

MINUTES OF THE VERNAL CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING HELD
JUNE 1, 2016 at 7:00 p.m. in the Vernal City Council room, 374 East Main, Vernal,
Utah 84078.

PRESENT: Councilmembers Dave Everett, Samantha Scott, Bert Clark, Travis Allan. Mayor Sonja Norton and Councilmember Ted Munford were excused.

SELECTION OF MAYOR PRO TEMPORE: *Councilmember Dave Everett moved to appoint Councilmember Samantha Scott as the Mayor Pro Tempore for this meeting. Councilmember Travis Allan seconded the motion. The motion passed with Councilmembers Everett, Allan, Scott and Clark voting in favor.*

WELCOME: Mayor Pro Tempore Samantha Scott 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 Dave Everett.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF MAY 18, 2016 REGULAR MEETING: *Councilmember Dave Everett moved to approve the minutes of May 18, 2016. Councilmember Bert Clark seconded the motion. The motion passed with Councilmembers Allan, Everett, Scott, and Clark voting in favor for a unanimous vote.*

PRESENTATION BY STRATA NETWORKS ON FIBER PROJECTS IN VERNAL: Tyler Rasmussen, from Strata Networks, explained that Strata has been working on their fiber distribution for the last two years. Currently over 3000 locations are connected to fiber which is approximately 20% of their customer base. It is critical to have fiber for future growth and expansion of Strata and other businesses such as the health care industry. Strata has made a \$29 million dollars investment in this area with the VTV studio and fiber distribution areas (FDA's). John Bingham, representing Strata Networks, pointed out this is an enormous undertaking to get fiber to all homes and businesses. He displayed a map of the area showing the progress they have made installing fiber along the Highway 40 corridor and throughout Ashley Valley. The fiber optic will offer outstanding speed for internet access, telephone service and cable TV. Tyler Rasmussen stated they are also investing in a new venture of a data center which will be the first of its kind in Vernal. This type of center is a valuable tool for business as entities are looking for off-site, secure locations to store data, and this will help diversify the economy. A tour of the facility will be scheduled in the near future. Ken Bassett noted that this is incredible benefit for our area which is unique. He complemented Strata for their vision. He asked what the cost difference is for fiber. Tyler Rasmussen answered that they treat the technologies the same so unless a customer specifically asks for faster speeds, the cost does not increase. John Bingham explained that once the new fiber is installed, the old coaxial cable is abandoned. Councilmember Bert Clark asked if there are any plans to go further south to service the oil and gas industry. Tyler Rasmussen answered that he did not know. Strata currently has several successful agreements for remote areas such as the water treatment facility that needs faster access. John Bingham stated they do work with developers on new facilities and do receive

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inquiries from larger companies who can get service using wireless microwaving. Tyler Rasmussen suggested the City contact their office if there is an area that is not getting service so they can research it and try to improve communication. Councilmember Travis Allan thanked Strata for their willingness to work on technology, especially with the downturn in the economy it is great to see companies moving forward and giving back to the community. The Council thanked Mr. Rasmussen and Mr. Bingham for their presentation.

“GROW YOUR OWN” USU REQUEST FOR FUNDING – KEVIN REMINGTON: Kevin Remington explained that he is on the Board for the USU Grow Your Own Teachers Scholarship Program for Vernal and Roosevelt. Over the years the Uintah School District has spent a lot of funds trying to recruit teachers, and keep them here. Unfortunately, most of them stay a few years, then go back home. This scholarship program is to help local students have the opportunity to become teachers. A dinner theatre is scheduled for June 23rd as a fund raiser for the scholarship fund. Last year this event raised \$11,000 and the goal is to raise \$25,000 so an endowment can be created. This particular scholarship is used for students who are enrolled in the semester where they are required to student teach. The student is required to quit their full-time job and concentrate on the unpaid student teaching. Many of the students have to stop their educational goals because they cannot afford to quit their jobs. Maxine Johnson, one of the recipients of this scholarship, explained her situation to the Council and how this scholarship helped her graduate on May 2nd. She explained that she considered pausing her education and finishing later, but with only one semester left this scholarship covered essential expenses and allowed her to finish. Kevin Remington stated that one of the greatest parts of this scholarship is that it is not limited to tuition so it can be used for living expenses while they student teach. He asked the Council to consider helping with the dinner theatre in the amount of \$1400. Councilmember Clark explained that with the downturn in the economy, it is tough to approve any expense that is not already in the budget. He stated he would be willing to help solicit sponsorships as he does support this program. Laura Foley, representing the Scholarship Board, asked the Council to at least consider purchasing one table at the cost of \$700, or personally purchase a seat or two at the dinner theatre. Councilmember Dave Everett asked who they should contact to purchase a seat. Mrs. Foley directed them to the USU Uintah Basin Campus website. Councilmember Travis Allan noted that this is a worthy cause, and if money were more abundant, they would help. He stated he would help personally. Ken Bassett stated that the City used funds out of the educational fund last time and he would see what is available in that fund now. He stated he would give that information to the Council at the next budget workshop meeting.

REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF BIDS FOR CEMENT WORK: Ken Bassett explained that every year the City budgets to complete concrete work including sidewalk ADA improvements and fixing spaulding or cracked sidewalks. Two bids were received from Stearns Construction and Bulldog for concrete work. Stearns Construction will do sidewalk repair and replacement work and Bulldog will complete work that requires the sidewalk to be lifted. Each project will be bid in small areas up to the amount in the budget which is \$35,000 for sidewalk repairs and \$50,000 for ADA improvements. After further discussion, Councilmember Bert Clark moved to approve the contract with Stearns Construction and Bulldog. Councilmember Travis Allan seconded the motion. The motion passed with the following roll call vote:

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Councilmember Allanaye;
Councilmember Everettaye;
Councilmember Scottaye;
Councilmember Clark.....aye.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS:

Budget Meeting:

Ken Bassett reminded the Council of the upcoming budget meeting scheduled for June 9th.

Insurance Meeting:

Ken Bassett stated that an open enrollment meeting for the health insurance has been scheduled for June 7th at 2 pm and 6 pm.

Vernal Excitement:

Councilmember Samantha Scott stated that the Vernal Excitement program will begin tomorrow night at 6 pm and continue every Thursday through July except for the Uintah County Fair week.

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

Mayor Pro Tempore Samantha Scott

ATTEST:

Roxanne Behunin, Deputy Recorder

(S E A L)