

**MINUTES
CITY COUNCIL MEETING
Bonners Ferry City Hall
7232 Main Street
267-3105
July 7, 2020
6:00 pm**

Mayor Dick Staples called the Council meeting of July 7, 2020 to order at 6:00 pm. Present for the meeting were: Council Members Rick Alonzo, Adam Arthur, Valerie Thompson and Ron Smith. Also present were: City Clerk/Treasurer Christine McNair, City Administrator Lisa Ailport, City Engineer Mike Klaus, City Police Chief Brian Zimmerman and City Attorney Andrakay Pluid. Members of the public present were: Jerry Higgs, Henry Yoder, Alan Hinson, Warren Campbell, Robert Lavala, Sheila Lavala, Courtney Frost, Denise Crichton, Steve Tanner, Loretta Hunsaker, Steve Nelson, Mat Surprenant, Stephanie Franke, Brion Poston, Craig Kelson, Rob Tompkins, Glenda Novinger and Sharon Hatch.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

GUESTS Courtney Frost - Presentation Regarding the High 5 Community Transformation Grant
Lisa said this was a very successful grant to reduce childhood obesity and offer more access to healthy foods. Courtney said the community transformation grant private nonprofit foundation. Youth behavioral health, healthcare innovations and children's health. It is a three-year grant focused on access to healthy activity and healthy food. When Bonners Ferry applied there were 20 applications. The three finalists were Sandpoint, Rexburg and Bonners Ferry. The foundation works with communities to address children's health, because the foundation doesn't know the communities.

The two phases to the grant process are: technical assistance, funding and implementation. The steering committee included: Boundary County School District, Boundary Community Hospital, Boundary County Parks and Recreation, Boundary County Library, Boundary County Extension Office, City of Bonners Ferry and a Citizen at Large. The steering committee was able to leverage money from Innovia for the synthetic ice rink and the splashpad, Selkirk Association of Realtors for the bike and pedestrian plan, Equinox Foundation for the BOCO backpack program and Community Block Grant for the pool rehabilitation. The committee was able double the money by leveraging \$250,000 for the community projects.

Rob Tompkins said it was eye opening when all the groups came together. Rob thanked the City of Bonners Ferry for creating a rec center that is not in a building.

Courtney said programs, policy, partnership and projects is the model for the transformation grant. The more "P's" that are involved the more successful the grant will be. Courtney congratulated all of the work that was done and is hopeful the City of Bonners Ferry will continue to work with the Blue Cross Foundation in the future.

Valerie Thompson thanked everyone involved since this has benefited many children in the community.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Henry Yoder said the Ministerial Association is concerned about the vision statement. He doesn't understand why sexual orientation and gender identity is included when it already states sex, which is male and female. The vision statement doesn't match together and is welcoming the spirit of lawlessness, which will destroy the social and moral fabric of this community. Suggesting advanced gender confusion to innocent boys and girls is child abuse, we detest such a perverse statement and respectfully request it be changed.

Robert Lavala said several people were concerned about item #12. Robert said clear language for agenda items is necessary. The City website is outdated and needs to be updated.

Loretta Hunsaker said she is here regarding the water and sewer rates. There were five years of substantial rate increases. Loretta hopes Council will take local demographics into consideration. The Seattle consumer price index is not relevant. She doesn't understand the reason for continuously increasing the rates. Loretta suggested decreasing the amount of the general fund transfer from water and sewer. She hopes Council will take a good look at things before a final decision is made and at this point she is against an increase in rates.

Warren Campbell said wants to know where the scientific evidence is for social distancing and wearing face masks. He feels it is ludicrous. The average person knows this is a scam perpetrated on the American people to subdue them and make them sheeple. A state representative from Post Falls said that there has not been a respirator used in the five northern counties for Coronavirus.

Steve Tanner encourages Council to remove the second sentence of the vision statement. Steve spoke with David Sims and David said the City had an unofficial liaison with the Human Rights Task Force. Steve recommends the City doesn't have a liaison with them since they are a liberal organization that promote the agenda of the LBGTQ. Steve feels this is a huge issue that we don't need to be part of.

Craig Kelson, with the Boundary County Human Rights Taskforce, said he is a liaison to the City. He appreciates Council welcoming all walks of life to participate and feels Council is a kind and generous group.

Stephanie Franke said there are a few items in the joint pole use agreement that need to be corrected, since it has EL Automation and Fat Beam listed and it shouldn't. Christine thanked Stephanie for noticing those and said the changes were made to the copy the Mayor will sign tonight.

Sharon Hatch said Bonners Ferry cannot live in fear of lawsuits as a way to guide our life. Insurance has become the ruler of entities. She and her family have put on fireworks displays for the last 29 years. Everyone has lost a lot this year and need something to celebrate. She is willing to do a fireworks show this year.

Jerry Higgs said he, as a City resident, still takes issues with people who are not citizens of the City trying to affect the policy that affects the citizens of the City. Jerry feels that people that are afraid to sacrifice some of their freedoms for benefit of their fellow citizens are being selfish.

REPORTS

Adam asked about the swimming pool sign for the North bound lane. Lisa said there was a special pole ordered for the swimming pool sign for the North bound lane and it has been installed. Mayor Staples asked about completion of the splash pad. Lisa said money has been secured from the Blue Cross foundation for an enhancement for the splash pad. Mike anticipates it will be completed this month.

Economic Development Coordinator Dennis Weed said the broadband grant will happen with the City of Moyie Springs and Boundary County. Dennis said there are several help wanted signs and few people looking for employment.

Ralph Lotspeich said the golf course has been really busy and the course is in really good shape.

CONSENT AGENDA – {action item}

1. Call to Order/Roll Call
 2. Approval of Bills and Payroll
 3. Approval of the June 16, 2020 Council meeting minutes, June 23, 2020 Special Council meeting minutes
- Adam Arthur moved to approve the consent agenda. Rick Alonzo seconded the motion. The motion passed. Adam Arthur – yes, Valerie Thompson – yes, Rick Alonzo – yes, Ron Smith - yes

OLD BUSINESS

4. Electric/Water/Sewer – Discuss Consumer Price Index Regarding Rate Increases (attachment) {action item}
- Mike said at the last Council meeting he was directed to provide the history of the rate increases. The Consumer Price Index (CPI) listed is not the Seattle CPI or any geographic area. Mike used the CPI U is the general index that encompasses about 87% of the United States' population. Mike said there are over 20 different rate classes in the utilities. In 2015, there were several improvements to the water and sewer systems, that were necessary to maintain the infrastructure. Most customers feel that smaller yearly incremental increases are better than a larger increase after several years of no increases. Mayor Staples asked about information going back past 2009. Mike presented a 100-year rolling average for the CPI. Ron asked if the base currently is \$11.46 with CPI would be \$12.72, water currently \$53.80 and CPI \$35.24, sewer currently \$37.68 CPI \$14.77. Mike said there are two ways to pay for capital projects: either reserve or by getting a loan. Rick said the cost of service analysis (COSA) was done to make sure we had enough money in reserve so we don't have to borrow money to repair/replace infrastructure. Adam said he is concerned with the CPI since it would have the rates lower than what we need to maintain the infrastructure. Mayor Staples wants to look at the numbers further back. Mayor Staples tabled this to the next meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

5. City – Rich Beck Regarding Abandon Properties in the City Limits {action item}

Rich Beck said he is concerned with the old China Kitchen, the old vacuum place, the old Harvest Foods, the old mill site and the buildings on this block. He spoke to the police regarding these properties. Rich wants to know if there are City ordinances regarding abandon properties. His son was the caddy for Mrs. Albertson and told her about the properties, she said she didn't know there were any problems. Rich would like to see the City do something about the abandon properties because it is not a good thing for the town. Ron Smith said he feels the same way, but there is something on the books about the conditions of the properties. Andrakay said there is a nuisance property ordinance. Rich asked if the ordinances can be re-written. Andrakay said unfortunately, no. Valerie asked if that is something that has to be taken up with the State Legislature. Andrakay said the City can't pass an ordinance that interferes with the rights of a property owner and their ability to do what they want with the property. Rich said the property next to the current Safeway building is a detriment and people have been caught back there with drugs. Rich asked if someone calls the City, please don't say the properties aren't a problem, since it is. Brian said the police have caught some kids drinking and using drugs during their lunchtime. Rick said that Dennis Weed has been working for years to sell or lease the property and Albertson's have been non-cooperative. Dennis said there have been 10-12 companies that have been interested and have not been able to negotiate with the Albertson's executive team.

6. Golf – Brion Poston Regarding Donation of the Green Fees from the Friends of Mirror Lake Golf Tournament to the Friends of Mirror Lake {action item}

Brion said the Friends of Mirror Lake are having a golf tournament August 7, 2020 and are asking the City to donate the green fees from the tournament. The Friends of Mirror Lake help with projects at the golf course to take some pressure off the City. Rick Alonzo moved to donate the green fees from the Friends of Mirror Lake golf tournament to the Friends of Mirror Lake. Adam Arthur seconded the motion. The motion passed. Adam Arthur – yes, Valerie Thompson – yes, Rick Alonzo – yes, Ron Smith – yes

7. Golf – Discuss Golf Course Project Recommendations by the Friends of Mirror Lake (attachment) {action item}

Adam said he is concerned with the cart path projects. Adam wants to make sure that the projects are completed so there is not any cost to the taxpayers if there are any issues. Adam asked if this list has gone through the golf committee. Steve Nelson said last fall, they were told to work through the golf course manager. Steve asked if the projects can be covered under Ralph's insurances. The Mayor will talk to Andrakay about the insurance. Ron asked if all the work on the list will be done by the Friends of Mirror Lake. Steve said yes. Brion said John Youngwirth is now on the golf committee. Mayor Staples said drainage is an issue with the cart paths and Mike should be consulted. Ron Smith moved to approve the list of improvements recommended by the Friends of Mirror Lake in coordination with the golf course manager. Adam Arthur seconded the motion. The motion passed. Adam Arthur – yes, Valerie Thompson – yes, Rick Alonzo – yes, Ron Smith – yes

8. Water/Sewer – Consider Authorizing the Mayor to Sign the Final Pay Application, Change Orders #2 and #3 and Close Out Documentation from Wink Inc. for the Wilson Street – Solomon Street Corridor Project (attachment) {action item}

Mike said the overall revised amount for the project is \$365,335.02. There was a \$10,000-\$12,000 savings on the engineering portion of the project. Rick Alonzo moved to approve the final payment to Wink Inc for \$169,117.27 and authorize the Mayor to sign all the change orders, pay applications and close out documentation. Valerie Thompson seconded the motion. The motion passed. Adam Arthur – yes, Valerie Thompson – yes, Rick Alonzo – yes, Ron Smith – yes

9. Electric – Consider Authorizing the Mayor to Sign the Joint Pole Use Agreement with IIG (attachment) {action item}

Mike said IIG requested a pole use agreement. Mike said there is a new addition for the pole use agreement on page 14 at the bottom regarding insurance. Mike recommends adding bonding to future agreements. Mayor Staples asked about the fees on page 22. Mike explained the rates. Mike said the rates have not been adjusted. Mayor Staples recommends looking at the rates. Ron asked if there is maximum number that can be on the poles. Mike said there is and that depends on the condition of the pole, wind loading, ice loading and weight. Ron Smith moved to authorize the Mayor to sign the joint pole use agreement with IIG with the edits and final review. Adam Arthur seconded the motion. The motion passed. Adam Arthur – yes, Valerie Thompson – yes, Rick Alonzo – yes, Ron Smith – yes

10. Electric – Consider Job Description for Moyie Hydro Backup Operator (attachment) {action item}

Lisa said there was not a true job description for this position. Lisa is hoping for cross-training employees. Valerie said it is essential to cross train employees and make sure they are able to do their other job as well. Adam Arthur moved to approve the job description for the Moyie Hydro backup operator. Rick Alonzo seconded the motion. Adam Arthur – yes, Valerie Thompson – yes, Rick Alonzo – yes, Ron Smith – yes

11. Street – Consider Street Name for the Wilson Street – Solomon Street Corridor Project (attachment) {action item}

Lisa reviewed the naming process and it can be a Lane, Drive, Street or Parkway. Mayor Staples wants to hear what the public has for recommendations. Rick Alonzo moved to table this item and receive recommendations from the general public.

12. City – Consider Extending the COVID-19 Policy until December 31, 2020 (attachment) {action item}
Mayor Staples said this is an internal employee leave policy. Rick Alonzo moved to extend the COVID-19 leave policy until December 31, 2020. Adam Arthur seconded the motion. The motion passed. Adam Arthur – yes, Valerie Thompson – yes, Rick Alonzo – yes, Ron Smith – yes

13. City – Consider Affirming the Mayoral Appointment of Dave Walter and David Sims to the Urban Renewal Agency Board for a Five-Year Term {action item}
Mayor Staples said they are both on the board now and are willing to serve another five-year term. Adam Arthur moved to affirm the Mayoral appointment of Dave Walter and David Sims to the Urban Renewal Agency Board for a five-year term. Rick Alonzo seconded the motion. The motion passed. Adam Arthur – yes, Valerie Thompson – yes, Rick Alonzo – yes, Ron Smith – yes

14. City – Discuss Submitting a Letter of Intent to Participate and Receive Funds from the Coronavirus Relief Fund in the Form of Property Tax Relief (attachment) {action item}
Ron asked if there is going to be some type of legislation for this. Lisa said there is a request to the federal level to make sure the program complies with federal regulations. Lisa said the letter of intent is due by July 17, 2020. Valerie said the state's recommendation is not compliant with the federal policy at this time since it states it is not for tax relief and she is concerned. Mayor Staples asked if the letter of intent is non-binding. That is the understanding, that it is not binding. Andrakay is skeptical about this being compliant with the federal CARES Act. The letter of intent is just saving our spot in the program. Rick Alonzo moved to submit a letter of intent to participate and receive funds from the Coronavirus Relief Fund in the form of property tax relief if it proves legal to do it. Ron Smith seconded the motion. The motion passed. Adam Arthur – yes, Valerie Thompson – yes, Rick Alonzo – yes, Ron Smith – yes

15. City – E.L. Internet Northwest Regarding Broadband Internet Services *Information Only*
Stephanie presented an information packet regarding and promoting EL. Internet Northwest. In the 10 years of serving Boundary County they have never had a rate increase and have had three rate decreases. They are constantly increasing the capabilities of their system. There is a map of the service area and speed tests to go along with the services offered in Bonners Ferry.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:20 pm