

MINUTES OF THE VERNAL CITY COUNCIL SPECIAL WORK SESSION
MEETING HELD FEBRUARY 6, 2019 at 5:00 p.m. in the Vernal City Planning
conference room, 374 East Main, Vernal, Utah 84078.

PRESENT: Councilmembers Dave Everett, Samantha Scott, Ted Munford, Bert Clark and Travis Allan and Mayor Doug Hammond.

Staff: Quinn Bennion, Dylan Rooks, Roxanne Behunin, L. Mike Davis and Micheal Davis.

WELCOME: Mayor Hammond welcomed everyone to this special work session of the Vernal City Council.

APPROVAL OF CITY COUNCIL MINUTES OF JANUARY 16, 2019: Councilmember Dave Everett moved to approve the minutes of January 16, 2019. Councilmember Ted Munford seconded the motion. The motion passed with Councilmembers Munford, Everett, Scott and Clark voting in favor. Councilmember Travis Allan was not present for the vote.

COUNCIL WORK SESSION:

Quinn Bennion reminded the Council of the informal meeting last year to go over events and upcoming projects to get direction for the staff of the Council's priorities for the year. There was a long list with many of the items being accomplished or still being worked on. The 2019 list consists items that have come up that possibly the Council would like to continue to work on or explore adding to the priority list.

The Council reviewed many of the items from 2018, and asked about the rental of the old office building and asphalt tailings from 400 West Street.

Quinn Bennion began going through each of the items on the 2019 list as follows:

- #1 - Roger Brooks recommendations, some progress has been made, and the City will continue to work on it.
- #2 - The staff has looked at installing parking at the pink dinosaur on the corner. UDOT thinks the vision triangle will be adequate with a curb. The thought is to have 3 parking spaces, however, there is no funding yet.
- #3 - There is 5 or 6 locations in downtown where there are public right-of-ways with a lot of questions on who maintains these alleyways. Zion's Bank has purchased property behind their building and will eventually allow public parking which is a huge advancement for downtown.
- #4 - Downtown bike lanes. The trails committee has an active plan for bike lanes and UDOT and Glade Allred have been working on it. The final plan will be presented to the City with discussion on maintenance. UDOT is willing to help with the cost for marking 100 North.
- #5 - A property owner in downtown approached the City to sell property for parking, however, with Zions Bank purchasing property, she was told the City is already pursuing other options.
- #6 & #7 - Dinosaur themed items. The Chamber of Commerce has started putting murals downtown and now a dino silhouette will be placed on benches that can be used for the bus route. Councilmember Munford suggested this item be on hold until after the BTA meeting. Quinn Bennion stated if they are not used for the bus route they can be placed around the

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City. Quinn Bennion stated there is also a suggestion to put dinosaur footprints on the sidewalk and ten blade signs have been ordered by local businesses that will have the dinosaur theme.

- #8 – Outdoor skating. There has been interest from the Recreation District and the Western Park to turn the parking lot at the Lamplighter Hotel into a skating rink in the winter. Lights and restrooms would be needed.
- #9 - This is a new event celebrating John Wesley Powell and is scheduled for the 3rd weekend in June. The planning includes an art festival with music, paddle boarding and other historic demonstrations. The Council noted there are volunteers in the community that would help. Councilmember Everett asked when the next meeting would be held. Quinn Bennion stated he would let him know. The event will include river runs and they hope to have the Governor and other elected officials attend.
- #10 Quinn Bennion stated the City does not have a full-time person handling code enforcement and another employee is covering during the winter. Councilmember Clark stated it takes everyone to watch for violations. Chief Rooks stated they have only had to issue 4 tickets and people do take care of the issue when notified. Quinn stated the letters have been revamped to follow a friendly approach. Councilmember Dave Everett asked if rental units are the largest problem. Allen Parker stated it is absentee landlords and vacant or bank owned property.
- #11 – Digital sign. Quinn Bennion stated that Commissioner Brad Horrocks has asked if the City would participate in repairing the sign in front of the museum at a cost of \$5000. Councilmember Ted Munford stated he remembers a discussion on that sign in the past and it was given to the County. Councilmember Everett remembered the discussion also and stated they wanted to move that sign. Councilmember Clark stated the City also gave up property to redo that park and library at no cost. Councilmember Ted Munford suggested looking at #16, if the City closes off the view area to the west, there possibly would be \$5000 on a one-time basis to help with the sign. Councilmember Clark asked if UDOT will take it over. Quinn Bennion answered no they are not willing to do that. The consensus of the Council was to table this item for now.
- #12 – Website. Quinn Bennion indicated that the City's new website will go live on February 25th.
- #13 – Street light system. Quinn Bennion stated that the City currently pays a tariff for the street lighting system to Rocky Mountain Power and the idea was to look at buying the system. The audit alone would cost \$10,500 to see what it would cost to take over the system. Councilmember Travis Allan stated there potentially could be a lot of expense as the system ages. Quinn stated the City would do a contract with a company to maintain the lights, but it could be expensive if one needs to be replaced.
- #14 A meeting has been scheduled for February 25th to discuss the future of the BTA bus system. The meeting will be held in the community room as it is anticipated a lot of people will attend. Mayor Hammond stated that he thought the State would require it to continue. Quinn stated there is a ¼ cent sales tax available through State statute, which failed county-wide, but passed in Vernal and Naples. The initial thought was that the Vernal citizens did not want the BTA, but the City residents did vote in favor. Now the County

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Commission believes the State will pass the tax and keep the funds for the transit system.

- #15 - Quinn Bennion stated that the City continues to apply for grants and the County is considering hiring a grant writer. In previous years the City paid the County \$25,000 towards that position and we stopped paying as there is no value to the City. The County would like the City to reconsider, which will only happen if they write grants for the City.
- #16 – Quinn noted that UDOT is in favor of closing the view area and removing the asphalt. The trails committee would like to move the pavilion to McCoy Flats. Chief Rooks stated there are good reasons to remove it. Councilmember Everett suggested the solar lights be used for the skating rink. The consensus of the Council was to remove the view area.
- #17 Domestic Violence Shelter. The City helps a little bit with the maintenance of the building, with 90% of the cost for the shelter carried by the State. The State is looking to have a non-profit step in and run the shelter at a cost of approximately \$270,000 a year. Quinn noted that there is a local group, Forever Forward, who is interested in running the shelter if they can raise the funds. The current statistics is 1000 room nights were needed last year.
- #18 & #19 Mike Davis explained that he prepares a report for the State each year showing the water loss for the City's system and the current year shows a 33% loss which is very high indicated that 1/3 of the water from the treatment plant is not being registered through meters. He suggested that the older meters for residents be changed out to make sure they are reading correctly. The cost to replace the meters is \$38 per meter. Quinn stated that if they stop the water loss, this program will pay for itself. Mike Davis stated he has a list of 225 old meters and the theory is they are not registering the correct usage. He suggested 250 meters be replaced each year. Councilmember Munford stated this is a reasonable request and would be interested in the testing results Mike Davis stated he will get that information to the Council. He noted that there is also a company that performs leak detection services and that service is \$4000. A meeting was held regarding security measures at Ashley Springs as there is zero security right now besides a locked gate. Rocky Mountain Power will install a buried conduit to the site as it has been determined that a solar system would not be reliable enough. The cost estimate to add a security system is \$90,000 and Ashley Valley Water and Central Utah Water are willing to participate. Councilmember Travis Allan asked what security will be installed. Quinn answered there will be power and cameras installed. Mike Davis stated that once power is installed they can also consider a more modern de-sander with flow controls and meters. There was discussion regarding how the sewer system is being billed and possibly adding flow meters to see what effluent is entering the City's system from other systems to better regulate the cost. Also, this will help to pinpoint where storm water is infiltrating the system.
- #20 - Five-year capital improvement lists. Quinn Bennion indicated that the City does not currently have a five-year list and it is sorely needed to address the needs of the community.
- #21 - The Community Impact Board will consider funding for the storm water improvements on Main Street tomorrow.
- #22 - Quinn Bennion stated that Phase 1 of the security improvements for the planning department will be to build a door where the current swing door is that will require a card to enter.
- #23 – Quinn Bennion explained that Central Canal received a huge grant to help them pipe the

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irrigation water and they plan on starting construction in 2020. Mike Davis stated he was told they would build into the design an area for flood control. Quinn Bennion stated that the City has not budgeted anything for this project, but it will need to be addressed. The trail that is being proposed will not be paved.

#24 - A grant to the CDBG has been submitted to complete work at the shelter.

#25 & #26 – Update master plan. There are no funds to hire a consultant to update the City’s master plan so the Planning Commission will look at a few of the sections to see what can be done to complete a minor update. There was some discussion regarding the maps. Mike Davis stated there has been some discussion to update the water system master plan that is now six years old. Quinn Bennion stated that the moderate housing plan also needs to be updated as it is required by the State every two years.

#27 – Quinn Bennion stated that the staff is doing what they can to foster good relations with the Districts and the County.

#28 – Quinn Bennion explained that the City needs to implement a records retention policy for text messages that are considered public records.

#29 - Air Quality. Quinn Bennion stated that the City needs to look at policies for businesses that burn their oil to make sure they have appropriate measures in place to stop air pollution. There is a student at USU that is working on air quality issues. Councilmember Ted Munford stated the City needs to look at measures for rolling coal from vehicles as well. A student mentioned that he does not “roll coal” from his vehicle unless someone is close to his bumper.

#30 – Wayfinding. Quinn noted that the wayfinding program is going well and UDOT is working with the committee. The plan is to have signs in the ground this year.

#31 – HOV routes through the City. Dylan Rooks stated that they are open to the idea to help visitors get to the trails if their HOV is not a fully street worthy RV. Most of the riders use a caravan system so the units that are not street legal do not bring undue attention. Quinn Bennion stated this will have a possible effect on the community to get tourists from their hotel to a restaurant or trail without trailering their units.

#32 – Water for community park. Quinn Bennion stated that the Recreation District said they paid \$300,000 for that water usage when the actual amount was \$120,000. The City suggested they charge the School District for their share. Councilmember Samantha Scott stated that they will begin metering the water so they can bill the schools. She stated they need to cut back on water usage and they have a Board member that will be working on this issue.

#33. Quinn Bennion explained that he has been working with the Utah League of Cities and Towns to discourage any change to the sales tax distribution which would greatly hurt rural Utah. In the past the State permitted a hold harmless provision for cities that had bonds out obligating their sales tax revenue and they would need to consider that provision again.

#34 Developing a vehicle replacement schedule. Quinn Bennion stated that the City needs a comprehensive vehicle replacement plan. Councilmember Clark stated they are tired of hearing a vehicle is old or they can no longer get parts. Quinn Bennion stated the staff will look at criteria to replace vehicles, although it will not be set in stone.

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ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS:

Snow Plowing:

The Council asked if there is a plan in place to plow snow. Quinn Bennion stated that the procedure is to start scraping at 4". However, there have been some storms that have dropped 8" inches of snow making it hard to keep up with it. Allen Parker stated there have also been some significant maintenance problems with the trucks and the crew is working on that. Mike Davis stated that plow school zones first, then collector roads. When an employee gets to the yard they have a map of areas that need to be plowed. They mark the area they are going to and the next employee picks another area. Councilmember Bert Clark stated that the dilemma is where to put the snow and who can haul it off.

ADJOURN: There being no further business; Councilmember Travis Allan moved to adjourn. Councilmember Ted Munford 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)