

MINUTES OF THE VERNAL CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING HELD
AUGUST 19, 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 Bert Clark.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Councilmember Ted Munford.

APPROVAL OF CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES OF AUGUST 5, 2020: *Councilmember Nicholas Porter moved to approve the minutes of August 5, 2020. Councilmember Bert Clark seconded the motion. The motion passed with Councilmembers Everett, Munford, Allan, Porter and Clark voting in favor.*

DINOSAUR ROUNDUP RODEO COMMITTEE REPORT - MIKE KARREN & CARSON YOUNG: Mike Karren, president of the Dinosaur Roundup Rodeo Committee, stated that this has been a very challenging year. Thanks to all the volunteers and the community the Dinosaur Roundup Rodeo was able to be held this year. Even though this area is in green status for the virus, the Committee followed the recommendations from the State and Tri-County Health to keep everyone safe. Usually the rodeo has around 400 contestants. This year with all the other rodeos being cancelled there were over 800 participants with 44 of them being world champions. Tickets were sold to people from 30 different States and 4 Canadian provinces. The Rodeo also hosted a junior rodeo free to the public to support the youth and the future of rodeo. Carson Young stated the rodeo was live streamed to 42 million homes and the bullfighting was live stream on Facebook giving Vernal more exposure. As expected, Thursday night had a light crowd and Saturday had a great crowd. Production costs went up \$60,000 with the added night so that probably will not continue for next year. Looking down the road, the hope is to add seating over the chutes allowing for more ticket sales. Councilmember Travis Allan thanked the Rodeo Committee for this great event. He stated that he would like to see more advertising for the City to let the community know how much the City has helped over the years. Carson Young thanked the City for the continued support.

FIRE FIGHTER BENEFITS: Linda Honeycutt explained that she has been serving as a fire fighter since 2002 and is one of the volunteers who still receive health insurance benefits paid by the Fire Special Service District. She stated that initially the District wanted to cut the insurance benefit and not pay it any more so the fire fighters came up with the offer to pay 50%. However, that is a lot for the fire fighters to pay, so she proposed that the City consider paying 35% of the cost, the Special Service District pay 35% leaving the fire fighters to pay 30%. The cost to the City would be around \$70,000 a year. She stated she understands the financial situation of the City right now, however, she signed on with the agreement to have insurance and has had coverage for the last 16 years. There was some discussion regarding the age of some of these fire fighters that are receiving benefits. Linda Honeycutt stated part of the proposal is to

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have the fire fighters that qualify for Medicare move to that coverage with the City / District paying the entire cost for a supplement. She stated that with the County Commission is considering desolving the District, and with the benefits in question that is not a favorable answer. There was some discussion regarding charging a fee for fire responses. Councilmember Ted Munford stated that Council will need to consider this proposal. Linda responded that if the District is desolved, there will be more cost put on the cities. Councilmember Dave Everett stated this has been very controversial with some fire fighters getting benefits while others don't. Linda agreed that more don't get the benefit than do. She asked the Council to consider this request.

REQUEST TO CONSIDER APPROVAL OF A RESOLUTION AMENDING THE FINAL BOND RESOLUTION DATED APRIL 3, 2019, TO REVISE SECTION 2.2 INTEREST ACCRUING DATE AND PRINCIPAL AND INTEREST PAYMENT DATES AND SECTION 3.4 SINKING FUND ACCRUAL DATE WITH RESPECT TO THE \$200,000 EXCISE TAX ROAD REVENUE BONDS, SERIES 2020, FOR THE PURPOSE OF THE ACQUISITION AND CONSTRUCTION OF ROAD IMPROVEMENTS, AND RELATED IMPROVEMENTS; AND RELATED MATTERS - RESOLUTION NO. 2020-10:

Quinn Bennion explained that this item relates to the downtown drainage project that was started two years ago. The City approached the Community Impact Board and secured a grant and a loan for this project. Now that project has been bid, engineered by UDOT, and the construction is about to begin. The low bidder is Black Sheep Oil Field services out of Roosevelt and they have until June 31st of next year to complete the installation of an additional 24" storm drain down the street. The bonds are for the loan that was awarded in the amount of \$200,000 and will be paid off over the next seven years using the new ¼ cent sales tax. Councilmember Bert Clark stated a good inspector will be needed for this project to make sure the City is satisfied with the job. Quinn Bennion stated that Sunrise Engineering is doing the construction inspection. Councilmember Travis Allan asked if the contractor has experience dealing with all the utilities in this roadway. Quinn Bennion stated this is a UDOT project and they are comfortable moving forward. A pre-construction meeting is scheduled for next week and Sunrise Engineering has worked with them before and feels comfortable. After further discussion, *Councilmember Dave Everett moved to approve Resolution No. 2020-10. Councilmember Travis Allen seconded the motion. The motion passed with the following roll call vote:*

- Councilmember Munford.....aye;*
- Councilmember Allanaye;*
- Councilmember Everettaye;*
- Councilmember Porteraye;*
- Councilmember Clark.....aye.*

REPORT ON THE USE OF CARES ACT FUNDING: Quinn Bennion reminded the Council that the federal government approved funds to States and local entities and the City received the first allotment in June. The City can use the funds for reimbursement of COVID leave for employees as well as hours worked dealing with the virus. The payroll department has been

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keeping track of those hours. Other uses include sanitation of the buildings, equipment for employees to work from home, webcasting equipment for meetings, and the glass in front of the planning window. The largest expense was the small business grants that were given to 240 businesses. Some of the funds can also be used to promote tourism. The next round of funding should be received within the next few weeks.

DISCUSSION ON ANIMAL AND WEED NUISANCES: Allen Parker explained that there are activities around town that are causing a nuisance in neighborhoods and the code is not sufficient to address it. One property has a lot of animal feces accumulated on it and the neighbors are not able to enjoy their yard due to the smell. This is not addressed in the City code. There is a section that deals with barking dogs, and Mr. Parker asked the Council what they thought about refining that section. Quinn Bennion stated it does not have a time limit. Councilmember Bert Clark suggested it go from dusk to dawn as a nuisance. Councilmember Dave Everett stated that animal control has to have some type of documentation of the nuisance first before they can address the issue. There was some discussion regarding how often a pet owner should pick up after their animals. After further discussion, the consensus was at least once a week. Allen Parker stated he would put together an ordinance to address this issue for the Council's review. He stated that another area of concern is an invasive weed that has cropped up in the valley that acts like a parasite wrapping itself around the plants. He asked the Council their thoughts on listing this plant as a noxious weed. Councilmember Ted Munford stated he would be concerned as this is similar to graffiti. The property owner does not want this to begin with, and ends up spending a lot of money to get rid of it. Allen Parker stated that the City employees can purchase special weed control products to take care of this issue. The consensus of the Council was to have Allen bring an ordinance for review.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

Sewer Rates.

Councilmember Bert Clark notified the staff that the sewer rates will increase by 33 cents per connection starting January 1.

Resource officers:

Councilmember Bert Clark asked if the School District is charging students for the cost of the resource officers. Quinn Bennion stated he would check with the School District.

Fire District:

Councilmember Ted Munford reported that the Fire District is in very bad shape financially and the County Commission has made it clear that they will be disbanding a special service district because of funding. If the fire services are put back on the City, it will be tough to cover the cost. The City has already eliminated ten positions and more people may have to be laid off to cover fire expenses. He stated that if going forward the City fire fighters are given benefits, there has to be a time frame on it when they will expire. Quinn Bennion stated it is very uncommon to cover benefits for a volunteer. There was some discussion regarding the funds going to the Transportation District that only serve the county residents. Councilmember

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Nicholas Porter stated that the Fire District should be the #1 priority.

Chip and Seal:

Quinn Bennion reminded the Council that there is a chip and seal project in progress and there has been an accumulation of gravel on the roads. The engineers are working with the contractor to correct the situation.

Protest:

Quinn Bennion stated that a protest is being organized in front of the library park against the School District requiring students to wear masks in school.

ADJOURN: There being no further business; *Councilmember Travis Allan moved to adjourn. Councilmember Dave Everett 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)