

City of La Verkin

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La Verkin City Council Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, March 18, 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, and Micah Gubler; Staff: Kyle Gubler, Derek Imlay, and Sergeant Amber Crouse; Public: Russell Lake

Councilman Kelly Wilson, Kevin Bennett, Chief Ben Lee and Christy Ballard were excused.

A. Called to Order – The invocation and the Pledge of Allegiance were given by Richard Hirschi 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: February 19, 2020, work meeting and regular meeting and March 4, 2020, work meeting
4. Review Invoices and Checks: \$165,902.75

The motion was made by Councilman Ray Justice to approve the consent agenda as written including the minutes of the February 19, 2020, work meeting and regular meeting and March 4, 2020, work meeting and Invoices and Checks in the amount of \$165,902.75, second by Councilman Chuck Hardy. Roll Call Vote: Hardy-yes. Justice-yes, Wise-yes, Gubler-yes. Motion carried unanimously.

C. Committee Reports:

1. Fire District-Nothing to report.
2. Sewer Board-Nothing to report.
3. Planning Commission-Nothing to report.
4. Water Board-Mayor Hirschi reported the irrigation water is back in the system.

D. Citizen Comment & Request for Future Agenda Items:

No comments were made.

E. Business:

1. Discussion and possible action to accept and authorize the recording of the Deeds of Dedication from property owners along 100 South and authorize and approve the construction and installation of the improvements to adjoining properties, to provide for the desired road and utility improvements contemplated as a part of the City's 100 South Improvement Project.

Derek explained the City was only able to get 8 ½ feet for curb and gutter from the property owners along 100 South. Most of the people agreed and have signed the paperwork but there is still one parcel on the north side that is for sale that we may be able to get once the property sells. We were also only able to get 3 feet from the property owner at the east end of 100 South, on the west side.

We were able to get enough property along 100 West for curb, gutter, and sidewalk.

There will also be curb, gutter, and sidewalk on both sides of 100 South from State Street to 100 West.

100 South will be a 50-foot wide street with curb and gutter.

The City will be responsible to replace anything they remove such as walls and landscaping. We will also be stubbing in the utilities to each of the vacant properties.

Councilwoman Wise asked how many residents were not willing to work with the City on this project.

Derek replied everyone is working with the City to some extent. The road is getting improved, but some parcels will not have a sidewalk. He hopes we will be able to at least acquire the property on the north side so there can be a path for the school kids to safely walk to the school.

Derek explained this project will take care of the drainage issue on 100 South.

This item of business allows staff to record the Deeds of Dedication but does not approve the road improvement project. If the City decides not to move forward with the project the property will revert to the property owner. That does not come with a time frame if the City decides they do not ever want to move forward with a road improvement project the property will be given back to the owner.

The motion was made by Councilwoman Patricia Wise to accept and authorize the recording of the Deeds of Dedication from property owners along 100 South and authorize and approve the construction and installation of the improvements to adjoining properties, to provide for the desired road and utility improvements contemplated as a part of the City's 100 South Improvement Project, second by Councilman Micah Gubler. Roll Call Vote: Gubler-yes, Wise-yes, Justice-yes, Hardy-yes. Motion carried unanimously.

2. Discussion and possible action on a grant application for the new Power Plant Park and the City's contribution hereto.

Councilwoman Wise explained the park is located at 401 W 210 S. It is a 2.3-acre, City-owned parcel where Washington County is currently installing a trailhead with restrooms and trail into Confluence Park. This is an opportune time for La Verkin to develop the remaining section of the parcel. She met with Derek, the Mayor, and Kyle several months ago to suggest the City apply for some Outdoor Recreation grant money. They agreed and a committee was formed with Councilwoman Wise as the Chair.

To make this grant happen, it needed to be outdoor recreation-related and not just a typical city park. The schematic has a toddler playground that would not be supported by the grant if it was a stand-alone playground, but it also includes an adventure playground for older children that is outdoor-related. The rim trail will be wheelchair accessible so the City will install benches at the natural bump-outs with a railing so everyone will be able to enjoy the view. This property also looks down on the old historic power plant. The County is working with a gentleman to restore the adobe brick on that building.

The project has been divided into four phases to help manage the cost of installing a new park. Phase one would be a 20-spot asphalt parking lot, which is an upgrade from the gravel parking lot the County is planning to install. There will be a light for the parking area and a grass area near the restrooms. It will also include a trail from the parking lot to the trailhead. This phase has a 24-month time frame.

Phase two would be the play area and playground.

Phase three would be a pavilion for the largest bump out area and another one at the play area.

Phase four would be installation of the desert garden.

The grant application is due March 20th. The Committee felt comfortable pursuing the first phase because it is infrastructure.

The grant is a 50/50 match meaning the State of Utah will put in 50% of what the City will put in. The State likes communities to have different partners financially and support within the community. Because the County has just put in the restroom, gravel parking area, rim trail, staircase, and trail into Confluence Park we didn't feel it was appropriate to ask them for more money but we were able to highlight the County's investment to the City in the essay for the application. We truly are partners with them on this project.

There are two pages on cost estimates for the project. Page one is the estimate for phase one and page two is the engineer opinion of probable cost for the entire park. Sunrise Engineering's cost estimate for phase one was \$86,000, that has been cut back to \$63,090. Most of the work would be done "in-house" by the public works department. The State would cover half of that amount. The City can use up to 20% of the labor cost and up to 15% of the engineering cost toward its portion of the grant.

The proposal is as follows; Utah Outdoor Recreation Grant-\$27,000, La Verkin City-\$27,500, public works department labor-\$5,000 and Sunrise Engineering costs-\$3,750 for a total of \$63,250.

The Council needs to decide if the City is willing to commit \$27,500 for the cash contribution. It would need to be paid over two years.

The contracts were originally going to be awarded at the end of May. However, due to the current circumstances that date has been postponed.

Kyle said he estimates the City will collect roughly \$39,000 under Parks & Rec Impact Fees from 12 building permits next year and approximately \$58,000 from RAP Tax. These numbers are based on past years and can change, especially if the economy “takes a hit”. These funds qualify for this type of expenditure.

Councilman Gubler felt it would be wise to approve the project based on the outcome of the grant.

Mayor Hirschi thanked Councilwoman Wise for all the work she did for this grant.

Councilwoman Wise mentioned part of her reason for pushing forward with this grant, despite the City not having a strong tourism year, is that it’s a relatively new grant, and the State has been pushing heavily to help rural communities and who knows how long that will last. The City would benefit from having a park that is visible from SR 9 with easy access to Confluence Park.

The County has created a beautiful new trail and trailhead that comes to a dirt lot and the City really needs to do something with it. This is a good start; it will provide a place for people to set and put things down that isn’t dirt or mud.

The motion was made by Councilman Micah Gubler to approve the grant application for the new Power Plant Park including the City’s cash contribution in the amount of \$27,500, second by Councilman Ray Justice. Hardy-yes, Justice-yes, Wise-yes, Gubler-yes. Motion carried unanimously.

3. Discussion and direction regarding the FY 2020-2021 Budget.

Kyle passed out a sample of the scholarship application for the Councilmembers to review.

He spoke with Dana Leavitt at the High School about getting the information to the students. It may be difficult since school is not in session. The City will also post information on social media to get the word out.

Kyle will be the contact person; his information will be added to the application for questions.

Kyle pointed out things were different than they are now when the budget retreat was held. He was going to suggest holding work meetings to discuss the recommendations made by the Public Works Director and the Public Safety Director during the retreat but due to the economic climate right now, his recommendation is to wait on adding anything additional to the budget and readdress them during the first budget amendment in January. He is worried about how COVID-19 is going to affect money coming in. He would also recommend postponing the cost of living and merit increases until at least October 1, 2020, with Council review before.

The tentative budget needs to be approved on or before the first meeting in May. There must be a public hearing and once the public hearing has been held, the budget can be adopted. The final budget needs to be approved by the second meeting in June.

The budget balanced when it was first presented. It was based on last year’s beginning budget with the COLA and merit increases for the entire fiscal year.

The economy is going to be affected quite a bit by what’s happening in the world right now.

Councilwoman Wise asked Kyle how much time he would need to have the budget ready for the second meeting in April. She feels the Council needs as much time as possible before making a decision to see what is going to happen.

Kyle pointed out just because a budget is approved does not mean the money has to be spent. If the budget is approved and things go downhill, we just put a hold on the budget and only necessary expenditures are permitted.

The Council will get with Kyle individually before the second meeting in April to discuss the tentative budget.

Kyle said another thing that needs to be discussed is the public gathering limitation. These meetings are public, and we need to find a way to limit the number of people and still allow comments. He has been meeting every morning with Derek and Sergeant Crouse (Chief Lee is on vacation) to stay up to date on the situation. The City does have an electronic phone system. He will make sure it is working by the next meeting, so the Council can phone in for the meeting, especially anyone over 60 years of age.

The City is going to take all the precautions necessary to keep the Council, staff, and citizens safe. There has been discussion on making the city office by appointment only. Staff would still be working but all payments would be made online, by calling in or through the dropbox. The public safety department has been directed to take all precautions necessary to stay safe. If the city office building locks its doors, the police department building will do the same.

The youth recreation has been suspended until April 1st.

Kyle reported on a webinar he participated in that discussed all the requirements for reducing the virus such as limiting public gatherings to under 10, he read through that list and the list of things that are still allowed such as hiking. The webinar discussed the symptoms of the virus and who is most at risk.

The Easter Egg Hunt for 2020 will be canceled.

City Council meetings moving forward will need to be done electronically. By law, the Council needs to meet once a month and Kyle feels that is all the City should meet until this is resolved.

He reported on a webinar hosted by Senator Mitt Romney held earlier today, March 18th. It talked about the stimulus package that, according to Senator Romney, had been approved.

Municipalities are considered critical employees if it gets to that point.

If the Council is okay, the city office building and the lobby door to the police department will be locked with public access being by appointment only.

Councilman Justice reported Zion National Park is still open, but the visitor center and shuttle system are closed.

The Council agreed to follow all recommendations.

F. Mayor & Council Reports:

Gubler- Nothing to report.

Wise- Nothing to report.

Justice- Nothing to report.

Hardy-Southwest Mosquito Abatement has begun trapping mosquitos and monitoring that situation.

Adjourn:

The motion was made by Councilman Ray Justice to adjourn, second by Councilwoman Patricia Wise. The motion carried unanimously at 7:14 pm.

Minutes were done by Christy Ballard.

April 15, 2020
Date Approved

Mayor Richard M. Hirschi

ATTEST:

Christy Ballard
City Recorder