

MINUTES OF THE VERNAL CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING HELD
APRIL 15, 2015 at 7:00 p.m. in the Vernal City Council room, 374 East Main, Vernal,
Utah 84078.

PRESENT: Mayor Sonja Norton, Councilmembers Bert Clark, JoAnn Cowan, Dave Everett and Ted Munford. Councilmember Samantha Scott was excused. Councilmember Samantha Scott did arrive just prior to the adjournment of the meeting.

WELCOME: Mayor Sonja Norton welcomed everyone to the meeting.

INVOCATION OR UPLIFTING THOUGHT: An invocation was given by Councilmember Ted Munford.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: The pledge of Allegiance was led by Mayor Sonja Norton.

APPROVAL OF CITY COUNCIL MINUTES OF APRIL 1, 2015: Councilmember Bert Clark asked Mr. Parker for an update on the retention pond for the B's convenient store. Mr. Parker stated they are working on the landscaping now and there will be improvements to the retention pond. *Councilmember JoAnn Cowan moved to approve the minutes of April 1, 2015. Councilmember Bert Clark seconded the motion. The motion passed with Councilmembers Munford, Cowan, Everett, and Clark voting in favor.*

TRI-COUNTY HEALTH REPORT – JORDAN MATHIS, DIRECTOR: Mr. Jordan Mathis, director of Tri-County Health, explained that he wanted to make the City aware of the findings of a recent air quality and infant mortality study. A public hearing has been scheduled for April 21st to present the findings to Uintah County residents. After the presentation, the hope is to have an open dialog about the steps that need to be taken to lower the number of infant deaths in the area associated with several cause factors. Councilmember JoAnn Cowan stated she read through the report and did not see any relationship between air quality and infant mortality. She asked what health care infrastructure is in place to address the known causes of infant deaths, and if anything can be done to address the media reports on this issue. Mr. Mathis noted that public health policies are being supported with available resources and data, although there is no causal affect from air quality related to infant deaths. He did not understand what caused the media stories on this issue. Councilmember Cowan encouraged Mr. Mathis to get this information out to the media so they understand that infant deaths are not tied to one cause. Mr. Mathis agreed that is the goal of the public meeting - to present the findings and discuss what happens next. Councilmember Clark stated that a Utah physician's meeting is scheduled to discuss air pollution and pregnancy at the Jr. High. He asked if Mr. Mathis would be at that meeting. Mr. Mathis answered that he has not been invited and has a conflict with the date.

Mr. Jordan Mathis presented a slide show to the Council outlining the goals of Tri-County Health to build healthy communities. Considerable money is spent on health care, especially chronic diseases, which could be lowered with life style adjustments. The lack of physical activity and poor nutrition have overtaken tobacco as the leading cause of preventable deaths. Data shows that most trips people take are less than 2 miles from home, yet people drive instead of walking or cycling. He asked the Council to consider a different approach when planning the community so residents change their behavior to become more physically active. One way is to transform streets from public health barriers to pedestrian walkways. Mayor Norton

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agreed that neighborhoods should connect to trails and walking paths. Mr. Mathis stated there are also social and mental health benefits as neighbors become more friendly, crime rates decrease, and people are happier. Many cities look at walking paths as an investment in human capital and are growing in a smart direction for an active community. Councilmember JoAnn Cowan stated that “walking school buses”, where parents take turns walking neighborhood children to school, is gaining momentum and is a better option than dropping the student off at the front door. She noted that physical activity for the youth in a community is critical for their health. Mr. Mathis agreed and stated that research shows if the infrastructure is there, people will use it if it connects to meaningful things. Councilmember Cowan encouraged Mr. Mathis to meet with community groups and schools on this topic. Mayor Norton and the Council thanked Mr. Mathis for his report.

PUBLIC HEARING: REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF AMENDING THE VERNAL CITY MUNICIPAL PLANNING & ZONING CODE – CHAPTERS 16.40 (R-2 RESIDENTIAL ZONE), 16.42 (R-3 RESIDENTIAL ZONE), AND 16.44 (R-4 RESIDENTIAL ZONE) – MINIMUM AREA REQUIREMENTS AND MINIMUM WIDTH REQUIREMENTS – ORDINANCE NO. 2015-06 (AMENDING ORDINANCE NO. 2015-03): Allen Parker explained that this ordinance simply clarifies the zero lot line allowance for a twin home where the building shares a common wall along the property line. The current code does not say the building has to be a duplex which would allow a small home to be placed right next to the property line and not attached to anything. Councilmember Clark asked if there is a minimum frontage required. Allen Parker answered 45 feet for each side of the structure. This type of structure has always been allowed in the R-2 residential zone, and now is allowed in the R-3 and R-4 residential zones. Mayor Norton opened the public hearing. There were no public comments and the public hearing was closed. *Councilmember Dave Everett moved to approve Ordinance No. 2015-06 as presented. Councilmember Ted Munford seconded the motion. The motion passed with the following roll call vote:*

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

WATER CONSERVATION MEASURES: Ken Bassett explained that the City receives culinary water from Ashley Springs, and the irrigators receive their water from Steinaker. Usually in May and June the runoff makes the water from Ashley Springs too dirty to treat so the City will switch over to Red Fleet water. With the lack of snow and water this winter, there is a concern regarding water quantities. The water superintendent has been monitoring Ashley Springs which has dropped significantly the last few weeks. Other cities in the State are implementing water conservation or restrictions measures already, and the community needs to know the Council is also concerned. Mike Davis explained that the Vernal City water intake is built low in the spring box while Ashley Valley Water & Sewer District’s is substantially higher. On Monday the water level was approximately four inches above the intake pipe for Ashley Valley which is extremely low. Today the water level is overflowing the aquifer caused by the last rain storm. He suggested the City develop a water conservation plan. Councilmember Clark stated there needs to be a media campaign so residents practice the “Slow the Flow”

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campaign. Mike Davis stated that he will continue to watch the water levels and will switch to Red Fleet water if necessary. A meeting has been set up with all the water providers in the area to come up with a plan, community-wide, so any restrictions will be consistent. Councilmember Clark noted that some properties use a well. Mike Davis suggested those property owners place a well water sign on their lawns. Councilmember JoAnn Cowan asked if there is any indication what the other water agencies want to do. Mike Davis stated he would not know until the meeting. Councilmember JoAnn Cowan suggested a tiered plan be developed to escalate the water restrictions if necessary. Councilmember Dave Everett suggested a media campaign be launched to get the residents to voluntarily conserve water. Most of the residents are aware of the situation. Councilmember Cowan voiced her concern regarding the flower project on Main Street. Ken Bassett stated that project only takes comparably a minimum amount of water for the entire season. Several of the Council members expressed interest in going to the springs. A time was scheduled for them to view the aquifer. The Council asked Mr. Davis to keep them informed.

MUNICIPAL WASTEWATER PLAN REPORT & APPROVAL - RESOLUTION NO. 2015-07:

Ken Bassett explained that the Utah Division of Wastewater requires a report every year showing the status of the wastewater program. There are a few items that need improvement, however, overall the system is in good shape. The report requires Council approval before being submitted to the State. *Councilmember Bert Clark moved to approve Resolution No. 2015-07. Councilmember Dave Everett seconded the motion. The motion passed with the following roll call vote:*

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

REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF THE AMENDMENT TO THE VANTAGE CARE RETIREMENT SYSTEM HEALTH SAVINGS PLAN – RESOLUTION NO. 2015-06:

Ken Bassett explained the purpose of this resolution is to amend the retirement program through ICMA, to recognize spouses of same-sex marriages. Recent litigation regarding same-sex marriage and spouses makes it necessary that the retirement plan reflect all spouses be recognized to use retirement funding. *Councilmember Dave Everett moved to approve Resolution No. 2015-06. Councilmember JoAnn Cowan seconded the motion. The motion passed with the following roll call vote:*

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

ELECTION OPTIONS FOR 2015: Ken Bassett reminded the Council that the City will have an election this year. Candidates need to submit their candidacy forms between June 1st and June 8th. The last City election was run exclusively by mail. The vote by mail process has changed by not requiring return postage on the ballot envelope and allowing a voting center on

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Election Day. The cost for return postage is approximately \$2000. Also, many municipal elections do not have a large turnout, and the intent of voting by mail is to see if more people will vote. Councilmember JoAnn Cowan stated that if this voting method has a better turnout, it should be done. Councilmember Clark stated he also likes the vote by mail method. Councilmember Ted Munford asked that a media campaign be done to educate the voters. *Councilmember JoAnn Cowan moved to conduct the election for 2015 by mail with in-person voting on Election Day. Councilmember Bert Clark seconded the motion. The motion passed with the following roll call vote:*

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

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT:

Impact Mitigation District:

Mayor Norton explained that the Impact Mitigation District is supporting the youth conservation program which provides employment and college credit to students. Also, the air quality study is continuing although it has been 23 months since there has been a day that has exceeded EPA standards for air quality.

ADJOURN: There being no further business, Councilmember Bert Clark 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)