

COTTER CITY
COTTER COUNCIL REGULAR MINUTES
July 23, 2026
6:00 p.m.
COUNCIL CHAMBERS

The Regular meeting of the Cotter City Council was called to order at 6:00 p.m. and roll call was taken by Recorder/Treasurer Andrea Kray. Present were Council Members Nicole Hatchet, Joe Bass, Carolyn Gill, Mertice Kray, Ang Pereira and Linda McCarthy.

The invocation was given by Councilwoman Mertice Kray followed by the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance by all present.

REPORTS

In the first order of New Business, Councilwoman Mertice Kray moved to accept the minutes of a regular meeting of the City of Cotter, Arkansas, City Council held on May 28, 2026, with noted corrections with a second provided by Councilwoman Nicole Hatchet. **Motion passed unanimously.**

May and June's 2026 Financials were emailed, and Council had no comments/questions during the meeting. Mayor Caradine requested a vote to accept. Councilwoman Mertice Kray moved to accept with a second provided by Councilwoman Linda McCarthy. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Public Works Department Report was given by Public Works Director Justin Morrow

Fire Department Report was given by Chief Lyle Jack

Police Department Report was given by Sergeant Michael Patterson

Building Permit Report was given by Andrea Kray

Planning & Zoning Commission Report -none at this time

Cotter/Gassville Sewer Commission was given by Carolyn Gill

Tree Advisory Board Report -none at this time

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None at this time.

NEW BUSINESS

In the first order of New Business, Fire Chief Lyle Jack and Assistant Fire Chief Sharon Kaster presented a \$15,000 check, award by Arkansas Rural Community Grant received from Governor Sarah Huckabee Sanders on July 13, 2026, in Little Rock, to purchase Fire Department Equipment.

In the second order of New Business, Mark Kapshandy, Chairman NAYC Board and Board President Jenny Burns presented \$487,620 check awarded by ACEDP (Arkansas Community Economic Development Program) received from Governor Sarah Huckabee Sanders on July 13, 2026, in Little Rock, to renovate the North Arkansas Youth Center. Mayor Caradine stated that the priorities were removal of the remaining guano and gym floor as well as painting and sprucing up the outside stucco and windows.

In the third order of New Business, Council considered Resolution 2026-11 – A Resolution to open a checking account to receive grant funds from ACEDP Grant Program for the NAYC Renovations. Prior to voting Councilwoman Linda McCarthy questioned the difference in the awarded amount on the check and the amount the city is receiving. The difference is the grant's processing fee. Councilwoman Mertice Kray moved to pass Resolution 2026-11 – A Resolution to open a checking account to receive grant funds from ACEDP Grant Program for the NAYC Renovations with a second provided by Councilman Joe Bass. **Motion passed unanimously.**

In the fourth order of New Business, Council considered Resolution 2026-12 – A Budget Resolution to Receipt \$15,000 grant from Ark Rural Community Development for CVFD Equipment and Generator. Councilwoman Ang Pereira moved to pass Resolution 2026-12 – A Budget Resolution to Receipt \$15,000 grant from Ark Rural

Community Development for CVFD Equipment and Generator with a second provided by Councilwoman Linda McCarthy. **Motion passed unanimously.**

In the fifth order of New Business, Council considered approval Cotter Trout Trail Agreement between the Cotter Area Chamber of Commerce and City of Cotter. Councilwoman Carolyn Gill asked why Justin Morrow is only listed for approval of installation of the statues. Mayor Caradine explained that Justin Morrow is the most knowledgeable of water systems and codes and Justin agreed that he'd be in communication with Mayor Caradine throughout the entire installation process. She also questions how many trout will be placed and then Councilman Joe Bass says there needs to be a set number for safety. He expresses concerns of people not liking the look and shape of the statues.

At this point in the discussion, Mayor Caradine asks Councilwoman Ang Pereira to share the current number and she declines. He goes on to admit that he is aware of at least 4 and possibly more explaining Duana Hada's plan for a "grand slam" painting four for the 4 different types of trout in the White River.

Councilwoman Carolyn Gill asks if this is supposed to be a money maker and where does the profit go? Councilwoman Ang Pereira explains that there isn't much profit from each statue and that the small revenue will be paying the city for materials and time incurred by the Public Works Department for installation.

Councilwoman Mertice Kray asks Councilwoman Ang Pereira if the Chamber is going to be transparent in all aspects of the project, and Councilwoman Ang Pereira affirms that the Chamber will be.

Councilwoman Nicole Hatchet asks how this project profits the city and Mayor Caradine states that the Chamber is an asset to the city and the project goal is to promote more visitors to the area and possibly give people more to do in our city while visiting. Councilman Joe Bass asks if we are charging the Chamber to add these statues to our park? Mayor Caradine responds that we don't charge people to have a bench when memorial benches are placed. Councilman Joe Bass responds with that he now understands. He doesn't appreciate the way it was explained, but he understands.

Mayor Caradine then asks Council for a motion to approve Cotter Trout Trail Agreement between the Cotter Area Chamber of Commerce and City of Cotter. Councilwoman Linda McCarthy moves to approve Cotter Trout Trail Agreement between the Cotter Area Chamber of Commerce and City of Cotter with a second provided by Councilwoman Ang Pereira. **Motion passes with 5 in favor and Councilwoman Nicole Hatchet opposed.**

INFORMATION

During Information, Mayor Caradine shared the approved Contractor painting the Highway Tank is scheduled to start late August or early September. Work shall take approximately 4 weeks. There will be no interruption of water service. The notice of reappraisals for Baxter County properties was mailed out last week from Baxter County Treasurer's office. Mayor Caradine and Mayor Braim met with Tim Mays, ESI to discuss future replacement of aging equipment needed for the Cotter-Gassville Wastewater Treatment Facility. The sewer plant was expanded in 2002. ANRC will have funding available in 2027 for Sewer and Water. Brian Haas, CPA will begin working on 2025 Water and Sewer Audit for the City of Cotter. Federal Audit Clearing House accepted our Federal Audit for Year 2024, for the Sewer Rehabilitation Project prepared by Hubb and Whitehead, CPA and Brian Hass, CPA. Insurance claims have been filed to replace a portion of bridge lights from March 2, 2026, power surge to system caused by lightning. The filing dates to petition to run for Cotter City Council and Mayor open at noon on July 29, 2026, and closes at noon on August 5, 2026. Petition Forms may be picked up at Baxter County Clerk's Office in Mountain Home. The next Coffee with the Mayor is July 24, 2026, at Cotter City Hall. A Special Council Meeting to be held at 6:00 pm on August 3, 2026, at Cotter City Hall. Agenda shall be posted on July 27, 2026. The next City Council meeting shall be on August 27, 2026, at 6:00 pm. Later in the meeting, Mayor Caradine asks Sergeant Michael Patterson to explain the newly branded coin from the CPD. Officers give these special coins out to build camaraderie between officers and other agencies.

SIGN-UP SHEET REQUESTS

None at this time.

AUDIENCE ANNOUNCEMENTS

None at this time.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Councilwoman Nicole Hatchet asks to explain the "heart" behind her no vote earlier tonight. She feels that Council should be looking beyond the immediate excitement about the Trout Trail and focus on what best fits the climate and culture of Cotter in 5, 10, or 20 years from now. She asks if this project actually enhance what the City of Cotter encompasses and what people come to Cotter to experience.

Councilman Joe Bass has no comment.

Councilwoman Carolyn Gill has no comment.

Councilwoman Mertice Kray has no comment.

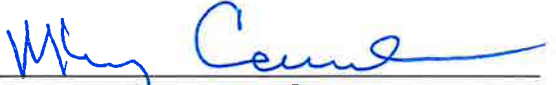
Councilwoman Ang Pereira has no comment.

Councilwoman Linda McCarthy encourages the audience to look at a picture taken by citizen Audrey Parrish of the Cotter Bridge lights and river. It is beautiful.

Mayor Caradine had no comments.

Councilwoman Mertice Kray moved to adjourn with a second provided by Councilwoman Linda McCarthy.
Motion passed unanimously. Meeting ended at 7:08 p.m.

APPROVED:



Mayor McGeorge Caradine

ATTEST:



Recorder/Treasurer Andrea Kray