

MINUTES OF THE VERNAL CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING HELD
AUGUST 6, 2014 at 7:00 p.m. in the Vernal City Council room, 374 East Main,
Vernal, Utah 84078.

PRESENT: Councilmembers Ted Munford, Dave Everett, Samantha Scott, Bert Clark and JoAnn Cowan and Mayor Sonja Norton.

WELCOME: Mayor Norton welcomed everyone to the Council 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 JULY 22, 2014: Councilmember Samantha Scott moved to approve the minutes of July 22, 2014 as written. Councilmember Bert Clark seconded the motion. The motion passed with Councilmembers Munford, Cowan, Everett, Scott and Clark voting in favor.

INTRODUCTION OF NEW EMPLOYEES, SADIE NORTON AND MCKENZIE ERICKSEN: Allen Parker, Assistant City Manager, introduced Sadie Norton, the new code enforcement officer who moved from West Jordan where she was serving in the same position.

Mike Davis, Water and Sewer Superintendent, introduced McKenzie Erickson, who was recently hired as a sewer technician. He grew up in Vernal, moved to Lehi and is happy to return.

The Council welcomed both Sadie and McKenzie to the City.

ADDRESS THE FUNERAL PROCESSION ISSUE: Mayor Norton explained that there has been some controversy over funeral processions in Vernal. She clarified that the City is not prohibiting funeral processions, but has decided not to provide police escorts. Mayor Norton asked for public comments.

Hal Hatch, resident at 292 East 200 North, stated he would like to express a few things about funeral processions going from the funeral home or churches to the cemetery. Motorists need to show respect and if there are certain intersections that were blocked off, the procession would move quickly. Councilmember JoAnn Cowan asked if he would like to see a police car in front of the hearse or at the intersections to the cemetery. Mr. Hatch answered that a police officer does not need to be leading or behind the procession, simply have an officer handle the traffic crossing the highway. Councilmember Ted Munford clarified that the main concern was Highway 40. Hal Hatch answered yes, that it should not take much time or effort from the police department. Councilmember Bert Clark noted that for military funerals the American Legion provides former military personnel dressed to salute and standing at attention, and it is hard for them to wait for the procession. Hal Hatch agreed as most of the members are elderly.

Gary Showalter asked what brought this topic up. Mayor Sonja Norton stated that she was on Main Street when a funeral procession blocked traffic creating a safety hazard. Gary Showalter

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stated that he approved approximately 15 funeral assists during his term as Mayor which is not that big a burden for the police department. He noted that there are approximately three intersections where funeral processions need traffic assistance including Main Street and Vernal Avenue, 1500 South and Hwy 40 and 500 West and Hwy 40. He emphatically disagreed with the Council's decision to not provide police help for funeral processions and reminded the Council that this is a tradition in the community. He suggested funeral processions be allowed for all citizens not just the prominent ones.

Mike Davis, 1700 E 4000 South, stated he does respect the Mayor and Council and that this is a public safety issue. He stated that he attended a funeral in Las Vegas recently and there was a motorcycle police escort that also blocked the intersections. He asked if routes could be drawn up with input from the funeral directors and police department so the police could still help with processions. Further, Mr. Davis thought it would be more advantageous to protect the motorists both in the procession or normal traffic rather than leaving them to navigate themselves. There is a motorcycle club that will provide escort services, including closing an intersection, if the family requests it.

Councilmember JoAnn Cowan stated that the Council wrestled with this issue for many years, and the decision was to turn it over to the Mayor to decide for each request. During the last discussion on this issue, the comment was made that if there is a high profile funeral with lots of people there would be a higher public safety need. The origin of the "prominent" quote in the paper was taken out of context. She agreed with holding a Public Safety Committee meeting and discuss the concerns of the police and morticians and bring those concerns back to the Council.

Councilmember Dave Everett stated that he is proud to be a part of the Council, and sometimes decisions are made that affected someone adversely. The Council does not want to jeopardize the well-being of the community or citizens and some decisions need to be re-evaluated.

Councilmember Bert Clark agreed that some type of traffic control is needed at major intersections and people from out of town expect to follow the hearse to find the cemetery. Councilmember Cowan suggested the police department coordinate with other agencies.

Assistant Chief of Police Keith Campbell stated he would like to attend the meeting when this issue is discussed as there are a lot of concerns. There are liability issues as well as handling calls with available resources. It was noted that parades are different than funeral processions.

Carolyn Wiseman, 634 W 500 South, stated that if the funeral attendees do not travel to the cemetery in a procession, it could take them a long time to get to the cemetery. She noted that the funeral procession for Mr. David Gurr was large and closed Highway 40.

Councilmember Ted Munford voiced his appreciation that this issue has created community involvement. Mayor Norton closed the public comments and stated that the Public Safety Committee will host a meeting regarding this issue.

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PUBLIC HEARING: A PUBLIC HEARING TO CONSIDER AUTHORIZING NOT MORE THAN \$600,000 TAXABLE WATER REVENUE BONDS IN ONE OR MORE SERIES FOR WATER SYSTEM IMPROVEMENTS, A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE \$490,000 TAXABLE WATER REVENUE BONDS, SERIES 2014 TO FINANCE WATER SYSTEM IMPROVEMENTS, AND RELATED MATTERS - RESOLUTION NO. 2014-12:

Ken Bassett explained that this item is to finalize the funding from the Community Impact Board (CIIB) for the north Vernal Avenue water line project. The CIB Board approved a \$490,000 grant and \$490,000 loan. This Resolution will allow the City to finalize the bonds for the loan. Mayor Norton opened the public hearing. Councilmember Clark asked what the interest rate will be on the bonds. Ken Bassett answered the bonds will be zero interest with a thirty year payment schedule. There being no further comments, the public hearing was closed. Councilmember Bert Clark moved to approve Resolution No. 2014-12 authorizing the issuance of the bonds. Councilmember Ted Munford seconded the motion. The motion passed with the following roll call vote.

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

CODE ENFORCEMENT PROGRAM DISCUSSION - JUNK A CLUNK - SADIE NORTON:

Ken Bassett explained that the new code enforcement officer has had success with several programs in other communities and would like to explain one of them that will help enforce nuisance ordinances on the books. He noted that it is nice to have an employee with experience and professionalism to tell property owners to clean up their property. Sadie Norton stated that as she has been inspecting the community, she noticed a lot of homes that have inoperable vehicles in their back yards. One mechanism to help address this issue is a junk the clunker campaign. This program works by getting towing companies to pick up junk vehicles at no cost to the vehicle owner. Letters are going to the towing companies and junkyards to try to get their participation. Councilmember Clark asked if they are just concentrating on junk vehicles. Sadie Norton stated that is the purpose of this program. Councilmember JoAnn Cowan stated that Duchesne County had a program where the vehicle owner could turn in their junk vehicle and their name would be entered into a drawing for \$100. Mike Davis stated that Roosevelt City gives \$50 per car. Sadie Norton stated that is an idea if the City wants to put up the funds. Councilmember Cowan stated she would support it. Councilmember Ted Munford stated that he appreciated programs that help citizens obey ordinances. He asked for a report on how well this campaign works.

REQUEST TO AMEND THE VERNAL CITY MUNICIPAL CODE - REPEALING SECTION 9.08.030, 9.08.040 & 9.08.050 - FIREARMS - ORDINANCE NO. 2014-28:

Ken Bassett explained that a letter was received from the 2nd Amendment Foundation, whose main purpose is to make sure that government is not impeding on Second Amendment rights. The letter indicated that the City has an ordinance dealing with the regulation of firearms which duplicates laws of the State of Utah and they would like the City to do away with it. The Chief of Police and City Attorney reviewed the request and found that section of code is not necessary to

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have in place. There are two other codes that also duplicate State law and it is being suggested all three sections be repealed. Councilmember JoAnn Cowan asked how the City could be infringing on rights if that law is identical with State law. Ken Bassett stated that there is a concern that State law will change and the City will not be aware of it. After further discussion, Councilmember Bert Clark moved to approve Ordinance No. 2014-28. Councilmember Ted Munford seconded the motion. The motion passed with the following roll call vote:

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

Councilmember Dave Everett suggested the media publish proper behavior for a funeral procession so drivers understand. Mayor Norton liked the idea of putting safety tips and traffic laws on the City website.

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

Mayor Sonja Norton

ATTEST:

Roxanne Behunin, Deputy Recorder

(S E A L)