

COTTER CITY
COTTER COUNCIL REGULAR MINUTES
May 28, 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 Linda McCarthy moved to accept the minutes of a regular meeting of the City of Cotter, Arkansas, City Council held on April 25, 2026, with noted corrections with a second provided by Councilman Joe Bass. **Motion passed unanimously.**

April 2026 Financials were emailed, and Council had no comments/questions during the meeting.

Public Works Department Report was given by Mayor Caradine

Fire Department Report was given by Chief Lyle Jack

Police Department Report was given by Sargent 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

In the first order of Unfinished Business, Council considered passage of Resolution 2026-09: A Resolution to amend the Cotter Employee policy to adopt a cybersecurity policy per AR Act 846 of 2023. Councilman Joe Bass moved to pass Resolution 2026-09: A Resolution to amend the Cotter Employee policy to adopt a cybersecurity policy per AR Act 846 of 2023 with a second provided by Councilwoman Linda McCarthy.

Motion passed unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

In the first order of New Business, Gassville Mayor Jeff Braim presented Intergovernmental Cooperative Agreement for the procurement of planning and related consulting services for cities to update their Municipal Codes Manual to comply with current Arkansas Statutes. The City of Gassville is the lead agency for the RFQ (request for qualifications) process. He shares that he is seeking other municipalities to join and costs would be finalized once others have committed.

Councilwoman Carolyn Gill asks if this only affects P & Z and when does he need an answer? Councilwoman Mertice Kray asks if this is a power of purchasing as cities would get bulk pricing? Councilman Joe Bass clarifies payment and cost sharing on page 3 paragraph F. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Councilwoman Carolyn Gill moves to support Mayor Caradine moving forward with the agreement with a second provided by Councilwoman Nicole Hatchet.

In the second order of New Business, Cotter Area Chamber of Commerce member Ang Pereira made a presentation on Trout Trail – “Where Art Meets the River”. She explains the concepts and why we as a City should provide activities like the Trout Trail as it is designed to promote pride in our community. It is a proven model that other cities have implemented and will give Cotter’s unique story a canvas. It will generate new revenue and will strengthen more visits as word of mouth expands. Fred is the 1st Fish of Cotter standing at 6.74 feet tall and weighing 491 pounds. The Chamber is currently looking for sponsors and artists who are selected from a juried process. There are no stipends to artists, but recognition comes in the forms of a plaque

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on the trout and publicity. Current pricing is \$3,500.00, but an additional \$1,500.00 will be charged if wanting to select location. The committee is still researching legality over placing these statues and the artist's intellectual property rights.

Councilwoman Nicole Hatchet asks the number of statues. Mayor Caradine states 8-15, but the number is fluid right now. She is concerned with that number and states she doesn't feel she wants to see that many statues in the park. She also asks about the other trails. Are there standards/guidelines followed? Councilman Joe Bass asks about solar lights around the walking path, but the statues won't be placed until lights are installed.

Although questions directly from the audience aren't normally allowed at this time, Mayor Caradine entertained questions from Jane Hatchet and Sharon Knowles. Jane's question of "Do projects of the Chamber have to be approved by the city?" Mayor Caradine explains that not necessarily as they help to promote city branding. He shares that this project has had a long-time planning process. Jane Hatchet further suggests that an agreement be made on the maximum number of statues and distance apart. Sharon's question was "would business owner's have to buy permits for installation of the statues?" Mayor Caradine shares that the part of the project should be considered in Phase II.

No action was taken by Council at this time.

In the third order of New Business, Council considered Resolution 2026-11 – A Resolution to obtain a grant in the amount of \$28,000, for CVFD generator, Air Tanks and Turn-out to assist with matching funds for approved Resolution 2026-08. Councilwoman Mertice Kray moved to pass Resolution 2026-11 – A Resolution to obtain a grant in the amount of \$28,000, for CVFD generator, Air Tanks and Turn-out to assist with matching funds for approved Resolution 2026-08 with a second provided by Councilwoman Carolyn Gill.

Motion passed unanimously.

INFORMATION

During Information, Mayor Caradine shared that the Arkansas Community Economic Development Program (ACEDP) awarded the City of Cotter \$487,000 grant to renovate (Exterior/Interior) at the North Arkansas Youth Center, and that the Cotter Volunteer Fire Department was awarded a grant for the 2025 Wildland Fire Suppression Kits which includes ten (10) sets of fire-resistance coveralls, ten (10) wildland firefighting gloves, two (2) back-pack water pumps, two (2) leaf blowers, four (4) leaf rakes, two (2) McLeod rakes. The City of Cotter/CVFD applied for a \$15,000 grant (Resolution 2026-08) from Arkansas Rural Community Grant Program to replace the generator at the firehouse, ten (10) o2 Tanks, three (3) turn-out Gear. The grant is 50/50 match. The City of Cotter's for year 2023 and 2024 Financial and Compliance Report was approved by the Arkansas Legislative Audit Committee and was posted on March 27, 2026, at two locations (City Hall, the Post Office) and on the City website. Brian Hass completed the 2024 Water and Sewer Audit and was submitted to Arkansas Legislative Audit Committed on May 15, 2026. The 2024 Water and Sewer Audit shall be posted on May 29, 2026, for thirty days at two locations (City Hall / Post Office) and on the City Website. The Cotter Bridge Ultra Run in Big Spring Park is scheduled for June 13, 2026. The next Coffee with the Mayor June 26, 2026, and the next City Council meeting shall be on June 25, 2026, at 6:00 pm.

SIGN-UP SHEET REQUESTS

1) Jane Hatchet-Are there standards for the installation of mailboxes? Where does she start? She should start with Planning and Zoning or with the Highway Department in Harrison. Also, USPS has height and distance guidelines.

AUDIENCE ANNOUNCEMENTS

1) Glen Dimick asks about removing more rock at the intersection of Denton Ferry Road and Highway 62? Mayor Caradine explained that City's Sewer system is placed under that section and they removed as much as they felt comfortable with remove to ensure the stability of the infrastructure underneath.

2) Tina Coats shares that The Sands will now be open on Sunday and Monday evenings.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Councilwoman Nicole Hatchet has no comment.

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Councilman Joe Bass is excited for what's happening in Cotter, but people are questioning the container laws. He demands that a Public Meeting date be set tonight to address the issue. At this time, Recorder/Treasurer Andrea Kray addresses Mayor Caradine stating that Council Comments are not the time to make this request as it is an actionable item and actionable items should be addressed in New Business. She references Resolution 2026-03, explaining the procedures required of said Council members requesting a special meeting. She also cautions Council that any three members discussing City Business outside of a set meeting would violate state statutes pertaining to public notice and could foreseeably place the city at risk of being sued.

Councilwoman Carolyn Gill expresses that Bayman's new mural is a great selling point for Cotter. Karen Montgomery is writing a press release, and the city should thank them. She states that Cotter has been the recipient of close to 20 shipping containers. She wants to call for a public meeting to discuss the shipping containers.

Councilwoman Mertice Kray has no comment.

Councilwoman Ang Pereira has no comment.

Councilwoman Linda McCarthy shares that the Fire Department did a smokehouse education at Trout Fest and had 4 groups of 20-25 people. She also shares that the White River Marathon chose the VFD as the grant recipient of 20% for its annual fundraiser.

Mayor Caradine thanks the Saturday Club for the donation to the cemetery and invites everyone to Coffee with the Mayor.

Councilwoman Mertice Kray moved to adjourn with a second provided by Councilwoman Linda McCarthy.
Motion passed unanimously. Meeting ended at 7:55 p.m.

APPROVED:


Mayor McGeorge Caradine

ATTEST:


Recorder/Treasurer Andrea Kray

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