

TOQUERVILLE CITY COUNCIL
Regular Work Meeting Minutes
August 6, 2020, at 6:00 pm
212 N. Toquer Blvd, Toquerville Utah



Present: Mayor Lynn Chamberlain; Councilmembers: Keen Ellsworth, Justin Sip, Gary Chaves, Chuck Williams; Staff: Treasurer Dana McKim, Public Works Director Lance Gubler, Recorder Ruth Evans; Support Staff: Accountant Candus Tibbits, Planning Chairman Manning Butterworth, Hurricane Valley Fire District Representative Merlin Spendlove, Ash Creek Special Services District Representative Blair Gubler; Public: Dan James, Joe Humpherys, Larry Bennett, Kay Chamberlain, Randy Scott, DC Young, Alex Chamberlain, Rebecca Hansen, Steve Roah, Gary Lunt, Paul Heideman; Absent: Councilman Ty Bringhurst.

A. CALL TO ORDER:

Mayor Chamberlain called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Councilman Williams. The invocation was offered by Councilman Chaves. There were no statements of belief voiced.

B. APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

The Council reviewed the agenda. There were no disclosures, nor conflict declarations from Council Members.

Councilman Gary Chaves moved to discuss item E4 as the first item of discussion on the Work Meeting Agenda. Councilman Justin Sip seconded the motion. Motion unanimously carried, 4-0. Keen Ellsworth – aye, Justin Sip – aye, Gary Chaves – aye, Chuck Williams – aye.

C. CITY DEPARTMENT REPORTS:

Ash Creek Special Service District Representative Blair Gubler reported on the District's mid-year budget meeting. Overall they are on track and not over budget. The Bench Lake project is over budget. The Center Street bridge project repairs will be done by the same contractor at the same time. The District still has hay for sale.

Hurricane Valley Fire Department Representative Merlin Spendlove reported the 24th had fewer calls than the 4th of July. There were 30 total calls for July; 4 medical transports, 18 transport refusals, and 8 fire response calls. There are crews from Hurricane at the Bishop Nevada fire. Additional crews were sent to Richfield for support in fighting Utah fires.

Planning Commission Chair Manning Butterworth reported on the status of the commercial design standards ordinance. After a public hearing this month, it will be ready for the City Council to vote on. The Planning Commission is working on revising the MPDO bonus density ordinance and will make a draft available to the Council for review.

Public Works Director Lance Gubler reported the Wall subdivision has been given a final punch list and is almost ready to record. The Center Street waterline project has been started. The Council will need to decide if they want a sidewalk and curbing on Center Street. There is a meeting in September with the County regarding issues at Toquer Falls. The trailer above the Springs has been removed by the BLM, however, there is still trash and debris that needs to be cleaned up. The lease for the white Ford F350 Public Works truck is ending and there are cheaper options available. These options will be discussed with the Mayor before any decisions are made.



The lights at the City Park are in the process of getting repaired. There was a meeting with the Washington County Water Conservancy District about the reservoir and the delays they have been dealing with. They have worked through those issues and should be starting soon.

D. PUBLIC FORUM:

Resident Alex Chamberlain inquired about the status of the warm color filters that were purchased for the street lamps and would like to see those installed. The Council responded that Rocky Mountain Power will not allow the City to install the filters on their street lights. The City is still waiting for a response from Rocky Mountain Power regarding the installation of the filters.

Resident Manning Butterworth commented that striping the street and installing a stop sign on Shangri-La have not been completed yet. This is a safety issue and needs to be done as soon as possible. There is only one way in and one way out to Toquerville Estates and there are building permits still being issued and more residences being built. This traffic and safety issue needs to be addressed.

Mayor Chamberlain commented that the bypass road right of way has been completed and once the bypass road is complete; there will be more access roads in and out of the Toquerville heights area that will solve the traffic and safety issues.

Resident DC Young asked the City to take charge of the drainage ditch on the south end of his property. Mr. Young has requested that the City fix this issue before. Nothing has been done yet.

E. WORKING AGENDA:

1. Discussion on increasing culinary water rates.

Mayor Chamberlain commented that Councilman Bringhurst will have the information on the culinary water rate proposals for next week's meeting when he is in attendance.

2. Discussion on Resolution 2020.XX FY2020-2021 Final budget adoption and Property Tax levy rate.

Treasurer Dana McKim explained the proposed budget and the proposed uses with the increase in revenue. The City could benefit greatly by hiring a city manager, another public works employee, and by giving the current staff health benefits. The current tax mill levy rate is .000837 and the proposed levy rate is .001650. The increase would amount to \$250,000 a year, which is about \$12.00 a month. This proposed rate is more in line with other cities in Washington County. Growth is coming and the City would benefit by having the staff in place to manage it. The Council was in favor of giving the staff health benefits. Mayor Chamberlain praised the staff for the incredible job they do every day. Accountant Candus Tibbits explained the truth and taxation process and how the levy rates keep the revenue constant. There will be a public hearing on August 12th at 6:01 p.m. for residents to express their opinions regarding this proposed tax increase. The Council will then make a final decision and vote at the August 13th Council meeting.

Resident Randy Scott commented that the proposed amount for employee benefits was extremely high. Mr. Scott would like to shop around and see if he could get better rates for the employees.



Resident Dan James praised the City for not raising taxes for 13 years. Mr. James cautioned the Council to keep the state of the economy in mind when considering a tax increase.

Resident Sandra Feagin is not in favor of raising taxes so high. It is not fair to raise the taxes all at once; rather it would be better to raise them incrementally. The City needs to take care of the existing residents before planning and paying for future residents.

Resident Dan James is in favor of giving benefits to current employees.

Resident Mark Hare commented that the City should get the word out about growth and that the residents don't want to see another Hurricane or St. George here in Toquerville. Perhaps growth can be put off for a few years so the COVID situation can settle down. Mr. Hare was in favor of allowing businesses along Toquer Boulevard and not in favor of the City going into debt to allow growth.

Councilman Ellsworth commented that the City will not go into debt for growth or expansion.

Resident Steve Roah was in favor of incrementally raising taxes instead of all at once. The tax rate needs to be addressed on a yearly basis. Residents as well as the City should be encouraged to budget and live within their means.

Councilman Sip commented that Toquerville residents should pay a higher property tax if they do not want to allow businesses in the City. Revenue either comes from commercial tax or property tax. Businesses have historically been driven out or not allowed in Toquerville, so the revenue needs to come from property taxes.

Resident DC Young was in favor of giving the City staff health benefits and understands the need to compete with nearby cities. Toquerville has done a marvelous job creating and maintaining a beautiful city with little support. Mr. Young was not opposed to raising taxes; however, the citizens need to know exactly what they would get for their money.

Mayor Chamberlain read a letter sent in from resident Mary Thayer. Mrs. Thayer was in favor of the proposed tax increase to give the staff health benefits and hire a city manager.

3. Discussion on a RES.2020.XX approving: (a) the proposed 10-year Residential Waste Collection Agreement between the Washington County Special Service District No. 1 and Republic Services, and (b) the proposed Solid Waste Collection Agreement between Washington County Special Service District No. 1 and the City of Toquerville, pertaining to billing and collection for solid waste services and related matters.

The current contracts with Republic Services will expire in 2021. Councilman Sip explained the two proposed contracts and the proposed increase for the Blucan recycling service. There will be an opt-out period for anyone who does not want a Blucan.

4. Discussion on Resolution 2020.XX FY2019-2020 Budget amendment.

Treasurer Dana McKim explained to the Council that there were unexpected attorney fees that were incurred during last year's budget. The proposed amendment is to transfer \$15,000 from the Economic Development Fund to the Administration fund to pay for the legal expenditures.



F. COUNCIL REPORTS:

Justin Sip reported there will be a meeting with an engineer regarding the proposed Westfield walking bridge. If built, the proposed Confluence treatment plant would be able to return approximately 90% of the city's wastewater back to the City as irrigation water.

Keen Ellsworth reported on a meeting with the International Sports Complex developers about their plans to install multiple sports fields west of Toquerville. Half of the fields will be artificial turf. They will be looking to buy water from the City to water their grass fields. There was a meeting with Sun River development group regarding the bypass road. They are proceeding with construction permits and should be breaking ground around May or June of 2021. They will start on the south end of the bypass road.

Gary Chaves reported on a minor workers compensation incident with an employee. The incident was handled perfectly and was resolved quickly.

Chuck Williams did not have anything to report.

Public Works Director Lance Gubler commented that the City has applied for a grant to install a new water tank on Springs Dr. The City Engineer has submitted this grant application for the City free of charge. The grant would match the City's funds and would pay for a 500,000-gallon tank. The current water tank is about 40 years old and too small to handle future growth.

Mayor Chamberlain did not have anything to report.

G. CALENDAR OF EVENTS:

There is a Special City Council Business Meeting on August 12th at 6:01 p.m. to discuss the proposed property tax increase.

H. ADJOURN REGULAR SESSION:

The Council discussed moving into a closed session for the purpose of discussing the purchase, exchange, sale or lease of real property and to discuss the character, professional competence, or physical or mental health of an individual.

Councilman Justin Sip moved to enter into a closed session for the purpose of discussing the purchase, exchange, sale or lease of real property and to discuss the character, professional competence, or physical or mental health of an individual. Councilman Gary Chaves seconded the motion. Motion unanimously carried, 4-0. Keen Ellsworth – aye, Justin Sip – aye, Gary Chaves – aye, Chuck Williams – aye.

Mayor Chamberlain adjourned the meeting at 7:21 p.m.

I. CLOSED SESSION:

The closed session for the purpose of discussing the purchase, exchange, sale or lease of real property and to discuss the character, professional competence, or physical or mental health of an individual was called to order at 7:45 p.m.

Minutes of the closed session were recorded and are now on file as a protected record.

The closed session adjourned at 7:57 p.m.



J. ADJOURN:

Mayor Chamberlain called the meeting back into open session at 7:58 p.m.

Councilman Justin Sip moved to adjourn the Regular Business Meeting. Councilman Chuck Williams seconded the motion. Motion unanimously carried, 4-0. Keen Ellsworth – aye, Justin Sip – aye, Gary Chaves – aye, Chuck Williams – aye.

Mayor Chamberlain adjourned the regular business meeting at 7:58 p.m.



Mayor – Lynn Chamberlain



Attest: City Recorder – Ruth Evans

9/16/2020
Date

