

MINUTES
REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING
JULY 10, 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, July 10th, 2023 at 7:10 p.m. in the council chambers. Members present were Mayor Harju, Council Members Erickson, Martinson, Sebring, and Wilson. Also present were members of the Public and Staff.

2. Approval of Agenda

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

3. Public Forum

- Reed Carlson informed the council that he had a party interested in buying his lot at 260 Millard Avenue Parcel to build apartments. Reed purchased the property in 2008 and would like to request that council allow up to a 20-unit apartment on the lot. Currently the city code requires two parking spaces per unit. Carlson requests that the council approve the apartments and allow the future tenants to park in other areas. Councilmember Wilson informed Carlson that the city is willing to work together to solve the issue but that parking for apartment buildings must be off street parking. Mayor Harju stated that the city would need the attorney to review the documents and information that Carlson provided. Administrator Potter informed council that he did forward the documents on to the lawyer but that he had not heard back yet. The situation will be investigated further.

4. Consent Agenda Items

a. Approval of Minutes from June 12, 2023 City Council Meeting

b. Sheriff's Report

c. Iron Horse – Liquor License

- **Motion** by Wilson to approve the consent agenda, seconded by Erickson; all voted aye.

5. Mayors Report

a. Brooks Lake Association Presentation

- Manda Goldsberry gave a presentation about what the Brooks Lake Association has been working on. In 2022 a grant was received from the DNR. The work that has been happening at Brooks Lake has been very successful. Ten years ago the lake did not look good because of invasive plants. With treatments the lake has improved greatly.

b. Request of Kieler Construction & Holdings Company LLC to rezone the rear 30 feet and north part of the property from R-3, Single Family Residential to C-2, Highway Commercial of the property at 275 Prairie Ave SE

- Administrator Potter informed council that the planning and zoning commission recommended tabling this until more information was received. Neighboring property owners shared concerns during the planning and zoning meeting about not knowing what the property would specifically be used for. Councilmember Wilson mentioned that the zoning needs to be looked into before moving forward. Shane Hanson a neighboring property owner stated that an agreement was made and the property was sectioned off to protect the neighborhood so that any buildings put up would need to be approved by council first and the neighbors would be notified to have an opportunity to discuss what is done. Hanson is against the rezoning as it would change the neighborhood and the property values.

- **Motion** by Erickson to table rezoning until more information is received, seconded by Wilson; all voted aye.

c. Request of AA Properties of Cokato/AA Holdings LLC for a lot combination and a conditional use permit to construct another industrial building on site. The property has an address of 4525 and 4529 Omer Avenue

- Administrator Potter informed the council that AA Properties would like to add an additional building for their business operation. Concerns were brought forward by neighboring properties about the after-hours noise. The planning and zoning commission recommended the approval of this with two conditions. Detailed

site plans showing driving and parking areas are provided and they must abide by the noise and nuisance ordinance. Craig Otto a neighboring property owner expressed concerns and mentioned that they have had issues since the first building was built. He suggested that council set hours of operation for the business. Councilmember Wilson suggested that no exterior noise be made from 8 pm to 6 am be stated in the conditional use permit and public safety requirements must be followed.

- **Motion** by Martinson to approve the lot combination and conditional use permit with the added conditions, seconded by Wilson; 3 votes yes, Sebring and Erickson opposed.

d. Planning and Zoning - Variance – Jeremy and Gretchen Pearson Variance allowing a second driveway to their property at 590 3rd Street SW PC Items

- Administrator Potter stated that this was discussed at the planning and zoning meeting. Gretchen Pearson asked council what questions they had for the building. Wilson replied that they wanted to know what the building would be used for. Pearson stated that the building will not be used for commercial purposes. Wilson mentioned that the West driveway needs to be brought into compliance and needs to be at least 5 feet from the property line before the curb cut can happen. Wilson reported that the planning and zoning commission recommended approval of the variance for the driveway on the East side but that the curb cut not be allowed until the West driveway meets the setbacks.
- **Motion** by Wilson to approve of the variance for the driveway on the East side but that the curb cut not be allowed until the West driveway meets the setbacks, seconded by Erickson; 4 votes aye, Martinson opposed.

~~**e. Request of Carter Nelson for a conditional use permit and variances for 32 unit apartment building at 260 Millard Avenue SW – WITHDRAWN**~~

f. Ordinance regarding signage along Broadway Avenue Businesses and in the C-1 Zoning District

- Administrator Potter mentioned that himself and Mayor Harju had discussed the idea of allowing the businesses on Broadway to advertise using sandwich board signs that may be placed outside of the business while they are open. Kala Larios from 4-Way Liquors mentioned that the previous sandwich board sign she had got knocked over quite often. Mayor Harju suggested looking into a sign that can have sand or water added for extra weight. Lori Heinz asked the council if they had any rules about what the signs could say and if there was a limit of signs that could be placed outside. Mayor Harju replied that only one sign be displayed per business and councilmember Erickson said that the ordinance states that the signs can show specials or hours of operation.
- **Motion** by Martinson to approve the ordinance, seconded by Sebring; all voted aye.

g. Property/Worker Comprehensive Insurance for 2023-2024

- Shari Forsman of Lake Region Insurance informed the council that the only major change with the insurance was going with the higher deductible plan to save money on the premium.
- **Motion** by Wilson to accept the insurance policy, seconded by Martinson; all voted aye.

h. Public Hearing - Interim Ordinance Authorizing a Study and Imposing a Moratorium on the Operation Cannabis Businesses

- Many cities are moving forward with the interim ordinance. There are still many unknowns and this ordinance would give the City of Cokato additional time to learn more and gather information.
- **Motion** by Sebring to approve the interim ordinance, seconded by Martinson; all voted aye.

i. Wright County Mitigation Plan Approval

- This plan is mainly for natural disasters. Administrator Potter mentioned that with approval of this plan if a natural disaster were to occur the city would be eligible for state and federal funding.
- **Motion** by Erickson to approve the mitigation plan, seconded by Wilson; all voted aye.

6. Public Works Report

a. Public Works Employee Hiring Update

- Administrator Potter recommended that MaKayla Gustafson be moved into the full-time public works position.
- **Motion** by Wilson to approve moving MaKayla Gustafson into the open full-time public works position, seconded by Erickson; all voted aye.

b. Stop Sign Request – Mooers Avenue SE and 6th Street SE

- A resident requested that a stop sign or yield sign be added to the Mooers Ave and 6th Street intersection. According to engineer Halverson the sign is not warranted. If issues arise the council will revisit the topic.

c. Projects - Pay Applications

- Engineer Halverson recommends approval of Ailie Ave Pay application for \$22,887.95.
- **Motion** by Erickson to approve the Ailie Ave pay application, seconded by Wilson; all voted aye.
- Engineer Halverson recommends approval of Industrial Park pay application 2 for \$445,844.90.
- **Motion** by Wilson to approve the Industrial Park pay application, seconded by Erickson; all voted aye.

d. Fill Material stored at WWTP

- There are about 4,000 yards of fill material at the Wastewater Treatment Plant. APT is looking at possibly building and they need some fill. Administrator Potter requested council approval to allow APT to use the fill at no cost. Public Works Director DeGrote informed the council that currently the city has no use for the fill. Council approved allowing APT to take the fill if needed.

7. City Administrator Report

a. 2024 Budget Planning Timeline

- Budget planning has been started. There will be a one time public safety aid increase, LGA went up about \$125,000 and small cities assistance. The preliminary levy needs to be submitted by September 11th. Administrator Potter stated that he will start preparing budget numbers.

b. Industrial Park Update

- Engineer Halverson talked about a possible road improvement grant opportunity for the turn lanes and informed council that the application is due in August. The award would come out in the spring. Halverson recommends applying for the road improvement grant. Council would like to try and get approval from the county to delay the project to apply for the grant. Administrator will continue to talk with the county and see what he can figure out.
- Potter mentioned that some people are interested in lots at the Industrial Park.

8. Financial Reports

a. Approval of Claims - \$385,692.13

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

b. Cash and Budget Report

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

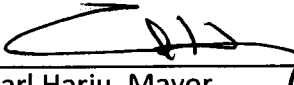
9. Adjournment

- **Motion** by Martinson to adjourn, seconded by Wilson; all voted aye.
- Meeting adjourned at 9:09 pm.

ATTEST:


Megan Gustafson, City Clerk

APPROVED BY:


Carl Harju, Mayor