

City of La Verkin

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La Verkin City Council Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, April 17, 2019 6:00 p.m.

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

Present: Mayor Richard Hirschi, Council Members: Patricia Wise, Kelly Wilson, Ray Justice and Randy Reeve; Staff: Kyle Gubler, Derek Imlay, Kevin Bennett, Chief Ben Lee and Christy Ballard; Public: Brian Stewart, Nick Wright and Chad Anderson.

Councilman Micah Gubler has been excused.

A. Called to Order – Thought and the Pledge of Allegiance were given by Patricia Wise at 6:00pm.

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. Minutes: March 20, 2019 work and regular meeting minutes
3. Review Invoices and Checks: \$128,271.35

Motion was made by Councilman Ray Justice to approve the consent agenda as written including the minutes of the March 20, 2019 work and regular meeting and invoices and checks in the amount of \$128,271.35, second by Councilman Kelly Wilson. Roll Call Vote: Reeve-yes, Justice-yes, Wise-yes, Wilson-yes. Motion carried unanimously.

C. Committee Reports:

1. Fire District- No meeting. Nick reported the month of March stats are; 34 calls for service, 8 cancelled calls, 2 fire alarms and 24 medical calls. The La Verkin fire station is moving forward, the flooring is going in now and the cabinets will follow. The exterior still needs to be painted. The Coral Canyon station is hosting a recruit academy Friday and Saturdays. Hurricane and Washington City are still working out the logistics for personnel.
2. Sewer Board-No meeting.
3. Planning Commission-Councilwoman Wise reported on the April 10th meeting. A public hearing was set for the final plat of Apricot Acres. Information was given to the Commissioners to begin the process of looking into allowing casita/mother-in-law apartments in residential zones in the City.
4. Water Board-No meeting. Kyle reported the Water Task Force meeting will be on April 22nd that Councilman Wilson will attend if SB52 is going to be discussed.

D. Citizen Comment & Request for Future Agenda Items:

No comments were made.

E. Business:

1. Discussion and possible action to accept the FY 2019-2020 Tentative Budget and set a date for the public hearing.

Kyle reported this item was discussed during the work meeting prior to this meeting and asked if the Councilmembers had any questions.

Councilman Reeve asked if taxes and fees were discussed during the April 3rd work meeting.

Kyle replied both Truth in Taxation and service fees were discussed. He had three Councilmembers speak to him throughout the week, none of them were in favor of Truth in Taxation.

If the Council decides to do Truth in Taxation that needs to be decided now before the budget gets approved. Service fees do not need to be decided during the budget process.

There is a process the City will have to go through if the Council decides to do Truth in Taxation. Service fees can only be used for the area the fee is attached to.

Kevin explained adding a service fee has a process also. A study will need to be completed with a plan showing what the City is trying to achieve from the fee. Only a portion of the fee can go to wages.

Service fees are attached to specific services, like water, that are not provided to the general public. General taxes cover services like public safety and roads and need to be increased by Truth in Taxation.

There are several cities that do charge service fees and some of them are being challenged.

Kevin used the drainage fee as an example of a specific service and pointed out La Verkin's drainage fee excludes commercial businesses and those are the impervious properties. The Council may want to change that.

Councilman Wilson would like to investigate commercial properties paying a drainage fee.

Kyle said the tentative budget can be excepted before the Councilmembers decide whether to do Truth in Taxation. Once the final budget is accepted, it is too late.

Councilwoman Wise would like to be very clear on why we would need to increase taxes. She thought, after the April 3rd work meeting, that the Council felt an increase was necessary for public works and wages for public safety and public works. Truth in Taxation is never a popular thing. It has been along time since it has happened, and costs go up continually. She does not want to let things slide like we did the water and then need to incorporate a substantial increase. She would like to consider Truth in Taxation.

Kyle said the Councilmembers that spoke to him mentioned Truth in Taxation was considered before the County decided to implement the quarter percent sales tax increase that will give the City approximately \$30,000 for roads.

Councilman Reeve stated he feels the City needs to do Truth in Taxation.

Councilman Justice said he agreed that it is not good to fall behind, his only problem with Truth in Taxation and increasing the current tax is the fact that we are already at the top of the counties list for highest taxes. He doesn't want to discourage people from moving to La Verkin because of the high property tax rate. The positive side of Truth in Taxation is there are so many properties not occupied by the owner that have a higher rate, it would benefit the coffers of La Verkin. He doesn't want to increase the tax rate for residents. However, it would be a good year for Truth in Taxation because it is an election year.

As for service fees, just because you can do something doesn't mean you have to or should do something like that. He does not want to do something that would penalize people for wanting to live in a nice community. He thought the last time there was a Truth in Taxation was 2006.

Councilman Wilson said his property tax has gone up substantially over the last few years and the City hasn't been the cause of it. It has been the Water District and the Fire Department.

Councilman Justice pointed out Springdale is one of the wealthiest communities in the County and they have one of the lowest property tax rates. Their money comes from tourist taxes. When La Verkin gets more businesses for tourists to patronize then we will see an increase in our coffers.

Kyle reported the tentative budget needs to be accepted by the next City Council meeting. The County will need to be notified if the Council would like to do Truth in Taxation, at that time approval for the final budget is extended. The Councilmembers will need to get actual numbers for Kyle to submit to the County.

Councilwoman Wise would still like to discuss Truth in Taxation. She understands La Verkin has one of the highest tax rates in the County, but we do not have the tourism and probably won't for at least 4-5 years and our services are not getting updated as they should. She is concerned with the fact it will cost the City more money in the long run if we put it off. She personally feels it is needed and that the Council needs to be very specific about what the money is going to be used for. She would like to increase wages slightly and put more money into the public works department. She is willing to accept the tentative budget at this meeting.

Kyle suggested another work meeting to determine the increase and where that money would be used. He will let the County know we are considering Truth in Taxation.

Councilman Justice pointed out if the property tax rate stays the same the dollar amount paid will vary because it is based on the market value of the home.

Kyle stated for La Verkin to generate an additional \$50,000 per year, the City would have the second highest tax rate. The public hearing should be set for the May 15th not May 1st.

Motion was made by Councilman Kelly Wilson to accept the FY 2019-2020 Tentative Budget and set the date for the public hearing as May 15, 2019, second by Councilman Randy Reeve. Roll Call Vote: Wilson-yes, Wise-yes, Justice-yes, Reeve-yes. Motion carried unanimously.

2. Discussion and possible action to set a public hearing for an ordinance adjusting the monthly compensation for the mayor and city council.

Kyle suggested setting the public hearing for May 15th.

Councilmembers Wise, Wilson and Reeve all stated they don't feel like the Council needs a wage increase.

3. Discussion and possible action to approve Resolution No. R-2019-11; a resolution memorializing, confirming, and tying together the City's recently- adopted General Plan, Master Transportation Plan, and Master Trails Plan.

Councilwoman Wise said she requested the Master Trails Plan, Master Transportation Plan and General Plan update be tied together by a resolution for easier reference in the future.

Motion was made by Councilwoman Patricia Wise to approve Resolution No. R-2019-11; a resolution memorializing, confirming and tying together the City's recently adopted General Plan, Master Transportation Plan and Master Trails Plan, second by Councilman Ray Justice. Wilson-yes, Wise-yes, Justice-yes, Reeve-yes. Motion carried unanimously.

4. Discussion and possible action to approve Resolution No. R-2019-12; a resolution approving the revised Lease/Purchase Agreement with Zions Bancorporation for a Public Works vehicle.

Kyle explained the dealership was not able to get us the truck when they originally thought. This will update that information and lower the interest rate. The truck should be ready at the end of May.

Kevin said some of the financial terms were changed, and he was not able to complete the attorney certification without the vehicle present. This revises the dates and lowers the price.

Motion was made by Councilman Kelly Wilson to approve Resolution No. R-2019-12; a resolution approving the revised Lease/Purchase Agreement with Zions Bancorporation for a Public Works vehicle, second by Councilwoman Patricia Wise. Roll Call Vote: Reeve-yes, Justice-yes, Wise-yes, Wilson-yes. Motion carried unanimously.

5. Discussion and possible action to Vote-By-Mail for Municipal Elections

Kyle reported most cities are going Vote-By-Mail.

Christy explained La Verkin is one of only three communities in Washington County not already signed up to Vote-By-Mail. She received a quote for services from the County to print the ballots for Vote-By-Mail and a quote for County services for the entire election. The estimated total cost is \$3,260.08.

Kyle explained he included the total cost in the tentative budget. It does increase what has been spent on elections by about \$2,000.

Christy continued that there is another option for the ballot printing, however, there have been several issues with them in the past.

Kyle reported La Verkin City had issues with the printing company during the last two elections.

There is an increase of voter participation with Vote-By-Mail.

Councilman Justice mentioned he has been an election official for many years and will miss having the opportunity of allowing citizens to come in and physically vote. The County has totally switched over to the Vote-By-Mail process and people are already used to the process. There are also a lot of people that are distrustful of the electronic machines. He feels the mail in paper ballot will encourage a lot more people to participate.

Kyle mentioned the absentee ballot option is also becoming more popular.

Christy pointed out election time would be less confusing to people if the City did go Vote-By-Mail because the County already does.

Whether the City contracts with the County to have them count ballots or not, the return address will be the County's if we use their printing company.

Councilwoman Wise is okay with Vote-By-Mail.

Councilman Wilson stated he likes the fact Vote-By-Mail increases the voter numbers.

Councilman Justice pointed out Vote-By-Mail will lower the number of provisional ballots.

Motion was made by Councilman Kelly Wilson to Vote-By-Mail for Municipal Elections, second by Councilman Ray Justice. Wilson-yes, Wise-yes, Justice-yes, Reeve-yes. Motion carried unanimously.

F. Mayor & Council Reports:

Wilson- Nothing to report.

Wise- Nothing to report.

Kyle reported Councilwoman Wise has put together and submitted a grant to approve Riverwood Park.

Councilwoman Wise said the City should know by June 10th if we were approved.

Justice- Nothing to report.

Reeve- He thanked Derek's crew for the quick response to the broken irrigation main line that almost flooded a house.

G. Adjourn:

Motion was made by Councilman Ray Justice to adjourn, second by Councilman Kelly Wilson. Motion carried unanimously at 7:03pm.

Minutes were done by Christy Ballard.

May 1, 2019
Date Approved

Richard M. Hirschi
Mayor Richard M. Hirschi

ATTEST:

Christy Ballard
Christy Ballard
City Recorder