

**M**INUTES OF THE VERNAL CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING HELD  
January 19, 2022 at 7:00 p.m. in the Vernal City Council room, 374 East Main,  
Vernal, Utah 84078.

**PRESENT:** Councilmembers Nicholas Porter, Dave Everett, Ted Munford, and Corey Foley and Mayor Doug Hammond.

**WELCOME:** Mayor Doug Hammond welcomed everyone to the meeting.

**INVOCATION OR UPLIFTING THOUGHT:** The invocation was given by Councilmember Ted Munford.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Councilmember Dave Everett.

**APPROVAL OF CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES OF JANUARY 5, 2022:** *Councilmember Nicholas Porter moved to approve the minutes of January 5, 2022. Councilmember Corey Foley seconded the motion. The motion passed with Councilmembers Everett, Munford, Foley and Porter voting in favor.*

**APPROVAL OF CITY COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES OF JANUARY 3, 2022:** *Councilmember Ted Munford moved to approve the minutes of January 3, 2022. Councilmember Nicholas Porter seconded the motion. The motion passed with Councilmembers Everett, Munford, Foley and Porter voting in favor.*

**PUBLIC BUSINESS**

**CONSIDER REQUEST FOR FUNDING OF OUTLAW TRAIL THEATER EVENTS:** Jay Haslem reported that they received \$3000 towards their show last year. With their success, they had hoped to sell enough tickets to not need additional funding this year. However, they still came up short and requested \$5000 to purchase the rights to perform the show. Councilmember Ted Munford asked about a profit loss or balance sheet. Jay Haslem responded that Carson Young was still working on it. Councilmember Ted Munford liked the idea of expanding the show and was in favor of funding \$3500. Councilmember Corey Foley asked if Naples City is providing any funds. Jay Haslem replied that they received \$1500 from Naples City. Councilmember Corey Foley asked Quinn Bennion if there was any money budgeted. Quinn Bennion replied that there are funds in the miscellaneous line item in the amount of \$6000. So far none of the funds have been spent out of the miscellaneous account and the City is halfway through the year. After further discussion, *Councilmember Nicholas Porter moved to approve \$3500 sponsorship for the Outlaw Trail event. Councilmember Ted Munford seconded the motion.*

*Councilmember Munford.....aye;*  
*Councilmember Everett .....aye;*  
*Councilmember Porter .....aye;*  
*Councilmember Foley.....aye.*

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**SOLID WASTE RATE REVIEW:** Carl Morton proposed an increase in rates for solid waste services. The fee from G&H Garbage will increase each year beginning in 2022 so the staff proposes to raise the garbage rates from \$14 each can to \$15 and from \$4.60 for an additional can to \$5 dollars for this year with an incremental increase each year. This fee would be for the duration of the 5 year contract. Councilmember Dave Everett asked if the rate increase is in the contract. Quinn Bennion and Carl Morton both stated that the rate increase is in the contract. Quinn Bennion went on to say that if the City doesn't escalate their fee, they would have to subsidize the difference. Quinn Bennion also stated that it works better to average the balance out over the five year period, rather than increase the fee each year. Councilmember Corey Foley asked what the fee would be at the end of the 5 years. Carl Morton replied that in 2025 the cost would be \$15.45 per can and went on to say that averaging the price out over the contract with one increase would be better for the customers. Councilmember Ted Munford reminded everyone that \$15 per can was lower in price than the high end bid of the competition from last year. *Councilmember Nick Porter moved to approve the increase to \$15 over the 5 year contract, Councilmember Dave Everett seconded the motion. The motion passed with the following roll call vote:*

*Councilmember Munford.....aye;*  
*Councilmember Everett .....aye;*  
*Councilmember Porter .....aye;*  
*Councilmember Foley..... aye.*

**REVIEW OF INTERLOCAL AGREEMENT FOR DOWNTOWN CRA:** Quinn Bennion stated that this meeting would be the first reading, review and overview of the Interlocal agreement with the City with the Community Redevelopment Agency. He went on to say that the City is in the process of establishing a CRA and mentioned that on December 15<sup>th</sup> there was a public hearing which had a great turn out. At the last meeting, during the agency board meeting, the Downtown plan and project area were approved. Quinn Bennion mentioned that he is visiting with six taxing entities who the City would like to participate in the CRA including Uintah County, Water Conservancy District, Mosquito Abatement, Uintah School District and Central Utah Water. The City's next step would be to review a draft agreement. Some of the highlights, including different funding sources, both public and private were discussed and have been obtained. The increment tax is shared between the CRA agency and the entity in a 75% / 25% split. The School District indicated that 20 years is a long time and suggested shifting to a 90%/10% split for the first five years, then 75% / 25% for the next 10 years, and finally go to a 50%/50% split. Quinn Bennion also mentioned that the City hired a consultant. There was some discussion regarding a cap and the consensus of the Council was to not have a cap. Quinn Bennion mentioned another item is if the downtown plan is successful, the agreement can be changed in the future.

**UPDATE REGARDING ASHLEY SPRINGS UTILITY PROJECT:** Keith Despain explained that the City considered this project two years ago in hopes of increasing security to the City's water supply. He went on to say that almost all of the City's water comes from Ashley Spring that is covered by a building. He recommended adding more security with cameras as well

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as good measuring devices for water flow. There were several road blocks such as Covid and right-of-ways and the City has now been able to secure those right-of-ways. The plan is to run power and fiber up to Ashley Spring area. Councilmember Ted Munford asked if the utilities would be underground. Keith Despain answered that most of the utilities would be underground. There is time crunch with Strata for scheduling so in order to proceed, the City only has a one month time frame. The treatment plant has fiber and power so it can be taken from that location and go straight north to this project. The total price tag is around \$300,000 between Vernal City, Ashley Valley Water and Central Water Conservancy District. The City's portion would be \$180,000. Currently the City does not have the funds in this year's budget; however, we have other ARPA funding available. Councilmember Ted Munford stated this is important and trumps any other project. Councilmember Corey Foley asked if there are rights to the water. Keith Despain answered yes, the City owns the water along with Ashley Valley Water, Maeser Water and local farmers. Councilmember Corey Foley asked if the City is not using all the water could it be pumped back to Red Fleet. Quinn Bennion replied that it is not known exactly what is coming out of the spring box. There is potential that not all of the City's water is being used and could be leased in the future. The other benefit, long term, is the whole system is currently mechanical and could be upgraded to an electrical system. Councilmember Corey Foley suggested the staff contact Strata to put this project on their schedule. Councilmember Nicholas Porter said that this project is an excellent idea.

### **INTERVIEW APPLICANTS AND SELECTION OF MID-TERM COUNCIL VACANCY:**

Mayor Doug Hammond explained the process to fill the vacant seat left by Travis Allan's resignation. The four candidates who submitted letters of interest are Robin O'Driscoll, Reid Samuels, Randall Mills and Stephen Ford, and they will be interviewed by the Council. Quinn Bennion mentioned that per State law, the process had to occur in an open meeting. Each candidate was asked to step out of the meeting until their time to be interviewed to avoid any of them hearing the questions and answers.

Councilmember Corey Foley disclosed for the record that Mr. Mills is his father-in-law and another applicant is his Bishop. Councilmember Ted Munford disclosed that he knows all four applicants fairly well and is on good terms with each one. Councilmember Dave Everett also disclosed that he knows each candidate.

Each Councilmember asked each candidate a specific question as part of the selection process as follows:

Councilmember Ted Munford asked each candidate the following question - Explain or describe a time you had to make a hard decision.

- Randall Mills introduced himself and responded to the question: In his time he has filled leadership rolls and had to fire people. Mr. Mills went on to say that he gathered

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the information and went to the individual face-to-face and told them that it was necessary to part business because of facts.

- Stephen Ward introduced himself and responded to the question: A hard decision was made a year and a half ago when he decided to move from Lehi to Vernal. He left a good job, good neighborhood and friends. His family was not excited at first yet he knew it was the right thing to do. He noted that his family has been blessed coming to Vernal.
- Robin O'Driscoll introduced herself and responded to the question: During her time of improving the golf course, a prominent citizen in Vernal was upset and wanted to take his family sledding. She had to explain the reason sledding was not permitted at this time. They didn't want to turn away kids but couldn't risk losing the new grass that was growing.
- Reid Samuels introduced himself and responded to the question: His wife who had troubles giving birth to their last child and had to make a decision where she couldn't have more children. He prayed and soul searched and decided to settle on the children they had. Going overseas was hard also, but not the same.

Councilmember Corey Foley asked each candidate the following question: What will you reply if asked about the Downtown Plan as many people are ok with how it is now and do not like change.

- Randall Mills responded that it is inevitable that the City is going to grow and needs to go forward. Technology advances daily and is necessary to improve our community. It is spending of a great amount of money but growth is inevitable.
- Stephen Ward responded with the following question "What is it that you like about Vernal most?" Each town has good and bad things that can be improved upon to build a common interest. Vernal can still keep a small town feeling if it is developed right. Small town residents know their neighbor, business owners and councilmembers which is a wonderful thing. The City can still do things to make life better, safe for children and the elderly, invite outsiders to enjoy Vernal as there are great things to offer.
- Robin O'Driscoll responds it is their opinion if they are ok with it how it is; however she would try to get them to see the bigger picture and would want to see the excitement on their faces as it gets better. She noticed that the old True Value building has broken windows and it breaks her heart, knowing it will be different. The Rec Center got backlash when it was being built and look at it now.

Quinn Bennion stated that if Robin wins, she can have the Mayors Walk back. Councilmember Corey Foley laughed and stated for the record that he will even dress up if Mayor Hammond does and if Councilmember Ted Munford will make him a costume.

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- Reid Samuels responded that decisions have to be made. People that make those decisions might be wrong or right. He noted that his great grandfather donated land and he hates to see it undeveloped.

Councilmember Dave Everett asked each candidate the following question: Sometimes you will experience duties and responsibilities that far extend the reach of just meetings. You will receive phone calls that aren't always nice, be asked to volunteer or give a speech, lose friends over decisions you have to make because they are the right decision to make, etc.. Would any of these requests be something you cannot fulfill? Are you willing to accept that responsibility?

- Randall Mills responded "Absolutely, I was raised by good parents and my father taught me how to work". He understands that he will be questioned and can be civil in response as he has been chewed out by the best and waiting on the rest.
- Stephen Ward responded "Absolutely not, I have volunteered for 9 years as scout master taking boy scouts once a week. I have no problem putting time in and speaking". He noted that as a middle school teacher, he had to interact with many types of people in some not very happy situations. As a public servant, council member, serving public, if needs aren't met that was on him. He was willing to listen to individuals and ready to take that on.
- Robin O'Driscoll responded she would be willing and added that she never shuts her phone off and always answered it because of the position she was in, including answering her phone on Sunday afternoon. She also mentioned that she has volunteered as well.
- Reid Samuels responded he had worked in the oil and gas industry for a long time, it was not quite as delicate and as far as working extra time, that's not a problem.

Councilmember Nick Porter asked each candidate the following question: Is there anything you would want as a pet project? Something you would like to continue on or change? What is your vision?

- Randall Mills responded the number one reason he put in for this position is because of outside influences moving in to the City. He explained that as citizens we need to stand up and not allow liberal and ridiculous ideas. he would like to defend this town and be responsible for funds and decisions while providing what is best for the community. Mr. Mills finished up by stating that we represent the great people of this City.
- Stephen Ward responded some of his goals is to develop open space by adding foot trails and bike trail. He went on to say that he would add more outdoor items as the City would allow.
- Robin O'Driscoll responded she has nothing that she sees needs changed at this time but that would come with time and sitting on the Council. She went on to say that she

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loves the community reinvestment project. She went on to say that Main Street tells a lot to visitors about the area and she wants to see the downtown project completed.

- Reid Samuels responded that the Kids Canal has him concerned. He played in the water and fished there as a kid. He is also concerned about the trees dying when they pipe the canal.

Councilmember Corey Foley encourages each of the candidates to be a part of the City's committees such as the Planning Commission that currently needs members. Councilmember Dave Everett added that in over the ten years of serving on the City Council, he has been very fortunate to have an amazing group of people sitting on the Council. It is an honorable position and whoever receives the position, congratulations.

Mayor Doug Hammond thanked everyone for participating in this process and announced that the consensus of the Council was to appoint Robin O'Driscoll as the new Councilmember for a two year term fulfilling the remainder of Travis Allan's term.

**ADJOURN:** There being no further business; *Councilmember Nicholas Porter moved to adjourn. Councilmember Dave Everett seconded the motion. The motion passed with a unanimous vote and the meeting was declared adjourned.*

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Mayor Doug Hammond

ATTEST:

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Roxanne Behunin, City Recorder

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