

AITKIN CITY COUNCIL MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING
AITKIN PUBLIC LIBRARY

November 3, 2025

6:00 p.m.

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

MEMBERS ABSENT: Jason Henke

ALSO PRESENT: City Clerk Samantha Sass, Street Supervisor Lon Nicko, Police Chief Colter Riedel, Code Enforcement Inspector Jeff Miller, Keith Dahl – Ehlers, Fire Chief Brian Pisarek

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A motion to approve the agenda was made by Julie Miller, 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 10/20/2025
- Accounts Payable
 - City
 - Liquor Store
- Mayor Appointment Updates (Bremer to Old National)
- 25.09.16 PUC Minutes
- Resolution No. 2025-11-03A Authorize App for LRIP Funding/Bunker Hill Dr.
- Special Event Permit; Aitkin Chamber Fish House Friday 11/28/2025
- Temporary Liquor License: Aitkin Chamber – Fish House Friday 11/28/2025
- Resolution No. 2025-11-03B Authorizing App for Grant Navigation Support
- Resolution No. 2025-11-03C Authorizing App for Grant Navigation Support under LMC
- Special Event Permit; Snowmobile Show 11/28/2025
- Resolution No. 2025-11-03K Accept Donation for Police Department

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

MAYOR'S REPORT

- Mayor Tibbitts, City Administrator Thompson, and City Clerk Sass met with IRRR Commissioner Ida and her assistant Whitney along with County Administrator Minke and EDA Development Coordinator Jeffers to tour and discuss projects within the City of Aitkin.

ADMINISTRATION REPORT

- Voting is from 7AM-8PM on November 4, 2025 at the Aitkin Public Library.
- City Offices will be closed on Tuesday, November 11, 2025 for Veteran's Day.

OLD BUSINESS

- None.

NEW BUSINESS

- **Keith Dahl of Ehlers, WWTF Bond Pre-Sale Documents**
 - Resolution No. 2025-11-03L was presented to the Council by Ehlers Senior Municipal Advisor Keith Dahl. Dahl presented a pre-sale report and proposed bond transaction of \$3,105,000.00 General Obligation Sewage Disposal System Bonds, Series 202A to finance the construction or improvement of the wastewater treatment facility.

A motion to approve Resolution No. 2025-11-03L was made by Chris Dotzler, seconded by Justin Cartie. The motion carried with all voting aye.

- **Employee Resignation – Street Department**
 - The City received a resignation from a Street Department Employee. The resignation was effective October 30, 2025.

A motion to accept the resignation of Street Department Employee #125 was made by Julie Miller, seconded by Justin Cartie. The motion carried with all voting aye.

- **Street Department Job Description Update / Post Vacancy**
 - City Administrator Thompson and Street Supervisor Nicko are reviewing operational needs for the structure of the department. With the resignation of a second employee, it is necessary to fill at least one of the Street Maintenance Worker positions to maintain

adequate staffing and operational capacity within the department. Updates to the job description include moving certain requirements to a "Preferred Qualifications" section rather than minimum requirements. The essential job duties remain unchanged.

A motion to approve the Street Department Job Description Update and Post the Vacancy was made by Chris Dotzler, seconded by Justin Cartie. The motion carried with all voting aye.

- **Liquor Store: New Hire**

A motion to extend the employment offer to Madysen Burgstaler at a Grade SS5, Step 1 on the 2025 Wage Scale for 14 hours/week or less contingent on a background check was made by Justin Cartie, seconded by Julie Miller. The motion carried with all voting aye.

- **Small Cities Development Program Preliminary Proposal**

- The City is planning several public infrastructure projects that will be included in the preliminary engineering report that Bolton & Menk has proposed under a separate scope. The Small Cities Development program supports grant requests for up to \$600,000.00 for types of public infrastructure projects that will be included in the preliminary engineering report. The proposed fees include the preliminary proposal and full application for \$7,000.00.

A motion to approve the Small Cities Development Program Preliminary Proposal was made by Justin Cartie, seconded by Chris Dotzler. The motion carried with all voting aye.

- **Preliminary Engineering Report Proposal**

- Bolton and Menk prepared a Facility Plan/Preliminary Engineering report for future utility improvement projects and to submit applications for placement of those City projects on the 2027 Project priority List for the Drinking Water Revolving Fund program and Clean Water Revolving Fund program. The estimated fee is \$11,710.00.

A motion to accept the Preliminary Engineering Report Proposal was made by Justin Cartie, seconded by Chris Dotzler. The motion carried with all voting aye.

ASSESSMENT HEARING

Consideration of Certifying Assessments for 3 Grass Violation/Overgrown Shrubbery Properties and 6 Nuisance Properties.

1. **Opening:** Mayor Tibbitts opened the Assessment Hearing at 6:22 p.m.
2. **Public Comments & Discussion:** Code Inspector Jeff Miller spent 73 hours on 19 nuisance property complaints. 4 complaints have been closed, 9 are actively working with the City, and 6 came before the council for assessment because little to no action has been taken. All property owners are given information for area resources that range from volunteer organizations to hauling vehicles. The council had a lengthy discussion about properties, including businesses downtown. Council Member Miller did not agree with the assessments on 206 4th St NE as the property cleaned up one of their nuisances and may not have the resources to correct the other nuisance (boarded windows). Miller pointed out that there is at least one business within the city limits that also has boarded up windows. City staff said that the business did not receive a letter or fine because it is in foreclosure. Miller pointed out that the system should be applied equally to all properties within the city limits. Costs of the services and fees will be assessed to the owner's property taxes with the debt to be paid over a one-year period at a 5% interest rate.
3. **Closing:** Mayor Tibbitts closed the Assessment Hearing at 7:12 p.m.

- **Resolution No. 2025-11-03D (Grass Violations)**

A motion to approve Resolution No. 2025-11-03D (Grass Violations) was made by Justin Cartie, seconded by Chris Dotzler. The motion carried with all voting aye.

- **711 2nd St NW**

- **Resolution No. 2025-11-03E**

A motion to approve Resolution No. 2025-11-03E was made by Justin Cartie, seconded by Chris Dotzler. The motion carried with all voting aye.

- **517 2nd St NW**

- **Resolution No. 2025-11-03F**

A motion to approve Resolution No. 2025-11-03F was made by Justin Cartie, seconded by Chris Dotzler. The motion carried with all voting aye.

- **206 4th St NE**

- **Resolution No. 2025-11-03G**

A motion to approve Resolution No. 2025-11-03G was made by Justin Cartie, seconded by Chris Dotzler. Mayor Tibbitts called the vote.

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

- Council Member Cartie – Aye

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

- **424 3rd Ave NE**
 - **Resolution No. 2025-11-03H**

A motion to approve Resolution No. 2025-11-03H was made by Justin Cartie, seconded by Chris Dotzler. The motion carried with all voting aye.

- **206 Minnesota Ave N**
 - **Resolution No. 2025-11-03I**

A motion to approve Resolution No. 2025-11-03I was made by Justin Cartie, seconded by Chris Dotzler. The motion carried with all voting aye.

- **127 3rd St NE**
 - **Resolution No. 2025-11-03J**

A motion to approve Resolution No. 2025-11-03J was made by Justin Cartie, seconded by Chris Dotzler. The motion carried with all voting aye.

PUBLIC WORKS

- Draft Minutes; 10/13/2025 Mtg.

BUDGET COMMITTEE

- None.

PLANNING & ZONING

- Draft Minutes; 10/15/2025 Mtg.

PARK COMMITTEE

- Draft Minutes; 10/14/2025 Mtg.

LIBRARY COMMITTEE

- None.

AIRPORT COMMISSION

- Draft Minutes; 10/23/2025 Mtg.

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

- None.

EDA

- Draft Minutes; 10/16/2025 Mtg.

COMMENTS FROM VISITORS

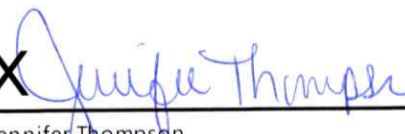
- None.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:25 pm was made by Chris Dotzler, seconded by Justin Cartie. The motion carried with all voting aye.

X 

Gary Tibbitts
Mayor

X 

Jennifer Thompson
City Administrator