

The Cannon Falls City Council met in a work session on Tuesday, December 7, 2021, in the City Council Chambers. Present were Mayor John Althoff and Council Members Bill Duncan, Matt Montgomery, Laura Kronenberger, Mary Jill Bringgold, and Steve Gesme; Council Member Derek Lundell was absent. Also present were Neil Jensen, City Administrator, and Sarah Schwarzhoff, City Attorney.

Call to Order

Mayor Althoff called the City Council work session to order at 7:37 p.m.

COVID-19 Policy Discussion

City Attorney Schwarzhoff provided background information and referenced past Council discussion of this topic. She reviewed the OSHA guidelines, noting that these have been challenged in the court system. She noted that there is currently no State or Federal mandate in place and suggested that the Council consider whether or not to implement a policy relating to City employees.

Council Member Duncan spoke in support of a vaccination or testing policy. City Administrator Jensen stated his understanding that at least 84% of City employees have been vaccinated. It was noted that several City employees have recently contracted COVID-19.

Council Member Bringgold expressed concerns about putting a policy in place in the absence of a Federal or State mandate.

Council Member Gesme suggested waiting for the court's decision prior to implementing a policy.

City Administrator Jensen commented that other communities have opted to wait until there is Federal or State guidance.

City Attorney Schwarzhoff commented that employee policies have been or will be implemented by the State of Minnesota, Hennepin and Ramsey Counties, and the cities of Minneapolis, St. Paul, and Duluth. She noted that a vaccination mandate by the City of St. Paul is being challenged by its labor unions.

Council Member Duncan expressed frustration that some employees' refusal to get vaccinated puts other employees and the public at risk.

Mayor Althoff spoke in favor of waiting to implement a policy.

City Attorney Schwarzhoff commented that the League of Minnesota Cities Insurance Trust has taken the position that insurance policies would not cover expenses relating to legal challenges of a vaccination mandate.

Following discussion, it was decided to continue to monitor the situation and further discuss this topic in the future.

Adjournment

The work session adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

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

John O. Althoff, Mayor

ATTEST:

Neil L. Jensen, City Administrator