

MINUTES OF THE VERNAL CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING HELD MARCH 20, 2024 at 6:00 p.m. in the Vernal City Council room, 374 East Main, Vernal, Utah 84078.

PRESENT: Councilmembers Edward Long, Robin O'Driscoll, Ted Munford, Randel Mills, 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 Randel Mills.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Councilmember Ed Long.

APPROVAL OF CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES OF MARCH 7, 2024: *Councilmember Ted Munford moved to approve the minutes of March 7, 2024. Councilmember Robin O'Driscoll seconded the motion. The motion passed with Councilmembers Mills, O'Driscoll, Munford, Foley and Long voting in favor.*

FUNDING REQUEST – UNTAH BASIN JUNIOR LIVESTOCK SHOW- CINDY BIRCHELL: Cindy Birchell presented a request for funding for the annual Junior Livestock Show scheduled for June 3rd thru June 8th. Last years' event had over 700 participants with half of them from out of town who spend time in hotels and eat out. This show also has a lot of learning workshops for the youth. Quinn Bennion pointed out this event is budgeted for \$750 sponsorship. Councilmember Robin O'Driscoll noted they are asking for \$1000. Cindy Birchell stated inflation has had an effect on the show. After further discussion, *Councilmember Ted Munford moved to approve sponsoring the Junior Livestock Show in the amount of \$850. Councilmember Ed Long seconded the motion. The motion passed with the following roll call vote:*

*Councilmember Munford.....aye;
Councilmember O'Driscoll.....aye;
Councilmember Long.....aye;
Councilmember Mills,aye;
Councilmember Foley.....aye.*

CONSIDER APPROVAL OF CITY'S ONE YEAR APPLICATION LIST FOR COMMUNITY IMPACT BOARD GRANTS / LOANS: Keith Despain explained that the Community Impact Board (CIB) receives funds from taxes paid for mineral extraction and the funds are supposed to go back to the communities that are impacted. With that in mind, the City qualifies to go to the CIB to request funds for projects. The City has to submit a one year list and those are the only projects that can be considered for the upcoming year. He went over the list for the Council and explained that roads, water and sewer projects are always on the list. The water project being considered is the 1500 North line that had a significant leak so it was taken out of service during the winter. There are more leaks in the line so funding is needed to run a new pipe down that line. The current line is 18' steel line with cement coating so a 14" line could be put inside. Councilmember Ed Long stated that is approximately \$13 million to \$14 million dollars in projects on the list and asked if the City is limited in how much can be

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requested. Keith Despain answered yes because the funding is usually a grant and loan combination so it depends on what the City can repay. The highest priority project will probably be the one that is applied for this year. Quinn Bennion commented that it is quite the process to request funding and all the entities in the Uintah Basin feel like more funds should be returned to the area as the majority of the funds comes from here. Cities throughout the state can request the funds whether they have mineral extraction or not and smaller communities get 100% grant. He suggested the Council attend the next CIB funding meeting to see how the process works. After further discussion, *Councilmember Ed Long moved to approve the one-year CIB capital improvement list. Councilmember Corey Foley seconded the motion. The motion passed with the following roll call vote:*

*Councilmember Munford.....aye;
Councilmember O'Driscoll.....aye;
Councilmember Long.....aye;
Councilmember Millsaye;
Councilmember Foley.....aye.*

FUNDING REQUEST – DINAH SOAR DAYS- BECCA SUMMERS: Becca Summers requested the Council consider sponsoring the Dinah Soar balloon festival which is the largest festival in Vernal. More and more pilots are signing up and the economic impact has also grown. Inflation has affected the event so the request is for \$1200. Quinn Bennion stated the City budgeted \$1000. *Councilmember Ted Munford moved to approve \$1200 sponsorship for Dinah Soar Days. Councilmember Robin O'Driscoll seconded the motion. The motion passed with the following roll call vote:*

*Councilmember Munford.....aye;
Councilmember O'Driscoll.....aye;
Councilmember Long.....aye;
Councilmember Millsaye;
Councilmember Foley.....aye.*

CONSIDER APPROVAL OF LAND PURCHASE CONTRACT – QUINN BENNION: Quinn Bennion reminded the Council they discussed this purchase at the last meeting for property on 100 South and Vernal Avenue. The property is an 'L' shaped piece and can be converted into parking. The purchase price is \$100,000 which is reasonable for that property. The construction of the parking lot can be put into the budget for next year. *Councilmember Corey Foley moved to approve purchasing the property at 136 South Vernal Ave in the amount of \$100,000. Councilmember Randel Mills seconded the motion. The motion passed with the following roll call vote:*

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Councilmember Munford.....*aye*;
Councilmember O'Driscoll.....*aye*;
Councilmember Long.....*aye*;
Councilmember Mills*aye*;
Councilmember Foley.....*aye*.

PRESENTATION ABOUT CODE ENFORCEMENT OUTREACH AND EDUCATION – GABBY BLACKBURN: Gabby Blackburn reminded the Council that the staff is going to launch an educational campaign for code enforcement to get property owners to pick up trash, get rid of junk cars, shovel snow and cut down weeds. The website and City code are not effective so a humorous approach on Facebook and Instagram is going to be launched. The hope is to reduce complaints and increase community pride. She displayed the first post “Keep Vernal Beautiful” with different captions. Quinn Bennion stated so far they have developed 60 ideas and will start posting them over the next few weeks. Councilmember Ted Munford applauded the staff for using a non-aggressive way to get compliance with City codes. Councilmember Corey Foley agreed noting it is like the UDOT signs that use humor to be friendly, and still muscle up that the community does not want to put up with this. Quinn Bennion reported that Shawn Lewis has been hired to do code enforcement part-time and he is doing a great job. He has sent out 140 letters on junk vehicles and only 3 have not been resolved. Councilmember Robin O'Driscoll stated she likes the positive and humorous approach.

STAFF REPORTS:

Sewer Management Board:

Councilmember Corey Foley updated the Council on the last Sewer Management Board steering committee. The Board will be increasing rates based on the State requirement to have funds for replacement of the facility within 10 years.

Well-being Study:

Quinn Bennion stated the area will be participating with Utah State to conduct a wellbeing study. The study is available on-line and he encouraged everyone to take the survey.

Mayor's Message:

Quinn Bennion reported that the local newspaper will publish a message from the City every other week starting with the Mayor's message. All the Council will be given an opportunity to put a message in the paper.

CLOSED SESSION: Councilmember Corey Foley moved to go into closed session to hold a strategy session to discuss the purchase, exchange, or lease of real property, including any form of

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a water right or water shares and discuss pending or reasonably imminent litigation. Councilmember Robin O'Driscoll seconded the motion. The motion passed with the following roll call vote:

*Councilmember Munford.....aye;
Councilmember O'Driscoll.....aye;
Councilmember Long.....aye;
Councilmember Mills,aye;
Councilmember Foley.....aye.*

RECONVENE INTO OPEN SESSION AND ADJOURN: The meeting reconvened into open session. There being no further business; *Councilmember Ted Munford moved to adjourn. Councilmember Robin O'Driscoll 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)