

MINUTES OF THE JOINT VERNAL CITY COUNCIL, UINTAH COUNTY COMMISSION, BALLARD TOWN AND NAPLES CITY SPECIAL MEETING HELD FEBRUARY 10, 2012 at 3:00 p.m. in the Uintah County Conference Room, 147 East Main, Vernal, Utah.

PRESENT:

VERNAL CITY: Mayor Gary Showalter, Councilmembers JoAnn Cowan, Ted Munford, and Sonja Norton. Councilmember Bert Clark and Dave Everett were excused.

UINTAH COUNTY: Commissioners Mark Raymond, Darlene Burns and Mike McKee.

NAPLES CITY: Mayor Dean Baker.

STAFF PRESENT: Ken Bassett and Roxanne Behunin.

GUESTS PRESENT: Brett Hancock, Ed Zurbuchan, Adam Massey, Paul Hacking, Steve Braden and Fred Champies.

WELCOME: Commissioner Darlene Burns welcomed everyone to the meeting.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT & APPROVAL OF SPECIAL MEETING: Commissioner Mark Raymond moved to acknowledge and approve this special meeting. Mayor Gary Showalter seconded the motion. The motion passed with a unanimous vote.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 30, 2011: Councilmember Ted Munford moved to approve the minutes of September 30, 2011 as written. Councilmember Sonja Norton seconded the motion. The motion passed with a majority vote, with Councilmember JoAnn Cowan abstaining.

PRESENTATION OF HARLEY DAVIDSON RALLY: Fred Champies, representing the Harley Davidson Rally, explained that this event will be in Vernal on July 12th and 13th. A similar event was held in Vernal in 2001, but was a more stationary event. This time, the riders will start at the Harley Davidson dealership in northern Utah, travel to Vernal and stay overnight, and then travel on to Logan. Commissioner Burns asked how many participants are expected. Mr. Champies stated they are anticipating between 800 and 1000 riders. He noted that Main Street will be under construction, so they will use alternate routes through the City. Mayor Showalter noted that his dealership will coordinate with the Harley dealership for this event. A short video was presented for the elected officials. Mayor Showalter asked what the anticipated arrival time is for the riders. Fred answered that they give the riders an established route, but they can take any route they choose to get here. He stated they will arrive sometime in the afternoon with dinner scheduled that evening in Vernal. Mayor Showalter asked what time they will leave the next morning. Fred stated that they will start leaving shortly after breakfast. Brett Hancock noted that the Dinosaur Roundup Rodeo will be held that night, and the Harley riders may be interested in attending. Steve Braden, the director of the local HOG Chapter, stated that the local entities have been great to work with and Greg Witbeck has indicated that they will

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provide discounted rodeo tickets for any Harley riders interested in attending. Brett Hancock agreed that the riders can also be recognized since it is the first night of the rodeo.

Fred Champies asked the local officials to sign a welcome letter to be placed in their newsletter. Commissioner McKee stated that this will be a unique opportunity for the community to have cowboys and Harley riders the same week. Steve Braden stated that one of the obstacles to having this event in Vernal is lodging.

Adam Massey, Chamber of Commerce Director, stated that this event will help showcase Vernal. Mayor Showalter suggested that a joint letter be drafted from the Chamber, the City and the County supporting this event. After further discussion, Councilmember JoAnn Cowan moved to have the Cities, County and Chamber sign a letter of support for the Harley Davidson rally. Commissioner Mark Raymond seconded the motion. The motion passed with a unanimous vote.

DINOSAUR ROUNDUP RODEO PRESENTATION: Brett Hancock, president of the Dinosaur Roundup Rodeo, stated that he is proud to have Uintah County and Vernal City as sponsors of the rodeo. He stated that the revenue for the rodeo was up from \$245,000 in 2010 to \$321,000 in 2011. Ticket sales were up along with sponsorships which indicate the economy is changing. He stated that the expenses have also increased including the stock contract. Commissioner McKee asked if there was a financial savings by going to three days. Brett Hancock stated that they noticed about a 25% savings. He stated that the local barrel racing is a big draw along with the mutton busting event. He asked the Vernal City Council and Uintah County Commission to consider supporting the rodeo again this year. Adam Massey noted that the rodeo parade will be combined with the 4th of July parade again this year to kick off rodeo month. Councilmember Cowan thanked the Rodeo Committee for their hard work and noted that this is the best example of volunteerism in the Uintah Basin.

Vernal City Approval:

Councilmember JoAnn Cowan moved to have Vernal City continue to support the Dinosaur Roundup Rodeo at same level as last year. Councilmember Ted Munford seconded the motion. Mayor Showalter asked for a roll call vote and the Council voted as follows:

Councilmember Munfordaye;
Councilmember Cowan..... aye.
Councilmember Norton..... aye.

The motion passed with a unanimous vote.

Uintah County Approval:

Commissioner Mike McKee moved to support the Dinosaur Roundup Rodeo at the same level as last year which was believed to be \$32,000. Commissioner Mark Raymond seconded the motion. The motion passed with a unanimous vote with Commissioners Raymond, McKee and Burns voting in favor.

CONVENTION CENTER DISCUSSION:

Commissioner Mike McKee explained that the County has been looking into bringing a convention center to Vernal. The first thought was to convert the old museum property, but it

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was decided that parking would be a major obstacle. Another option may be the old USU building. Mr. Paul Hacking, with the Impact Mitigation District, stated that this District is in support of higher education. The old building on Highway 40 was used to bond for additional funds that were needed to complete the USU Bingham building with the idea that when the building was sold, the proceeds would be used to pay off the bond. However, the building has not been sold and the District continues to pay the bond payments. The value of the building has been decreasing because the building is vacant and deteriorating. Commissioner McKee stated that the Western Park is over utilized, and yet does not meet the needs of certain types of conventions that could be held in Vernal. It would be expensive to renovate the old USU building; however, the Community Impact Board could be approached to help with the financing. Councilmember Cowan asked how many conventions could be enticed to come to Vernal with this facility. Commissioner McKee stated that they have not completed a full analysis yet. He stated the Commissioners are considering a private / public partnership on this venture. There was some discussion regarding the difficulty of using the Western Park for different uses. Mayor Baker agreed that it is frustrating for the agricultural users as well. Councilmember Cowan commented that if the main need for the community is the overcrowding and usage of the Western Park then possibly the old USU building should be used for that purpose. However, if education is the primary focus, an option would be to partner with the School District to use the building as a lab or allow student teachers to work with children and give them hands on experience. Commissioner McKee stated that this why this discussion is needed, to come up with a comprehensive plan for a convention center and the best use of the building.

CEMETERY UPDATE:

Commissioner Darlene Burns stated that no additional funds are needed from Vernal City for the Vernal Memorial Park at this point until the remaining funds from last year are spent. A new building has been installed and the sprinkling system was expanded to the east to beautify that area. Councilmember Cowan stated that other cemeteries have maps and clearly mark the roadways so relatives can find graves easily. She suggested something be put in place at the Vernal cemetery to simplify the process of finding graves. Commissioner Burns stated she will look into what is currently available. Councilmember Norton noted that she is the new representative for Vernal City on the Cemetery Board. Commissioner Burns stated she will contact her to attend the next meeting.

UINTAH COUNTY TRANSPORTATION YARD & ROAD CLOSURE:

Commissioner Mark Raymond stated that the County needs more room at their transportation yard. One option for expansion is to vacate the roadway on 335 South in front of the shop. Councilmember Cowan stated that she is reluctant to close the road because it will impact businesses and the animal shelter, and the County will only gain the width of the roadway. She noted that there is a large field to the south that may be available for expansion. Ken Bassett noted that the portion of the road being discussed may not be in the City limits. Commissioner Raymond stated he will check on that.

LEGISLATIVE ITEMS

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Commissioner McKee explained that Senator VanTassell is sponsoring SB83 to help curtail the reach of the federal government over land in Utah that is used for development and reflect the value of the land for energy extraction. Commissioner McKee then read part of the text of the bill being proposed to the State Legislature. He noted that the Federal Management Act requires federal departments to be consistent with local plans.

Commissioner McKee reported that there is serious discussion regarding the installation of a railroad. A study will be underway, and \$300,000 of local funding is needed for the study. The study will help determine the ideal route.

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

Ken Bassett, City Recorder