

**COOK CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
APRIL 24, 2014 – COOK CITY HALL – 6 PM**

TIME AND PLACE: A regular meeting of the Cook City Council was held at 6 PM on Thursday, April 24, 2014 at the Cook City Hall.

CALL TO ORDER: Mayor Harold Johnston called the meeting to order at 6 PM.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Mayor Harold Johnston.

ATTENDANCE: Present at roll call was Mayor Harold Johnston and City Councilors Jody Bixby, Kim Brunner, Karen Hollanitsch and Elizabeth Storm. Absent were none. Also present were Administrator-Clerk/Treasurer Theresa Martinson, Deputy-Clerk/Treasurer Cindy Palm, ARDC Andy Hubley, Assistant Liquor Store Manager Randy Olson, Ambulance Director Tim Mankowski, VFW Nikki Lange, The Timberjay and Cook News Herald.

ADDs/DELETES: Mayor Harold Johnston read into the record the revisions to the original agenda.

Add: Consent Agenda-Recreation Minutes 4-23-2014, Old Business-Sign Retro-reflectivity, CN Training, and New Business-Cub Scouts Trash Pickup

Move: None

PUBLIC FORUM: None

Comprehensive Planning 2014

ARDC Andy Hubley reported that the IRRRB Grant for \$10,000 is executed and the following steps are next:

1-Establish a planning committee for the Comprehensive Plan process. Andy recommends 7-10 members of the community such as council, business owners and residents.

2-Establish meetings to be held the 3rd Thursday of each month for 7 months. The first meeting will be held May 15th at 5 PM at Cook City Hall with the initial meeting as the kickoff then into planning. A promotional mailer should be addressed with website and newspaper publishing as well.

3-Installment payments will be made starting July 1st and the final November 1st to ARDC.

Licenses and Permits

Tiffany Briggs requested council approval to use River Street Park for a Cook Farmers' Market on Saturdays from 8 AM to 1 PM during the summer months. A \$25.00 fee will be paid with liability insurance coverage and vendor waivers provided.

Motion by Storm, second by Bixby granting approval of the Cook Area Farmer's Market use of River Street Park on Saturdays from 8-1 contingent upon all necessary requirements met. **MOTION CARRIED**

John Malm requested council approval to use River Street Park for a Celina Farm Market (comprised of only John Malm) on Saturdays from 8 AM to 1 PM during the summer months. A \$25.00 fee will be paid with liability insurance coverage and vendor waivers provided.

COMMISSION AND STAFF REPORTS:

Ambulance

Ambulance Director Tim Mankowski reported an urgent need for EMT's and First Responders. Recruitment efforts in 2011 brought in new EMT's and First Responders but numbers are declining everywhere and not just specific to Cook. Daytime call is difficult to cover and non-response times could jeopardize the license in the future if this continues. Revenues are lost because the ambulance service cannot take transfers without daytime coverage. We are relying on mutual aid. Times have changed with more people working full-time day jobs and the department is seeking input for any possible changes to be made.

Recruitment efforts are being made through advertising and articles, addressing at large gatherings, letters to townships, the local ministerial association and an open house being held on May 31st at the ambulance/fire hall. Other efforts include possible scholarship opportunities for training and the possibility of funding a daytime staff person or utilizing nursing staff with the hospital.

Funding staff is the largest setback as legislation requirements do not allow the use of committed funds to cover staffing.

Liquor

Assistant Manager Randy Olson presented quotes for a new security system as the current system is outdated and in need of replacement. Security is an important issue with the liquor store and the capital account has sufficient funds to cover this cost. Randy researched and compared the product specifications and reviewed the system of Bauer Communications installed at a local business and recommends the council accept the low quote from Bauer Communications for \$4305. The lower quote starts with a smaller system, sufficient for the liquor store, and can be added to later if needed. The system is warranty and maintenance protected.

Motion by Bixby, second by Storm to accept the low quote of \$4305 from Bauer Communications for installation of a new replacement security system at the liquor store. **MOTION CARRIED**

Library

Librarian Steve Harsin has submitted his letter of resignation, with his last day May 9th as he has accepted a position as the Head Librarian in Grand Marais MN. Administrator Martinson has requested approval to accept his resignation, with regret, and to authorize the Personnel Committee to conduct the replacement process.

Motion by Storm, second by Hollanitsch to accept the resignation, with regret, of Librarian Steve Harsin and to authorize the Personnel Committee to conduct the replacement process for a new librarian.

MOTION CARRIED

Planning & Zoning

Planning and Zoning met and considered a request for a variance of 3.9 feet (as required rear setback of 20 feet is not met measuring 16.1 feet) from the Cook VFW Post 1757 for the purpose of constructing an 8x41 addition at 206 1st St. SW, Cook MN 55723. Ashawa Village of Cook, Lots 1-7, Block 7.

Proposed Variance requested from Ordinance NO. 901 – C-1 Building and Land Use Regulations, Subdivision 4 – Commercial Building Requirements.

Yard Setbacks:

1. 8 feet for front yard setbacks
2. 20 feet for rear yard setbacks
3. There shall be no side yard setbacks except when adjoining a residential district in which case, there shall be a side yard of not less than ten feet. If an unrequired yard is provided, it shall not be less than five feet.

Commander Darrel Lindgren reported that the addition will be primarily used for storage with the possibility of very minimal office space. There were no additional questions or concerns.

Planning and Zoning recommends to the City Council that a Variance be granted to Cook VFW Post 1757 for constructing an addition to the existing building at 206 1st St. SW, Cook MN 55723, Ashawa Village of Cook, Lots 1-7, Block 7.

Motion by Brunner, second by Hollanitsch that a Variance of 3.9 feet (as required rear setback of 20 feet is not met measuring 16.1 feet) be granted to Cook VFW Post 1757 for construction of an addition to the existing building at 206 1st St. SW, Cook MN 55723, Ashawa Village of Cook, Lots 1-7, Block 7.

MOTION CARRIED

OLD BUSINESS:

Cook Active Transportation Coalition Meeting/SHIP

Councilor Elizabeth Storm reported that the Cook Active Transportation Coalition Meeting was held April 3rd.

Some of the key items addressed were to review the cost to construct a sidewalk along 5th St SE near St. Mary's Catholic Church. The cost is excessive from \$12-20,000 and alternative options are to be reviewed while still considering a walking path around the Doug Johnson Park.

A bike rack has been ordered for placement near the library. Carol Booth has been involved with ordering specifications for protection from the elements of the area and also working with maintenance as to the best location to place this bike rack.

The walking and biking promotion plan is to host a visible event with a walking group on Wednesdays before Music in the Park and involvement in the Timber Days Parade allowing the group to give promotional materials for walking and biking safety and to promote the coalition.

One of the highest priorities is the need to address the speed limit along Highway 53 as the tourism season is approaching. The group will continue to work with MnDOT to install a digital speed monitor in Cook.

Sign Retro-reflectivity

By June 13, 2014 "all agencies, including cities, who maintain roadways open to public travel must adopt a sign maintenance program designed to maintain traffic sign retro reflectivity at or above specific levels".

Maintenance Superintendent Bud Ranta reported that the cost to replace all signs at one time within the city could cost \$20-30,000. The city will participate in this program as required and spread the replacement cost out over consecutive years. Council Members Elizabeth Storm and Kim Brunner will represent the City of Cook for the sign maintenance program.

CN Railroad Disaster Preparedness

CN Railroad will conduct a presentation on Disaster Preparedness on Monday, April 28th at 5 PM in the Cook Hospital Main Conference Room and not the Garden Conference Room as previously noted. Members of the council and various city departments will attend.

NEW BUSINESS:

NWFA Art Expo

Northwood's Friends of the Art will display artwork at Cook City Hall and citywide during the Spring Art Expo from June 6th-20th.

Littlefork River Board Meeting

The Little Fork River Board will meet May 7, 2014 at 6 PM in the Koochiching County Courthouse Board Room for any council members who would like to attend.

Club Scouts Trash Pickup

Local Cub Scouts and Boy Scouts will pick up trash on April 28th at 6 PM, weather permitting, for the City of Cook.

COUNCIL FORUM:

Councilor Kim Brunner asked if there will be transition adjustments between driveways and streets as part of the 2013-14 Street Improvements project as there are some noticeable issues in some neighborhoods. JPJ Engineering will be contacted to make sure this is part of the project.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business brought before the Council, motion to adjourn at 7:10 PM was made by Councilor Brunner and second by Councilor Storm. **MOTION CARRIED**

CITY OF COOK – Cook, MN 55723

Harold Johnston, Mayor

Recorder: Cindy Palm, Deputy Clerk/Treasurer

Attest: Theresa Martinson, Administrator-Clerk/Treasurer