

City of La Verkin

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La Verkin City Council Special Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, December 4, 2024, 6:00 pm.

Council Chambers, 111 S. Main, La Verkin, Utah

Present: Mayor Kelly Wilson; Council Members: Patricia Wise, Blair Gubler, Micah Gubler, Darren Prince; Staff: Kyle Gubler, Derek Imlay, Fay Reber, and Nancy Cline; Public: John Valenti, and Maridee Johnson.

Councilman Richard Hirschi was excused.

A. Called to Order –Darren Prince gave the invocation/thought and Pledge of Allegiance at 6:00 pm.

B. Consent Agenda: (Items on the consent agenda may not require discussion. These items will be a single motion unless removed at the request of the Mayor or City Council.)

1. Declarations of conflict of interest
2. Agenda
3. Meeting Minutes November 6, 2024, regular meeting
4. Checks & Invoices: \$267,122.83

The motion was made by Councilmen Darren Prince to approve the consent agenda as written, including the minutes of the November 6, 2024, regular meeting and Checks and Invoices in the amount of \$267,122.83, second by Councilman Micah Gubler. Roll Call Vote: Micah Gubler-yes, Wise-yes, Blair Gubler-yes, Prince-yes. The motion carried unanimously.

C. Business:

1. Annual training for Utah Open Public Meetings Act.

Council members completed the required annual Utah Open Public Act training via video.

Video played

Councilman Prince asked if we follow all these rules.

Fay replied that the city had done a good job of following these rules.

2. Discussion and possible action to approve the Reuse Water Exchange Agreement.

Fay explained that the Water District met with the Water Board to work out some details and answer some questions the Board and staff had about the contract. They are meeting again on December 16, 2024, to discuss those changes and receive an updated contract.

Mayor Wilson summarized the contract. They're proposing that they purchase our irrigation water that we don't use. The district proposed to pay \$12.22 per acre-foot; he thought it was too low and suggested it should be much higher. After reading the Water Environment magazine, they're offering farmers and ranchers in Colorado not to use their water on their farms and send it down the Colorado River; the average is \$509 an acre-foot. They're willing to help us redo our secondary system, which needs to be completely redone. They're willing to put in some money and help us find money to do that. It's all part of our study with the Water District. It may get us a settling pond, redo the system, and reuse water as it becomes available. By paying us for that water we don't use, we can get a bond to redo our system. We're not giving up any water rights to them. There is a change of use, so they can take it and use it to treat drinking water standards and sell it to any of us in the water region. They want a contract with us because they could maintain our place in the water right on the river. They'd be using that water under our umbrella. They could jump to that position with the water they bought from us. The Water Board favored it if we addressed all the issues they raised.

Kyle Gubler added if there's any haircut involved, it will be on their end.

Fay said Ivin, Santa Clara, and Washington had signed the contract. St. George, Hurricane, and Toquerville are still discussing it.

Mayor Wilson explained that the reuse water authorization contract allows them to take that reused water, and what we don't use, they can use throughout the system. But we still maintain our rights to reuse water. However, they want to return most of that reused water to our irrigation system. Toquerville also has a settling pond. They eventually want to be able to put water in their settling pond. And they're going to build into the new reservoir or into our system to have the option to move that water wherever it's needed. There needs to be more water coming out of that treatment plant for quite a while to benefit us as far as our system goes, but whatever water there is, it's clean water and that's what we're trying to get.

Councilman Prince asked if our settling pond would be gravity-fed and if a location had been picked.

Mayor Wilson replied that the settling pond should be gravity-fed. They had three proposed sites. The one we thought was the best was in Cottonwood Hollow, up on the bench, closer to where the highway comes from the bend, and everybody agreed that that would be the best place. It would be a lined pond. Part of it would be cement, so you can go in and clean it out with the dirt settling. The owners of Interstate Rock are in favor of it. And we would add a park with a pond. He advised the council to read the contract and email any questions. He felt that the contract was close to being signable. They only had a few things to address. The council agreed it was worth the money to hire an outside counsel for the water contract.

4. Discussion and possible action to approve Zion Regional Collaborative Corridor Contract.

Councilwoman Wise explained that the contract is the same as last year and that a 2.4% cost-of-living increase was proposed. It is a yearly contract, and she asked the council if they are comfortable passing it with the understanding that nothing will change from last year's contract and that the mayor can sign it once we receive it.

Fay had a question about Charge West paying \$11,500 of the contract. If so, would the city's portion decrease?

Councilwoman Wise explained that Charge West backed out and would not pay that amount. Utah Clean Cities said it would not work with the collaborative. They already have a program for electric vehicles with the town of Springdale, and the ERC won't be part of it.

Kyle asked if we would still be paying the \$6500.

Councilwoman Wise explained that it would be \$6500 plus a 2.5% increase in the cost of living.

Councilman Micah Gubler asked if it was contingent upon all entities agreeing.

Councilwoman Wise replied that it was. They got a \$187,000 grant for corridor management and another grant for growth management. She reported how much work the Collaboration does for growth management.

Kyle added it would be an additional \$166.50.

Councilwoman Wise asked the council if they were all comfortable with the contract. They all agreed.

The motion was made by Councilwoman Patricia Wise to approve the Zion Regional collaborative Corridor Contract with the stipulations that the 2025 contract has the same terms as the 2024 contract, second by Councilman Blair Gubler. Roll Call Vote: Micah Gubler-yes, Wise-yes, Blair Gubler-yes, Prince-yes. The motion carried unanimously.

Kyle commented that a wall could be included, which could be phase one. But if you want to design, you will have to pay someone.

Councilman Micah Gubler agreed that he liked the idea. It makes sense; you don't have to use the whole thing. It could be a section of the park and put up a flagpole, a couple of statues, or plaques.

Councilman Prince added that Hurricane City did its memorial wall cheaply because contractors volunteered, citizens donated, and possibly the Rotary Club.

D. Mayor & Council Reports:

Mayor Wilson: Reported that the council decided to have a city council dinner on January 21st at 6:00. He reminded them about their Winterfest obligations.

Blair Gubler Reported that they have a meeting for the solid waste district on Monday, and they will approve the new budget.

Richard Hirschi: Not in attendance.

Micah Gubler: Reported that wreaths Across America will be placed at the La Verkin Cemetery on Saturday, December 14th, at 9 a.m. There will be a short patriotic program; they could help place wreaths on Veteran's Graves that morning. Just a reminder: the Christmas Eve program will be at 6 p.m. on Christmas Eve. The Animal Shelter is having an open house from 10 to 2 on Saturday, December 14th. There will be free tours and pets.

Patricia Wise: Reported that there have been no planning commission meetings in November. She did attend the DTEC meeting on November 19th. From the beginning of November until the 19th, were 322 riders on the Springdale Transit line.

Mayor Wilson added something that might have been brought up with them: the gun range which we've talked about many times. That's getting to be a serious safety hazard up there. I don't know if you go up there very often, but especially on the weekends, there's a ton of people up there that are riding motorcycles, side by sides, four-wheelers, and the people using the gun range. The safety hazard is getting on and off the highway there. There's no turning lane.

Kyle added that BLM and UDOT will not do anything. It has yet to be discussed, but if there were an accident it would become necessary.

Mayor Wilson suggested pestering them and bringing it up at every meeting.

Councilwoman Wise added that if they shut that down, they'll shut down not only the shooting but also the ATV roads, and there are so few people that there are so few routes left for ATVs. That's one of the most popular ones down here. People come from all over the state and around the area to ride that route. There's a trail for motorbikes that goes right behind the shooting range. She will call and try to get the St George field office to agree to help.

Kyle replied that BLM wants to give it to us. It's the liability. They want to eliminate it, and we want to avoid taking on that liability.

Councilwoman Wise added that drop-off for the Transit line has been a problem, and they are working on a new location in La Verkin to make it more convenient. Five routes run daily and have been 322 riders in the last 19 days.

They're under study now regarding cost and which camping areas to disperse. BLM hopes to change it so they can entice campground hosts to come and manage some of it, which would be much better. However, for Sheep Bridge, they have already paved the first part of the road to the bridge. The rest is being studied for a separate paved bike path on the east side. The county is doing this on the east side of Sheep Bridge Road. Sheep Bridge will be paved.

The economic development meeting will be on January 23rd, and the mayor will address the state of the city. We'll also visit what's up down south to get regional information.

Darren Prince: Reported that the mosquito abatement is running efficiently. They had a good year this year. They have a lot of money saved, so they're considering buying the building next to them. They wouldn't need it for five to ten years, so they would just rent it out. But there was one concern that we had a certain type of mosquito show up that they're concerned about. They're keeping us safe so far.

Citizen Comment & Request for Future Agenda Items:

No comments were made.

H. Adjourn:

Mayor Wilson closed the meeting at 7:36 p.m.