

The Cannon Falls City Council met in a regular session on Tuesday, July 6, 2021, in the City Council Chambers. Present were Mayor John Althoff and Council Members Bill Duncan, Mary Jill Bringgold, Matt Montgomery, Laura Kronenberger, Steve Gesme, and Derek Lundell; Council Member Matt Montgomery was absent. Also in attendance were Neil Jensen, City Administrator; Dan Howard, Public Works Director; Sara Peer, City Clerk; Jeff McCormick, Police Chief; and Sarah Schwarzhoff, City Attorney.

Call to Order Mayor Althoff called the City Council meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Roll Call Roll call was conducted. Mayor Althoff and Council Members Bringgold, Duncan, Gesme, Kronenberger, and Lundell were in attendance. Council Member Montgomery was absent.

Pledge of Allegiance Mayor Althoff led the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of Agenda A motion was made by Council Member Duncan, seconded by Council Member Gesme and unanimously carried, to approve the agenda as presented.

Presentation:
2020 Audit
Presentation

Brad Falteysek from Abdo, Eick & Meyers reviewed the results of the City's financial audit. He noted that this was a very clean audit, in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles and in compliance with Minnesota statutes. He discussed internal controls in terms of the preparation of financial statements. Mr. Falteysek referenced the City's policy in terms of the general fund balance, noting that the general fund stayed above the minimum reserve percentage of 70%. He reviewed 2020 budget variances relating to revenue and expenditures. Mr. Falteysek also provided a detailed explanation of other City funds, including capital project and special revenue funds. He reviewed the City's debt service funds along with outstanding bond principle and interest payments over the next few years. He discussed sewer and water enterprise funds, the storm water fund, the Ambulance fund, the Deputy Registrar fund, and recycling funds. He reviewed a chart showing cash balances over the last three years. Mr. Falteysek provided comparison data with similar-sized Minnesota cities.

Mayor Althoff requested a recommendation in terms of water and sewer rates. Mr. Falteysek reviewed options in this regard.

A motion was made by Council Member Lundell, seconded by Council Member Bringgold and unanimously carried, to accept the audit report.

Consent Agenda

- A. Just and Correct Claims – Accounting Period Ending July 1, 2021
- B. Meeting Minutes for June 15, 2021, City Council Meeting
- C. Meeting Minutes for June 22, 2021, City Council Special Meeting
- D. Resolution 2550, Approving Limited Use Permit No. 2504-0042 with the Minnesota Department of Transportation
- E. Resolution 2551, Approving Limited Use Permit No. 2506-0040 with the Minnesota Department of Transportation
- F. Resolution 2552, Approving Limited Use Permit No. 2502-0039 with the Minnesota Department of Transportation
- G. Resolution 2553, Accepting a Bike Donation from Glenn Schulz to the Police Department
- H. Resolution 2554, Accepting a Monetary Donation from the Cannon Falls Fire Department Relief Association for \$8,000 to the Fire Department
- I. Approve Purchase of Vehicle for the Ambulance Department
- J. Approve Police Officer Cole Neubauer Hire
- K. Resolution 2555, Authorizing the Declaration of an Urban District on County Road 17 Between North First Street and Primrose Lane
- L. Approve Temporary On-Sale Strong Beer Liquor License for the Cannon Falls Bears
- M. Approve Request for Traffic Cones and Barricades for Cannon Car Cruiser Club
- N. Approve Street Crack Sealing and Spray Patching Quote from Pavement Resources, Inc.
- O. Approve Mill Street West Parking Stalls
- P. Approve “No Outlet” Street Sign on Middle Street West
- Q. Approve 2021 Park Street Area Improvements
- R. Resolution 2556, Accepting a Drinking Fountain Donation from ArtOrg to the Parks Department
- S. Resolution 2557, Accepting a Monetary Donation from the Irene Carnel Estate for \$4,500 to the Parks Department
- T. Resolution 2558, Approving Administrative Subdivision / Lot Combination for Nate’s Garage at 1717 & 1713 North Highway 20
- U. Resolution 2559, Approving Administrative Subdivision / Lot Split for Josie and Zach Hayes at 300 Carlson Road

A motion was made by Council Member Duncan, seconded by Council Member Lundell and unanimously carried, to approve the Consent Agenda as presented.

Council Business:
Resolution 2560, Rick
and Jason Knowlton
Variance Request

City Attorney Schwarzhoff provided background information regarding the variance request and summarized discussion during a recent Planning Commission meeting. She reviewed the legal standard for

granting a variance and the practical difficult criteria. She stated that the Planning Commission voted to recommend that the City Council grant the variance, primarily due to the orientation of the proposed home and the shape of the lot. She noted that staff does not believe that the variance meets the standard for practical difficulty terms of being unique to the property and not created by the landowner. She also referenced issues relating to street access to this property. She clarified that, although Bluff Drive is open, a portion of Sandstone Road has been vacated and a portion is not open at this time. She noted that driveway access could be granted off of Bluff Drive but not off of Sandstone Road for this lot. When asked about the future plans for the roads, City Attorney Schwarzhoff provided additional information in this regard.

At this time the meeting was opened for public comment.

One of the applicants, Rick Knowlton, provided information in support of Sandstone Road as being open. He provided rationale for the orientation of the home and the need for slab on grade construction.

Babe O’Gorman, Cannon Falls Township, further discussed the road issues, stating that Sandstone Road has been used for many years.

Chris Albrecht, 6670 Bluff Drive, referenced the practical difficulty criteria, noting that the proposed home will not alter the essential character of the neighborhood. He stated that he and others are trying to develop this area and build more housing in Cannon Falls. He recommended resolving the street issues in order to allow this happen.

One of the applicants, Jason Knowlton, provided additional information relating to the road issues.

Andrew Endres stated that he represents the owners of property to the south and east of the Sandstone development. He stated that he has been accessing his property via Decorah Drive for several years, with permission from City staff.

When asked about the variance request and plans for the adjacent lot, Rick Knowlton referenced the setbacks for the corner lot under discussion and the adjacent lot. He provided rationale for the requested variance.

The road issues were further discussed.

Council Member Kronenberger spoke in support of the variance request. Council Member Duncan spoke in opposition to the variance request, stating that the home should be built to fit the lot. Council Member Bringgold commented that there are other building lots in Cannon Falls. Council Member Lundell commented that the standards are in place to keep things consistent and fair for everyone.

Rick Knowlton commented with regard to variances that were granted to add four-season porches to existing homes.

Council Member Duncan commented that approving this variance may establish a precedent and open the City to future legal challenges.

A motion was made by Council Member Bringgold to deny the variance request for Rick and Jason Knowlton. The motion was seconded by Council Member Lundell. A roll call vote was conducted. Council Members Bringgold, Duncan, Gesme, and Lundell voted aye; Council Member Kronenberger voted nay. Four ayes; one nay; motion carried.

Reports:
Council
Committees/
Commissions/
Nonprofit
Organizations

Cannon Falls Area Chamber of Commerce President Kyle Paulson expressed appreciation to everyone who assisted with the recent Chamber golf tournament. She discussed the upcoming Open Air Fair events. She also discussed the very successful Cannon Valley Fair and parade.

City Administrator Jensen discussed a recent EDA meeting, during which the Keller-Baartman project and grant funding were discussed.

Council Members Lundell and Bringgold summarized discussion during a recent Public Works Commission meeting, during which a sewer credit request was discussed along with runoff issues and school crossings.

Public Works Director Howard summarized discussion during a recent Park Board meeting, during which John Burch Park was discussed along with recent park donations.

Staff, Mayor, and
Council

Alley paving was discussed.

Public Input

Goodhue County Commissioner Brad Anderson provided an update. He referenced the County's Road Plan and discussed local option sales tax funding toward road construction projects.

Commissioner Anderson also reviewed how CARES Act funding was allocated. He discussed grants that were approved for Cannon Falls businesses. He commented that land use issues are challenging.

Mayor Althoff reviewed the public input procedure.

Babe O'Gorman, Cannon Falls Township, discussed his curb renovation project bid on Limestone Road, citing soil issues and other challenges. He spoke in support of local contractors.

Chris Albrecht, Cannon Falls, inquired regarding the status of the SEMMCHRA lots, stating that he would be interested in developing this property.

Adjournment

Mayor Althoff clarified the upcoming meeting schedule.

A motion was made by Council Member Duncan, seconded by Council Member Lundell and unanimously carried, to adjourn the meeting. The meeting adjourned at 7:48 p.m.

Adopted by the City Council of the City of Cannon Falls on the 20th day of July, 2021.

John O. Althoff, Mayor

ATTEST:

Neil L. Jensen, City Administrator