

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SODA SPRINGS, CARIBOU COUNTY, IDAHO HELD NOVEMBER 4TH, 2020.

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 via conference
SCOTT K. GAMBLES

EXCUSED:

ALSO PRESENT:	Mark Steele via telephone	Alan Skinner, Engineer
	Celeste Billman	Tausha Vorwaller, Clerk
		Gregg Haney, Attorney

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

Mayor Robinson noted Councilmember Lau was present via conference call and the rest of the Council was in attendance in person.

The previous meeting minutes were presented for review. Councilmember Goode stated he had reviewed and noted no changes he then moved to accept the October 21st, 2020 minutes in their current form and dispense with the reading. Councilmember Hart seconded the motion. All in favor, motion carried.

The accounts payable and payroll were reviewed. Councilmember Gambles moved to accept the accounts payable dated October 20th thru October 31st, 2020 along with the payroll for October, 2020, seconded by Councilmember Goode. Councilmember Goode asked about the reimbursement for the damaged pedestrian crossing light. Engineer Skinner explained it has not been billed yet and the City Crew will be installing the replacement light. Councilmember Goode suggested making sure the full cost of benefits is calculated into the repair cost. Councilmember Hart reviewed the benefit policy on work boots. Engineer Skinner explained the employees receive \$150 annual allowance for boots. Councilmember Hart also commented on the payroll and overtime costs. He asked if it would make sense to do an analysis on hiring an additional employee and having split shifts to cover weekend duty and lessen overtime hours. Engineer Skinner noted the elimination of 20 hours of overtime a week when the sampling for Formation is no longer required. The Police overtime was also discussed. The two new officers will have six months of schooling before they will be able to cover shifts and alleviate the police department overtime. A vote on the motion was called. All in favor, motion carried

(SEE ATTACHED ACCOUNTS PAYABLE & PAYROLL REGISTERS FOR DETAIL)

Recreation Director, Celeste Billman gave an update on the additional considerations being taken for the upcoming little league basketball programs due to the Governor's order to move back to Stage 3. In addition to what she is already doing she will be encouraging masks and Grace has made masks mandatory. The Council and staff discussed at length masks, temperature checks and avoiding confrontations. Director Billman explained she will be limiting participants to two spectators each and will be watching closely to keep the total group to 50 people or less to comply with the Governor's guidelines. The teams will play two games a weekend back to back and the next group will be asked to wait in their cars in order to disinfect in between and not exceed the 50 rule. She explained that if we want the kids to play the adult spectators will have to make some sacrifices. Director Billman mentioned she is working on getting a new part-time employee to help oversee games and the facilities but if she doesn't find anyone she will need to keep all the games in one location. The Mayor and Council agreed masks should be provided and strongly recommended. Councilmember Goode feels the schools should require masks. Councilmember Hart commended Director Billman on how well thought out her planning is. The Mayor and Council expressed their appreciation.

Rec. Dir. Billman also presented a proposal on behalf of City Director, Justin Hansen who was unable to attend. He came up with the idea to have a City sponsored ice-skate night on December 22nd which is the last day of school before Christmas break. They will plan to take the necessary precautions for the outdoor event by social distancing and watching the number of participants. The Mayor and Council expressed their support of the great idea and just suggested they be ready to make changes to the plan if necessary. It was also mentioned that the City advertise for anyone with extra skates that would be willing to loan or donate to the City.

During citizen input Mayor Robinson recognized the Nurse Practitioners in the State of Idaho for their contributions to health care and proclaimed November 8th thru November 14th, 2020 as National Nurse Practitioner Week in the City of Soda Springs. There was no other citizen input.

The project list was reviewed. Engineer Skinner continues to work on the playground/City Park security system and mentioned it will be able to access WiFi from the Library. He explained initially the project was possible due to a Silver Star grant which is no longer available but he will reach out to Direct Communications to see if they will partner on the project and continue to investigate and come back with an estimate. The Streets Department service truck has been purchased and there are also funds in the budget for a Water/Sewer Department service truck that will be pursued. Engineer Skinner noted there will be a compliance audit for the Wastewater Treatment Plant on November 24th with the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ). This is supposed to be an annual inspection but hasn't been done for three years or since the new Idaho Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Program (IPDES) permit and electronic Discharge Monitoring Reports (DMR) have been in place. He also mentioned he is working on the surplus equipment auction and will be meeting with Prime Time Auction on Monday.

Clerk Vorwaller gave an update on the back file scanning project. She answered some questions from the previous meeting regarding the quality and verification of the scanning. She will be proceeding with reviewing what should not be shredded and will begin sorting and boxing. She will report back with the final cost for this first batch when it is ready to go.

The proposal for restaurant vouchers in lieu of the Christmas Party was reviewed. The Clerk detailed the average cost of the annual party and to give \$100 to full time and \$50 to part time in vouchers would be similar in cost. Councilmember Hart suggested extending the expiration for use through the end of March. The vouchers will go out with the 1st payroll in December. The annual Thanksgiving turkey was also discussed. It was noted the last pay period of the month will actually fall on January 1st and the Council suggested letting the employees know due to the holiday it may not show in bank accounts until the following Monday. Councilmember Goode moved to approve the Christmas voucher proposal as submitted by the Clerk, seconded by Councilmember Gambles. All in favor, motion carried.

The Clerk forwarded a request from Fire Chief Squires to have fiber optic internet connected to the Fire Station at the same cost as the other City buildings. The Chief mentioned the need due to more trainings being provided by online sources. The ability to cover the costs with COVID funding was reviewed. The Council suggested pursuing a WiFi connection to the Library's service.

Councilmember Goode noted the recent spike in COVID-19 cases in the area and expressed his desire for the City to do all it can to emphasize the need to follow the Governor's and Health Department's guidelines. The number of cases daily in Caribou County and the increase since the onset was reviewed and discussed. He noted Councilmember Hart's excellent letter to the editor in the newspaper which mentioned a good message put out by the United States Chamber of Commerce titled "It's Up To All Of Us: How To Slow The Spread, Keep Our Local Communities Healthy And Keep America Open." Councilmember Goode stressed the need to continue to spread the word but not the disease and encourage everyone to be conscientious and help protect our community by following the guidelines. He suggested the Mayor and Council provide a reminder every meeting. It was noted that several religious congregations are trying to help by limiting meetings and mandating masks for activities. The Council also discussed the difference in surrounding County case counts. Councilmember Hart expressed frustration with the information provided by the Health Dept. and would like to know by zip code the number of cases to help each city's officials know what necessary steps should be taken. Councilmember Gambles agreed. The Mayor mentioned he feels the community is adapting to the latest increase in numbers because he sees more people wearing masks, but some have health issues that make it hard to wear a mask. Councilmember Hart was encouraged by all the voters wearing masks.

Councilmember Hart moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:15pm, seconded by Councilmember Goode. All in favor, motion carried.

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PASSED AND APPROVED BY THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL THIS 18TH DAY OF
NOVEMBER, 2020.

Austin W. Robinson, Mayor

ATTEST:

Tausha Vorwaller, Clerk