

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SODA SPRINGS, CARIBOU COUNTY, IDAHO HELD DECEMBER 2ND, 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
SCOTT K. GAMBLES

EXCUSED:

ALSO PRESENT:	Mark Steele via telephone	Alan Skinner, Engineer
	Chief Scott Shaw II	Tausha Vorwaller, Clerk
		Gregg Haney, Attorney

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

The Mayor noted the full Council was present.

The previous meeting minutes were presented for review. Councilmember Goode stated he had reviewed and noted no changes or amendments needed, he then moved to accept the November 18th, 2020 minutes 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 for November 17th thru November 30th, 2020, seconded by Councilmember Gambles. Councilmember Hart asked about the high cost of scaffolding rented for use at the Wastewater Treatment Plant and suggested purchasing our own if it is used often. Engineer Skinner explained the need for someone certified to install the scaffolding and mentioned it is only needed about every other year and may be less with the new chains. A vote on the motion to approve the accounts payable was called. All in favor, motion carried.

(SEE ATTACHED ACCOUNTS PAYABLE REGISTER FOR DETAIL)

Councilmember Gambles moved to approve and accept the Payroll dated November 1st thru November 30th, 2020. Councilmember Goode seconded the motion. Councilmember Goode asked if someone had been hired for the new maintenance position. The Mayor reported yes and two new police officers had also been hired. Chief Shaw reported the two new officers, Bryce Matthews and Colton Kirby had completed their pre-classes and are registered to begin school on January 11th, 2021. The Chief also explained the increased overtime by certain officers is due to others using up their personal time hours before the end of the year. A vote on the motion to approve the payroll was called. All in favor, motion carried.

Councilmember Lau revisited the past discussion regarding fees. He explained the premise behind his proposals. His opinion is that city residents should pay as low as possible fees because they already pay taxes. He suggested pet fees should encourage spay and neutering by raising the fee for unsprayed-unneutered animals and lowering the cost if they are spayed or neutered. He also discussed the very low airport land lease fees and noted he wants to review with the Airport Commission. The Council discussed if the hangars at the airport and buildings in the Industrial Park were being taxed separate from the property. Engineer Skinner will check with the County assessor. Councilmember Lau also stressed his desire to make building fees and water and sewer hookup fees more reasonable to encourage new house developments. Councilmember Hart agreed he would like the City to provide an incentive and be able to advertise that to developers and also use that to work with local industry to encourage new employees to build in the City. Councilmember Lau stated he and the staff will take another couple of weeks to review and meet with the Airport Commission before presenting a proposal for fee changes. Councilmember Gambles will discuss recreation fees with Director Billman.

The project list and equipment purchases were briefly discussed. Engineer Skinner requested approval to commit to purchasing a service truck for the water/sewer department if one comes available that is within the budgeted amount. The Council agreed. The police department vehicles are 60 to 90 days out. Attorney Haney reminded the Chief that he needs to review the final agreement.

Engineer Skinner reported on the recent inspection of the Wastewater Treatment Plant done by the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ). He explained this was the first inspection since the new National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit was put in place and the DEQ compliance officers were also new to their jobs. The focus was a lot different than past inspections and more time was spent reviewing reports than in the plant. Several reports are required which the City had the original versions of but they may need to be updated and the Quality Assurance report needed to be submitted electronically. A Toxicity Reduction Strategy report was the only new one that was needed. Engineer Skinner asked the Mayor and Council to review and let him know if they see anything that needs updated. There should be a report from the inspection in about 60 days but he doesn't anticipate any major issues. Reports required coming up in January are the annual sludge and, receiving water monitoring. Managing the permit for the next five years mostly involves the new testing and monitoring of copper. The copper testing before was only required when accepting sludge but it will now be monitored regularly and may determine if changes to the permit are needed in the future.

Engineer Skinner updated the Council on the offer from the Idaho Nature Conservancy (TNC) to gift to the City the property including the Formation Cave and Formation Springs Preserve. The TNC is willing to include a \$10,000 endowment with the property to help with maintenance and Engineer Skinner mentioned the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has also helped with the maintenance in the past. Councilmember Hart verified the endowment funds could be set aside for this use only. The Clerk stated yes it can be handled similar to memorials set aside in the Library Fund. Councilmember Goode

reviewed the maintenance and improvement costs and suggested getting a commitment from the BLM that they will continue to contribute to the maintenance and clarify the specifics. Engineer Skinner will continue to work with the agencies and finalize the agreements for approval.

During citizen input Councilmember Gambles expressed his appreciation for the Thanksgiving turkey he received from the City. He said it was a very good turkey. Mayor Robinson encouraged everyone to be mindful of local merchants noting that every business matters and to continue to support local businesses even after Christmas.

Councilmember Goode gave an update on the current COVID-19 statistics and shared his concern about Caribou County which has had 10 deaths and 450 cases. He pointed out this is 2 ½ times the statewide average for deaths per cases. He mentioned the White House COVID Task Force's recent statement encouraging everyone to be extra careful to avoid taxing the medical care facilities. He emphasized the need to be cautious and do the right thing. Councilmember Hart added that he encourages everyone to please try to wear a mask noting other areas you visit everyone is wearing a mask but here you are a minority if you are wearing one. The Council briefly reviewed how the recreation programs were going. The Mayor noted it was going well and was streamed online which seemed to work well. All agreed they commended everyone for trying to do their best.

Councilmember Goode moved to adjourn the meeting at 5:45pm, seconded by Councilmember Hart. All in favor, motion carried.

PASSED AND APPROVED BY THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL THIS 16TH DAY OF DECEMBER, 2020.

Austin W. Robinson, Mayor

ATTEST:

Tausha Vorwaller, Clerk