

**M**INUTES OF THE VERNAL CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING HELD  
SEPTEMBER 2, 2015 at 7:00 p.m. in the Vernal City Council room, 374 East Main,  
Vernal, Utah 84078.

**PRESENT:** Councilmembers Ted Munford, Dave Everett, Samantha Scott, Bert Clark, JoAnn Cowan, and Mayor Sonja Norton.

**WELCOME:** Mayor Sonja Norton welcomed everyone to the meeting.

**INVOCATION OR UPLIFTING THOUGHT:** An invocation was given by Councilmember Bert Clark.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** The pledge of Allegiance was led by Councilmember Ted Munford.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF AUGUST 19, 2015 REGULAR MEETING:**  
*Councilmember Dave Everett moved to approve the minutes of August 19, 2015. Councilmember Samantha Scott seconded the motion. The motion passed with Councilmembers Munford, Cowan, Everett, Scott, and Clark voting in favor for a unanimous vote.*

**REQUEST FOR SPONSORSHIP OF UINTAH BASIN ORCHESTRA AND CHOIR - MR. BOYD EDWARDS:** Mr. Boyd Edwards displayed a presentation of the accomplishments of the Uintah Basin Orchestra and Chorus from the previous year. He explained that auditions were held in November of 2013 starting with 88 members and now has grown to 330 members. The main purpose of this organization is to elevate the cultural level in the Uintah Basin and since the last concert sold out in 10 days there does seem to be a lot of support. Two concerts are scheduled for this Christmas season and one in the spring. Mayor Norton asked where the concerts will be held. Ken Bassett answered they are scheduled for the Vernal Middle School. Mr. Edwards noted that they are on a very tight budget and thanked the Council for their support in the past. *Councilmember JoAnn Cowan moved to extend financial support to the Orchestra and Chorus at the same rate as last year. Councilmember Ted Munford seconded the motion. The motion passed with the following roll call vote:*

*Councilmember Munford.....aye;*  
*Councilmember Cowan.....aye;*  
*Councilmember Everett .....aye;*  
*Councilmember Scott.....aye;*  
*Councilmember Clark.....aye.*

**YOUTH CITY COUNCIL:** Councilmember Samantha Scott introduced Abby Harfinger, the 2015 / 2016 Youth Mayor. The Mayor invited her to stay on the dais with the Council. Anna Billings with the Terra Academy asked if members from their school could participate in the Youth Council. Mayor Norton answered yes, any students that are high school age are welcome to join. Ken Bassett stated he would get Ms. Billings the information for students to join.

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**TRI-COUNTY HEALTH MEDICAL VAN PROGRAM - JORDAN MATHIS:** Mr. Jordan Mathis explained that the “radiation vacation van” or “wellness wagon” program is no longer running as the total annual expenses has exceeded the revenue by \$10,000 making it necessary to shut down the program. There were a total of 1052 trips to the Wasatch Front between 2008 and 2015 with an average of 2 people per trip. Councilmember Bert Clark asked how often patients were taken to the Wasatch Front. Jordan Mathis stated it depended on the medical needs of the riders. Mr. Mathis presented the expense report for the program. Councilmember Cowan asked if this program also provided services for veterans. Mr. Mathis stated they were taking veterans to their medical appointments as well. He noted that this is a worthwhile endeavor, but there is no funding to continue. Councilmember JoAnn Cowan stated that people rely on this service, and with a little creativity a solution can be found for this problem. She asked if the transportation tax passes, can any of those funds be earmarked for this program. Jordan Mathis stated that he has discussed this with UBAG, who indicated that this program does not fall under the funding they receive. There was some discussion regarding the wages and duties of the drivers. Mr. Mathis stated that Uintah Basin Medical Center and Ashley Regional Medical Center are not supportive of this program as it is taking patients out of the community for some services that are available here. He suggested if the program is reinstated that an inventory of available services be done to determine what services qualify for transport to the Wasatch Front and possibly also provide transport to local medical centers. Councilmember JoAnn Cowan suggested this issue be discussed at the next joint City / County meeting and invite representatives from the medical centers, veteran groups, and government agencies to find a solution to this problem. Alex Riker, student, asked if medical appointments could be scheduled on specific days so they do not have to take as many trips. Mayor Norton stated this program is usually for those that do not have any other way to get out there and many times need daily treatments. Councilmember Clark stated many patients also need oxygen or are not mobile so extra equipment is necessary. The consensus of the Council was to set up a meeting to discuss options. Ken Bassett stated he would set up a meeting including Duchesne County. Mr. Mathis stated he would also be available.

**UINTAH ENERGY BY-PASS ROADWAY DISCUSSION - REBECCA BOREN:** Rebecca Boren, owner of Little B’s, asked the Council to help stop the energy route. A meeting was held yesterday with the Uintah County Commission on building this road, and approximately 130 people attended with only one person speaking out in favor of the road and the rest were against it. Councilmember Clark stated there was a news story that the Commission was considering only building the east portion of the roadway. Ms. Boren explained that the data that is being used showing the need for this energy route is 5 to 7 years old and traffic has changed. Also this project will direct 40% of the traffic away from Vernal City which will hurt businesses that are already struggling with the downturn in the economy. She stated that \$80 million dollars for a by-pass road is not what is needed. Further, a large amount of property has been purchased along that route by a large investment company which will further deplete economic development within the City. Mr. Troy Lupco, owner of Altitude Cycle, explained that he has been voicing his concern about this by-pass road for years especially the impact to the McCoy Flats area. Phase 1 of this project has funding, and the County has submitted a Title 5

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application to the BLM so even if it is tabled, the other phases will eventually happen. Further, Mr. Lupco stated that the economic impact to Vernal City will be devastating. He asked to give a more in-depth presentation on the bike trails and economic resources to the community using the trail system at a later date. Mayor Norton explained that she did attend the meeting held by the County Commissioners, and her concern is if the road is built, will the State one day say that it is the new State highway and vacate the current highway. Councilmember Clark stated he voiced his opposition to this by-pass road in the past even though the Commission assured the City that they would not change the zoning. Councilmember Dave Everett reminded the Council that the City has requested the roadway in the cemetery be repaired for years so there are smaller projects that need funding before this large of a project and would be more beneficial to the community. Further, in twenty-eight years there has only been one hazardous spill so a more intelligent approach needs to be taken. Councilmember Ted Munford stated he is concerned about economic growth and how this road will tie into Highway 191.

Gary Showalter, 15 North 1500 West, stated that he attended the BLM scoping meeting in August, and Commissioner Raymond indicated that Phase I was going to be built. The meeting that was held yesterday was specifically set up with all three Commissioners so they could hear the concerns of the community. At the end of the meeting, the Commissioners were amazed at the outcome and were willing to rethink building a roadway to nowhere. Unfortunately in government the thinking is if there is money left over it must be spent rather than giving it back. Further, with who purchased the property, it could become another Vernal out there so the City has more to lose than anyone. Councilmember Bert Clark stated that when it was originally analyzed a few years ago it was recommended no services be allowed along that route. Gary Showalter stated that the Section 5 application has a provision for private land to ask for rezoning to commercial upon approval of the application. He asked the Council to take a stand not to just put an interim stop to phase 2 or 3, but ask the Commission to rescind the whole project. *Councilmember JoAnn Cowan moved to authorize a letter by the Mayor asking the Uintah County Commission to withdraw from the energy route and cancel plans to build it citing that the City cannot support it because of the economic damage, indebtedness and detrimental effects to the community. Councilmember Dave Everett seconded the motion. The motion passed with Councilmembers Cowan, Everett, Munford, Clark and Scott voting in favor.*

**PUBLIC HEARING: SUBMISSION OF FUNDING REQUEST TO THE COMMUNITY IMPACT BOARD FOR WATER & SEWER SYSTEM IMPROVEMENTS:** Ken Bassett explained that there are several utility system projects that need to be completed which were discussed by the Council during the budget work sessions. The Council determined that funding should be sought through the Community Impact Board (CIB) for the radio read metering system. The CIB has approved funding for this type of system in the past, although they determined that it was not a need, but a want. Mr. Bassett stated that he has concluded that this type of meter reading system is actually a necessity to better manage the system. The staff will have the ability to read the meters in the winter and detect leaks quickly, measure how much water is coming into the system from the treatment plant, as well as provide better security for the system. If a meter lid is tampered with, a message is sent to the City immediately.

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Councilmember Clark asked if that means when a property owner uses a t-bar to turn off their water the City is notified. Ken Bassett answered yes, and then the staff can check to see what the problem is.

Ken Bassett explained that the cost for the water meter system is estimated at \$500,000. The majority of the funding application to the Community Impact Board will be for a sewer project at a cost of \$1.4 million dollars. With new technology, the sewer system can be relined adding a significant number of years to the pipes before they need to be replaced. The total funding request to the CIB will be \$1.9 million dollars. If the request is approved at ½ grant and ½ loan, the users may need to pay an additional 70 cents per month to cover the loan payment. The City also has impact fees that have been collected over the last six years that need to be used, especially on the sewer system. Councilmember Cowan asked if the CIB funded the water meter system for the other community. Ken Bassett answered yes the funding was approved as a loan only. Mayor Norton opened the public hearing for public comments. Councilmember Munford asked what will happen if the CIB only approves a loan. Ken Bassett stated it will be up to the Council to accept or decline the loan. Councilmember Munford stated he would not be in favor of a full loan. Councilmember Clark noted that the City has relined portions of the system in the past and coordination will need to be made with Ashley Valley Water and Sewer and the Sewer Board. Ken Bassett explained that the sewer project will prevent leakage which will enhance the system. There being no further comments the public hearing was closed. *Councilmember Bert Clark moved to submit an application to the Community Impact Board for \$1.9 million dollars for the water meter radio read system and the sewer relining project. Councilmember Ted Munford seconded the motion. The motion passed with the following roll call vote:*

- Councilmember Munford.....aye;*
- Councilmember Cowan.....aye;*
- Councilmember Everett .....aye;*
- Councilmember Scott .....aye;*
- Councilmember Clark.....aye.*

**REQUEST FOR SPONSORSHIP OF ANNUAL HALLOWEEN MAYOR’S WALK AND BREAKFAST WITH SANTA EVENTS - UINTAH RECREATION DISTRICT:** Shauna Jo Eves, representing the Recreation District, asked the Council to sponsor the annual Halloween Mayors Walk in the amount of \$1500 which is the same amount as in the past. Also, the Breakfast with Santa event is coming up and the City has sponsored that program in the amount of \$700. She noted that she will be contacting Naples City as well. Mayor Norton asked if more children are participating. Shauna Jo Eves answered that these programs are growing and they may need help with crowd control. *Councilmember Ted Munford moved to provide \$1500 for the Halloween Walk and \$700 for Breakfast with Santa. Councilmember Bert Clark seconded the motion. The motion passed with the following roll call vote:*

- Councilmember Munford.....aye;*
- Councilmember Cowan.....aye;*
- Councilmember Everett .....aye;*

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*Councilmember Scott.....aye;*  
*Councilmember Clark.....aye.*

**REQUEST FOR APPROVAL TO AMEND THE VERNAL CITY MUNICIPAL CODE -  
ADOPTING POLICE DEPARTMENT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES - ORDINANCE**

**NO. 2015-21:** Ken Bassett explained that over the years when a change was needed to the police procedures, it was taken to the Public Safety Committee and then to the Council and hard copies were presented. With the changes in technology and an era of lawsuits, police procedures need to be updated quickly to be in tune with issues dealing with police departments and lessen the City’s liability. The Police Department subscribes to Lexipol, a police procedure company, who sends out updates on a regular basis, and it is tough to keep up with them. Because these policies are on-line, it is more difficult to have the Council review the policies before they are approved and available to the officers. Ordinance No. 2015-21 allows the Chief of Police to make changes and the Public Safety Committee can still review them. Councilmember JoAnn Cowan reminded the Council, of the thick policies, legislative mandates and court cases being presented in the past, and it makes sense to allow the Chief to update the policies as needed. Councilmember Munford agreed. *Councilmember JoAnn Cowan moved to approve Ordinance No. 2015-21. Councilmember Ted Munford seconded the motion. The motion passed with the following roll call vote:*

*Councilmember Munford.....aye;*  
*Councilmember Cowan.....aye;*  
*Councilmember Everett .....aye;*  
*Councilmember Scott.....aye;*  
*Councilmember Clark.....aye.*

**ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS**

ULCT Conference

Ken Bassett reminded the Council of the upcoming Utah League of Cities and Towns conference scheduled for the third week of September. The regularly scheduled City Council meeting will be canceled as it is at the same time as this conference.

Signage and Construction:

Councilmember Ted Munford stated that it has been brought to his attention that businesses are choosing to move into the County rather than the City because of the tighter regulations. He voiced his concern that businesses are discouraged from moving into the City and hurting economic growth. Councilmember Cowan agreed that the regulations need to be fair yet encourage growth. Allen Parker stated he would see what can be done to make things smoother.

**ADJOURN:** *There being no further business, Councilmember Bert Clark moved to adjourn. Councilmember Samantha Scott seconded the motion. The motion passed with a unanimous vote and the meeting was declared adjourned.*

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Mayor Sonja Norton

ATTEST:

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Roxanne Behunin, Deputy Recorder

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