval. In this case, the repair was deemed an emergency and required to prevent further damages. The EDA will address the language in the CBP guidelines at the next meeting to have more consistent procedures in the future. The EDA met on September 23, 2025 to review the CBP Application and recommend the approval of the CBP Application for RE/MAX NORTHLAND for \$15,000 with loan payments to be directly deposited to the City.

A motion to approve the CBP Application for RE/MAX NORTHLAND for \$15,000 and loan payments directly deposited was made by Jason Henke, seconded by Julie Miller. The motion carried with all voting aye.

- **Water Tower, Rice Lake Pay Request No. 5**

- Pay Request No. 5 in the amount of \$361,581.40. This will mostly be reimbursed under the EPA Grant. The non-qualifying items will be reimbursed through the PFA Loan.

A motion to approve Pay Request No. 5 in the amount of \$361,581.40 was made by Justin Cartie, seconded by Chris Dotzler. The motion carried with all voting aye.

- **Resignation of Liquor Store Clerk**

- The City received a resignation from a liquor store clerk in a 14-hour or less position. The employee was grateful for the opportunity for the employment.

- **Liquor Store: New Hire**

- Liquor Store Manager Sam interviewed and recommended Elek Christensen for hire.

A motion to extend the employment off to Elek Christensen at a Grade SS5, Step 1 of the 2025 Wage Scale for 14 hours or less contingent on a background check was made by Jason Henke, seconded by Justin Cartie. The motion carried with all voting aye.

- **Change Order No. 1 – Thelen Roofing**

- Thelen Roofing has nearly completed the roof replacement on the Fire/PD. After the roofing material was opened up, it was discovered that two roof drains were rusted through and required replacement. The roof repair could not continue until the drains were replaced. 3 quotes were requested, 2 were received. The lowest bid was awarded to Gravelle Plumbing & Heating at \$3,575. This did not require a change order because the work was contracted directly through Gravelle.
- The second issue discovered that the cap flashing that goes on the edge of the roof was previously installed incorrectly. It had screws going through the top which creates an area where water can get in. The cost to replace the cap flashing is \$1,900. The tin would be installed next week, and the project would be completed the week of October 13, 2025.

A motion to approve Change Order No. 1 for Thelen Roofing in the amount of \$1,900 was made by Chris Dotzler, seconded by Justin Cartie. The motion carried with all voting aye.

#### **PUBLIC WORKS**

- None.

#### **BUDGET COMMITTEE**

- None.

#### **PLANNING & ZONING**

- Draft Minutes; 9/17/2025 Mtg.

#### **PARK COMMITTEE**

- None.

#### **LIBRARY COMMITTEE**

- None.

#### **AIRPORT COMMISSION**

- 9/25/2025 Mtg. – Canceled

#### **PERSONNEL COMMITTEE**

- None.

**EDA**

- Draft Minutes; 9/23/2025 Mtg.

**COMMENTS FROM VISITORS**

- Street Supervisor Lon Nicko reminded that leaves should not be in the street or onto the curb.
- The Aitkin County Compost Site has been re-opened.

A motion to close the open meeting at 6:18 pm was made by Chris Dotzler, seconded by Jason Henke. The motion carried with all voting aye.


**CLOSED MEETING**

- The Council closed the public session pursuant to discuss Labor Negotiation Strategy and Proposed Pay Structure; Minnesota Statute 13D.03 and excused all members of the public.

A motion to re-open the meeting at 6:53 pm was made by Justin Cartie, seconded by Chris Dotzler. The motion carried with all voting aye.

**ADJOURNMENT**

A motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:54 pm was made by Chris Dotzler, seconded by Jason Henke. The motion carried with all voting aye.

X   
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Gary Tibbitts  
Mayor

X   
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Jennifer Thompson  
City Administrator