

AITKIN CITY COUNCIL MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING
AITKIN PUBLIC LIBRARY

January 5, 2026

6:00 p.m.

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

MEMBERS ABSENT: None.

ALSO PRESENT: Street Supervisor Lon Nicko, Police Chief Colter Riedel, Fire Chief Brian Pisarek, Tami Jacobs, Linda Way

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A motion to approve the agenda 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 12/15/2025
- Accounts Payable
 - City
 - Liquor Store
- Resolution No. 2026-01-05A Authorize Payment Prior to City Council Approval
- Resolution No. 2026-01-05B Authorize EFT for FY 2026
- Renewal Madden Galanter Hansen, PLLC; 2026 Labor Attorney
- Annual Update: Data Access Policy for Members of the Public
- Annual Update: Data Access Policy for Data Subjects
- Special Event Permit; Aitkin Chamber Winterwonderama 2/21/26
- Mayor Tibbitts FAA – Letter of Support
- Gambling Permit; Aitkin County Pheasants Forever; Event 3/28/26

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

- 2026 Mayor Appointments
 - Appointments will remain the same in 2026.

A motion to approve the 2026 Mayor Appointments was made by Julie Miller, seconded by Chris Dotzler. The motion carried with all voting aye.

- Minnesota Mayors Letter
 - Mayor Tibbitts along with 240 other Mayors in the State of Minnesota signed a letter to Minnesota State Representatives, Senators, and Governor Walz expressing deep concern about the fiscal direction of the state.

ADMINISTRATION REPORT

- Logging has begun at the tank trails. The timber has reached its maturity level and revenue from the sale will be reinvested into the park system. The trails will look bare but will create a stronger, healthier forest for the future.
- The recent Street Department hire has declined the offer. City staff will repost the position.
- Ice Rinks are open for public use.

OLD BUSINESS

- None.

NEW BUSINESS

- **Proposal Bolton & Menk; Project Engineering & Administration for Air Park Dr. Sewer Lining Project**
 - The proposal from Bolton & Menk in the amount of \$55,680 for Engineering Design, Bidding, Award, Contract Preparation, Observation and Contract Administration and will be paid from the 617 fund.

A motion to approve the proposal from Bolton & Menk for Project Engineering & Administration for Air Park Dr. Sewer Lining Project was made by Justin Cartie, seconded by Chris Dotzler. The motion carried with all voting aye.

- **ORD 419 Amending Chapter 33: Fee Schedule of the City Code & Summary for Publication**
 - Updates were made to Chapter 33: Fee Schedule of the City Code regarding fees and charges for services including Airport Lot Lease, Cannabis Initial/Renewal Registration, Fieldhouse Rental, Tax Abatement/TIF Application Fee.

A motion to ORD 419 Amending Chapter 33: Fee Schedule of the City Code & Summary for Publication was made by Justin Cartie, seconded by Julie Miller. The motion carried with all voting aye.

- **WWTF – Pay Application No. 2**
 - Pay Application No. 2 in the amount of \$226,827.19 for the WWTF. Council Member Dotzler spoke with Murv from Public Utilities and was pleased with the progress.

A motion to approve Pay Application No. 2 for WWTF was made by Chris Dotzler, seconded by Jason Henke. The motion carried with all voting aye.

- **Bureau of Mediation Services, Notice of Withdrawal of Representation Teamsters/Liquor Store**
 - As of December 31, 2025, the Teamsters, Local 346, Duluth, Minnesota, is no longer the certified exclusive representative for the employees of the City of Aitkin, falling within the following bargaining unit: All employees of the Municipal Liquor Store.
- **Updated DRAFT Personnel Policy**
 - Changes were made to language in the Personnel Policy. Easter Holiday and PMFL were added into the Policy.

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

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

- None.

A motion to close the open meeting at 6:21 pm was made by Justin Cartie, seconded by Chris Dotzler. The motion carried with all voting aye.

CLOSED MEETING

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

A motion to re-open the meeting at 7:04 pm was made by Chris Dotzler, seconded by Justin Cartie. The motion carried with all voting aye.

- **MOA LELS Police Officers Wage Adjustment**

A motion to approve the MOA LELS Police Officers Wage Adjustment was made by Justin Cartie, seconded by Chris Dotzler. The motion carried with all voting aye.

- **LELS 2026-2028 Collective Bargaining Agreement**

A motion to approve the LELS 2026-2028 Collective Bargaining Agreement was made by Chris Dotzler, seconded by Justin Cartie. The motion carried with all voting aye.

- **Teamsters 346 (Public Works) 2026-2028 Tentative Agreement**

A motion to approve Teamsters 346 (Public Works) 2026-2028 Tentative Agreement was made by Chris Dotzler, seconded by Justin Cartie. The motion carried with all voting aye.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:17 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