

Mayor David Sims called the regularly scheduled council meeting of January 16, 2018 to order at 7:00 p.m. Present for the meeting were Mayor Sims, Council President Rick Alonzo, Council Members Ron Smith, Valerie Thompson, and Adam Arthur, Clerk Kris Larson, Engineer/Administrator Mike Klaus, Attorney Andrakay Pluid, Police Chief Vic Watson, Fire Chief Dave Winey, Street Department Supervisor John Youngwirth, Bookkeeper Christine McNair, and Economic Development Coordinator Dennis Weed. Also present were Marcia Cossette, Denise Creighton, Jerry Higgs, Dave Gray, Mike Weland, Marty Martinez, Warren Patzer, and Tim West.

Tim West gave a memo regarding Highway 95 concerns to council members. He said he has spoken to engineers regarding the highway project, and now that sidewalks are part of the project some changes had to be made. Tim said the north bound lanes of the bypass may be left two lanes but the south bound lanes will be reduced to one due to the crosswalks. He had recommendations for council. He said the level of the roadbed has risen substantially over the years, and it is difficult to pull onto the highway. He would like the road level taken down to street level for a smoother transition. He would like a turn lane from the top of the bypass to Liberty Gas Station. More crosswalks are needed but if they are causing the lanes to be narrowed down, he would like this to be put on the back burner for now. He would like to see the traffic keep flowing. Tim would like to see the current sidewalk on the bypass repaired. The widening of the highway will take up much property of the businesses and residences along the highway. He does not like this. The bypass needs to remain four lanes in his opinion. If it is reduced to two lanes there will be reduced traffic flow. He thinks the traffic flow will be worse with the proposed project. Tim wants the stop light to stay at Alderson Lane but he would like to see turning arrows and better programming of the light. Tim said that people have turned in comments and have not gotten a response. Tim respectfully asked City Council to withdraw their approval of the highway project.

Mayor Sims said about five years ago there was a joint meeting between Idaho Transportation Department (ITD) Engineers and the City and County and the ITD Engineer stood up and said ITD will not spend any money in Bonners Ferry. Mayor Sims said we got ITD to include Bonners Ferry in a corridor study for the State of Idaho and the conclusion was that the traffic flows fine on the highway, but it is better to have a three lane rather than a five lane as a five lane would take out many businesses and homes. The bypass was not feasible due to cost. The congestion on the highway is not an ITD problem but a local problem due to local traffic patterns. The EDC had 14 public meetings talking about the intersections, profile of sidewalks, crosswalks, etc. The project was developed using information from these public meetings. Mayor Sims said most of the project planning was done two to four years ago so the City has encouraged ITD to have more informational meetings so people could be updated. Sidewalks width changed from 6 feet to 8 feet due to bicycle traffic. Mayor Sims said ITD has looked at the Alderson light three times this year but have agreed to look at the City's data for the light in the traffic study that we are doing. The transportation study will look at alternate routes or connections. Alderson Lane is a three legged light. Augusta Street may be another route for through traffic. There has to be an engineering study to prove the light is warranted. He thinks ITD is concerned about the flow of traffic on the highway not the people trying to enter on to the

highway. He said it is important to have the highway project done to keep the highway in better shape. David said ITD worked hard to keep from taking out any businesses or homes with the sidewalks and widened highway. Mayor Sims said he appreciates Tim's comments, but we don't have control over the project. He said ITD did get a lot of public comments at their meetings. Tim's main concern is the bypass when the outside lane ends at Kootenai Street. He said there is a lot of passing trucks on the bypass. Mayor Sims said Damon Allen said this is paint on the ground, and it can be changed if necessary. Tim said he was out of town working when most of the meetings took place.

Jerry Higgs said we need a sign that says "through traffic keep left" when traveling on the bypass. He is hopeful that ITD will listen to the dialog from citizens. Rick Alonzo said years ago the sign said that. Jerry also asked about the status of the hire for clerk/treasurer.

Warren Patzer said traffic was backed up from Pizza Factory to the parking lot of the high school, and people cannot get on the highway. He said with the flashing light cars cannot get on the highway because traffic continues moving. His concern is having another light near Badger Den to allow traffic to pull onto the highway. John Youngwirth said there is an hour difference if the light is working rather than flashing. Mr. Patzer asked about the highway repair near the mudslide at Naples. Mayor Sims said ITD is planning repairs for this year. He said there will be comment forms for ITD regarding the highway project.

Police Chief Vic Watson said since January 3, 2018 there have been two warrant arrests, two mental holds, one misdemeanor battery charge, one malicious injury to property, one civil protection order violation, one abandoned vehicle and property, two welfare checks, one trespass, one theft, one battery, and one vehicle crash.

Fire Chief Dave Winey said there was one CO check with Avista, one broken gas meter on Denver Street, and one vehicle assist with the police for an accident on Bonner and First Street. Ron Smith asked about the accident on Bonner and First Street. Vic said an older gentleman was test driving a vehicle at Riverside that was a little more powerful than what he could handle.

Mike Klaus said there is nothing big to share this evening.

Dennis Weed said negotiations with Albertsons are still ongoing for the old Safeway building. Another offer has been sent, but if it does not go through then the prospective business may build a building. There is activity at the Pape site. Dennis said one retail store will be going in south of the current Pape building. The plan is to take the Pape building down and Boundary Tractor is trying to purchase the northwest end of the property with the loading dock. From the loading dock to the apartments is Stuart Hill's property. There was no Spot Bus meeting this month. Dennis is working with businesses for building but he cannot say anything about it at this time but will as soon as he can. Yoder's opened up this morning at their new location and they were very busy all day long. Dennis said buildings are getting in short supply. A selection was made for engineer of the regional sewer study. Boundary County is growing at a pretty good clip and sewer would benefit the Three Mile area businesses. In order to use the Urban Renewal tax benefit for development, there must be a commercial component to it before the Board will look at giving the tax benefit. Mayor Sims said a through street is being considered on some

residential development. Ron asked about payment for the sewer study. Dennis said there is a DEQ Grant and the County will put in some funding. He said some of the businesses may help pay for the match also. Dennis said a part of the study may be whether or not the City can pump sewer waste to the Three Mile area. Mayor Sims said it is very expensive to pump sewer. Mike said a scope and fee will be detailed by the engineering firm. The County can negotiate the scope and fee with the engineer once it is done. As many possibilities that exist will be looked at in the sewer feasibility study. Dennis said there could be a Three Mile sewer and a Moyie sewer. This will be determined in the feasibility study. Mayor Sims said it is a challenge to have sewer system with low density users.

Adam Arthur moved to approve the consent agenda. Valerie Thompson seconded the motion. The motion passed – Ron Smith “yes”, Rick Alonzo “yes”, Valerie Thompson “yes”, Adam Arthur “yes”. The consent agenda contained the following: roll call; approval of accounts payable and payroll; and approval of January 2, 2018 council meeting minutes.

Golf fees were discussed. Mayor Sims said the golf committee is not recommending a fee increase this year, but he thought it may need to be reviewed. He said it is a problem when we wait a long period before raising fees. Ron thinks we should send it back to the golf committee to see if an adjustment should be made. Adam said it is a balancing act because if the rates get too high then the patrons don’t want to golf. Rick likes the comment about small incremental changes rather than large jumps. Ron Smith moved to send the fee increase issue back to the golf committee for their consideration. Adam Arthur seconded the motion. The motion passed – Ron Smith “yes”, Rick Alonzo “yes”, Valerie Thompson “yes”, Adam Arthur “yes”.

The Community Builders Grant for technical assistance was discussed. Mayor Sims said getting to smarter growth would look at zoning on the corridor of the highway and this is what Lisa would like to look at. Zoning along the highway is difficult due to residential and commercial along the highway. Looking at the entire corridor would make sense. Staff is asking for approval to apply for the grant. There is no match required. Rick Alonzo moved to have staff look into applying for the grant. Valerie Thompson seconded the motion. The motion passed – Ron Smith “yes”, Rick Alonzo “yes”, Valerie Thompson “yes”, Adam Arthur “yes”.

Mike Klaus said there are problems with the pickup Steve Neumeyer drives. He said they are in the shift assembly rather than the transmission. Steve’s pickup is a 2006 with over 100,000 miles. A double door pickup is being looked at. Adam asked if there is a vehicle replacement plan. Mike said there is a plan but he did not anticipate Steve’s pickup needing replacement this year. Mayor Sims asked what we would do with the pickup we are replacing. Mike said he would speak to the mechanic and see if it can be fixed for another department or if not, surplus it and sell it. Adam asked if there is another vehicle in worse condition than this one. Mike said there is not in the electric department. Another department may need it. Ron Smith moved to purchase an electrician’s vehicle in the amount of \$45,131. Valerie Thompson seconded the motion. The motion passed – Ron Smith “yes”, Rick Alonzo “yes”, Valerie Thompson “yes”, Adam Arthur “yes”.

Mike said recently we had 15 applicants for the water/sewer job. An employee is also leaving the water/sewer department. We found when we went through the interviews and the selection was made that the prospective employees could not take the job at the wage level offered. The recommendation is to bump up the base wage to \$17 per hour with the allowance of up to \$2 per hour for education and experience. Mayor Sims said there is a shortage of water/sewer operators in the State of Idaho and it is important to have a competitive wage. The base wage will go from \$16.56 per hour to \$17 per hour. Mayor Sims said the matrix we had was based solely on the certifications and we are finding that other factors should be considered. Attorney Andrakay Pluid said one applicant had a Bachelor degree that would fit our position and another applicant had experience that would help but we did not have a way to adjust the matrix for this. Mike said if we had an applicant coming out of high school for example, the entry level wage rate would be \$17. He explained that each certification would increase the wages by \$.50 per hour. Adam questioned the difference of a new person coming in with education making more than a new hire with two certifications. Mike explained that degrees take time off the certification process. Mayor Sims said it allows us to get a certified operator more quickly. Valerie Thompson moved to adjust the base wage from \$16.56 to \$17 per hour with the ability to increase the entry wage \$2 per hour based on education and experience. Ron Smith seconded the motion. The motion passed – Ron Smith “yes”, Rick Alonzo “yes”, Valerie Thompson “yes”, Adam Arthur “yes”.

Mayor Sims explained the Boundary Area Transportation Team (BATT). Rick Alonzo moved to approve the Mayor’s recommendation to appoint John Youngwirth as the City representative to BATT and Lisa Ailport at alternate representative to BATT. Adam Arthur seconded the motion. The motion passed – Ron Smith “yes”, Rick Alonzo “yes”, Valerie Thompson “yes”, Adam Arthur “yes”.

Mayor Sims said Mike is currently the city engineer and has administrator duties. He said with the current and future workload it is clear that this is more than a one person job. He said the work load is pretty tough for Mike, as we have many projects on the horizon, and they require a lot of oversight as well as additional engineering needs. He thinks it would be a good idea to have an engineer and an administrator. Mike said he is open to what council thinks but the City will be very busy for the next few years, and we don’t want to miss anything. Mike said the building permits have gone to another level, and Lisa is doing a great job with this. Mayor Sims said there are ordinances that need to be redone. Mike said there are policies that need to be done and it may pay to take some time to consider this option. Mayor Sims said council can think about this and we can re-agendize this at a later date. Rick thinks it is worth looking into. Ron would like to hear recommendations from Mike and how the work will be split up. He wants to know if the position will be full time or part time. Mike wants to do this in an open forum where the public can hear the discussions. Val said she would like to move it to the next council meeting so everyone has more time to see what the position entails.

Mayor Sims said we have received a number of applications for the clerk/treasurer position. In looking at the applications it is hard to tell what the salary range will need to be. He said currently we pay about \$65,000, and we advertised the position for \$50,000 to \$60,000. We

would like the flexibility to go up to \$65,000 if needed. Ron Smith said in the personnel policy there is a part that says if a current employee applies and has the qualifications that consideration will be given. He asked if we are at that point. Mayor Sims said we have not selected the candidates for interview, but the policy says we may give preference to internal candidates. He said Idaho Code sets out guidelines for how the appointed positions are hired. The clerk/treasurer position is an appointed position. Ron said the Mayor would look at appointment and council would approve. He said he would like Rick, Mike, Kris, and Andrakay look at the applications and help him select the candidates to be interviewed. Rick has a problem with the top wage being what Kris makes now because the new person would not have the knowledge base. He could go up to \$62,000. Adam agreed especially with the number of applications received. Ron said if the person proves themselves we could raise the wage at that time. Mayor Sims said we would have to come back to council at that time. Rick moved to increase the starting salary range from \$50,000 to \$60,000 to \$50,000 to \$62,000. Ron Smith seconded the motion. The motion passed – Ron Smith “yes”, Rick Alonzo “yes”, Valerie Thompson “yes”, Adam Arthur “yes”.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:21 p.m.

David Sims, Mayor

Attest:

Kris Larson, City Clerk