

MINUTES OF THE VERNAL CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING HELD
FEBRUARY 15, 2023 at 7:00 p.m. in the Vernal City Council room, 374 East Main,
Vernal, Utah 84078.

PRESENT: Councilmembers Nicholas Porter, Robin O’Driscoll, Ted Munford, Dave Everett, and Corey Foley and Mayor Doug Hammond.

WELCOME: Mayor Doug Hammond welcomed everyone to the meeting.

INVOCATION OR UPLIFTING THOUGHT: The invocation was given by Councilmember Corey Foley.

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

APPROVAL OF CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 1, 2023: *Councilmember Nick Porter moved to approve the minutes of February 1, 2023. Councilmember Robin O’Driscoll seconded the motion. The motion passed with Councilmembers Everett, O’Driscoll, Munford, Foley and Porter voting in favor.*

REQUEST FOR FUNDING STORY TELLING FESTIVAL - VERNIE HEENEY: Vernie Heeny introduced Chris Oviatt who is also on the Schools Foundation Committee and helps with this event. A handout was given to the Council explaining what the festival is and why they do this. Vernie Heeny explained that the stories are for information as well as entertainment to expose the students and community to how to write and tell stories and pass on family history. The event is scheduled for Monday and Tuesday March 20th and 21st in the hope to grow the audience by not conflicting with other events happening at the end of the week. Councilmember Dave Everett asked how much they are asking for from the City. Vernie Heeny stated they would like \$1000. Councilmember Robin O’Driscoll stated the request is \$750 on the application. Quinn Bennion noted that a few years ago when the budget was tight several events were cut and this was one of them. There are funds available under the miscellaneous section for sponsorships. *Councilmember Dave Everett moved to sponsor the Storytelling Festival in the amount of \$750. Councilmember Robin O’Driscoll seconded the motion. The motion passed with the following roll call vote:*

Councilmember Munford.....aye;
Councilmember O’Driscoll.....aye;
Councilmember Everettaye;
Councilmember Porteraye;
Councilmember Foley.....aye.

Councilmember Dave Everett asked what the fund balance is for the miscellaneous fund. Carl Morton answered there is still around \$2200 dollars in that fund.

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REQUEST FOR FUNDING FOR GRAD NIGHT - MEGAN HAWKES: Megan Hawkes stated that she and her husband Paul are over the grad night event this year and they are asking for \$2000 from the City. Quinn Bennion reported that this event has been budgeted. Paul Hawkes explained that this event is to provide a drug and alcohol free environment for the students to celebrate their graduation. *Councilmember Corey Foley moved to approve the \$2000 sponsorship for the grad night event. Councilmember Nick Porter seconded the motion. The motion passed with the following roll call vote:*

Councilmember Munford.....aye;
Councilmember O’Driscoll.....aye;
Councilmember Everettaye;
Councilmember Porteraye;
Councilmember Foley.....aye.

REQUEST FOR FUNDING FOR VERNAL’S DINOSAUR ROUND UP RODEO - CINDY WILLIAMS & CARSON YOUNG: Quinn Bennion reported that the Rodeo Committee has requested that this item be placed on the next agenda. Mayor Doug Hammond tabled this request.

REVIEW OF PROPOSED CONCEPT FOR BUREAU OF RECLAMATION FOR DRAIN IN HAVEN ESTATES: Gabby Blackburn explained that there are land drains all over the valley and there is one going through Haven Estates. She displayed a map showing the drain coming off 500 South and 500 West and where the developer and Bureau of Reclamation are proposing the existing drain be moved to. In this subdivision these are actually 30 feet easements making many of the lots unbuildable. The utilities have not been installed in this area yet and the developer does not want to put them in if he cannot build homes there anyway. He is requesting the City consider allowing this drain of the Bureau of Reclamation be moved into the public right-of-way. There will be no cost to the City to move the line; however it will require a non-exclusive very restrictive easement in the City’s right-of-way. This line could take the City’s storm water if the pipe is sized correctly. Quinn Bennion stated that normally the City would not grant an easement to give priority to one utility over another. In this case, the Bureau of Reclamation is demanding an easement. There is the option to run the line down 400 West where there is a drainage outlet just north of the cul-de-sac. Mayor Doug Hammond asked if this line would interfere with installing the water and sewer lines. Gabby Blackburn answered that there is enough to have all of the utilities in the road and the developer would have to make it fit to make the lots buildable. Councilmember Ted Munford asked if the staff has a preference on allowing this easement. Gabby Blackburn stated she wants to encourage development and this would help connect the storm drainage system. *Councilmember Ted Munford moved to approve the concept as for moving the line and approving an easement as presented. Councilmember Dave Everett seconded the motion. The motion passed with the following roll call vote:*

Councilmember Munford.....aye;

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Councilmember O’Driscoll.....aye;
Councilmember Everettaye;
Councilmember Porteraye;
Councilmember Foley..... abstained.

PUBLIC HEARING: REQUEST APPROVAL TO AMEND THE VERNAL CITY CODE-COMBINING THE DEFINITION OF SIGN SECTIONS 16.04.495, 16.04.497, 16.04.500, 16.04.505, 16.04.510, 16.04.512, 16.04.515, 16.04.520, 16.04.525, 16.04.535, 16.04.540, 16.04.545, 16.04.550, 16.04.555, 16.04.560, 16.04.565, 16.04.570, 16.04.575, 580, 16.04.585, 16.04.590, 16.04.595, 16.04.600, 16.04.610, 16.04.615, 16.04.620, 16.04.625, AND 16.04.630 – ORDINANCE NO 2023-04: Gabby Blackburn explained that this section of the code has the definitions for different types of signs. The thought process for this change is to put all the definitions together so it can be found easier. There are 770 definitions and other cities combine definitions. However, with this change, it would be necessary to repeal and replace the other numbers so the Planning Commission decided to table this ordinance and look at all the definitions to simplify this Chapter. Mayor Doug Hammond opened the public hearing. There being no public comments, Mayor Doug Hammond closed the public hearing and tabled this item until there is a recommendation from the Planning Commission.

PUBLIC HEARING: REQUEST APPROVAL TO AMEND THE VERNAL CITY CODE TO INCLUDE A STIPEND FOR THE PLANNING COMMISSION BOARD MEMBERS SECTION 16.08.030 – ORDINANCE NO 2023-05: Gabby Blackburn explained that that City Council added a small stipend for the Planning Commission members to the salary schedule. In Section 16.08.030 of the code, it states that the Planning Commission shall serve without compensation so that is in direct opposition to the budget approval. Councilmember Ted Munford asked why the City has this code. Gabby Blackburn stated it is unusual to pay the Planning Commission. Carl Morton stated Naples City does this. Councilmember Corey Foley commented that the Planning Commission members spend a lot of time on City issues. Councilmember Nick Porter stated he likes the proposed language on the screen better than what is in the packet and suggested the wording be changed to “may”. Councilmember Dave Everett agreed that City boards and committees require a lot more time than a meeting. Mayor Doug Hammond opened the public hearing.

Paul Hawkes stated that the State Legislature redefined the word “shall” to mean “may” and has directed the State to not use that word anymore.

Jenny Thompson, resident at 55 West 200 North, stated she did not think they should not get a stipend. She noted that in the 1800’s it was thought that if civil servants were paid they would serve for the wrong reasons. Councilmember Ted Munford stated he understood her position and this is small compensation.

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Jenny Thompson stated during the hearing to rezone the property for Carol Judd a Mr. Southam mentioned he was on the City Council in the past and did not get paid at that time to do it.

There being no further public comments, Mayor Doug Hammond closed the public hearing. *Councilmember Ted Munford moved to approve Ordinance No. 2023-05 with the wording changed to “may” so there is no conflict. Councilmember Robin O’Driscoll seconded the motion. The motion passed with the following roll call vote:*

- Councilmember Munford.....aye;*
- Councilmember O’Driscoll.....aye;*
- Councilmember Everettaye;*
- Councilmember Porteraye;*
- Councilmember Foley..... aye.*

CONSIDER APPROVAL OF STAFF TO WORK WITH ROCKY MOUNTAIN POWER FOR LED STREETLIGHT CONVERSION: Quinn Bennion reminded the Council that the City has been exploring the cost savings to convert the street lights to LED. The lights are owned and maintained by Rocky Mountain Power (RMP) with a few exceptions and there are 674 lights including the decorative lights. The City pays a monthly tariff for the lights that will decrease if they are converted to LED fixtures. RMP prepared a table that outlines the costs to pay to transition to LED. The staff budgeted the lights at a high level knowing this would occur so there would be enough funds to pay for the conversion. Gabby Blackburn commented that these new lights will be dark sky compliant. The conversion cost is \$265,000 so it will take three years to see any savings. *Councilmember Nick Porter moved for the staff to continue to work with Rocky Mountain Power and bring a contract for the conversion. Councilmember Ted Munford seconded the motion. The motion passed with the following roll call vote:*

- Councilmember Munford.....aye;*
- Councilmember O’Driscoll.....aye;*
- Councilmember Everettaye;*
- Councilmember Porteraye;*
- Councilmember Foley..... aye.*

REVIEW OF REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL FOR SALE OF CITY PROPERTY AT 43 SOUTH. 100 WEST: Quinn Bennion requested the Council’s feedback on a draft request for proposal (RFP) for the City to sell the property at 43 South 100 West. This is a 900 square foot building that is partially rented. The City purchased this property for public parking and most of the land will be paved. He suggested the Council consider more than just the price to sell this property to ensure it fits with the neighborhood and the revitalization of downtown. The Council will review proposals in a presentation format during a work session and later vote for the preferred buyer. Councilmember Dave Everett stated this process shows due diligence and the City’s interest in revitalization. Councilmember Robin O’Driscoll suggested the cost be dropped to 40% of the review. Councilmember Corey Foley disagreed and stated the City

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should simply sell it and not interfere with the commercial use. Quinn Bennion stated this will be a challenge as the Council may know the bidders. Councilmember Ted Munford stated this is not a large building so what could be done. Gabby Blackburn stated it is zoned CC-1 so it could be any retail. Councilmember Nick Porter stated the building could also be demolished for more parking. Councilmember Robin O’Driscoll stated if the City weighs the purchase price heavier, say 70%, then the bidder with money will get this location. Councilmember Dave Everett stated the activity at this location has to have some kind of connectivity considering the funds the City is putting into this area. Carl Morton noted that the City does not need to sell it and can remain the landlord. Quinn Bennion stated he has heard from two people who are interested in purchasing and asked about the possibility of a drive thru. This would eliminate 4 parking slots. Quinn Bennion displayed the rendering of the future parking lot and how a drive-thru would impact it. Councilmember Corey Foley stated that person should have to pay more into the parking fund if they utilize spaces for the drive-thru. Quinn Bennion stated he may be able to draft up what a drive through would look like for the Council’s consideration.

STAFF REPORTS

Downtown projects:

Quinn Bennion reported that the large major improvement project for the downtown parking lots has gone out to bid and the deadline had to be extended to March 9th.

Roof Collapse:

Quinn Bennion stated the roof on the Basin Laundry building has collapsed, and a letter has been sent by the building official that it has to be removed or fixed. The City hired a contractor and the building should be demolished within the next few weeks.

ADJOURN: There being no further business; *Councilmember Nick Porter moved to adjourn. Councilmember Corey Foley seconded the motion. The motion passed with a unanimous vote and the meeting was declared adjourned.*

Mayor Doug Hammond

ATTEST:

Roxanne Behunin, City Recorder

(S E A L)