

AITKIN CITY COUNCIL MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING
AITKIN PUBLIC LIBRARY

October 20, 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: City Clerk Samantha Sass, Street Supervisor Lon Nicko, Assistant Chief Drew Boldt, Aitkin County Commissioner Michael Kearney, Kat Robb of the Aitkin Independent Age, Kaleb Farmer, Michael Farmer, Cassandra Farmer, Jenna Farmer, Tami Jacobs, and 2 unknown members of the public.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Addition under New Business:

- Resolution 2025-10-20B

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 10/6/2025
- Accounts Payable
 - City
 - Liquor Store
- Financial Reports as of: 9/30/2025
- Resolution 2025-10-20A Close Park Savings & Move to City Checking
- Fieldhouse Rental Policy
- Gambling Permit Application: Knights of Columbus Event – 11/16/2025
- USICG Consulting Services Contract

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

PUBLIC HEARING

- None.

MAYOR'S REPORT

- Attended the annual deer hunt by persons with disabilities at Rice Lake National Wildlife Refuge from October 9-12, 2025.
- Attended the Chamber Coffee with Connections on October 15, 2025 at American Peat Technologies with City Administrator Jen Thompson. Chris Ismal from IRRR also attended.
- On October 17, the City met with American Peat Technologies, MLEC, County Commissioner, and Representative Pete Stauber.
- Volunteered at the Glen Halloween Party and over 300 children attended.

ADMINISTRATION REPORT

- The Story Walk at the Aitkin City Park is installed. The books will change with the season and currently displays a Fall Book. Thank you to Aitkin County SHIP, Friends of the Library, and our Street Department.
- Bremer Bank has transitioned to Old National Bank as of 10/20/2025. The transition has been seamless so far.
- The Aitkin Recreational Trail (Tank Trail) will be closed November 8th to November 23rd for Minnesota Deer Firearm Season. The Street Department will clearly mark the closing of the trails.

OLD BUSINESS

- None.

NEW BUSINESS

- **Community Business Partnership (CBP) Application for Greater Midwest Insurance / Hanson Ins. Agency**

- Tim Hanson with Greater Midwest Insurance / Hanson Ins. Agency submitted an application for a CBP Loan in the amount of \$15,000.00 for a roof repair. The EDA reviewed the application on October 16, 2025 and recommend the approval of the CBP Application for Greater Midwest Insurance / Hanson Ins. Agency for \$15,000.00 for a roof repair. Hanson attended the EDA Meeting, however due to a schedule conflict, was unable to attend the City Council Meeting.

A motion to approve the CBP Application for Greater Midwest Insurance / Hanson Ins. Agency for \$15,000.00 was made by Chris Dotzler, seconded by Julie Miller. The motion carried with all voting aye.

- **Resolution No. PC2025-10-15A Farmers Cannabis Co. IUP**

- Interim Use Permit: On Wednesday, October 15, 2025 the Aitkin Planning Commission heard a request for an interim use permit from Farmer's Cannabis Company. The IUP included parcel 56-1-004600 on Minnesota Ave N. The planning commission established 9 conditions as described in Resolution No. PC2025-10-15A and makes a recommendation of approval to the Council.

A motion to approve the IUP for Farmers Cannabis Company through Resolution No. PC2025-10-15A was made by Jason Henke, seconded by Julie Miller. Mayor Tibbits called the vote.

- Council Member Dotzler – Abstain
- Council Member Henke – Aye
- Council Member Miller – Aye
- Council Member Cartie – Nay

The motion carried 2-1, with one Council Member abstaining.

- **CBP/SFL Application Updates**

- The Community Business Partnership and Store Front Loan Applications updates were reviewed by the EDA with recommendation of the approved changes.

A motion to approve the CBP/SFL Application Updates was made by Justin Cartie, seconded by Julie Miller. The motion carried with all voting aye.

- **Bolton & Menk Proposal – LRIP Grant Application Assistance for Bunker Hill Dr. Project**

- The Public Works Committee recommends the approval of the proposal from Bolton & Menk for LRIP Grant Application Assistance for the Bunker Hill Dr. Project for \$3,000.

A motion to approve Bolton & Menk LRIP Grant Application Assistance for Bunker Hill Dr. Project was made by Julie Miller, seconded by Jason Henke. The motion carried with all voting aye.

- **Ordinance 418: Amending Chapter 152: Zoning & Subdivisions of the City Code & Summary for Publication**

- The Planning Commission recommends amending language in Chapter 152 of the City Code. The amendments include allowing projecting signs in the DMU District, allowing larger square footage for accessory structures for larger parcels, adding traffic visibility requirements, definitions, and minor subdivision splits.

A motion to approve Ordinance 418: Amending Chapter 152: Zoning & Subdivisions of the City Code & Summary for Publication was made by Justin Cartie, seconded by Jason Henke. The motion carried with all voting aye.

- **Employee Resignation – Street Department**

- The City received a resignation from a Street Department Employee. The resignation is effective November 13, 2025. Street Supervisor Nicko and City Administrator Thompson will review operational needs and discuss options for filling the vacancy. These options will be reviewed with the Personnel Committee, and a follow-up recommendation will be presented to City Council at a later date.

A motion to accept the resignation of Street Department Employee #53 was made by Chris Dotzler, seconded by Julie Miller. The motion carried with all voting aye.

- **Resolution 2025-10-20B Authorizing COA to Make Application and Accept Funds from IRRR**

- The City would make application on behalf of the City of Aitkin for a Commercial Redevelopment Project at 117 1st St NW.

A motion to approve Resolution 2025-10-20B Authorizing COA to Make Application and Accept Funds from IRRR was made by Jason Henke, seconded by Julie Miller. Mayor Tibbits called the vote.

- Council Member Dotzler – Nay
- Council Member Henke – Aye
- Council Member Miller – Aye
- Council Member Cartie – Aye

The motion carried 3-1.

PUBLIC WORKS

- None.

BUDGET COMMITTEE

- None.

PLANNING & ZONING

- None.

PARK COMMITTEE

- None.

LIBRARY COMMITTEE

- None.

AIRPORT COMMISSION

- None.

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

- None.

EDA

- None.

COMMENTS FROM VISITORS

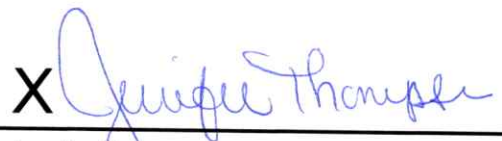
- Council Member Jason Henke wanted to clarify that if the School Referendum is voted down, the \$5,000,000 IRRR Grant does not go to the City of Aitkin. It will go to another community.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:30 pm was made by Justin Cartie, seconded by Chris Dotzler. The motion carried with all voting aye.

X 

Gary Tibbits
Mayor

X 

Jennifer Thompson
City Administrator