

CITY COUNCIL MEETING

A work session was held beginning at 3:30 p.m. and the regular meeting of the Coleraine City Council was held at 4:02 p.m., **Monday, December 8, 2025**, in the Council Chambers of Coleraine City Hall.

WORK SESSION

3:00 p.m.

Jessica Pellinen, Regional Manager-Northern Minnesota of CEDA shared information on the differences between a Strategic Plan and a Comprehensive Plan. She briefly went over the process and provided options for the Council to consider while deciding whether to move forward with either or both. She indicated that they did have partners they could potentially ask for grants to help fund either one or both. Clerk Anderson indicated that it might be possible to use some of the Blandin grant outstanding, pending approval from the Blandin Foundation and that a meeting between the Blandin Foundation, Mayor Antonovich, and herself would be on Monday, December 15th. Council asked CEDA to provide solid numbers as to what it would cost for each one, and a what the rate would be should they decide to do both at the same time.

Tia, from Smoke on the Water, as a business representative wanted to start the conversation to see if there was a possibility to get a sign on the Hwy indicating that there were restaurants/businesses in town. Council agreed that they could start looking into this.

REGULAR MEETING

4:02 p.m.

The regular meeting was called to order by Mayor Antonovich at 4:00 p.m. followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. A roll call was done by Clerk-Treasurer Anderson. **Members present: Councilpersons Swanson, Giving, Wilson, Sobotzak, and Mayor Antonovich.** Attorney Shaffer was absent with notice.

Moved by Councilperson Sobotzak, supported by Giving, **to approve the consent agenda which included minutes of 11.24.25, correspondence, claims of \$20,043.80, Res. No. 2025-12.08—Polling Places, and Resolution No. 2025-12.8—PERA FUND.** Roll Call: Ayes: Councilpersons Sobotzak, Giving, Wilson, Swanson, and Mayor Antonovich. Nays: none. Motion carried.

Moved by Councilperson Sobotzak with support from Swanson, **to approve the meeting agenda with the addition of an MOU with Teamsters, and an MOU with AFSCME.** Ayes: All. Nays: none. Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Holly Guyer indicated that First National Bank of Coleraine has an electronic billboard and they are very good at putting up information for activities and things going on in the community.

DEPARTMENT HEADS

Trout Lake Fire Department

Assistant Fire Chief Jordan Schaefer was present and explained the letter that had been provided in Council packets regarding their proposed plan if they can't get to a full roster. The current roster is 13 and they have answered 306 calls so far this year. They really need a roster of 20 to be at full capacity. If they can't get to at least 15 by the end of June 2026, then calls will have to be triaged. If they don't get to a full roster of 20 by the end of the year other services will need to be cut. The letter explains it all. The Fire Department would like to send a similar letter to Coleraine residents to try and get people to apply.

Police

Police Chief Beach provided a verbal report. He stated that interviews were being conducted on Wednesday for a full-time officer. Training for the new part-time officers was going well—Brandon is in his 3rd week of FTO and Joss was in his 2nd week. The PD participated in the local Shop with a Hero event that went well. He also stated his support of the Fire Department.

Public Works

Public Works Supervisor Tabaka provided a verbal report. It's been pretty quiet, the new loader is working good, guys have been cleaning the shop which was badly needed. The ice is ready to skate on; he has students to call so the skating shack should be open soon.

ATTORNEY

Absent—tied up in court.

NEW BUSINESS:

Authority to Certify delinquent PU accounts to property taxes – Motion by Councilperson Giving, with the support of Wilson, **to grant authority to City Clerk-Treasurer Anderson to certify any delinquent public Utility accounts necessary to property taxes.** Roll Call: Ayes: Councilpersons Giving, Wilson, Swanson, Sobotzak, and Mayor Antonovich. Nays: none. Motion carried.

Construction Documents with Collaborative Design Group – Motion by Councilperson Wilson, supported by Swanson, **to approve the Construction Drawing Package – Option 3 for \$14,500 provided the City receives a \$10,000 grant from the Minnesota Historical Society with the remaining \$4,500 to come from Fund 200—Special Projects Fund.** Roll Call: Ayes: Councilperson Wilson, Swanson, Giving, Sobotzak, and Mayor Antonovich. Nays: none. Motion carried.

Letter to residents served by the Trout Lake Fire Department – Clerk Anderson indicated that the Fire Department would be billed for the materials for the mailing and that they would help stuff, seal, and stamp all the envelopes. **Motion** by Councilperson Swanson, with support from Giving, **to approve the sending of the letter.** Ayes: all. Nays: none. Motion carried.

Cancel December 22nd Council meeting – Motion by Councilperson Sobotzak, supported by Giving, **to cancel the 2nd council meeting of the month scheduled for December 22nd.** Ayes: all. Nays: none. Motion carried.

MOU with Teamsters & MOU with AFSCME – The MOUs are as a result of the required payment/deductions for the new Paid Leave Law going into effect on January 1, 2026. The MOUs split the payment to the state with 50% being paid by the City and the other 50% being deducted from employee pay. The MOU also allows

an employee to supplement the paid leave with any time they have available to them (sick time/vacation time) not to exceed their normal wages. **Motion** by Councilperson Sobotzak, with support from Swanson, **to approve both the MOUs contingent upon Union approval.** Roll Call: Ayes: Councilpersons Sobotzak, Swanson, Giving, Wilson, and Mayor Antonovich. Nays: none. Motion carried.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Arbitration with Bovey of TLF D Tanker payment split – a status report was given. Tabled.

COUNCIL CONCERNS:

Sobotzak: None
Giving: Inquiring if anyone has checked into signs for Mitchell Street yet.
Swanson: None
Wilson: None
Antonovich: None

At **4:43 p.m.** Councilperson Sobotzak made a **motion to recess the meeting until the Truth in Taxation portion of the meeting.** The motion was supported by Mayor Antonovich. Ayes: all. Nays: none. Meeting recessed.

At **6:00 p.m.** Councilperson Sobotzak **motioned to return from recess and recall the meeting to order for the Truth in Taxation portion of the meeting.** Motion seconded by Swanson. Ayes: all. Nays: none. Meeting continued.

Present: Councilmembers Sobotzak, Giving, Wilson, Swanson, and Mayor Antonovich.

Councilperson Sobotzak began by explaining that the council has been reviewing the budget and numbers and this has been a particularly difficult process this year. He stated that the final levy will be 15% higher and not the 25% increase that went out in the proposed tax statements. He indicated that there were four major things that impacted the increase:

- 1) One extra pay date in 2026 – 27 pay dates instead of the normal 26 which happens every 7 years or so.
- 2) Fully staffed the Police Department with 4 full-time officers instead of 2. (with an explanation of the logic). The most complaints received is that the officers are never seen; coverage simply cannot be done with 2 officers (one is in the school 4 hours per day).
- 3) The Fire Department needed a new Tanker for calls and Coleraine pays 50% of the cost.
- 4) A new loader for the street department was purchased which is the primary piece of equipment for snow removal in the city. The cost to partially repair the old one was \$50,000 with no guarantees; spent a lot of money to replace the hydraulic pump last year and it was already failing. The new one is under warranty and we did get \$30,000 on trade-in of the old one.

He again reiterated that this was not an easy process for Council and it's still not great, but they were able to cut out about 10%.


Several residents including Mary Troumbly, Brian Bengston, Mary Kay Jacobson, Kyle Erickson, Frank LoBosco, and others unknown had various things to say. Comments regarding high property taxes especially for those on fixed incomes, feeling priced out of their homes by taxes and those high taxes are a disincentive to move here, questions relating to the loader purchase, tanker for the fire department, staffing

of Administration, Public Works, Police Department, Library, questioning police coverage, contracting with the County, rental property classification, the rural benefit ratio, to name a few. Council listened and responded to each of them.

Motion by Councilperson Sobtzak, supported by Giving, **to set the general levy at \$1,292,792 and the library levy at \$143,293 for a total of \$1,436,085 (an increase of 15% over last year), and to confirm the rural benefit ratio at 75% (an increase of 10% over last year).** Roll Call: Ayes: Councilpersons Sobtzak, Giving, Swanson, Wilson, and Mayor Antonovich. Nays: none. Motion carried.

Motion by Councilperson Sobtzak, supported by Swanson, **to approve the 2026 budget as presented.** Roll Call: Ayes: Councilpersons Sobtzak, Swanson, Giving, Wilson, and Mayor Antonovich. Nays: none. Motion carried.

Councilperson Sobtzak made a **motion at 8:00p.m. to adjourn the meeting.** This was supported by Mayor Antonovich. Ayes: all. Nays: none. Motion carried, meeting adjourned.



Mike Antonovich, Mayor



Briana Anderson, Clerk-Treasurer