

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 10, 2025 COLD SPRING CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Dave Heinen at 5:00 p.m. The following City Council members were found to be present: Mayor Dave Heinen and Council Members Mike Fall, Ryan Hennen, Fran Ramler and Doug Schmitz. Absent: None. Others present: Kris Dockendorf, Sam Butler, Jason Blum, Jon Stueve, Peter Negel, Gary Traut, Marshall Wirtzfeld, Dave Terres, Brent Neisinger, Dan Weber, Kari Franklin, Paul Steil and Joe Jelovnick.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

MOTION WAS MADE BY HENNEN, SECONDED BY SCHMITZ, TO APPROVE THE AGENDA OF THE DECEMBER 10, 2025 CITY COUNCIL MEETING AS PRESENTED. MOTION PASSED 5-0.

CONSENT AGENDA

A. Minutes – November 26, 2025 Regular Meeting

MOTION WAS MADE BY HENNEN, SECONDED BY RAMLER, TO APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA AS PRESENTED. MOTION PASSED 5-0.

RESOLUTION NO. 2025-18, A RESOLUTION APPROVING RIVER LINKS 7 PRELIMINARY AND FINAL PLAT

Kari Franklin and Paul Steil explained the changes to the plat since the last meeting. They reported that they discussed Outlot F with Stearns County who agreed to turn it back to the developer, but that the City would need to approve that too. Several members of the Council still had reservations of giving back dedicated right of way and the impact that may have to future the traffic flow for the development. Councilor Hennen stated his concern for limiting the north/south thoroughfare, as a connection to 14th Avenue would be beneficial and strengthen support for a traffic signal at Highway 23 through MnDOT. Councilor Fall was in favor of turning Outlot F back to the developer so that it would be taxable property, and he thought it would be unrealistic for it to be a future road. Mayor Heinen and Councilor Hennen stated once right of way is given up it is impossible to get back. Councilor Schmitz stated he was leaning towards giving it back since he also felt it was unrealistic for it to be a roadway. Councilor Hennen stated there would be little to gain for taxes on the property and didn't want to deny an opportunity for the future, therefore he favored the easement option. Steil stated their preference for simply having Outlot F turned back to them, then stated their desire to have all outstanding issues resolved before approving the plat.

MOTION WAS MADE BY HENNEN, SECONDED BY FALL, TO DIRECT DJP TO REQUEST AN EASEMENT FROM STEARNS COUNTY THROUGH OUTLOT F ON THE PROPOSED RIVER LINKS 7 FINAL PLAT DRAWING. MOTION PASSED 5-0.

DISCUSS GAMBLING PREMISES PERMIT

Marshall Wirtzfeld from Cold Spring Lanes presented a request to have charitable gambling at their business including pull tabs and e-tabs. Dockendorf stated the process would be to advertise for the premise permit to allow all interested parties to apply and then the Council would need to select an organization to the site.

MOTION WAS MADE BY SCHMITZ, SECONDED BY HENNEN, TO APPROVE ADVERTISING FOR CHARITABLE GAMBLING ORGANIZATIONS TO OPERATE CHARITABLE GAMBLING AT COLD SPRING BOWLING LANES. MOTION PASSED 5-0.

APPROVE DESIGN DEVELOPMENT FOR AN ATTACHED POLICE GARAGE

Peter Negel from HMA Architects and Gary Traut from Donlar Construction were present to answer questions. Negel stated that by making a decision on an attached garage would allow that option to move into the design development phase, it does not lock in having it constructed. Rather it would allow the architects to complete a drawing for it and plans so that it still could be bid as an alternate. He also stated that adding a garage at a later time is not completely off the table if the Council decides against it tonight.

Councilors Fall and Schmitz stated they were not in favor of adding a garage. Councilor Hennen and Mayor Heinen stated they were interested in having a two-stall attached garage as an option. Councilor Ramler stated he was in favor of the six-stall attached garage, as it's going to be needed eventually. MOTION WAS MADE BY FALL, SECONDED BY SCHMITZ, TO MOVE AHEAD WITH NO ATTACHED GARAGE. ROLL CALL VOTE, AYES - HEINEN, HENNEN, FALL AND SCHMITZ, NAYES – RAMLER. MOTION PASSED 4-1.

ACCEPT RESIGNATION OF MIKE DOCKENDORF, EMERGENCY SERVICES DIRECTOR

Dockendorf stated that after 21 years Mike Dockendorf was retiring from his position and further clarified that he was retiring from the department entirely, not just as director.

MOTION WAS MADE BY SCHMITZ, SECONDED BY HENNEN, TO ACCEPT THE RESIGNATION OF MIKE DOCKENDORF, EFFECTIVE DECEMBER 31, 2025 AND TO THANK HIM FOR HIS 21 YEARS OF SERVICE AS EMERGENCY SERVICES DIRECTOR.

APPOINTMENT OF DAN WEBER AS EMERGENCY SERVICES DIRECTOR

Dockendorf stated Dan Weber has also been part of the Civil Defense department for the last 21 years and currently serves as the Assistant Director. He is willing to take over as the Director. The Council discussed whether this personnel change will still allow for enough weather spotters on the Emergency Management Services Department and who will be appointed as the Assistant Director. Weber explained that there is overlapping of personnel for both Emergency Services and Fire & Rescue Departments. The Council discussed the need for additional personnel for Emergency Services so that the Fire and Rescue Department does not get spread too thin if there were a major weather event that would necessitate personnel from each department to respond.

MOTION WAS MADE BY SCHMITZ, SECONDED BY HENNEN, TO APPOINT DAN WEBER AS EMERGENCY SERVICES DIRECTOR, EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1, 2026 AND TO ADVERTISE FOR TWO EMERGENCY SERVICES PERSONNEL. MOTION PASSED 5-0.

ORDINANCE NO. 430, AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE FEE SCHEDULE

Dockendorf stated that these fees were discussed at a prior meeting and are now presented for formal approval.

MOTION WAS MADE BY HENNEN, SECONDED BY RAMLER, TO APPROVE ORDINANCE NO. 430, AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE CITY CODE OF COLD SPRING BY ADJUSTING THE VARIOUS RATES AND FEES. MOTION PASSED 5-0.

DISCUSS CHANGES TO WATER AND SEWER RATES

Dockendorf stated that as requested staff had done a survey of other cities of their commercial water rates. She stated that none of them have a higher commercial rate than their residential rates. Councilor Fall stated he still felt that commercial users should pay a higher water rate than residential users since they make a profit off of the water they are using. The Council discussed the rates and proposed and upcoming projects that the increased rates would go towards. Councilor Schmitz commented that the rate increases are only needed to replenish the water and sewer funds from money that was stolen out of those funds to pay for other projects that weren't budgeted for from those funds. Several members of the Council agreed that small increases to rates are what they have agreed on for years past to reduce the impact on residents. Overall, the Council agreed for staff to move forward with staff publishing the proposed increases to rates.

TRUTH IN TAXATION MEETING FOR 2026 BUDGET AND LEVY

Dockendorf stated that there has been no changes since the adoption of the Preliminary Levy, which is a 3.32% increase to the levy rate. Mayor Heinen allowed public comments. Brent Neisinger stated he was concerned about the debt service payments for the Fire Hall and the future impact to taxes. He also expressed concern about the additional upkeep and maintenance for the new buildings in the coming

years. Dave Terres stated his concern about the new Fire Hall and the remodeling project of the existing City Hall. He also stated that his road hasn't been plowed since he has been vocal at the City Council meetings and he would be hiring it out and passing the cost onto the City. Stueve stated he would check into the matter immediately and that it would be plowed the following morning. Terres also commented about the meeting time and how he felt it should be later so that more people could attend after work. MOTION WAS MADE BY HENNEN, SECONDED BY RAMLER, TO APPROVE RESOLUTION NO. 2025-21, A RESOLUTION ADOPTING THE FINAL 2026 COLLECTIBLE TAX LEVY, ALONG WITH THE GENERAL FUND, WATER, SEWER, EDA, STORM WATER, AND PRE-TREATMENT FACILITY BUDGETS FOR 2026. MOTION PASSED 5-0.

APPROVAL OF NON-UNION CONTRACT

Councilor Hennen gave a brief update on the committee negotiations with the non-union employee group. He stated that the contract proposal matches the cost of living adjustments at the same percentage as the union group, just without the market rate wage adjustments. The contract also provides Juneteenth as an added paid holiday. He added that the committee did feel that discussions should be had early in 2026 to separate the overtime exempt employees to their own contracts. Councilor Fall stated he was against adding another paid holiday.

MOTION WAS MADE BY HENNEN, SECONDED BY SCHMITZ, TO APPROVE THE LABOR AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE CITY OF COLD SPRING AND COLD SPRING MUNICIPAL EMPLOYEES FOR THE PERIOD OF JANUARY 1, 2026 THROUGH DECEMBER 31, 2028, AND TO REVIEW THE OPTION OF SEPARATE CONTRACTS FOR SALARIED EMPLOYEES. ROLL CALL VOTE, AYES – HEINEN, HENNEN, RAMLER, SCHMITZ, NAYES – FALL. MOTION PASSED 4-1.

FIRE DEPARTMENT REPORT

Chief Dan Weber explained they ended their 2025 year at the end of November with 622 calls for service. He stated that number was down from 2024. He requested that residents shovel snow from around the fire hydrant close to their homes.

PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR REPORT

A. Replacement of VFD at Well #7

Stueve explained that this is a very low frequency drive that has gone bad at Well #7.

MOTION WAS MADE BY RAMLER, SECONDED BY HENNEN, TO APPROVE THE REPLACEMENT OF THE VFD AT WELL #7 FROM DESIGN ELECTRIC AT A COST OF \$7,879.00; TO BE PAID FROM WATER EQUIPMENT REPAIRS, LINE ITEM #6313. MOTION PASSED 5-0.

B. Purchase of Salt

Stueve stated the salt supply has been depleted due to multiple major snow events in the last few weeks.

MOTION WAS MADE BY RAMLER, SECONDED BY SCHMITZ, TO APPROVE THE PURCHASE OF 50 TONS OF SALT FROM CARGILL AT A STATE CONTRACT PRICE OF \$107.88/TON, FOR A TOTAL PURCHASE PRICE OF \$5,394.00; TO BE PAID FROM STREETS SALT SAND, LINE ITEM #6315. MOTION PASSED 5-0.

C. Updates

Councilor Fall stated he was still concerned about the sidewalks along Highway 23 from Teals to Granite Bank. Stueve stated that MnDOT does not clear sidewalks and that the businesses snow removal contractors usually have skid steer equipment which would be able to clear the sidewalks.

CITY ENGINEER REPORT

A. Project Updates

Butler stated that he continues to progress through the preliminary design memos with staff and that the

30% design report should be ready in March.

POLICE DEPARTMENT REPORT

A. Updates

Chief Blum provided the monthly calls for service report for November. He stated that a swinging gate hit one of the squad cars. He reminded the public about the snow parking and sidewalk shoveling ordinances.

CITY ADMINSTRATOR REPORT

A. Choose Date for November 11, 2026 City Council Meeting

Dockendorf stated that the November 11th meeting would need to be rescheduled since that falls on Veterans Day. The Council agreed that it should be moved to November 10, 2026.

LIST OF BILLS AND ADDITIONS

Councilor Schmitz stated he was concerned about the \$328,701.55 supplemental list of bills only being presented at the Council meeting desk, not emailed in advance. He went on to question the purpose of the supplemental list. Dockendorf explained that there has always been a supplemental list, which mainly consists of bills that come in between the date of the packet distribution and the actual meeting, and bills for which there are outstanding questions. The purpose of the supplemental list is to pay as many of the bills that are received and ready at that time of the meeting. Councilor Schmitz stated that only the bills that are included in the packet should be approved at the meeting and all other bills would have to wait until the next meeting.

MOTION WAS MADE BY RAMLER, SECONDED BY SCHMITZ, TO REVIEW AND ACCEPT PAYMENT OF THE ACCOUNTS PAYABLE ACCORDING TO THE LIST TOTALING \$409,558.77 AND SUPPLEMENTAL LIST TOTALING \$328,701.55 AS PRESENTED BY CITY STAFF.

MOTION PASSED 5-0.

MOTION WAS MADE BY SCHMITZ, SECONDED BY FALL, THAT ALL THE BILLS APPROVED AT THE COUNCIL MEETING ARE IN THE CITY COUNCIL MEETING PACKET ON FRIDAYS, OTHERWISE THEY CARRY OVER TO THE FOLLOWING MEETING. MOTION PASSED 5-0.

GENERAL COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS

Councilor Schmitz stated he wanted to respond to a comment made by one of his colleagues at the last meeting, that Schmitz knew it was an important meeting and that he should have attended. He stated to make a comment that when it gets tough that he skips a vote is laughable and that he makes a lot of controversial votes. He stated he had a family obligation that came up and that he notified staff ahead of time and that is why he was absent. He stated that he was disappointed in the comment and urged the Council to do better. Councilor Fall stated that he plans his life around the Council meetings and that it's his first priority. Councilor Ramler stated that his wife has been battle cancer and he makes sure that he's in attendance at meetings. Councilor Hennen stated that City Council is a priority to him but that family is also important and that he respects everyone's choices. Mayor Heinen stated that family will always be his first priority, and that he agreed with Councilor Schmitz.

CLOSED SESSION

At 6:56 p.m. Mayor Heinen stated that pursuant to Minnesota State Statute 13D.05 Subd. 3(a) the meeting would be closed for a performance review of the City Administrator.

OPEN MEETING

MOTION WAS MADE BY HENNEN, SECONDED BY FALL, TO OPEN THE MEETING AT 7:45 P.M. MOTION PASSED 5-0.

Mayor Heinen stated that they are giving the City Administrator a satisfactory performance review. MOTION WAS MADE BY FALL, SECONDED BY SCHMITZ, TO APPROVE THE CONTRACT FOR THE CITY ADMINISTRATOR FOR THE PERIOD OF OCTOBER 5, 2025 THROUGH OCTOBER 5, 2026. MOTION PASSED 5-0.

ADJOURN

MOTION WAS MADE BY SCHMITZ, SECONDED BY HENNEN, TO ADJOURN AT 7:47 P.M., SEEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS TO COME BEFORE THE CITY COUNCIL. MOTION PASSED 5-0.

Dave Heinen, Mayor

Kris Dockendorf, City Administrator