

**MINUTES OF THE
CITY COUNCIL MEETING
March 21, 2023
6:00 pm**

Mayor Dick Staples called the Council meeting of March 21, 2023, to order at 6:00 pm.

Council members present were Brion Poston, Valerie Thompson and Rick Alonzo.

Staff present were City Administrator Lisa Ailport, Police Chief Brian Zimmerman, City Engineer Mike Klaus and Hydro Operator Adam Isaac. City Attorney Andrakay Pluid attended via Zoom.

Members of the public included: Tony Garcia, David Sims, Gerald Higgs, Denise Winey, Hailey Paterson Morgan, Lorretta Hunsaker, David Clark, Fay Almond,

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Mayor began the meeting with the pledge of allegiance.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

The Mayor asked if there was any who wished to speak.

Hailey Patterson Morgan spoke with the council regarding her trash situation, noting that it was fixed, and she is very appreciative of the help from the city.

REPORTS

City Engineer Mike Klaus spoke about the relicensing process for the Hydro facility. He shared a PowerPoint slideshow presentation summarizing the process for how to do relicensing. He mentioned that the process for relicensing will take 5-6 years, noting the different areas associated with relicensing, such as the clean water act, any affected environmental agencies, the Kootenai Tribe of Idaho, US Forest Service.

He then noted that there are three processes for relicensing, noting that we will likely follow the traditional or integrated process based on our needs and timeline.

Costs associated with the process for relicensing the hydro ranges from \$400,000-5,000,000 dollars. Mike stated he feels that we will likely pay between \$400,000-\$500,000 and that rates will have to be adjusted to plan for this cost.

Next steps include the selecting a consultant within the calendar year to stay on track with relicensing. A request for proposals may be necessary, or we can select a firm that we already work with on our hydro project. Mike will come back to council with a recommendation on contracting with an engineering firm and will likely do so within the next 3 months.

Val asked if there was value in hiring a consultant that already knows our system. Mike said that may play into our decision.

Brion Poston asked if the decision on who we hire will come back to the city council. Mike responded that yes it will.

David Sims commented on the EDC luncheon and that Nancy Mabile spoke about the update to the regional economic comprehensive plan.

USDA was up to discuss the funding for the value-added producer grant. They did meet with a few producers who may apply for the funds.

CONSENT AGENDA – {action item}

1. Call to Order/Roll Call
2. Approval of Bills and Payroll
3. Approval of minutes from the March 7, 2023, meeting.

City Administrator, Lisa Ailport noted that there were two errors in the March 7, 2023, minutes. The first was the wrong date and the second did not include Ron Smith as in attendance that evening. The draft minutes have been corrected with the two errors caught and if approved the motion should include the changes that staff stated.

Rick Alonzo moved to approve the consent agenda noting the changes to the minutes by the city administrator.

The motion was seconded.

Result:	Approve
Moved by:	Rick Alonzo
Seconded by	Val Thompson
Voted Yes	Brion Poston, Val Thompson, Rick Alonzo,
Voted No	
Absent	

NEW BUSINESS

4. **Electric-** Consider approval of Change Order for new turbine for Unit 1 with Riverside Inc. [attachment] {Action Item}

Mike summarized the proposal of the need to replace the turbine for Unit 1, stating that the two quotes that came in come from a manufacturer in China and the other in the US. After discussing the project with other hydro around the region, his recommendation was that we go with the turbine from China over the US version. The total cost to purchase the unit is around \$106,000.

Val Thompson moved to approve the purchase of unit 1 turbine at \$106,000 and authorize the Mayor to sign change order #2.

Motion was seconded.

Result:	Approve
Moved by:	Val Thompson
Seconded by	Rick Alonzo
Voted Yes	Brion Poston, Val Thompson, Rick Alonzo,
Voted No	
Absent	

5. **Utilities-** Consider contract with BDS to provide monthly utility billing. [attachment] {Action Item}

City Administrator, Lisa Ailport summarized the process of why the city moved away from using BDS services, while it wasn't clear why exactly the move occurred at this time the cost of administering the bills in-house was costing the city an additional \$500 per month, plus what was unaccounted for was the lost time on other projects that staff was unable to get to because they were consumed with getting bills out. Additionally, Lisa mentioned

she has spoken with some customers who were also frustrated with the bills lacking envelopes and perforated strips for removing the payment portion. Overall, the move back to BDS will improve our customer service as well as our bottom line.

Brion asked if this process will, free up time for staff to do other projects with the city. Deby Garcia responded that it will.

Rick Alonzo moved to authorize the Mayor to sign the contract with BDS. The motion was seconded.

Result:	Approve
Moved by:	Rick Alonzo
Seconded by	Val Thompson
Voted Yes	Brion Poston, Val Thompson, Rick Alonzo
Voted No	
Absent	

- 6. **City-** Consider Mayor Appointment of Deby Garcia to the Clerk / Treasurer Position and approve wage/salary. [attachment] {Action Item}

Lisa Ailport summarized the memo that was submitted to council regarding the job acceptance by Mrs. Garcia. With the acceptance of the position Mrs. Garcia could be appointed to the city clerk/treasurer position upon appointment by the full council.

Rick made a motion to appoint Deby Garcia as the city Clerk/Treasurer.

The motion was seconded.

Result:	Approve
Moved by:	Rick Alonzo
Seconded by	Val Thompson
Voted Yes	Brion Poston, Val Thompson, Rick Alonzo
Voted No	
Absent	

City- Mayor to perform swearing in of Deby Garcia, Clerk / Treasurer.

The Mayor recognized Mrs. Garcia, by asking her to raise her right hand and repeat after him the following statement,

"I Debra Garcia, do solemnly swear that I will support the Constitution of the United States, and the Constitution of the State of Idaho, and that I will faithfully discharge the duties of the office of City Clerk/Treasurer according to the best of my ability."

Mrs. Garcia completed this task as read by the Mayor, and then the Mayor announced her new role as City Clerk for the City of Bonners Ferry.

7. **City-** Consider wages in the Clerk's office [attachment] {Action Item}.

Lisa summarized a proposal of increasing wages for all the clerk's positions as she referenced the handout that was submitted to them.

Brion commented that he supported the higher end of the increases, noting that was \$21 dollars for the Deputy Clerk and three dollars an hour for the other positions. He commented that it wouldn't impact the general fund with that move.

Val commented that she also supported the move to \$21 and 3\$ an hour increase.

Rick Alonzo made mention that future 1% tax will not impact the utility funds.

Brion Poston commented that the costs are warranted, and he wants to keep the people that we currently have and supports raising the pays for the clerks.

Rick commented he was for the \$21 for the deputy clerk and \$3 / hour for the other two positions.

Brion asked why the billing clerk and the frontend clerk was so different from each other. Deby responded that there are more duties on the utility clerk including after hours and most notably was the length of time the person has been with the city.

Brion made a motion to raise the deputy clerk position to \$21/hour and the other two positions to provide a \$3/hour raise.

The motion was seconded.

Result:	Approve
Moved by:	Brion Poston
Seconded by	Rick Alonzo
Voted Yes	Brion Poston, Val Thompson, Rick Alonzo
Voted No	
Absent	

After conducting the business of the city, the Mayor noted the meeting was over. The time reflected was 6:35 pm.

I presided over this meeting and can confirm that the above minutes reflect the actual events as summarized and approved by the Council of the March 21, 2023, meeting.

Chairman

Approval Date