

**COOK CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
JULY 25, 2013 – COOK CITY HALL – 6 PM**

TIME AND PLACE: A regular meeting of the Cook City Council was held at 6 PM on Thursday, July 25, 2013 at the Cook City Hall.

CALL TO ORDER: Acting Mayor Karen Hollanitsch called the meeting to order at 6 PM.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Acting Mayor Karen Hollanitsch with all those present reciting.

ATTENDANCE: Present at roll call were Acting Mayor Karen Hollanitsch and City Councilors Jody Bixby, Kim Brunner and Elizabeth Storm. Absent was Mayor Harold Johnston. Also present were Administrator-Clerk/Treasurer Theresa Martinson, Maintenance Superintendent Bud Ranta, Cook News Herald and The Timberjay. William Whiteside and Darrel Lindgren arrived at 6:10 PM.

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

Add: None

Move: None

PUBLIC FORUM:

William Whiteside – Utility Account

Motion by Hollanitsch, second by Storm to provide Mr. William Whiteside with a payment plan on his utility account. **MOTION CARRIED**

William Whiteside and Darrel Lindgren (arrived at 6:10 PM) and addressed Whiteside's utility account and requested a reduction in the bill. Whiteside has been billed for 65,000 gallons worth of water usage. Whiteside explained that he owns a home in the city; has trouble renting it and every spring turns the water on and has plumbing issues. The home sits vacant in the winter but turns the water on when trying to sell the home. He has had trouble finding a plumber over the years. The meter is in a difficult location and hard to read. There have been multiple leaks at the home. He explained his financial hardship. Councilors explained that other utility accounts within the city have had similar situations and no reduction was offered because the water was used and amount owed to the city. The meter at Whiteside's property, when turned into the city had been tampered with and is city owned property. The usage on the meter was documented and water had flowed through the meter; therefore, billable to the owner. The plumber tested the meter and found it was working appropriately. Whiteside offered equipment rental as a trade for outstanding account balance. It was explained that exchange of service would need to be legally reviewed. However, if the city had need for equipment usage; Ranta could contact Whiteside as an option. Whiteside would bill the city and payment would be placed on utility account. Whiteside was asked what he could afford a month. He offered \$50.

Motion by Hollanitsch, second by Bixby to accept a \$50/month contract payment plan with William Whiteside on his utility account. The city will look into equipment rental. First payment due on September 1, 2013.

MOTION CARRIED

Propane Bids (2013-2014 Heating Season)

Bids were received from Como Oil & Propane, Ferrellgas, Lakes Gas Co. and Range LP Gas for the propane contract for the 2013-2014 (September 1, 2013 through August 30, 2014) heating season. Lakes Gas is the apparent low bidder. They have indicated no additional truck charges for any city deliveries and 24 hour emergency service. The city purchases approximately 11,000 gallons per heating season.

COMMISSION AND STAFF REPORTS:

Airport Commission

Motion by Brunner, second by Storm to approve Grant Agreement for Airport Maintenance and Operation MnDOT No. 03856 in the amount of \$14,855, to adopt resolution authorizing the execution of said agreement and authorizing the Mayor and Administrator-Clerk/Treasurer to sign and execute said agreement and any amendments on behalf of the City of Cook. **MOTION CARRIED**

Library

Motion by Storm, second by Bixby to establish a Library Book Fund account up to \$6500 comprised of monies received from the Arrowhead Library System, contributions and the remainder from the Library Equipment Fund. Any materials bought for the library collections intended for circulation, including but not limited to: books, audio books, DVDs, music CDs, newspaper subscriptions, electronic resources, and more. **MOTION CARRIED**

Councilor Storm shared that over 50 kids and 30 adults attended the Science Museum of Minnesota Program about dinosaurs and the day previous probably made a record attendance with close to 300 people utilizing the Library.

A thank you was shared for the Maintenance Department's attention to the River Street Park and what a pleasure it is to host things when the property is presented so wonderfully. Don Flack was acknowledged for all his hard work.

Planning and Zoning Commission

A committee has been comprised to meet regarding the MacDonald property future intended uses and pertinent zoning. A firmer plan and recommendations will be brought back to the council once finalized. Private ownership easements are being formalized.

Recreation Commission

Motion by Bixby, second Brunner to approve an invoice in the amount of \$935.70 from The Tinsmith for the heat venting at the Community Center. Funds are to be utilized from the Building Fund. **MOTION CARRIED**

OLD BUSINESS:

None

NEW BUSINESS:

Council and public was informed that Congressman Nolan's office will be visiting Cook on Thursday, August 8, 2013 from 11 AM to 1 PM at the Cook City Hall. Any federal projects ideas could be shared.

A public notice of intent from the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency to approve the St. Louis County's Solid Waste Management Plan dated July 16, 2013 was received and posted at City Hall and shared with the Cook City Council. The public comment period is from July 21, 2013 through August 19, 2013.

Hollanitsch requested necessary city approvals for the Cook Hospital's Health & Wellness Fair/5K Walk/Run.

Motion by Storm, second by Bixby to approve use of the Doug Johnson Recreation Area for the Cook Hospital's Health & Wellness Fair and the city streets for the 5K Walk/Run to be held Saturday, September 21, 2013. **MOTION CARRIED**

COUNCIL FORUM:

Councilor Brunner shared her concern regarding synthetic marijuana and illegal drugs and the city being proactive against and trying to stop it from filtering into the community. Staff was directed to research.

Councilor Storm said that Music in the Park has been wonderful however; musicians are discouraged that attendance has been down and part of this might be advertising. She encouraged councilors to read the League of MN Cities quarterly magazine regarding “Staying on the right side of Open Meeting Law”, a good refresher for everyone and “Navigating healthcare reform” that could affect the city to include a new ruling of 30 hours/week employees offered insurance which may include the volunteer fire department and EMTs.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business brought before the Council, motion to adjourn at 6:59 PM was made by Councilor Storm and second by Councilor Bixby. **MOTION CARRIED**

CITY OF COOK – Cook, MN 55723

Harold Johnston, Mayor

Recorder and Attest:

Theresa Martinson, Administrator-Clerk/Treasurer