

City of La Verkin

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La Verkin City Council Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, February 19, 2020, 6:00 p.m.

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

Present: Mayor Richard Hirschi, Council Members: Chuck Hardy, Patricia Wise, Ray Justice, Micah Gubler, and Kelly Wilson; Staff: Kyle Gubler, Derek Imlay, Kevin Bennett, Chief Ben Lee, and Christy Ballard; Public: Brian Stewart, Brittney & Isaac Stewart, and Nick Wright.

A. Called to Order – The invocation and the Pledge of Allegiance were given by Micah Gubler at 6:03 pm.

The newly hired police officer, Christopher Smith was sworn in by the City Recorder.

B. Presentation:

1. Zion Regional Collaborative, Emily Friedman-National Scenic Byway

Emily is the facilitator for the Zion Regional Collaborative (ZRC). The ZRC is a group of stakeholders from around the region that meet regularly to discuss some of the challenges facing our area and possible strategies for how to handle those challenges. The ZRC is also very focused on opportunity and that is why she is here to speak with the Council about a National Scenic Byway designation. This was initially brought up as a project over 10 years ago. In 1990 SR9 from I-15 to Carmel Junction was designated a State Scenic Byway and 20 years later the ZC3 (Zion Canyon Corridor Council), who proceeded the ZRC, decided to seek national designation. The ZC3 completed a lot of the necessary steps to move forward with that project. Unfortunately, the National Scenic Byway program was defunded at the federal level. What that meant was there was no longer grant money available and the Department of Transportation was no longer designating new byways. This put the project on the back burner.

In September 2019 the President signed a bill into law that revived this program. It required the DOT to issue a call for nomination within 90 days and designate new byways within the year. The ZRC is once again in the position to seek this nomination and is looking for support from the municipalities along the potential route. The route they are discussing is a small section of the State Byway that would begin in La Verkin and stretch to the east side of Zion National Park. There are many benefits to having this designation, the big one is potential grant funding. The bill past did not include funding but that may change in the future. In the past, other scenic byways received grant money for restrooms and visitor centers. This designation also increases visitation.

The ZRC is requesting a letter of support for this designation as part of the application requirements.

Councilman Wilson asked if this designation would create any additional restrictions for property owners along the highway.

Emily reported there would be no additional restrictions.

Councilwoman Wise asked Emily to speak on the intrinsic qualities and other viewpoints that are up for discussion.

Emily explained one of the most important elements in a national scenic byway application is the selection of a primary intrinsic quality and then examples of that intrinsic quality. Basically, you must justify why this deserves to be a national scenic byway. The ZRC decided that out of archeological, cultural, natural, recreational, scenic and historic they would like to go with a scenic intrinsic quality. Some of the examples they have discussed to include in the application are the La Verkin Overlook, Hurricane Mesa and Confluence Park. The examples have not been decided yet, but she feels this region has a lot to offer outside of Zion National Park and it's important for people to have the opportunity to experience them.

C. Appointments:

1. Appointments to Board, Commissions, and Committees

This item will be moved to the next agenda.

D. 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. Meeting Minutes: February 5, 2020, regular meeting minutes
3. Review Invoices and Checks: \$41,455.57

The motion was made by Councilman Ray Justice to approve the consent agenda as written including the minutes of the February 5, 2020, regular meeting and Invoices and Checks in the amount of \$44,455.57, second by Councilwoman Patricia Wise. Roll Call Vote: Hardy-yes, Justice-yes, Wise-yes, Wilson-yes, Gubler-yes. Motion carried unanimously.

E. Committee Reports:

1. Fire District-Nothing to report.
2. Sewer Board-Nothing to report.
3. Planning Commission-Councilwoman Wise reported on the February 12th meeting. There were two items and they were both presentations.
4. Water Board-They will meet next week.

F. Citizen Comment & Request for Future Agenda Items:

No comments were made.

G. Business:

1. Discussion and possible action to approve a letter of support for the Zion Regional Collaborative group to submit an application to the National Scenic Byway Program for SR-9.

The motion was made by Councilman Ray Justice to approve a letter of support for the Zion Regional Collaborative group to submit an application to the National Scenic Byway Program for SR-9, second by Councilman Micah Gubler. Gubler-yes, Wilson-yes, Wise-yes, Justice-yes, Hardy-yes. Motion carried unanimously

2. Discussion and possible action to approve a letter of support for the Washington County Desert Reserve to apply for a grant from the Utah Outdoor Recreational Program to construct a bridge in the Confluence Nature Park.

Councilman Gubler said this letter is for the bridge that was presented during the last city council meeting.

Mayor Hirschi reported the engineer for the bridge will be at the next Confluence Park meeting so we can report back to the Council after that.

The motion was made by Councilman Micah Gubler to approve a letter of support for the Washington County Desert Reserve to apply for a grant from the Utah Outdoor Recreational Program to construct a bridge in the Confluence Nature Park, second by Councilman Ray Justice.

Kevin explained Kathleen sent the City a list of requirements for this letter after the packets went out. He did not change the letter based on those requirements. One of those requirements was committing the City to \$25,000-\$50,000 which this letter does not. This letter does commit the City to non-monetary, in-kind assistance and a certain amount of, to be determined, financial support.

Christy reported Kathleen has seen the proposed letters and she was happy with them.

Roll Call Vote: Hardy-yes, Justice-yes, Wise-yes, Wilson-yes, Gubler-yes. Motion carried unanimously.

3. Discussion and possible action to approve a letter of support for the Washington County Desert Reserve to apply for a grant from the Recreational Trails Grant for Utah to construct a bridge in the Confluence Nature Park.

Kevin explained this grant is for the bridge abutment and trail leading to the bridge.

Both grants are match grants. This grant is a \$100,000 grant and the other one is \$150,000.

The motion was made by Councilwoman Patricia Wise to approve a letter of support for the Washington County Desert Reserve to apply for a grant from the Recreational Trails Grant for Utah to construct a bridge in the Confluence Nature Park as written, second by Councilman Ray Justice. Roll Call Vote: Gubler-yes, Wilson-yes, Wise-yes, Justice-yes, Hardy-yes. Motion carried unanimously.

4. Discussion and possible action regarding a La Verkin City high school scholarship.

Councilman Gubler reported he spoke with Dana Leavitt, registrar at Hurricane High School who told him the surrounding communities award scholarships one of two ways. First, you can do it through the foundation that the high school has. Students put together scholarship portfolios and three representatives from the City would be assigned to go

through those and chose a young man and woman from the City of La Verkin to award the tax-exempt scholarship to. That money is sent to the Washington County School District and the student has 3 years to claim it. Any money not claimed is considered a donation to the foundation. Second, the city awards the scholarship and coordinates with the high school so that it is awarded during the ceremony. This option is done on the city's terms so we could put our own restrictions on it. Hurricane and Toquerville use this option. The scholarships are not always based on academic achievements but can be serviced based.

The high school has an awards banquet where the mayor or designee could present the award or if no one is available the school will announce it.

The dollar amount varies, but he doesn't remember any of them being lower than \$100.

Councilman Wilson said he thinks the scholarship should be at least \$500 each.

Kyle reported there is money in Community Development that would cover \$1,000. He also mentioned the Elementary School has contacted him about donating to the Jared Boren Scholarship Fund. This fund raises money for scholarships for students that graduated from La Verkin Elementary School. The number of scholarships they give out depends on how much money they earn.

Councilman Gubler was okay with offering two scholarships and donating to the Jared Boren Fund.

Councilwoman Wise stated she is in favor of \$500 for each scholarship and would like it awarded upon proof of enrollment. The City could also decide if they would award a scholarship for something other than a traditional college.

Councilman Wilson agreed and feels the City should decide who to award the scholarships to.

Councilman Justice said he thinks this is a great way to encourage the youth in our community. He would like to request the students provide a list of different services they have provided to La Verkin. This could help encourage youth to do service projects in our community.

Councilman Gubler suggested creating a committee of citizens and city representatives to help identify students.

The motion was made by Councilwoman Patricia Wise to approve three scholarships at \$500 each to be awarded to two (one male and one female), graduating La Verkin City high school students, and one to the Jared Boren Scholarship Fund, second by Councilman Kelly Wilson. Roll Call Vote: Gubler-yes, Wilson-yes, Wise-yes, Justice-yes, Hardy-yes. Motion carried unanimously.

Kyle would like Mayor Hirschi to assign two Councilmembers to meet with him to work out the details of the scholarships.

Mayor Hirschi assigned Councilman Micah Gubler and Councilman Chuck Hardy to work with Kyle on this item.

5. Discussion and possible action to authorize early payment to Ash Creek Special Service District for the property located west of 210 south and 375 West.

Kyle reported the money was approved during the last budget amendment. He did not calculate the amount of interest this would save the City, but it would be paying it off 8 or 9 years early.

Councilwoman Wise mentioned she is in favor of paying the property off early because it would make things easier with grant application for the proposed park.

The motion was made by Councilman Kelly Wilson to authorize early payment to Ash Creek Special Service District for the property located west of 210 south and 375 West, second by Councilman Ray Justice. Roll Call Vote: Hardy-yes, Justice-yes, Wise-yes, Wilson-yes, Gubler-yes. Motion carried unanimously.

H. Mayor & Council Reports:

Mayor Hirschi-Thanked the Directors for the reports they email to the Council. He thanked also the employees for all they do.

Gubler-Several months ago he brought up reviewing the City's emergency response plan. He would still like to get the plan updated. There are several individuals in the community that would be willing to volunteer to be on a committee to give the City some recommendations of what could be updated. He will work with Chief Lee to put together that committee.

Wilson-Nothing to report.

Kyle was able to attend the Water Task Force meeting and reported Senator Anderegg was on the agenda and he did not show up. There is a first substitute to the bill that specifically lists La Verkin City as a good example of an exemption due to water quality. Kyle thinks this bill will pass and require all counties of the 1st and 2nd class to meter secondary water. Washington County is a 2nd class county because of St. George, and they don't even have a secondary water system. La Verkin City will be exempt until someone builds a water meter that can handle our water and then we will be required to do it.

Councilman Wilson said he feels the City should keep opposing it and would like to send out another email to the House Representatives and Senators telling them we are not in favor of it and give them the information again.

Councilwoman Wise said it is up to our location representatives to make sure the exemption for La Verkin is included in the amendment.

Councilman Justice mentioned he is confused at why they are doing it by counties and not individual communities. There are a lot of smaller communities, like La Verkin, that can't afford to do this.

Wise- Findlay Subaru and Canyon Media have partnered with the County to offer trailhead signage and other services for trails throughout the County. They would like to complete four projects per year. La Verkin has a project ready, we need signage for the Overlook trail. She felt this was a perfect project for this offering. They have had several meetings and things seem to be moving forward. They will build a kiosk and put up signage for us. The City will need to decide what information we want on the signage. There doesn't seem to be any outlay on the City's part, however, the monument on the east end of the trail is on SITLA land. SITLA has very stringent requirements for this type of thing. They are a public/private entity whose mandate is to make money for education, so they look at everything they allow as how would this benefit schools. She met with the regional SITLA administrator, along with Kyle and the Mayor. The Administrator said the City could apply for an easement. The application requires a survey to determine the amount of property the City would like. We also must pay a small percentage of the land value. She thinks the project would cost the City approximately \$5,000. This would also give the City control of the property for as long as the relationship lasts. We could improve the trail and put signage which would benefit the area. Confluence Park will host a cleanup project on March 21st.

Justice-The Washington County Solid Waste Board met last week. The landfill will be receiving 12,000 yards of construction and demolition material from the Page Arizona power plant. The manager from the landfill is not concerned. Councilman Justice voiced his concerns during the meeting and the attorney, Faye Reber assured him there will be clauses and stipulations in the contract to prevent things that could destroy our landfill. He was not sure why the power plant wasn't taking the debris to an Arizona landfill.

Hardy-He passed out a pamphlet from the Mosquito Abatement Committee. It was the first meeting of the year so they went over the purpose of the Committee. They have a very extensive lab where they identify different types of health-related mosquito-borne diseases.

Adjourn:

The motion was made by Councilman Ray Justice to adjourn, second by Councilman Micah Gubler. The motion carried unanimously at 7:10 pm.

Minutes were done by Christy Ballard.

March 18, 2020
Date Approved

Richard M. Hirschi
Mayor Richard M. Hirschi

ATTEST:
Christy Ballard
Christy Ballard
City Recorder