

**MINUTES OF THE CITY COUNCIL MEETING**  
**September 19, 2023**  
**6:00 pm**

Mayor Staples opened the meeting at 6:00 pm with the pledge of allegiance. Present for the meeting included Council members Val Thompson, Rick Alonzo and Brion Poston. Ron Smith was absent.

**Members of Staff present:** City Administrator Lisa Ailport and City Engineer Mike Klaus, Police Chief Brian Zimmerman, Corporal Jeremy Garrett, Officer Brandon Johnson, Officer Scott McBride,

**Members of the Public Present:** MarciaVee Cossette, Gerald Higgs, Adrienne Norris, Ken Norris, Bob Boone, Cheryl Boone, Melissa Krejci, Robert Lombard, Sue Lombard, Gil T. Hernandez, Linda K. Hernandez, and Leah Johnson and her four minor children.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Gerald Higgs commented that he felt the council should consider gifting back the fees for the building permit to the county since they had given the city \$80,000 to keep the pool open. He hoped the city council would consider this at some point in the future.

**REPORTS**

No additional report testimony was received outside of what was acknowledged within the council packet. The Mayor asked if there were any questions on the reports received and none were given.

**GUEST**

Lifesaving award presentation to Bonners Ferry Police Department- Presented by Bob Boone

The Mayor acknowledged Mr. Boone and his wife regarding their comments regarding the lifesaving award. Mr. Boone commented that he and his wife were kayaking together on the Kootenai River this summer when Mr. Boone's kayak hit a rock and capsized, trapping him with his kayak on top of him. After some effort was made to get unpinning, his wife was some yards downstream from him and was able to make a call to dispatch for help. Mr. Boone then was able to make his way towards the shore but unable to fully get there before assistance arrived. Officer Scott Davis and Brandon Johnson were first on scene and were able to pull Mr. Boone to the shore, effectively saving his life. He was grateful for the fast acting and selfless nature in which the two officers assisted him and that he was overjoyed to see them get the recognition they well deserved.

The Mayor then presented Officer Scott Davis and Brandon Johnson with the lifesaving award.

**CONSENT AGENDA – {action item}**

1. Call to Order/Roll Call
2. Approval of Bills and Payroll

Val made a motion to approve the consent agenda. The motion was seconded. Motion carried.

<b>Result:</b>	Approve
<b>Moved by:</b>	Val Thompson
<b>Seconded by</b>	Brion Poston
<b>Voted Yes</b>	Rick Alonzo, Brion Poston, Val Thompson
<b>Voted No</b>	
<b>Absent</b>	Ron Smith

**NEW BUSINESS**

**3. CITY {action item} [attachment]- Consider lifting hiring freeze for General Fund Employees**

City Administrator, Lisa Ailport asked if there were any questions relating to this request outside of what was presented to them through her memo. Brion Poston commented about the seventh officer position being filed by agreement of the Council and that to him was recognition of the lift of the hiring freeze, but a noted that a motion would clear that up.

Brion Poston made a motion to lift the hiring freeze for general fund employees, effective immediately. The motion was seconded. Motion carried.

<b>Result:</b>	Approve
<b>Moved by:</b>	Brion Poston
<b>Seconded by</b>	Val Thompson
<b>Voted Yes</b>	Rick Alonzo, Brion Poston, Val Thompson
<b>Voted No</b>	
<b>Absent</b>	Ron Smith

**4. CITY {action item}- Consider hiring temporary 8<sup>th</sup> Officer for Police Department**

City Administrator Lisa Ailport introduced the topic noting that the budget summary presented within her memo gave council a summary level of where the budget is for through the end of the fiscal year. Lisa noted that there was a resignation letter from an officer and that this position may or may not be in addition to the existing 7 officers, depending on how the hiring process goes. Mayor Staples asked when the departure date was for the officer who was leaving, and Chief Brian Zimmerman noted that it was December 1, 2023. Chief Brian Zimmerman then summarized their scheduling issues with the POST academy and that without hiring the 8<sup>th</sup> officer now, they could miss the chance to sponsor an officer to POST and that it may be a year's wait before POST would accept sponsors again.

Rick made a motion to hire the 8<sup>th</sup> officer to fill the pending vacancy of the Police Department. The motion was seconded. Motion carried.

<b>Result:</b>	Approve
<b>Moved by:</b>	Rick Alonzo
<b>Seconded by</b>	Val Thompson
<b>Voted Yes</b>	Rick Alonzo, Brion Poston, Val Thompson
<b>Voted No</b>	
<b>Absent</b>	Ron Smith

**5. CITY {action item} [attachment]- Consider pay wage adjustments for Police, Fire and Streets Department**

City Administrator Lisa Ailport, presented to council the discussion of a step approach as discussed with council during the budget workshops. However, Lisa felt that since there wasn't clear understanding of that step approach, bringing clarity the general fund employee raises was something necessary for council to decide. Lisa then went over the memo presented in the packet to council where she suggested \$2/hour, effected at the first of

the fiscal year and a 1\$ to be given later, which needed to be discussed and direction provided with the agenda item.

Discussion about paying the general fund employees was discussed by council with Brion Poston suggesting that if the General Fund employees are withheld their full raise that all employees should be too. Rick Alonzo suggested that the general fund employees should get their full raise at the first of the year. Val agreed.

Val Thompson made a motion to approve the \$3 per hour raise for the general fund employees and the 10% increase to the Fire Department, effective in the first full pay period of the new fiscal year. The motion was seconded. Motion carried.

<b>Result:</b>	Approve
<b>Moved by:</b>	Val Thompson
<b>Seconded by</b>	Rick Alonzo
<b>Voted Yes</b>	Rick Alonzo, Brion Poston, Val Thompson
<b>Voted No</b>	
<b>Absent</b>	Ron Smith

6. **GOLF {action item} [attachment]-** Consider approval of expenses to build a new pump house for the golf course.

City Engineer Mike Klaus put together a rough estimate for the building improvements for the golf course pump shed. At the time of the memo Mike hadn't spoken with the Electrician, Steve Neumeyer, about the cost to move the electrical components. However, since then the amount has grown from the estimate in his memo to approximately \$11,000 with the electrical included.

The start of the construction will coincide with the need to hire Ken Robertson to aid in the construction of the building. That request to do that will come to a future meeting. According to Mike, he feels it is a good investment to take to make sure the pump house is protected.

Rick made a motion to authorize spending up to \$11,000 on the pump shed at the golf course. The motion was seconded. Motion carried.

<b>Result:</b>	Approve
<b>Moved by:</b>	Rick Alonzo
<b>Seconded by</b>	Brion Poston
<b>Voted Yes</b>	Rick Alonzo, Brion Poston, Val Thompson
<b>Voted No</b>	
<b>Absent</b>	Ron Smith

7. **CITY- {action Item} [attachment]-** Consider approval of funds to purchase an air compressor.

Mike presented to the council that our existing air compressor is damaged beyond repair and the need for a compressor for projects that do not coincide with business hours to rent a compressor, warrants the city considering purchasing a new one rather than renting.

Mike presented some estimates that range between \$25,000 or less but with the needed added extra components a request to spend up to \$30,000 was needed.

Val Thompson made a motion to purchase a new compressor up to \$30,000 with the split to be done equally between Water, Sewer, Electric and General Fund at \$7,500. The motion was seconded. Motion carried.

<b>Result:</b>	Approve
<b>Moved by:</b>	Val Thompson
<b>Seconded by</b>	Brion Poston
<b>Voted Yes</b>	Rick Alonzo, Brion Poston, Val Thompson
<b>Voted No</b>	
<b>Absent</b>	Ron Smith

**ADJOURNMENT**

Seeing there was no other business to attend to, the Mayor adjourned the meeting at 6:31pm.