

MINUTES OF THE VERNAL CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING HELD
FEBRUARY 20, 2019 at 7:00 p.m. in the Vernal City Council room, 374 East Main,
Vernal, Utah 84078.

PRESENT: Mayor Doug Hammond and Councilmembers Samantha Scott, Bert Clark, Dave Everett and Ted Munford. Councilmember Travis Allan was excused.

WELCOME: Mayor Doug Hammond welcomed everyone to the meeting.

INVOCATION OR UPLIFTING THOUGHT: The invocation was given by Councilmember Bert Clark.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Councilmember Samantha Scott.

APPROVAL OF CITY COUNCIL MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 6, 2019: *Councilmember Dave Everett moved to approve the minutes of February 6, 2019. Councilmember Samantha Scott seconded the motion. The motion passed with Councilmembers Munford, Everett, Scott and Clark voting in favor.*

REQUEST FOR SPONSORSHIP SUPPORT OF DIAMOND MOUNTAIN SPEEDWAY – ALLEN HACKING: Allen Hacking explained that a special event will be held at the Diamond Mountain speedway in June and requested the Council consider sponsorship of the event. Councilmember Ted Munford asked if this organization is non-profit. Allen Hacking stated that they are not a 501C3. Quinn Bennion stated that he met with Allen and went over this event and although nothing has been budgeted to sponsor this event for FY2019, the City does have funds in the miscellaneous fund account. Councilmember Samantha Scott asked how many days this race would run. Allen Hacking stated it is for two days with 107 participants pre-registered. The estimated visitors would be around 300-400 and spectators around 800. Only three teams are local with the rest coming from the surrounding States and Canada. The racers compete in three divisions – modified, stock and national, and receive national points for this race. Quinn Bennion stated this is the first year this event has been back to Vernal for quite a while. Allen Hacking stated they hosted this event in 2007. There was some discussion regarding the revenue for this event and if it makes a profit. Allen Hacking stated that last year they were in the red \$1900. Quinn Bennion noted that Uintah County tourism approved \$5000 for this event. *Councilmember Dave Everett moved to approve a \$1000 sponsorship for the Diamond Mountain Speedway event. Councilmember Bert Clark seconded the motion. The motion passed with the following roll call vote:*

Councilmember Munford.....aye;
Councilmember Everettaye;
Councilmember Scott.....aye;
Councilmember Clark.....aye.

REQUEST FOR SPONSORSHIP OF DINOSAUR ROUND-UP RODEO AND SPECIAL NEEDS RODEO – MIKE KARREN AND CARSON YOUNG: Mike Karren, president of the Dinosaur Roundup rodeo displayed a presentation of the 2018 rodeo. Carson Young,

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vice-president of the Rodeo Committee, explained the highlights for 2019 including that it is on the PRCA Pro tour which will bring in top contestants and more media exposure. The marketing for a PRCA event will reach over 1 million people which will help ticket sales; however, the purse has to be higher for the contestants. Councilmember Ted Munford asked about their non-profit status. Carson Young answered that they are a 501C3 organization. Quinn Bennion explained that for the past several years the City has sponsored this event in the amount of \$22,500 and the special rodeo in the amount of \$1500. Councilmember Samantha Scott asked how much money the rodeo has in their fund. Carson Young stated that they have a target of \$150,000 in case the rodeo is canceled and they still have to pay stock contracts etc. *Councilmember Dave Everett moved to approve the Dinosaur Roundup Rodeo sponsorship in the amount of \$22,500 and the special rodeo in the amount of \$1500. Councilmember Bert Clark seconded the motion. The motion passed with the following roll call vote:*

Councilmember Munford.....aye;
Councilmember Everettaye;
Councilmember Scott.....aye;
Councilmember Clark.....aye.

VERNAL RECOVERY DAY COALITION PRESENTATION AND REQUEST FOR BOARD MEMBERS – SUSAN MANSFIELD: Mayor Hammond stated this presentation will be postponed as Ms. Mansfield is ill and cannot attend.

VERNAL AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE ANNUAL REPORT - JOEL BROWN: Joel Brown, director of the Vernal Area Chamber of Commerce, introduced his Board members present at the meeting, Robin O’Driscoll, Ben Cluff, Mike Faucett, President and Marilyn Wallis. He presented the annual report showing what the Chamber has done for 2018. Many of the downtown revitalization projects are starting to come together including the blade sign project and wayfinding. Councilmember Bert Clark asked what the cost is for a blade sign. Joel Brown answered that the sign is \$159 and is built by Zeco. The City waives the permit fee for these signs. He stated that the Legislative Committee has been re-established and are watching State bills that will affect sales tax, homelessness etc. The next event sponsored by the Chamber is guest speaker Dan Clark scheduled for March 7th at the conference center. The “ThisisVernal” website is also up that displays the community calendar and the Chamber was instrumental in this endeavor to promote the area. Councilmember Clark asked how their recruitment for new membership was going. Joel Brown stated it is tough with the downturn in the economy, but they are attracting a few more businesses each month and have around 300 members. Mayor Hammond thanked Mr. Brown for his report.

REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF AMENDMENT TO WHITE HOUSE ACADEMY RENTAL AGREEMENT: Lisa Henderson, Board member for White House Academy, explained that the School is hoping to reduce costs to remain operational. She noted that several teachers are willing to forgo their pay for the remainder of the school year to keep the school running. In the past they would offer scholarships and they are no longer able to do that. The school is LDS based and is listed as non-profit with 75 students. An open house was held

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and there are families that would like to enroll their children, but the cost is prohibitive. She asked the Council to consider negotiating a lower rent. Councilmember Samantha Scott asked what reduction they are asking for. Lisa Henderson stated they are currently paying \$3844 and would like a reduction to \$2500 a month. Councilmember Ted Munford asked what the current commercial rent rate is right now. Allen Parker stated it is wide ranging based on location and type of building. Quinn Bennion stated that the current lease agreement goes thru June, and he can get more data before a decision is made. He noted that the tenant pays the water and sewer costs and the City pays 42% of the other utilities as well as handling maintenance. There was a potential renter for the remainder of the building but the parking was an issue. Councilmember Munford stated he is in favor of looking at this issue and make adjustments based on the economy. The consensus was to bring back a recommendation.

**REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF AMENDING THE VERNAL CITY MUNICIPAL
CODE CHAPTER 5.74 - TAXI-CAB LICENSING- ORDINANCE NO. 2019-03:**

Quinn Bennion explained that the next two items being proposed would change the regulations and fees for taxicab drivers in Vernal. There are currently three taxi-cab vendors in Vernal and they struggle to keep drivers. One of the issues is a potential driver has to pay a \$75 fee to the City and have their criminal background reviewed. The staff recognized that the process is discouraging drivers from getting licensed. The drivers, if they go through the process to be employed, do not stay very long so it was suggested that the City consider issuing a temporary license at a cost of \$20. The last few weeks the City has had thirteen people come in to sign up as taxi-cab drivers with a lower fee. Councilmember Bert Clark stated that when this Ordinance was adopted the fee was set to cover the cost of the background checks. Quinn explained the fee only covers the Utah background and the applicant has to obtain their out of state background themselves. Roxanne Behunin stated that many times the Utah background will show if they are a multi-state offender so the license clerk is aware there is something from another state. Quinn Bennion stated that the taxi-cab owners like the process, not the fee. Councilmember Ted Munford stated that the point of this ordinance is public safety and suggested the penalty be increased if the drivers still do not come in for a license. Quinn Bennion stated he would look into it. He noted that the companies seem to patrol themselves watching who is driving. Mr. Corey Foley asked how this ordinance would affect UBER and Lyft drivers. Quinn Bennion state that State statute governs ride share operations and the City is not allowed to regulate it. Those large companies do perform background and security checks on their drivers. One other provision of the ordinance change is to accept licenses from jurisdictions with similar requirements only. So if a taxi-cab company is licensed in Uintah County who does not require background checks, that license is not recognized by Vernal City. Those companies are allowed to drop off fares in Vernal City, but they cannot pick up a fare. He noted that Uintah County is working on revising their requirements. *Councilmember Ted Munford moved to approve Ordinance No. 2019-03 as presented. Councilmember Samantha Scott seconded the motion. The motion passed with the following roll call vote:*

Councilmember Munford.....aye;
Councilmember Everettaye;
Councilmember Scott.....aye;

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Councilmember Clark..... aye.

REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF AMENDING THE VERNAL CITY LICENSING FEES FOR TAXI-CAB DRIVERS - RESOLUTION NO. 2019-04: Quinn Bennion stated this is the resolution to lower the fee for a taxi-cab driver as discussed. *Councilmember Ted Munford moved to approve Resolution No. 2019-04. Councilmember Samantha Scott seconded the motion. The motion passed with the following roll call vote:*

Councilmember Munford.....aye;
Councilmember Everettaye;
Councilmember Scott.....aye;
Councilmember Clark..... aye.

RECOMMENDATION FOR APPROVAL OF PLANNING COMMISSION MEMBERS TO FILL CURRENT VACANCIES AND REMOVAL OF A MEMBER: Allen Parker stated that the removal of a member does not need to be discussed as he is going to resign. There are two individuals willing to serve on the Planning Commission. The first resident is Troy Allred who has served on this Board in the past and moved into the County. He now lives in the City again and is interested in serving. Mr. Parker suggested he be appointed to serve as a regular member of the Planning Commission. Councilmember Bert Clark agreed that he has served before and is very knowledgeable. Allen Parker stated that the other resident interested in serving is Mr. Corey Foley. He is a business owner and has an interest in how Vernal City grows and develops. He suggested he be appointed as an alternate. Mayor Hammond stated he appreciates Mr. Foley’s willingness to be involved. *Councilmember Samantha Scott moved to appoint Troy Allred as a regular member and Corey Foley as an alternate member of the Planning Commission for four year terms. Councilmember Dave Everett seconded the motion. The motion passed with Councilmembers Scott, Everett, Clark and Munford voting in favor.*

DISCUSSION ON DINO DAYS AND REQUESTED STREET CLOSINGS: Quinn Bennion explained that last year was the first Dino Saur Day’s balloon festival for Vernal. There were 17 hot air balloons, a craft fair, and battle of the bands. Unfortunately the balloons were not able to launch because of the weather. However, the rest of the festival was a huge success. This year they are hoping to have 20 balloons launching from the field behind the recreation center. The night time events will include a balloon glow and battle of the bands concert. The committee would like to block off South Vernal Avenue after the bank’s drive-thru closes for two days for the concerts. They have also requested that the City consider closing Main Street for the balloon glow. Last year there were two comments from neighboring businesses who did not like the street being closed. The balloon glow with the baskets and balloons would be from 7 pm to 10 pm similar to a parade. Mayor Hammond stated that event would have to be coordinated with UDOT. Quinn Bennion stated that would be a large hurdle. Councilmember Bert Clark stated the Main Street businesses will need to be notified also. Councilmember Samantha Scott stated this event may be beneficial to those businesses. Councilmember Dave Everett stated events like this will help the City build a reputation as being on a more artsy community and should be pursued. The Council tentatively agreed with the

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concept for this event if UDOT will approve closing Main Street. The event is scheduled for Mother’s day weekend.

2019 LEGISLATIVE UPDATE: Quinn Bennion explained that so far over 1000 bills have been filed with the Utah State Legislature with a varying degree of impact to the City. One large bill is based on affordable housing. He noted that most of the Legislators live along the Wasatch Front where housing is a struggle. The Utah League of Cities and Towns is supporting SB34, version 3 that only has a few additional requirements. The next bill is the homeless bill sponsored by Representative Chew that lowers the threshold for rural communities with 25 beds to be eligible for funds and not pay fees. The sales tax legislation has not been filed yet so at this point it is not known what will be in that bill. Mr. Bennion stated he will keep the Council informed on any bills that will have a high impact.

STAFF REPORTS

Special Service Districts:

Mayor Hammond stated he spoke with Commissioner Stringer and they expect to receive around \$12 million dollars in mineral lease funds and the Special Service Districts budgeted \$13 million.

Website Launch:

Quinn Bennion reminded the Council that the new website will launch March 4th.

Road conditions:

Councilmember Samantha Scott stated that there are pot holes in front of Mort’s car wash that need attention. Allen Parker stated that the weather has not allowed the crew to do any maintenance work and they will look at it.

Overlook items.

Mayor Hammond stated that the BLM would love to have the pavilion from the overlook to put at Fantasy Canyon.

CONVENE INTO CLOSED SESSION: *Councilmember Bert moved to convene into closed session to hold a strategy session to discuss pending or imminent litigation and reconvene into open session once the discussion is completed. Councilmember Samantha Scott seconded the motion. The motion passed with the following roll call vote:*

- Councilmember Munford.....aye;*
- Councilmember Everettaye;*
- Councilmember Scott.....aye;*
- Councilmember Clark.....aye.*

RECONVENE INTO OPEN SESSION: The meeting reconvened into open session.

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ADJOURN: There being no further business, *Councilmember Ted Munford moved to adjourn. Councilmember Samantha Scott seconded the motion. The motion passed with a unanimous vote and the meeting was declared adjourned.*

Mayor Doug Hammond

ATTEST:

Roxanne Behunin, Deputy Recorder

(S E A L)