

MINUTES

COTTAGE GROVE CITY COUNCIL

November 1, 2023

**COUNCIL CHAMBER
12800 RAVINE PARKWAY SOUTH**

REGULAR MEETING - 7:00 P.M COUNCIL CHAMBER

1. CALL TO ORDER

The City Council of the City of Cottage Grove, Washington County, Minnesota, held a regular meeting on November 1, 2023, at Cottage Grove City Hall, 12800 Ravine Parkway. Mayor for the Day Mia Nemshick called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The audience, staff, and City Council Members stood and recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. ROLL CALL

City Clerk Tammy Anderson called the roll: Mayor for the Day Mia Nemshick - Here; Mayor Bailey - Here; Council Member Khambata - Here; Council Member Olsen - Here; Council Member Thiede - Here.

Also present: Jennifer Levitt, City Administrator; Kori Land, City Attorney-LeVander, Gillen & Miller, PA; Tammy Anderson, City Clerk; Ryan Burfeind, Public Works Director; Gretchen Larson, Economic Development Director; Zac Dockter, Parks and Rec Director; Pete Koerner, Public Safety Director; Brenda Malinowski, Finance Director; Amanda Meyer, City Engineer; Emily Schmitz, Community Development Director.

4. OPEN FORUM

Mayor Bailey opened the Open Forum. As no one wished to address the Council, Mayor for the Day Nemshick closed the Open Forum.

5. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Council Member Olsen made a motion to approve the agenda; second by Council Member Thiede. Motion carried: 4-0.

6. PRESENTATIONS

A. Mayor for the Day

Staff Recommendation: Appoint Mia Nemshick as acting Mayor for the Day on November 1, 2023.

Mayor Bailey stated this is an exciting presentation, as Mia was one of over 70 students who had written an essay about why they'd like to be Mayor for the Day in Cottage Grove. Mayor Bailey and the staff chose Mia, as she had shared great information about what she would like to see in the future of Cottage Grove. Our Council and staff heard Mia earlier today, in a press conference, where she presented her goals and objectives for being Mayor of Cottage Grove. Mayor Bailey asked her to read that for the public, which she did, after which everyone applauded.

Mayor Bailey stated our future is very bright with our youth, like Mia, with her goals and objectives and the passion that she has for making good things happen. He noted that Mia had a busy afternoon: She rode in a snowplow truck, went to the Ice Arena and had food from the concession stand (her favorite was the cheese curds), rode on the Zamboni, and visited the Central Fire Station. Mia shared with him that she loves the parks and she is also a Starbucks fan.

Mayor Bailey asked the Council to join him and Mia in front of the Council dais. He thanked Mia's parents and her brother, Patrick, for supporting her in this endeavor; he's very happy that they're all here tonight. Mayor Bailey first met Mia at the Halloween Parade and she told him, "I'm the Mayor for the Day, I'm the one you picked!" He thought that was pretty cool.

Mayor Bailey presented Mia with a Certificate of Appreciation, which he read aloud, for her being Mayor for the Day on November 1. He congratulated her and her parents, and everyone applauded. Mayor Bailey told her that her official duties of the day were now finished, and Mia was given her official nameplate from the Council dais to take home with her. Mayor Bailey asked Mia if she'd like to say something; she stated, "Thank you, everyone, for believing in me." Everyone applauded, after which photographs were taken of Mia, her family, and the entire City Council.

B. Cottage Grove Holiday Events

Staff Recommendation: Receive the presentation outlining the upcoming holiday events within the community.

Mayor Bailey introduced Molly Pietruszewski, Recreation Services Manager, who will speak about the upcoming holiday events in Cottage Grove.

Molly stated there are lots of things going on in Cottage Grove in the next couple of months, which she detailed:

- **Pumpkin Chuck, November 2**, at Peter Thompson Park, 3:30-5:30 p.m.: Bring your pumpkins to be rolled, chucked, or whatever you'd like down the hill, after which they'll be composted with Washington County; if you can't make it, you can bring your pumpkins to Public Works, where they'll be composted.
- **Silent Auction, November 17 to November 30**, Holiday Train Committee holds this, bid on items on the Friends in Need Food Shelf website.

- **Hale to the Bird 5K Race, November 23**, at Hamlet Park, 9:00 a.m., the 13th Anniversary of raising money for the Friends in Need Food Shelf.
- **Holiday Lights Home Tour, November**: If you're planning a big display, register your home address as a stop on our tour; a link on the City's website will be available on November 6. A City website map will be created on November 22, updated weekly until mid-December, with addresses to guide you on the route, which will start here at City Hall.
- **Hometown Holiday Event, November 29**, 5:00-7:00 p.m., at City Hall. Activities: Santa & Mrs. Claus, wagon rides from Washington County and HERO Center parking lots, live reindeer, games and activities, food trucks, Park High School choir, and more!
- **Fill at Fire Truck, December 2**, 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m., Woodridge Park. Santa & Mrs. Claus will accept paper items and cash donations; no food items, please. Pick up your Silent Auction Winning Bid items here, too.
- **River Oaks Santa Breakfast, December 10**, 9:15 a.m.-12:15 p.m. Get your photos taken with Santa, sleigh rides around the course, Great North Pole breakfast menu. Reservations by phone are required.
- **Canadian Pacific-Kansas City (CPKC) Holiday Train, December 10**, 5:00 p.m. Returning for its 20th year! Arrive as early as 3:00 p.m. to enjoy the festivities. Wagon rides available from the Park & Ride; the train will stop at approximately the Youth Service Bureau, we're expecting larger crowds.
- **Park and Rec-Get Out and Play!** Winterlong amenities include: Parks, Trails, Warming Houses, Skating Rinks, Sledding Hills, Cross Country Skiing, and Snowshoes

Molly stated there's a lot going on, so get out there and enjoy these activities. Mayor Bailey stated the Spooktacular at the Ice Arena had a huge turnout; Molly noted both sessions, 100 participants each, sold out, so it was a busy night. Mayor Bailey thanked the Parks and Recreation staff for putting all those events together for our community. He mentioned there's also the upcoming Friendsgiving at River Oaks, and thought it really neat that we're doing all of this.

7. CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Approve the October 4, 2023, City Council Regular Meeting Minutes.
- B. Approve the October 18, 2023, City Council Special Meeting Minutes.
- C. Approve the October 18, 2023, City Council Regular Meeting Minutes.
- D. Accept and place on file the minutes of the Advisory Committee on Historic Preservation from March 14, 2023, April 11, 2023, and August 8, 2023.
- E. Accept and place on file the minutes of the July 24, 2023 Planning Commission meeting.
- F. Approve the issuance of rental licenses to the properties in the attached table.
- G. Adopt Resolution 2023-137, accepting donations received in the 3rd Quarter 2023.

- H. Authorize Public Works to advertise and sell surplus property on Municibid.
- I. Approve the lease agreement for the F-150 with MN Department of Administration Fleet Services for 5 years, 85,000 miles at an estimated rate of \$10,216.44 per year.
- J. Approve Glacial Valley Park Change Order #1 in the amount of \$42,434.61.
- K. Accept and approve the Marathon Community Investment Grant in the amount of \$5,000.00.
- L. Adopt Resolution 2023-138 approving the boundary adjustment between 7560 Harkness Avenue South and 7675 Hardwood Avenue South.
- M. Receive the Washington County Draft 2024-2028 Capital Improvements Plan response letter.

Council Member Olsen wished to pull Item G, Accept Donations for 3rd Quarter 2023, and Council Member Thiede pulled Item K, Marathon Community Investment Grant Acceptance, for further comment and/or discussion.

Council Member Olsen thanked the various donors for their contributions to the City for the 3rd Quarter; it's very humbling and impressive how the community supports so many things with not only their time and their energy, but also with their hard-earned dollars. He thanked the following donors:

- Paul & Allie Schumacher, \$500 donation to our EMS Department
- Cottage Grove Hockey Association, \$22,500, for the second half of the Glacial Valley Rink boards
- Teddy's Heart Foundation, \$5,912, for the AED at Glacial Valley Park
- Pheasants Forever, Cottage Grove Chapter, \$2,000, for the Archery Range

Council Member Olsen stated if anyone is interested in making a donation, reach out to any Council Member or reach out to our City staff at 651-458-2800, ask for Tammy, our City Clerk, and she will help you. He thanked everyone for making our community even better through their donations.

Council Member Thiede stated he wanted to recognize the Marathon Community Investment Grant that we're accepting tonight. He read aloud Director Koerner's memo: *Marathon is a very big community supporter, and this grant supports their charitable mission of being committed to making our communities stronger, safer, and thriving places to live, work, and place. They provide funding for programs that promote the resiliency of our shared communities, including helping to address basic needs, supporting youth development programs, and creating opportunities for economic vitality. This also includes safety projects and efforts that help communities better prepare for, mitigate the risks of, and respond to disasters, hazards, and emergencies. Council has approved Public Safety to apply for grants through the St. Paul Park Refinery. Cottage Grove is a rapidly-growing community with areas of residential and commercial construction. Park High School is a designated site for a Reception Center in the event of a radiological emergency at Prairie Island Nuclear Plant. We often have*

full parking lots at shopping centers, at parks for sporting tournaments, and at special event venues such as Strawberry Fest and our Hometown Holiday Celebration. Large crowds often bring increased risks. In the 2019 State of Minnesota Threat and Hazard Identification Risk Assessment Process, equipment for on-scene security and protection were identified to have gaps. Our application for monies for portable surveillance and monitoring equipment was intended to decrease this gap and align with the physical protective measures' core capability for soft targets and crowded places by enhancing the security and protection of locations such as parks, restaurants, shopping centers, special event venues, and similar facilities. Staff worked with Marathon Petroleum and determined the need for these tools would fit the guidelines of their Community Investment Grants. Staff were notified our application for funding was approved in the amount of \$5,000.

Council Member Thiede stated he thinks we'll most likely accept this tonight, and he thanked Marathon very much for their participation.

Mayor Bailey thanked Marathon, as well as all of the previous donors noted by Council Member Olsen.

Motion by Council Member Khambata to approve the Consent Agenda; second by Council Member Thiede. Motion carried: 4-0.

8. APPROVE DISBURSEMENTS

- A. Approve payments for the period of 10-13-2023 through 11-02-2023 in the amount of \$3,336,943.87.

Motion by Council Member Olsen to approve disbursements; second by Council Member Khambata. Motion carried: 4-0.

9. PUBLIC HEARINGS - None.

10. BID AWARDS - None.

11. REGULAR AGENDA - None.

12. COUNCIL COMMENTS AND REQUESTS

Council Member Khambata stated as his kids get older, he could relate more to the Mayor for the Day; he thought it was very cool for Mia and her family to be able to do that. Mayor Bailey agreed that is a fun thing to do.

Council Member Thiede stated we had the Monster Bash parade last weekend and actually, for a cold day, we had a great turnout. He thanked everybody involved who make things like that happen in this City.

Council Member Olsen stated he thinks it's pretty clear that Santa Claus has a soft spot for Cottage Grove because he visits us a lot, especially during the latter part of November and into December. Molly spoke earlier about Santa Claus & Mrs. Claus, who will be at Woodridge Park on December 2 to take paper donations and cash donations for our Friends in Need Food Shelf. They'll also be at River Oaks on December 10, and also at our Hometown Holiday Celebration here at City Hall. Council Member Olsen stated there's also a Cottage Grove Lions Santa Breakfast, which will take place at the VFW on December 3, from 8:00 a.m. to noon. Santa and Sparkles the Elf will absolutely be there for any young people, of any age, to sit on his lap and talk about what they want for Christmas. We'll also have some fantastic food for you, including biscuits, gravy, mini doughnuts, eggs, bacon, sausage, etc. Adult price is \$12, Kid price is \$5. It's a really fun, busy day, but it's something that our local Cottage Grove Lions Club just loves to do. So, if you can't make it to River Oaks on December 10, don't be shy, come and see Santa on December 3 at the VFW.

Council Member Olsen said as Molly spoke about the Holiday Train, it took him back to last year. We had an amazing turnout last year, as we do every year, despite the temperatures. People make it a priority to get out there because it is such a fun event. Last year's parking got a little weird, though, so he asked staff if there's been any conversation with local businesses where people chose to park last year, to give them a heads up on the date and time, as it's very likely that people will seek out parking. He and Mayor Bailey both belong to All Saints Church, and he knows that church community has offered their parking lot for years. There are a number of businesses close by, and he thought some of them got a little frustrated with the situation last year. He asked if anybody knew if we had had any dialogue with those businesses.

Public Safety Director Pete Koerner stated there has been communication with the businesses there, but it is our plan to meet with them beforehand. We talked about also having some possible signage to remind people that it's business parking only. We're also working with the Armory, All Saints, etc. We're having meetings every two weeks now for the Holiday Train.

Council Member Olsen stated he thinks it's something we should anticipate because people will find a spot to park, and they're not going to be very choosy if they can't find the perfect spot. He thanked Director Koerner for answering that question; he's glad to hear that we already have a plan to reach out and make those businesses partners, as opposed to having them be frustrated by a surprise on that evening.

Mayor Bailey stated that River Oaks actually has quite a few events coming up. One of them is Friendsgiving, which is a family-style meal with tables of eight; it will be held on Friday, November 10. Happy hour starts at 5:00 p.m., dinner starts at 6:00 p.m. Our chef there is absolutely amazing. If you're interested, he encouraged people to contact River Oaks directly; individuals can come, you don't have to have a party of eight. He noted the number of people attending with his group now takes up over two tables.

Mayor Bailey stated he has not been to this, but Director Koerner had mentioned they're also having Dueling Pianos on November 4, December 8, and December 30, and it

continues into January. He hears that sells out quickly; Director Koerner and his wife have been there and think it's absolutely amazing. He encouraged everyone to check out the River Oaks website and/or social media to learn more and sign up if you're interested.

Mayor Bailey stated next Wednesday, November 8, from 7:00 to 8:00 p.m., is the Fentanyl Awareness Community Conversation, which will be held at the HERO Center. There will be a group talking about the effects of fentanyl in our community, both youth and adults. If you're interested, want to be part of that conversation to learn more about this particular issue and its effect on our communities, please feel free to attend.

Mayor Bailey noted the Park High School boys' soccer team made it to the State semifinals today. He wasn't able to attend, but he had parents keeping him updated; unfortunately, they got beat in overtime, in a shootout, by Maple Grove. He thanked them for representing our community; our Public Safety team gave them a nice send off. We're very proud of our team and their accomplishments this year. So, there are many other winter sports activities still ongoing, so get involved and check out some of our great high school sporting events here.

13. WORKSHOPS - OPEN TO PUBLIC - ST. CROIX ROOM

A. Fire Chief Candidate Interviews

Staff Recommendation: Conduct the Fire Chief Candidate Interviews. This agenda item will be conducted in the St. Croix Room.

Mayor Bailey stated Council will do interviews of the final two Fire Chief Candidates in the St. Croix Room; our goal is making a final decision tonight. We therefore will be adjourning this meeting from the St. Croix Room.

Two candidates were interviewed for the position of Fire Chief, Jon Pritchard (Cottage Grove Fire/EMS Deputy Chief) and Corey Larson (Cloquet Area Fire District Assistant Chief). After the interviews the decision to appoint Jon Pritchard as Fire Chief was made.

14. WORKSHOPS - CLOSED TO PUBLIC - None.

15. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Council Member Olsen, second by Council Member Thiede, to adjourn the meeting at 10:25 p.m. Motion carried: 4-0.

Minutes prepared by Judy Graf and reviewed by Tamara Anderson, City Clerk.