

**AGENDA
REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING
JANUARY 9, 2023**

1. Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance: 7:00 p.m. Council Chambers

- Mayor Harju called the Cokato City Council to order Monday, January 9th, 2023 at 7:00 p.m. in the council chambers. Members present were Mayor Harju, Council Members Martinson, Sebring, and Wilson. Also present were members of the Public and Staff.

**Accepting resignation of Carl Harju as Councilmember as he was elected Mayor
Swearing in of Mayor and Councilmembers**

- **Motion** by Wilson to accept the resignation of Harju as councilmember, seconded by Martinson; all voted aye.
- Mayor Harju and re-elected councilmembers Sebring and Wilson took an Oath of Office.

2. Approval of Agenda

- **Motion** by Sebring to approve the agenda seconded by Wilson, all voted aye.

3. Public Forum

- None

4. Consent Agenda Items

a. Approval of Minutes from December 12, 2022 City Council Meeting

b. Sheriffs Report

- Deputy Miller reported that he would be moving on to another territory and expressed gratitude for the opportunity to serve in Cokato and thanked the community for being supportive and showing respect for law enforcement officers.
- **Motion** by Wilson to approve the consent agenda, seconded by Martinson; all voted aye.

5. Mayors Report

a. Res No 2023-03 Possible appointment of vacant Council Position (formerly held by Mayor Carl Harju)

- Administrator Potter stated that the City of Cokato would be declaring a vacancy of a councilmember position as former councilmember Harju was appointed Mayor and still had two years left of his term. An application and interview process was suggested to fill the vacancy. The application process will close on January 30th and a special meeting will be held to interview any applicants.
- **Motion** by Martinson to begin the application process to fill the vacant council seat, seconded by Sebring; all voted aye.

b. Res No 2023-01 – Approving Annual Appointments

- Mayor Harju made an adjustment to the annual appointments. Councilmember Martinson was added to the parks commission. Harju will be contacting the school to see if a member of council still needs to be on the Safe Schools Committee as the safety discussed now pertains

to inside the school. The committee had previously been started to create the sidewalks around the school.

- **Motion** by Sebring to approve the Annual Appointments with the corrections, seconded by Wilson; all voted aye.

c. Res No 2023-02 - Pre-Authorization of Claims

- **Motion** by Martinson to approve pre-authorization of claims, seconded by Wilson; all voted aye.

d. Annual Report Cokato Museum

- Museum Director Johanna Ellison stated that 2022 was a busy year at the museum with many different events occurring. The museum had a few different exhibits set up throughout the year including displays set up at the Wright County Fair and the Dassel Cokato High School. A tree was decorated at the Wright County Historical Society's Festival of Trees by the museum volunteers and the tree was decorated with Akerlund photographs and camera ornaments on it. There is a display at the PAC that the Cokato Museum and Dassel Historical Society may be able to set up displays in. Many changes have occurred at the museum throughout the year. Various exhibits were changed, new temporary exhibit displays have been created to show more of the collection as only about 30% of it is on display currently. Off site storage has been rearranged and new shelving has been added in the museum to store more of the collection. The small grant designs for the museum HVAC system were completed. The application for the large grant for the Akerlund Studio HVAC system was denied, application will be filled out again next year. The museum HVAC system will also be needing replacement soon. Improvements were made to the building including repair of the wall and a new garage door was installed. Attendance, Facebook, and YouTube views were up during 2022. A new escape room will start on February 11, 2023. The new big summer exhibit will feature the Cokato Royalty Program.

e. Fire Department Annual Report and Approval of Officers

- Fire Chief Hutch Erickson stated that the officer recommendations for 2023 are for the same officers as 2022. Erickson stated that he would like 2023 to be his last year as chief as 2023 will be his 10th year in the position. There was a record number of calls for service with 130 calls. There are more and more medicals every year. Erickson stated that 2022 was a bad year for motor vehicle accidents and it was a very difficult on the firefighters. The biggest structure fire for the year was the Forsman Farms Fire with 13 different departments coming for mutual aid. Two gentlemen completed firefighter 1 and 2. Currently the roster is full at 30 members. Erickson expressed thanks to the businesses in town that allow firefighters to leave for calls, Cokato Fire Department has a very good daytime response that not all cities have.
- **Motion** by Martinson to approve the 2023 officers, seconded by Wilson; all voted aye.
- **Motion** by Sebring to approve the annual Fire Department report, seconded by Wilson; all voted aye.

f. Ambulance Annual Report and Approval of Officers

- Ambulance Director Jimmy Martinson presented the officer nominations for 2023. Martinson stated that during COVID there was a shortage of EMTs and the EMSRB started allowing people that are not EMTs to become drivers for the ambulance through 2023 currently. Calls were down a bit to 439 during 2022. There has been an uptick in the ambulances mutual aid calls as many services are struggling to find help. Mayor Harju suggested that director Martinson track non transport calls by location. Protocol was changed for fire standby; ambulance personnel are no longer paged for fire alarms. Ambulance will be paged to the

scene if there is a confirmed fire. Martinson stated that the ambulance also had many bad calls throughout 2022. The LifeLink helicopter responded to 4 calls in Cokato during 2022. Martinson said that the ambulance could use additional EMTs, currently there are 21 EMTs and 1 EMR on the roster.

- **Motion** by Martinson to approve the officer nominations, seconded by Wilson; all voted aye.
- **Motion** by Wilson to approve the annual Ambulance Service report, seconded by Martinson; all voted aye.

g. Economic Development Authority

- Mayor Harju stated that he thought an EDA would be a good idea to help the city get grants. Administrator Potter suggested that the EDA would consist of 2 council members and 3 members of the community. Wilson would like to discuss the EDA further during a workshop.

6. Public Works/Parks

a. Res No 2023-04 Approving Plans and Specifications and Ordering Advertisement for Bids for North Cokato Industrial Park and CSAH 3 Turning Lanes

- Engineer Halverson would like to open bids for Industrial Park on February 9th and close on February 13th. The project would consist of two parts, the construction of 24 acres of the park into 6 lots and turn lanes required by Wright County. The substantial completion date would be November 1, 2023 and the final completion would be one year later after settling occurs. Wilson would like to clarify that the Industrial Park portion would be separate as there is a Deed grant to pay for part of it. The detour would be up for 1 week when the turn lanes are installed.
- **Motion** by Wilson to approve the plans and specifications and advertising for bids, seconded by Martinson; all voted aye.

b. Approving a County Stormwater Grant

- The City of Cokato was awarded the MPCA grant for the stormwater analysis. The SWC and county has been working with Houston Engineering about the drainage near the water tower as well. The county is looking at a project to fix the drainage near the water tower and Wright County will pay for this project entirely. An access point needs to be determined. The county has been looking at the drainage pond near sucker creek. The pond has not been cleaned out well and the county would like to make the pond much larger to keep the sedimentation from Sucker Creek. It would potentially be a 5 acre pond that could be 6 feet deep. The city would like to make sure that the pond could be of service for future developments to the North or West. The county has funding pools that go back to the American Recovery Grant. The county decided to put money towards stormwater projects. The county would need a 25% match about \$62,500. The amount could go down as the project is bid. Engineer Halverson stated that all 3 areas have been problematic, and this grant would have a lot of probability to solve problems that have been going on for a long time. Application would need to be submitted by February 7th.
- **Motion** by Martinson to approve application for a stormwater grant, seconded by Wilson; all voted aye.

7. Financial Reports

a. Approval of Claims - \$917,160.12

- **Motion** by Sebring to approve the claims, seconded by Wilson; all voted aye.

b. Cash and Budget Reports

- **Motion** by Sebring to approve the cash and budget reports, seconded by Martinson; all voted aye.

8. Reports & Information

- a. **Reminder – City Hall Closed Monday, January 16, 2023 for Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday**
- b. **Reminder – Fire Commission Meeting Tuesday, January 24, 2023 at 5:30 p.m. – Fire & Ambulance Station**

9. Adjournment

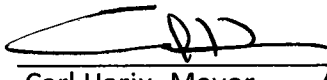
- **Motion** by Wilson to adjourn seconded by Sebring; all voted aye.
- Meeting adjourned at 8:08 pm.

ATTEST:

APPROVED BY:



Megan Gustafson, City Clerk



Carl Harju, Mayor