

The Cannon Falls City Council met in a regular session on Tuesday, September 7, 2021, in the City Council Chambers. Present were Council Members Bill Duncan, Matt Montgomery, Mary Jill Bringgold, Steve Gesme, Laura Kronenberger, and Derek Lundell; Mayor John Althoff was absent. Also in attendance were Neil Jensen, City Administrator; Sarah Schwarzhoff, City Attorney; and Dan Howard, Public Works Director.

- Call to Order Mayor Pro Tem Gesme called the City Council meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.
- Roll Call Roll call was conducted. Council Members Bringgold, Duncan, Gesme, Kronenberger, Lundell, and Montgomery were in attendance. Mayor Althoff was absent.
- Pledge of Allegiance Mayor Pro Tem Gesme led the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.
- Approval of Amended Agenda A motion was made by Council Member Lundell to approve the amended Agenda as presented. It was noted that Item C under Council Business was discussed during the special meeting. Council Member Lundell amended his motion to approve the amended Agenda, minus Item C under Council Business. The motion was seconded by Council Member Bringgold, a vote was conducted, and the motion carried unanimously.
- Consent Agenda
- A. Just and Correct Claims – Accounting Period Ending August 31, 2021
 - B. Meeting Minutes for August 17, 2021, City Council Meeting
 - C. Resolution 2573, Adopting the Preliminary Tax Levy and Budget Collectible in 2022 and Setting a Public Meeting Date
 - D. Approve Temporary Liquor License for Cannon Valley Fair
 - E. Approve Temporary Liquor License for VFW Post 4452
 - F. Appoint Cliff Adel to the Public Works Commission
 - G. Approve Wastewater Treatment Plant Raw Wastewater Pit Pump
 - H. Approve Pickup Truck and Snowplow Purchase
 - I. Approve Roof Inspection Reports and Repairs
 - J. Approve Pressure-Reducing Valve Maintenance
 - K. Approve Colvill Street West Exploratory Dig
 - L. Approve Goodhue County Mill and Overlay Project of CR 2022
 - M. Approve Park Street Apartments Sidewalk Replacement
 - N. Approve American Accounts & Advisers, Inc for Ambulance Collections
 - O. Approve Third Street North Water Main Connection Quotes

Council Member Montgomery referenced Item G, noting that so-called flushable wipes are costing the City thousands of dollars in

terms of wastewater treatment plant maintenance and repairs. He urged residents to throw flushable wipes into the garbage.

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

Council Business:
Department of Vehicle
Services Discussion

City Administrator Jensen provided background information and referenced past discussion of this topic during a work session. He reported that the former Deputy Registrar has accepted a new position in the Twin Cities. He discussed the upcoming retirement of the two remaining Vehicle License Center employees. He summarized guidance that has been provided by the State of Minnesota in terms of procedures and processes. He stated that the Finance Committee has discussed the situation and reviewed two potential options:

- 1) Hire a new Deputy Registrar and one or two part-time employees to staff the Vehicle License Center.
- 2) Relinquish the Deputy Registrar appointment and allow the Minnesota Department of Public Safety to conduct an RFP process for a private entity to take over the Vehicle License Center in its present location.

Administrator Jensen commented that either process could take several months to complete, due to the technical nature of these positions. Administrator Jensen reviewed the budget impact for both options. He noted that the Vehicle License Center would need to close after September 30, 2021, for an undetermined length of time.

Council Member Duncan summarized discussion of the options by the Finance Committee, with a recommendation for Option 2. Administrator Jensen commented that it is not unusual for a private Vehicle License Center to operate within a public building.

It was reiterated that, either way, the Vehicle License Center would need to close for a period of time. The benefits of having a Vehicle License Center in Cannon Falls were discussed. Administrator Jensen indicated that the State would make this determination and manage the process, if the City relinquishes the Deputy Registrar appointment and decides to privatize the Vehicle License Center.

A motion was made by Council Member Bringgold for the City to relinquish the Deputy Registrar appointment and allow the Minnesota

Department of Public Safety to proceed with an RFP process for a private entity to operate the Vehicle License Center. The motion was seconded by Council Member Duncan. Council Member Duncan clarified that the Vehicle License Center will close temporarily on September 30. Council Members expressed appreciation to the Vehicle License Center staff for their hard work. A vote was conducted, and the motion carried unanimously.

Resolution 2574, in Support for 2022 State Bond Requests for John Burch Park Wall Rehabilitation

Administrator Jensen provided background information and discussed the need for restoration of the wall at John Burch Park. He reviewed the bonding requests, which have been reviewed and approved by the Park Board. He noted that Representative Barb Haley has indicated that she will support the State bonding requests. The project funding match requirements for State bonding assistance were clarified. Council Member Duncan commented John Burch Park is heavily used by the School District.

A motion was made by Council Member Bringgold to adopt Resolution 2574. The motion was seconded by Council Member Montgomery, a vote was conducted, and the motion carried unanimously.

Personnel Matter

This item was removed from the Agenda.

Reports:
Council
Committees/
Commissions/
Nonprofit
Organizations

Council Member Kronenberger referenced Trail Board discussion relating to clarifying land ownership and rights-of-way.

Administrator Jensen discussed a recent EDA meeting, during which an update was provided regarding the Keller-Baartman project in terms of an environmental RAP (Response Action Plan). He stated that advertising was discussed along with the scheduling of a 2022 goal-setting session.

Council Member Montgomery discussed a recent Park Board meeting, during which the bonding requests for John Burch Park were discussed.

Council Member Lundell discussed a recent Public Works Commission meeting, during which items as listed on the Consent Agenda were discussed.

Staff, Mayor, and Council

Public Works Director Howard discussed a mill and overlay project, noting that information about parking restrictions has been posted on

the City's website and Facebook page. Director Howard also provided a Third Street Bridge project update.

Director Howard expressed appreciation for Council approval of the raw wastewater pit pump.

Administrator Jensen suggested the formation of a Sandstone Ridge Committee. Mayor Pro Tem Gesme indicated that he would be discussing this topic later during the meeting.

Council Member Duncan commented with regard to increasing COVID-19 cases in the area. He recommended instituting a vaccine mandate for all City employees and elected officials. He suggested asking City Attorney Schwarzhoff to look into this possibility. City Attorney Schwarzhoff stated that employers can require vaccination, noting that a policy would need to be developed, including accommodations and religious exemptions. She stated that the League of Minnesota Cities has developed model policies. Potential City liability was discussed. Council Member Duncan stated that if more people are vaccinated, the fights over face coverings would go away. Council Member Montgomery asked whether there would be any issues with the bargaining units. Attorney Schwarzhoff recommended discussing this matter with union representatives. Council Members Bringgold and Lundell discussed potential impacts of positive cases within City departments and the need for exposed employees to quarantine. Mayor Pro Tem Gesme stated his opinion that employee actions in this regard should be driven by their conscience and not by an employer mandate. Council Member Duncan stated his opinion that if COVID-19 is spread from an unvaccinated individual, that infringes upon the rights and freedoms of the person who is infected. He discussed how employee privacy would be protected. Council Member Lundell asked about a potential incentive program, as opposed to a mandate. Attorney Schwarzhoff stated that the City is limited in terms of what it can offer to its employees. She stated that testing could be required in lieu of vaccination. She also discussed privacy concerns.

It was suggested to add this topic to the agenda for the next Council meeting. City Attorney Schwarzhoff indicated that she will provide sample policies from the League of Minnesota Cities, for discussion purposes.

Council Member Bringgold reiterated that there is no such thing as a flushable wipe.

Mayor Pro Tem Gesme stated that he received a tour of the new fire truck.

Mayor Pro Tem Gesme discussed the need for a Sandstone Ridge Committee to review issues and options.

Council Members Duncan and Kronenberger volunteered to serve on this committee along with Mayor Pro Tem Gesme and Luke Cooreman from the EDA.

Mayor Pro Tem Gesme referenced the public input procedure.

Adjournment

A motion was made by Council Member Duncan, seconded by Council Member Montgomery and unanimously carried, to adjourn the meeting. The meeting adjourned at 7:10 p.m.

Public Input

Public input was conducted following adjournment of the meeting.

Adopted by the City Council of the City of Cannon Falls on the 21st day of September, 2021.

John O. Althoff, Mayor

ATTEST:

Neil L. Jensen, City Administrator