

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SODA SPRINGS, CARIBOU COUNTY, IDAHO HELD NOVEMBER 3RD, 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:      Karen Crane      Alan Skinner, Engineer  
                                 Paul Gritton      Tausha Vorwaller, Clerk  
                                 Dan Squires      Gregg Haney, Attorney  
                                 Austin & Jackie Robinson  
                                 Brock & Paige Byram      Chief Scott Shaw II  
                                 Ryan Carpenter      CeJay Golightly

The invocation was given by Paul Gritton, Mayor Robinson then led everyone in the 'Pledge of Allegiance'.

The previous meeting minutes were presented for review. Councilmember Goode stated he had reviewed and didn't see anything that needed amended. He then moved to accept the minutes of October 20<sup>th</sup>, 2021 in their current draft form and dispense with the reading. Councilmember Lau seconded the motion. All in favor, motion carried.

The accounts payable and payroll were reviewed. Councilmember Goode moved to approve the accounts payable dated October 19<sup>th</sup> through October 31<sup>st</sup>, 2021 as well as the payroll for the month of October, 2021. Councilmember Lau seconded the motion. Councilmember Goode asked about the payment to High Desert Power Systems. Water/Wastewater Supervisor, Dan Squires explained it is a maintenance contract on two generators; one at the treatment plant and one at lift station #2 by the JR Inn. Councilmember Hart also noted the Police Department's high overtime. Chief Shaw explained it was mostly due to coverage while officers were attending training. Councilmember Goode also noted it was a three pay-period month. A vote on the motion to approve the accounts payable and payroll was called. All in favor, motion carried.

(SEE ATTACHED ACCOUNTS PAYABLE & PAYROLL REGISTERS FOR DETAIL)

Engineer Skinner presented the Council with the updated project spread sheet and the budgeted capital list. He reviewed the items being actively worked on. There is nothing new on the playground; still waiting on the contractor to call and say equipment is in. He mentioned the 46kV transmission line easement was reviewed by the property owners which are Justin Steele and Mark Steele. They are both in agreement with the 50-foot right-of-way starting where the poles currently run and going west to enable the new poles to be

placed without changes to the easement and when the job is complete it will be resurveyed. The original easement is from 1948. The South 2<sup>nd</sup> East Street project has been postponed until spring. The contractor has all the materials purchased. Councilmember Hart suggested talking about other projects to do in conjunction with this project next spring.

Karen Crane on behalf of Lori Anne Lau, representing the Caribou County Farm Bureau Board addressed the Mayor and Council. She invited the Mayor and Council to attend their winter seminar which was going to be a presentation on policy coordination presented by Jennifer Ellis. The seminar would be a preview of a more entailed training on how to work with Federal, State and regulatory agencies to protect Caribou County from their encroachment. The seminar will be November 12<sup>th</sup> at 6:30pm at the Tigert Middle School and she mentioned she had the training booklets available for \$15.00. Mayor Robinson asked to purchase two of the booklets for the City and thanked Mrs. Crane for attending.

Police Chief Shaw reported he has three officers who will have completed their probationary period during this month and requested approval of the budgeted wage increases. Officers Kirby and Mathews will receive a \$2.22 increase and Officer Phelps will receive .50cents. The Chief mentioned he completed evaluations of each of the Officers who passed the standards set with high marks. The Chief pointed out the City's wages are still substantially short of the County's wages. Councilmember Goode moved to approve Chief Shaw's recommended increases as budgeted for the three officers. Councilmember Gambles seconded the motion. All in favor, motion carried.

Engineer Skinner continued his review of the project list. He gave an update on the repairs to the #4 Hydro Plant which included an increased cost of \$8500 to rebuild and replace bearings. The work is moving forward on the mechanical repairs and will soon be testing the electrical. Engineer Skinner will keep the Council up to date. Councilmember Hart pointed out the repairs have been authorized and suggested once the final amount is known then it can be approved.

The Engineer's preliminary plans for the pressure reducing valve (PRV) project was presented. Engineer Skinner asked the Council to review and provide comments. Water/Wastewater Supervisor, Dan Squires will also be reviewing. The estimated cost and the approved budget were briefly discussed. Councilmember Lau pointed out some possible corrections needed to the map regarding the location of the Formation and Ledge Creek feeds. This was discussed at length. Councilmember Lau also asked what it would take to complete the water transmission line upgrade/extension from Ledge Creek that was started a few years ago. The relocation of the line was discussed at length by Supervisor Squires who pointed out the need due to the close proximity to a residence and because of the sewerline location. It was also clarified the new line had not been pulled under the railroad tracks and only the culvert was installed. The completion will take 1200 to 1500 feet of waterline and the estimated cost was discussed. Councilmember Hart suggested it could be included as a shovel ready project and paired with the PRV project. Engineer Skinner will put some costs together.

The proposed Main Street utility, curb, gutter and sidewalk upgrade project was reviewed. Engineer Skinner stated the 4<sup>th</sup> South and Main Street projects should get Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) approval by the end of the year. He explained how critical the Main Street project is because none of the businesses have shut off valves that work and when there is a problem the whole line has to be shut down including the fire hydrants. There is also a section of sewerline that needs to be straightened out because it can't be cleaned. Where to place the valves was discussed due to the street right-of-way being right up to the face of the businesses. Engineer Skinner stated Supervisor Squires and Director Hansen will be reviewing the plans and the next step will be estimating costs which should be available in about 30 days. Councilmember Lau suggested taking the crown down so all the drainage doesn't collect and freeze in the gutters and may need to incorporate storm drains. A rough cost estimate of \$2.5 million was suggested and the project will continue to be reviewed and fine-tuned.

During citizen input Austin Robinson of 235 West 4<sup>th</sup> South thanked the Mayor and Council for picking up the broken limbs and trees after the recent snow storm that caused so much damage. The Council discussed and was curious about the tonnage and number of truck loads hauled. Local resident and business owner Paul Gritton announced an avalanche awareness training he will be hosting on November 11<sup>th</sup> and asked for any kind of support the City could contribute. He also expressed his frustration with the increased Business License fee with no justification communicated to the business owners. He stated he is not opposed to paying a fee and would be willing to pay double if the funds were used to appropriately compensate the police officers. He added it is very expensive to keep replacing officers and the younger officers will be looking for better pay. Business owner, Brock Byram reiterated the need to entice the police officers to stay with the City. Mayor Robinson added to citizen input. He pointed out High School basketball season was starting and noted the local businesses care more about our community than Jeff Bezos of Amazon. He encouraged everyone to support local commerce telling the story of a school art class needing a special paint which they were able to find exactly what they needed in town.

The Fire Station repairs, costs and ownership were revisited. Councilmember Hart gave some background on the situation. He noted part of the building was owned by the County and over the past few years, natural causes and possibly a water leak has caused settling of the building which is now damaging plumbing and creating truck access issues. The City's insurance carrier had a structural engineer look at the issue and after review reached a settlement to dedicate to the repairs. Moving forward the ownership needs to be cleaned up if the County is willing to sell or give the City the building along with immediate repairs need to be done before weather gets worse in order for the fire trucks to be able to get in and out without dragging. The Forsgren Engineer's plan was to tear out the driveways, compact, install a drain system and replace. The estimated cost is \$137,800 which Engineer Skinner feels could be decreased with some of the work done by the City and some materials which have decreased in cost since the estimate. The repairs need to be expanded to include the building repairs to ceiling, walls, fixtures & bricks and there may be grants available. Everyone agreed there has to be a temporary fix done immediately.

Engineer Skinner suggested tearing out the driveways, put a drain pipe in and compact for around \$5000 to \$7000 for a temporary fix. Councilmember Lau pointed out the repairs will still not solve the overall problems of the facility being too small for standard fire trucks and not enough room for training and maintenance. He reminded everyone of spending an additional \$65,000 for a special truck to fit the building. He stressed the need to think about the whole issue and suggested if the City sold some property, it could fund a proper fire house. Fire Chief Squires supported the quick fix and agreed with Councilmember Lau's comments.

The Ender's building discussion was deferred to executive session.

The Mayor and Council revisited the fee schedule after some concerns were raised about some of the increases. Councilmember Lau reviewed the increase in the business license fee and what the fee provides. The business license main function is to provide a way for the City to verify zoning is correct for the type of business. Councilmember Lau also suggested the businesses are getting some marketing value by being listed on the City's website. The Mayor allowed business owner Paul Gritton to comment. He expressed his concern about the increase causing new businesses to be leery of coming to town and also questioned if the increase was warranted to cover the increased cost of administering the service. Councilmember Goode noted he feels the intent was to validate zoning and suggested considering an initial fee of \$100 to cover the time for checking the zoning and then an annual renewal amount. The Council will review and discuss further. Councilmember Lau moved on to discuss the fee for copies. The fee inadvertently got increased from .10 cents to .25 cents and Head Librarian, Cindy Erickson expressed a concern due to many patrons using the service. The Council agreed to correct the fee schedule with copies being .10 cents. The other fee changed with the last update was the water connect/disconnect fee during hours. Water/Wastewater Supervisor, Dan Squires expressed his disagreement and concerns. He explained the water valves are the City's responsibility to maintain and if homeowners are turning them on and off themselves to avoid the fee, they are more likely to get broken which then costs the City up to \$750 to fix. The Council agreed to remove the fee as recommended by Supervisor Squires. Councilmembers Hart and Lau explained fees are used to generate revenue or offset costs or to influence or modify behavior. If it doesn't serve one of those purposes or will create more of a problem then there shouldn't be a fee. Councilmember Hart added he agreed the business license fee should, besides verifying zoning, be a marketing tool and suggested the businesses provide a description of the services they provide, kept to a defined number of words/characters. Councilmember Lau moved to do away with the water connect/disconnect fee during hours and adjust copies back to .10 cents. Councilmember Hart seconded the motion. All in favor, motion carried.

Engineer Skinner presented a letter from the Army Corp of Engineers approving the placement of two culverts and the realignment of 500 linear feet of the Little Spring Creek off of Formation Avenue. This was originally applied for by Josh Hansen and transferred back to the property owner, Deworth Williams. Engineer Skinner pointed out a couple options regarding the realignment with the one that makes the most sense is to keep the

creek on the north side of the platted street. The purpose is to create better access to residential lots that are for sale. The Council reviewed and noted it is private property and agreed it will be a positive fix.

Councilmember Hart mentioned there is a newly elected officials training on November 16<sup>th</sup> in Chubbuck. He stated the Association of Idaho Cities recently updated the newly elected official's handbook and it will be an excellent training.

Councilmember Hart pointed out the County had requested a City representative to participate in a citizen advisory committee as part of their review of the County's comprehensive plan. The first meeting is Monday, November 8th. The Mayor and Council agreed Engineer Skinner should represent the City along with Councilmember-Elect Rod Worthington with his experience on the Planning & Zoning, if he is willing. The Clerk will let the County know.

Councilmember Hart mentioned the public comment period is open through December 6<sup>th</sup>, 2021 for the proposed Husky 1/North Dry Ridge new mine. He encouraged all to provide comments individually or collectively as a group. Councilmember Goode offered to put together a letter from the City.

Councilmember Lau moved to approve entering into executive session pursuant to I.C. 74-206(1)(f) to communicate with legal counsel regarding probable litigation. Councilmember Goode seconded the motion. A roll call showed the following vote:

Those voting aye:	Mitch Hart	Those voting nay:	none
	Scott Gambles		
	Robert Lau	Absent:	none
	Jon Goode		

Motion Carried.

Councilmember Goode moved to exit executive session, seconded by Councilmember Lau. All in favor, motion carried.

Councilmember Hart moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:10pm, seconded by Councilmember Goode. All in favor, motion carried.

PASSED AND APPROVED BY THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL THIS 17<sup>TH</sup> DAY OF NOVEMBER, 2021.

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Austin W. Robinson, Mayor

ATTEST:

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Tausha Vorwaller, Clerk