

The Cannon Falls City Council met in a regular session on Tuesday, December 17, 2024, in the City Council Chambers. Present were Mayor Matt Montgomery and Council Members Derek Lundell, Steve Gesme, Lisa Groth, Diane Johnson, Laura Kronenberger, and Ryan Jeppesen. Also present were Sara Peer, City Clerk; Shelley Ryan, City Attorney; Jed Petersen, Public Works Director; Jeffrey McCormick, Police Chief; Zach Logelin, Permit & License Technician; Laura Qualey, Community & Business Development Specialist; and Brice Miller, Fire Chief. New City Administrator Jon Radermacher attended the meeting remotely.

- Call to Order Mayor Montgomery called the City Council meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.
- Roll Call Roll call was conducted. All members were in attendance.
- Pledge of Allegiance Mayor Montgomery led the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.
- Approval of Agenda A motion was made by Council Member Groth, seconded by Council Member Jeppesen and unanimously carried, to approve the amended Agenda as presented.
- Public Input Mayor Montgomery reviewed the public input procedure.
- Greta Bjerkness introduced herself as an attorney representing the Cannon Valley Fair Association. She urged the City Council to deny the first reading of the proposed ordinance amendment. She stated that the Cannon Valley Fair Association requests an opportunity to work cooperatively with the City on any ordinance that pertains to Cannon Valley Fair Association property. She summarized comments that were made by the President of the Cannon Valley Fair Association during a recent public hearing. She commented that a better ordinance can be drafted, one that will address the needs of all stakeholders.
- Jim Hoffman, 917 Park Street West, Cannon Falls, commented regarding the recent public hearing that was conducted by the Planning Commission. He noted that the Planning Commission recommends no changes to current zoning. He urged the City Council to issue a cease and desist order to shut the racetrack down.
- Alisha Saladino, 515 Hoffman Street East, Cannon Falls, reviewed a petition requesting information about the swans:
- 1) Name and licensing information of the swan breeder.
 - 2) The current diet and feeding schedule of the swans and who is responsible for caring for the swans.

3) The number of swans that the City has purchased over the years.

Consent Agenda

- A. Just and Correct Claims – Accounting Period Ending December 12, 2024
- B. Meeting Minutes for December 3, 2024, City Council Meeting
- C. Resolution 2794, Adopting 2025 Tax Levy and Budget
- D. Approve Data Center Tax Analysis Engagement Letter
- E. Introduction and First Reading of Ordinance 408, an Ordinance Amending Cannon Falls City Code Regarding Zoning Related to Cannabis Businesses
- F. Approve New Therapeutic Massage License for Harmon Givens in 2025
- G. Resolution 2795, Authorizing Budget Transfers for Year-End 2024
- H. Approve the Request to Apply for the Assistance to Firefighters Grant

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

Council Business:
Combined Service
Pension Bylaw
Changes

Fire Chief Miller provided background information and reviewed the proposed combined service pension bylaw changes. He discussed a desire to align the Cannon Falls Fire Service bylaws with those of surrounding fire services. He noted that this benefit would assist with the recruitment of volunteer firefighters. He referenced turnover rates and call volume increases being experienced by fire services nationwide.

A motion was made by Council Member Jeppesen, seconded by Council Member Gesme and unanimously carried, to approve the combined service pension bylaw changes as presented.

AquaEye Handheld
Sonar

Police Chief McCormick reviewed a joint request from the Police Department and the Fire Department to purchase an AquaEye device. He discussed a recent missing person search and detailed how this tool would aid future searches. He discussed potential budget funding toward the purchase.

Council Member Johnson spoke in support of the equipment purchase and asked whether the Police Commission has been asked for a recommendation. Chief McCormick and Chief Miller further

discussed the request, noting how the equipment would be housed, utilized, and shared.

City Clerk Peer described a fund transfer from the reserve fund to cover the cost of the equipment.

The Mayor and Council Members spoke in support of the purchase.

A motion was made by Council Member Groth, seconded by Council Member Lundell, to approve the equipment purchase. Council Member Johnson suggested replenishing the general fund reserve if funds are available at the end of the year in the Police or Fire Department budgets. Following discussion, a vote was conducted and the motion carried unanimously.

Cannon Valley Fair

Permit & License Technician Logelin provided background information and reviewed a proposed ordinance amendment that would rezone the Cannon Valley Fair property to a new Fairgrounds zoning classification. He noted that this would allow the City to establish a set of permitted, accessory, interim, and prohibited uses along with corresponding conditions. He stated that the new zone would be specific to the Fairgrounds property and would give the City authorization to put restrictions on events that occur on the Fairgrounds property, such as racing events. City Attorney Ryan reviewed action by the Planning Commission to recommend denial of the proposed ordinance amendment. Council Member Lundell suggested denying the proposed ordinance amendment, based on the Planning Commission's unanimous recommendation and opposition expressed by the Cannon Valley Fair Board.

Council Member Gesme stated that the information being presented to the City Council is slightly different from information that was presented to the Planning Commission. He requested clarification of the action being requested by the City Council at this time. City Attorney Ryan clarified that the Planning Commission recommended denial of the proposed ordinance amendment. She referenced resolution language that includes findings to support the denial.

A motion was made by Council Member Gesme to adopt Resolution 2796, which includes findings to support the denial of the proposed ordinance amendment. The motion was seconded by Council Member Johnson, a vote was conducted, and the motion to adopt Resolution 2796 carried unanimously.

Reports:
Council Committees,
Commissions, and
Nonprofit
Organizations

Cannon Falls Area Chamber of Commerce Director Maggie Wilson discussed Deck the Falls activities and thanked City staff, volunteers, sponsors, and attendees for making this a successful event. She discussed a Chamber business recognition event on January 8.

Director Wilson encouraged the community to shop local and support local businesses, especially during the winter months.

Community & Business Development Specialist Qualey summarized topics of discussion during the last EDA meeting, including Hardwood Estates lot sales, Hardwood Estates and Timber Ridge model homes, and an EDA member vacancy in 2025. She also recommended supporting local businesses during the holiday season and beyond.

Council Member Groth discussed a recent Library stakeholders meeting.

Council Members Johnson and Gesme summarized topics of discussion during a recent Planning Commission meeting, including proposed ordinances relating to the fairgrounds and cannabis businesses.

Council Member Groth summarized topics of discussion during a recent Joint Powers Trail Board meeting, including slope failures at Mile 14 and Mile 16.

Staff

Public Works Director Petersen discussed snow and ice removal activities and safety precautions. He also discussed ash tree removal.

Permit & License Technician Logelin discussed the license renewal process.

Community & Business Development Specialist Qualey thanked Council Members Gesme, Groth, and Lundell for their input and support along with City Administrator Jensen. She welcomed new City Administrator Radermacher.

Police Chief McCormick discussed winter parking restrictions and reviewed the business licensing process. He thanked outgoing Council Members for their service.

Mayor and Council
Members

Council Members Groth and Lundell expressed appreciation for the opportunity to serve the community and encouraged community members to become involved in local government. Council Member Gesme described some of his experiences as a City Council Member.

Council Members Groth, Lundell, and Gesme were thanked for their service.

Mayor Montgomery welcomed City Administrator Radermacher and discussed a reception for City Administrator Jensen on December 20.

Mayor Montgomery also thanked EDA President Jon Dahl, Planning Commission Member Bruce Hemmah, and Joint Powers Trail Board Citizen Representative Paul Korkowski for their service to the community. He thanked the entire City Council for their hard work.

Mayor Montgomery referenced planned meetings in January and training offered by the League of Minnesota Cities.

Adjournment

A motion was made by Council Member Lundell, seconded by Council Member Gesme and unanimously carried, to adjourn the meeting. The meeting adjourned at 7:19 p.m.

Adopted by the City Council of the City of Cannon Falls on the 7th day of January, 2025.

Matt Montgomery, Mayor

ATTEST:

Jon Radermacher, City Administrator