

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SODA SPRINGS, CARIBOU COUNTY, IDAHO HELD MAY 19TH, 2021.

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER AT 5:00PM BY AUSTIN W. ROBINSON, MAYOR.

ROLL CALL SHOWED THE FOLLOWING PRESENT: AUSTIN W. ROBINSON, MAYOR
MITCHELL J. HART, PRES.
JON D. GOODE
ROBERT M. LAU
SCOTT K. GAMBLES

EXCUSED:

ALSO PRESENT: Mark Steele via telephone Alan Skinner, Engineer
Kathy Ray Tausha Vorwaller, Clerk
Whitney Offret Gregg Haney, Attorney
Chris Street
Barry Oates Chief Scott Shaw II
Brock & Paige Byram Chris Guedes

The invocation was given by Kathy Ray, Mayor Robinson then led everyone in the ‘Pledge of Allegiance’.

The Mayor noted all Council and staff were in attendance with Engineer Skinner via telephone.

The previous meeting minutes were presented for review. Councilmember Goode stated he had reviewed and noted no changes. He then moved to approve the minutes of May 5th, 2021 in their current draft form and dispense with the reading. Councilmember Lau seconded the motion. All in favor, motion carried.

The accounts payable were reviewed. Councilmember Goode moved to approve the accounts payable dated May 1st through May 17th, 2021, seconded by Councilmember Gambles. Councilmember Goode noted the lease payment for the new police vehicles and asked if they had arrived. The Mayor informed him they were here and being used but did not have the striping/decals yet. The old vehicles will be sold by the lease company and the funds credited toward the lease of the new vehicles. Councilmember Goode also asked when the Vector sewer truck would be paid for. Councilmember Lau recollected it was a 7-year lease to own contract. The Clerk verified it would be paid off in 2023. A vote on the motion to approve the accounts payable was called. All in favor, motion carried.

(SEE ATTACHED ACCOUNTS PAYABLE REGISTER FOR DETAIL)

Kathy Ray, Four County Alliance of SE Idaho (4CASI) gave her annual update on projects in Soda Springs and Caribou County and requested the City’s annual support of \$3000 for the 4CASI program. She detailed the requests for information she responded to and the site visits made to local businesses. She explained this last year she spent a lot of time providing the local vendors with information on the assistance programs available due to

the pandemic and helped some of the businesses apply. She mentioned she would be retiring September 1st and was not sure of her replacement yet. Councilmember Goode moved to approve the annual support of \$3000 as well as use of the office space valued at \$4800 consistent with prior years. Councilmember Gambles seconded the motion. All in favor, motion carried. Mrs. Ray thanked the Council for their support and use of the building and noted she enjoyed working with the City Hall staff.

The Mayor noted John Thompson with Teton Adventures RV was not going to make this meeting and was still working on the site plan.

Councilmember Hart asked for an update on the meeting with the Enders Building lessee and if the maintenance issues were being resolved. Attorney Haney reported Engineer Skinner was trying to set up a meeting. Regarding the maintenance issues he stated he knew the lessee had contracted with Oregon Trail Salt to keep the water softener stocked but was not aware that anyone had looked at the radiators yet. Councilmember Hart stated he believed the two issues were connected and needed to be addressed as soon as possible. Councilmember Hart asked Director of City Services, Justin Hansen to take a look at the radiators by getting a key to the building from Engineer Skinner. Councilmember Hart also mentioned a donor who wanted to get their uniforms out of the museum and an issue with some of the locks needed to be addressed.

Councilmember Hart reported on a productive meeting with the Idaho Transportation Department, Senator Harris and Brock and Paige Byram regarding the Highway 30 egress near Soda Sip. He explained the proposed plan is to put up signage and a barrier requiring a right turn onto 3rd West Street when exiting Soda Sip to alleviate the safety issues of crossing 3rd West Street right next to the Highway intersection. He noted they are also going to explore some other opportunities. He felt it was a productive meeting and everyone is willing to see how it goes. Engineer Skinner and Director Hansen will walk the site with the Byrams and determine placement of the barrier and signs.

Councilmember's Hart and Goode reported on recent property tax legislation passed and reluctantly signed by the Governor. The Association of Idaho Cities opposed the legislation but the Counties were more inclined to support it. It will create a small reduction in property tax due to an increase in the home-owners exemption but the biggest issue is growing areas can only use 90% of the new construction amount to increase property tax dollars making it hard to cover the cost of services to the new growth. An interim committee will be reviewing for reconsideration during the next session. Councilmember's Hart and Goode agreed not enough time and review went into the legislation. It was noted the dramatic increase in values is increasing taxes and causing a hardship for those with fixed incomes. Councilmember Lau noted Caribou County's Assessor only implements increases in certain areas each year and it may be up to four years before some areas see their values increase. Councilmember Hart suggested some assessors are changing this due to the drastic value increases currently taking place. He also noted that Representative Christensen voted in favor, Senator Harris was opposed and Representative Gibbs was absent.

Engineer Skinner joined the meeting in person.

During the time for citizen input Brock Byram of 150 Spring View, Soda Springs, Idaho stated he wanted to go on record of presenting a letter of intent in regards to a contract dated January 15, 2018 to the Mayor and City Council.

Mayor Robinson recognized the local service organizations like the Lions Club, Rotary Club and Main Street Cruisers just to name a few along with the many volunteers that go unnoticed. He stated the Lions Club has a motto; "I am an American Citizen; god help me do my duty as such". He noted what makes our town great is the willingness of our citizens to volunteer and encouraged everyone to continue the tradition of volunteering.

Continued discussion was held regarding the proposed Kelly Park West subdivision. Councilmember Lau noted some engineering was started by Engineer Skinner and Forsgren Engineers and he has been working with P.E. Chris Guedes furthering the proposal. He explained the benefit of realigning the existing irrigation ditch/creek in regards to the subdivision proposal. It is his understanding that the Army Corp of Engineers tried to vacate the ditch but the Environmental Protection Agency stated it was a waterway of the U. S. based on a letter from 1914. Due to this determination a permit must be obtained for improvement of an aquatic habitat. The idea is to make it more of a straight line and easier to develop around and improve the water flow. Councilmember Lau asked if the Council wanted to proceed with applying for the permit to make changes to the ditch with Mr. Guedes help who has volunteered to work with Engineer Skinner on the process. Councilmember Hart stated the concept had merit and noted whatever is done with the property down the road it would make it more amenable to development. He also suggested working on the flow of the ditch as it crosses under the railroad tracks; fixing it all and doing it right. Councilmember Goode suggested checking on available funds to help with the project from the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), the Department of Environmental Quality and the Idaho Department of Water Resources. Councilmember Lau hopes if the City could get the permit in a timely fashion the work may be able to get it done in October. Councilmember Goode points out the difficulty of working with the Union Pacific Railroad. Mr. Guedes noted most permits allow up to five years to complete the work. The Council all agreed it was a good idea and instructed Mr. Guedes to proceed and thanked him for volunteering his time and knowledge.

Engineer Skinner briefly reviewed the project list and reported the City made approximately \$30,000 off the Prime Time auction. Director Hansen noted there is only one truck left in the yard. The Playground Committee is looking at \$24,000 in repairs to the playground due to damage to the flooring. This will exhaust the Committees funds and Engineer Skinner suggested the City will need to earmark funds each year for the continued maintenance.

The Council reviewed the applications from Barry Oates and Ken Finlayson who jointly applied for a conditional use to build 18 twin homes (36 units) on Lots 4 & 5, Finlayson Subdivision. They also applied for a variance to allow for covered porches on the units encroaching six feet (6') into the front setback. Councilmember Goode reported on the

Planning and Zoning Commission's (P & Z) public hearings and discussions. The P & Z voted to recommend approvals of both applications. Councilmember Lau asked why the conditional use was needed. Engineer Skinner explained it is required by code for multi-family dwellings. Chris Street, Mr. Oates engineer for the project explained they plan to build the units in three phases with the first phase beginning on the east side. The Council reviewed and discussed the fencing and grading. Councilmember Lau, accepting the P & Z's recommendation, moved to approve the conditional use for Barry Oates and Ken Finlayson for the 18 twin home development, seconded by Councilmember Goode. All in favor, motion carried.

Councilmember Goode then moved to approve the variance of six feet (6') requested to allow for covered porches on the twin homes, based on the recommendation for approval from the P & Z. Councilmember Lau seconded the motion. All in favor, motion carried.

The Council then reviewed the application of Whitney Offret requesting a conditional use to establish a group day care facility at her home, 390 Gagon Drive. A group day care facility allows for the care of three to twelve children. Mrs. Offret mentioned she is working on getting the State approvals needed and her home is located across the street from a currently operating preschool. Councilmember Goode reported the P & Z held a public hearing and reviewed the application and recommended approval of the conditional use. The Council reviewed and discussed. Councilmember Goode moved to approve the conditional use for the group day care facility located at 390 Gagon Drive, based on recommendation of the P & Z and adding the stipulation that outside playtime by the children be limited to the hours of 8am to 6pm. Councilmember Hart seconded the motion. All in favor, motion carried. Councilmember Lau also suggested the use of Gagon Drive for drop-off and pick-up at the daycare due to the congestion already on 4th South Street.

The Mayor and Council discussed the upcoming meeting schedule and the need to change the 2nd meeting in June due to the Association of Idaho Cities Conference. It was agreed to change the 2nd meeting in June to June 23rd.

The Mayor, Council and Staff began review of the FY2022 budget. The Clerk presented a five-year comparison of revenue over operating and maintenance which was something Councilmember Lau asked for last year. Councilmember Hart noted City Hall was remodeled in 1996 and is now needing repairs and maintenance he suggested looking at the long-term plan for City Hall and other department's building needs. Councilmember Lau mentioned the Greater Soda Springs Community Development Committee (GSSCDC) was also looking at some community needs and has engaged the chair of the architecture department at the University of Utah. Councilmember Gambles noted the GSSCDC is mainly looking at ideas for a recreation center. Councilmember Lau added there may be domino effects of pursuing these ideas. Councilmember Hart suggested scheduling a work meeting to discuss these long term/comprehensive plan type ideas. Councilmember Hart asked about the Recreation funds balance. The Clerk explained when the new fund was set up the transfers were set too high and an unneeded balance accrued. She suggested making a transfer back to the General Fund. The Recreation Fund should only carry about an \$18,000 to \$20,000 balance which is what was turned over to the City from the separate

accounts a few years ago. Councilmember Hart noted the City's ability to pay for the unfunded mandate at Formation Spring with the City's cash reserves because of the City's prudent spending and saving. He expressed concerns about fund balance limitations being considered by the legislature. The Clerk reviewed the estimated property tax budget and levy which includes capturing the foregone amount not taken last year due to the Governor's Public Safety Initiative. Councilmember Hart commented on the proposed cost of living allowance and the need to consider what inflation is going to do over the next two years.

Councilmember Lau moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:25pm, seconded by Councilmember Goode. All in favor, motion carried.

PASSED AND APPROVED BY THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL THIS 2ND DAY OF JUNE, 2021.

Austin W. Robinson, Mayor

ATTEST:

Tausha Vorwaller, Clerk