

**M**INUTES OF THE VERNAL CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING HELD  
MARCH 18, 2020 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, Travis Allan and Bert Clark 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 Travis Allan.

**APPROVAL OF CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES OF MARCH 4, 2020:** *Councilmember Bert Clark moved to approve the minutes of March 4, 2020. Councilmember Dave Everett seconded the motion. The motion passed with Councilmembers Everett, Allan, Munford, Porter and Clark voting in favor.*

**REQUEST FOR SPONSORSHIP OF NEW FREEDOM FEST, 4<sup>TH</sup> OF JULY EVENTS - SAMANTHA SCOTT:** Samantha Scott explained that a new event is being planned for the 4<sup>th</sup> of July. She explained some of the activities being planned and gave the elected officials a copy of the proposed budget. Also, there will be a patriotic field of flags at the walking park. She asked the Council to consider sponsoring this event in the amount of \$1000. Mayor Doug Hammond asked if most of the activities will be at the park. Samantha Scott answered yes, except for the parade. Councilmember Ted Munford asked if they are a non-profit group. Samantha Scott answered that it is sponsored by a charitable organization, the Friends of Ashley Valley. After further discussion, *Councilmember Travis Allan moved to sponsor the 4<sup>th</sup> of July event in the amount of \$1000 and the fireworks display in the amount of \$3000. Councilmember Nicholas Porter seconded the motion. The motion passed with the following roll call vote:*

*Councilmember Munford.....aye;*  
*Councilmember Allan .....aye;*  
*Councilmember Everett .....aye;*  
*Councilmember Porter .....aye;*  
*Councilmember Clark..... aye.*

**REQUEST FOR SPONSORSHIP OF DINOSAUR ROUNDUP RODEO & SPECIAL NEEDS RODEO:** Carson Young, representing the Dinosaur Roundup Rodeo, thanked the Council for their support of this event, and are optimistic that the Rodeo will be held this year. The Dinosaur Roundup Rodeo was listed on the pro rodeo tour last year and they have pledged to do that again if the prize money is increased. It will be live streamed to bring more media attention. Mr. Young explained who would be performing this year and providing the stock. Also, the Committee is working on a Junior Rodeo Camp to try to get more youth interested in this sport. Unfortunately there is a decline in sponsorship revenue for this year. The hope is there will be good ticket sales to help cover the costs. The current fund balance will cover the contracts if the rodeo has to be canceled. The dates for the rodeo are July 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup>. Carson asked the Council for financial support. Councilmember Dave Everett thanked the

**MINUTES OF THE VERNAL CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING HELD MARCH 18, 2020**

committee for their hard work to provide a quality event. Councilmember Ted Munford stated the rodeo is a staple of the community, and he is impressed with the financial stability of the rodeo which has not always been the case. One item to keep in mind is that the City wants to help events get off the ground and once they are stable to continue without a taxpayer subsidy, and it seems as though the rodeo is almost there. Carson Young agreed that their budget is better now than 4 years ago. However, to remain a tour rodeo additional funds will be needed. Councilmember Travis Allan stated one of his concerns is some events had to be taken out of the budget and how long can the City continue to help the rodeo when there are no funds for other necessary items. *After further discussion, Councilmember Ted Munford moved to sponsor the rodeo as a top sponsor in the amount of \$12,000.* Councilmember Bert Clark asked how much has been budgeted for the rodeo. Quinn Bennion answered \$22,500 for the main rode and \$1500 for the special needs rodeo. Councilmember Travis Allan asked about the sponsorship from Uintah County. Carson explained that although they donate \$25,000, the Western Park charges \$21,000. This year they have requested that the \$21,000 be earmarked for capital improvements. Mike Davis stated that he looked at their revenue and expenses and determined they would need around \$17,000 to break even. *Councilmember Travis Allan seconded the motion. Councilmember Ted Munford amended his motion to sponsor the main rodeo in the amount of \$12,000 and the special rodeo in the amount of \$1500. Councilmember Travis Allan seconded the motion. The motion passed with the following roll call vote:*

*Councilmember Munford.....aye;*  
*Councilmember Allan.....aye;*  
*Councilmember Everett.....nay;*  
*Councilmember Porter.....aye;*  
*Councilmember Clark.....nay.*

Councilmember Travis Allan suggested the Rodeo Committee come back to the City is they need additional financial help.

**REPORT FROM CITY AUDITOR FOR FY2019 - DOUG RASMUSSEN:** Doug Rasmussen presented the FY2019 audit to the elected officials. He explained that the financial statements present fairly a clean or unqualified opinion which is required by the State Auditor. He noted that the financial highlights show that the assets of the City exceed the liability by \$48 million dollars. However, there was a decrease of \$700,000 dollars at the close of the fiscal year in the general fund. Mike Davis clarified that the decrease was due to the payment to the Special Service District in the amount of \$400,000 for the chip seal project. Doug Rasmussen stated that overall the departments are spending less than anticipated with the budget having \$9.7 million in expenses and the actual amount spent being \$8.9 million dollars in the general fund. The utility funds, revenue and expenses had a net income that was positive with \$65,000 in the water fund, \$119,000 in the sewer fund and \$29,000 in the solid waste fund. This is significant as these funds need to overcome the depreciation that has been recorded. He commended the City for the financial position of the utility departments. Mr. Rasmussen explained that there are some items that need to be addressed. The first is the general fund balance. The State of Utah only allows a 25% fund balance for unrestricted funds and the City exceeded that amount. He

**MINUTES OF THE VERNAL CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING HELD MARCH 18, 2020**

noted that part of that will be taken care of this next fiscal year. Councilmember Bert Clark asked what the minimum amount the City should have is. Doug Rasmussen stated it cannot go below 10%. Another item is the financial reports must be presented to the elected officials monthly and quarterly with the quarterly statement being more detailed. The consensus was that could be easily remedied. Another item is the requirement for training on the open and public meetings law. The elected officials must take the training each year and take the new orientation for each term of office. *After further discussion, Councilmember Ted Munford moved to accept the audit report for FY2019. Nicholas Porter seconded the motion. The motion passed with the following roll call vote:*

*Councilmember Munford.....aye;*  
*Councilmember Allan .....aye;*  
*Councilmember Everett .....aye;*  
*Councilmember Porter .....aye;*  
*Councilmember Clark.....aye.*

**REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF AMENDED INTERLOCAL COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT WITH UINTAH BASIN NARCOTICS STRIKE FORCE - RESOLUTION NO. 2020-01:** Quinn Bennion stated that the Uintah Basin Narcotics Strike Force was formed through an interlocal agreement and that agreement needs to be renewed. Keith Campbell, Assistant Chief of Police, explained that this agreement will be for 50 years and has a governing board that meets quarterly. Councilmember Bert Clark asked if they still receive federal funding. Keith Campbell answered that yes they do receive a federal grant and each entity contributes to the budget. *After further discussion, Councilmember Travis Allan moved to approve the Interlocal Agreement for the UBNSF, Resolution No. 2020-01. Councilmember Bert Clark seconded the motion. The motion passed with the following roll call vote:*

*Councilmember Munford.....aye;*  
*Councilmember Allan .....aye;*  
*Councilmember Everett .....aye;*  
*Councilmember Porter .....aye;*  
*Councilmember Clark.....aye.*

**REQUEST TO AUTHORIZE THE MAYOR TO DECLARE LOCAL EMERGENCY AT APPROPRIATE TIME DUE TO OUTBREAK OF COVID-19 - QUINN BENNION:** Quinn Bennion explained that with the outbreak of the COVID-19 virus the City is considering declaring a local emergency. Currently, 20 Cities in the State have issued local emergency declarations along with Uintah County. He noted that the Mayor has the authority for this emergency order for 30 days. However, it is anticipated that this will need to be in place longer than 30 days once there is a confirmed case in Vernal. Councilmember Ted Munford asked what the benefit is to this declaration. Jeremy Raymond stated that the main reason is to allow the City to help with resources and if necessary have the State bring in resources and financial assistance. The Utah State Governor has declared the emergency, however, the State

**MINUTES OF THE VERNAL CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING HELD MARCH 18, 2020**

Emergency Management is requesting local governments also issue this declaration. *Councilmember Bert Clark moved to approve the declaration of local emergency once there is a confirm case of COVID-19. Councilmember Dave Everett seconded the motion. The motion passed with the following roll call vote:*

- Councilmember Munford.....aye;*
- Councilmember Allan .....aye;*
- Councilmember Everett .....aye;*
- Councilmember Porter .....aye;*
- Councilmember Clark.....aye.*

**REQUEST TO AMEND THE VERNAL CITY MUNICIPAL CODE - SECTION 15.01.010 - ADOPTION - FEES - ORDINANCE NO. 2020-02:**

Quinn Bennion explained that previously the City code listed out each code and when the State amends the codes, the City has to amend this code section. The City Attorney is suggesting the City simply approve the State codes as shown in the ordinance so they are automatically adopted and the City does not have to change them each time. *Councilmember Ted Munford moved to approve Ordinance No. 2020-02 as presented. Councilmember Nick Porter seconded the motion. The motion passed with the following roll call vote:*

- Councilmember Munford.....aye;*
- Councilmember Allan .....aye;*
- Councilmember Everett .....aye;*
- Councilmember Porter .....aye;*
- Councilmember Clark.....aye.*

**DISCUSSION ON FUTURE PUBLIC MEETINGS:** Quinn Bennion explained that the coronavirus has put the City in a unique situation where the Council is required by State law to meet at least once a month. The City code requires a quorum be present at the meeting location. With the State of Emergency and direction from the Governor not to have gatherings of more than 10 people, it may be difficult to hold meeting while trying to minimize the spread of this disease. Other cities and agencies are moving to on-line meetings using zoom or YouTube so residents can watch the meeting. Quinn recommended the Council consider approving items through a phone poll and ratify them at a future meeting. The Utah League of Cities and Towns has indicated that the State is going to suspend the rule of a meeting each month. Mayor Doug Hammond asked what will happen with the joint City / County meeting that is scheduled for next week. Quinn Bennion stated he will meet with the County Commission to see how that meeting will be handled. The consensus of the Council was to keep them informed and speak to each of them if necessary for urgent items.

**ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS**

COVID-19 procedures:

**MINUTES OF THE VERNAL CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING HELD MARCH 18, 2020**

Quinn Bennion reported that the staff has had several meetings regarding how to handle issues with the virus. One item is to encourage residents to not come to City Hall even though the building is open. Fortunately three of the four areas open to the public have glass which helps keep the employees safe. Credit card fees are being waived to allow residents to pay items on-line. With restaurants being closed, the police have had to help with traffic control at drive-up windows. Also, all use of the community room has been suspended for large groups.

Downtown drainage project:

Quinn explained that UDOT will begin the downtown drainage project the first part of April. Phase 1 will repair the collapsed line by Landmark Hotel. Phase 2 will be from 400 West to 500 East adding an additional irrigation line. That project is projected to start August 3<sup>rd</sup>

**CLOSED SESSION:** Councilmember Bert Clark moved to convene into closed session to hold a strategy sessions to discuss the purchase, exchange, or lease of real property, including any form of a water right or water shares and reconvene into open session when the discussion is finished. Councilmember Dave Everett seconded the motion. The motion passed with the following roll call vote:

- Councilmember Munford*.....aye;
- Councilmember Allan* .....aye;
- Councilmember Everett* .....aye;
- Councilmember Porter* .....aye;
- Councilmember Clark*..... aye.

**RECONVENE INTO OPEN SESSION AND ADJOURN:** The meeting reconvened into open session. There being no further business; *Councilmember Bert Clark moved to adjourn. Councilmember Ted Munford 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, Deputy Recorder

( S E A L )