

MINUTES
SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING
LIBRARY-PARKS AND BEAUTIFICATION
COOK CITY COUNCIL
SEPTEMBER 26, 2013 – CITY HALL – 5 PM

TIME AND PLACE: A special meeting of the Cook City Council was held at 5 PM on Thursday, September 26, 2013 at the Cook City Hall.

CALL TO ORDER: Mayor Harold Johnston called the Special Council Meeting to order at 5 PM.

ATTENDANCE: Present were Mayor Harold Johnston and City Councilors Kim Brunner, Karen Hollanitsch and Elizabeth Storm. Absent was Councilor Jody Bixby. Also present was Administrator-Clerk/Treasurer Theresa Martinson, Deputy Clerk/Treasurer Cindy Palm and Librarian Steve Harsin.

The purpose of this meeting is to hold monthly special study sessions to discuss budget planning for 2014. Study sessions will be held at 5 PM prior to the monthly regular council meetings for the remainder of the year to discuss the budget and levy for 2014.

The September study session focuses on the budgets for library and parks and beautification.

Library

The library equipment fund is utilized for building improvements as approved by the library board. There are no anticipated projects for 2014.

The library budget covers operational and maintenance expense. Major purchases come from designated accounts such as donations, ALS Reimburse, ALS Best Seller and the Library Equipment Fund and Book Fund. Librarian Harsin monitors the designated account balances as funds are to be expended annually and to promote circulation for the library.

Volunteer help, public promotion and press releases for the library are utilized to promote library services. Book sales reduce old circulation with funds put back into the library. Books that don't sell are donated to local groups for further community circulation.

The Summer Reading Program was successful by utilizing volunteers and a minimizing budget impact with Friends of the Library purchasing supplies. The program was offered to pre-school, grade school and older/advanced audiences with theme based reading and activities. Community interest is positive with 70-100 attendees for the Zoo Mobile and Science Museum activities.

The Teen Summer Reading Program was held Wednesday evenings for June and July with a positive response from the teens who welcomed the hours. Librarian Harsin does not feel the program is warranted on a longer term basis at this time as the participation dropped as the days got shorter and fall schedules increased.

Librarian Harsin commented that the library space is limited for hosting certain events and would be willing to utilize other spaces within the community.

A door counter has been installed and traffic has increased with all ages attracted to the library. Circulation has increased with considerable literature requests as well.

Cook Public Library has been selected for a public art project funded through the Legacy Program offered by the Arrowhead Library System. Artwork will be on display on the library grounds or within the building. Librarian Harsin commented that this is positive promotion for the library and invites council members to participate in upcoming art project meetings.

Librarian Harsin installed new book ends purchased from Ryan's Rustic Railings in 2013. He intends to highlight local history interest such as local authors, school yearbooks and possibly historical city information if permitted in the future.

Parks and Beautification

Primary expenditures are for parks maintenance and beautification in downtown Cook with focus on maintenance free beautification due to time and resources. Annually, \$2000 is designated towards the purchase of one table, bench and grill for River Street Park.

Maintenance efforts will be budgeted for weed control next summer in River Street Park, by city hall and the River Street and Highway 53 flags. Future plans would be to consider a concrete pad near the gazebo for seating in the park or a designated picnic area.

The River Street Park murals need to be re-leveled and stained. This could be a project that a specific group may be interested in pursuing with funding provided from the parks and beautification budget.

The garden club will continue to maintain the city gardens as they have each year with a budget to purchase supplies.

Park usage has increased and remains steady throughout the warmer seasons at both River Street and Doug Johnson Parks.

The October budget study session will review the recreation and airport budgets.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business brought before the Council, motion to adjourn at 5:55 PM was made by Councilor Hollanitsch 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