

City of Choteau
PO BOX 619
CHOTEAU, MT 59422-0619
406-466-2510

**OFFICIAL MINUTES OF THE APRIL 21, 2015 MEETING
OF THE CITY COUNCIL**

Present were Mayor Jack Conatser, Council Member Stewart Merja, Council Member Rose Crawford and Council Member Dan Lannen. Council Member Jill Owen was excused.

Staff present was Finance Officer Jodi Rogers and Public Works Director Kelly Hirsch.

Citizens present were Melody Martinsen of the Choteau Acantha; Levi Warehime, Sarah Richardson, Anna Heimbeck, Matt Heimbeck and Logan Yeager of the Choteau Cub Scouts; Kevin Johnson of DOWL; Paul Wick, Teton County Flood Plain Administrator; Rich Lusky; Diane Bishop; Brooke Richins; and Lindy Troy.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Conatser called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

A motion to approve the minutes of the April 7, 2015 meeting was made by Council Member Merja, seconded by Council Member Lannen. The motion passed with all in attendance voting aye.

REQUESTS TO BE OUT OF STATE

None

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

SET DATE FOR ANNUAL CLEAN-UP

Mayor Conatser stated that we still have not come up with a date for the clean-up. He further stated that Public Works Director Hirsch will be talking to N.M.J.R.D.D. about our options. We are also looking at not accepting tires this year. A motion to table the item until the next meeting was made by Council Member Merja, seconded by Council Member Crawford. The motion passed with all in attendance voting aye.

UPDATE ON SEWER PROJECT - KEVIN JOHNSON

Kevin Johnson stated that he worked with Mayor Conatser and Jim Bouma about irrigation issues at the lagoon. He explained that we are through the approval process and the pre-bid meeting is scheduled for next Tuesday at 1:00 p.m. He expects to talk for approximately 45 minutes then move out to the site. The bid opening will be on May 12th. It will take a couple of weeks to get references checked and get the notice of award and another couple of weeks to get the contractor under contract. Next will be the notice to proceed, usually within 30 days after execution of the contract or 60 days after the bids are opened. He anticipates construction for one year. The project is projected to be done the fall of 2016. Council Member Merja asked if the weight bearing pylons are because of the loose gravel. Mr. Johnson replied that it does not have the bearing capacity so the support is needed.

Mayor Conatser stated that he and Mr. Johnson spent time together today discussing the progression of the project. He stated that Finance Officer Rogers has been working on the financial end of things and Public Works Director Hirsch has been working with the crew to get the gravel hauled.

Council Member Lannen stated that they have put Mr. Johnson through the paces trying to save money on the project. He wishes we could have done something different but feels we have exhausted all the possibilities.

Mayor Conatser and the Council thanked Mr. Johnson for all of his hard work. Mr. Johnson stated that it is a major investment for the community but stated that we are not alone. He feels that the project will last a long time and not have to be done for a while. He stated that Choteau has been a challenge with our topography and terrain.

Mayor Conatser stated that we are going to grow our own wastewater treatment plant operators. Kelly Hirsch will be the overall operator with Levi Warehime and BJ Warehime. He is proud of them for stepping up.

NEW BUSINESS

PRESENTATION ON CITY PARK PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT

Mayor Conatser introduced Brooke Richins. Ms. Richins introduced Lindy Troy. She explained that they are heading up a project to try and get a playground built in the City Park. She stated that the current playground is out of code which is a major liability issue. She has worked with and is proposing to use a company called Leathers and Associates out of New York and Florida. They allow the kids, Choteau Activities and the community to design and build the playground.

The structures are custom built, will meet all state codes, made from recycled plastic, sliver safe and handicapped accessible. They provide design, project management and construction. They will be there every step of the way. She stated that the design day is tentatively scheduled for May 28th. The end result will be a 3-D design of our new playground. They are looking for people to help with all phases of the project. They are looking at the possibility of raising approximately \$150,000. To get the designer here will be about \$2500, if we can co-op with Wyoming, it will be about \$2000.

Council Member Lannen asked how big of an area they are looking at and about the possibility of moving the playground across the creek. Ms. Richins replied that it depends on what the City will allow them to use. She asked for official approval from council so they can move ahead with the project.

Mayor Conatser asked Mr. Wick what he was able to find out as the playground area is in the flood plain. Mr. Wick asked Ms. Richins if she would ask the designer if they have ever designed a playground in a flood plain. He stated that it is good it is not in the flood way. He further suggested the designer possibly come up with two designs, one for the flood plain and one not in the flood plain. He further stated that any fencing would need to be flow through in case there is a flood.

A motion to allow Ms. Richins and Ms. Troy to move forward with the playground design was made by Council Member Lannen, seconded by Council Member Crawford. The motion passed with all in attendance voting aye.

OPPORTUNITIES, INC. PROCLAMATION

Mayor Conatser reported that in honor of the 50th anniversary of community action and Opportunities, Inc, they are proclaiming May 2015 Community Action Month. A motion to approve the proclamation was made by Council Member Merja, seconded by Council Member Lannen. The motion passed with all in attendance voting aye.

LDS PARK CLEAN-UP

Mayor Conatser stated that there are members of the LDS Church that would like to clean the creek, starting at the bridge and ending at the rodeo grounds. Council Member Merja made sure that Fish and Game were notified before the clean-up started.

LAW ENFORCEMENT REPORT

The Law Enforcement Report for March 2015 was submitted for Council's review.

CITY JUDGE'S REPORT

There was no City Judge's report submitted. Finance Officer Rogers stated that we have the full court software from the state and Becky has been working with the state to get everything on line. Pete Howard has been helping Judge Fasbender who will be going to training next week.

PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Public Works Director Hirsch reported that the crew checked a sewer main, opened the white bathrooms, cut down some small Ash trees for the sidewalk project and sent a load of recycling. He stated that he is going to have to send a letter to N.M.J.R.D.D. to as to be placed on the agenda for the next meeting to discuss the community clean-up. Mayor Conatser stated that they have hauled 14,000 cubic yards of gravel to the construction site. Council member Lannen asked when the sidewalk project will be started. Public Works Director Hirsch replied that it has not gone to bid yet. Finance Officer Rogers explained that when the gentleman from CTEP got approval, he sent the paperwork to the federal level, which can take from two weeks to a month.

FINANCE OFFICER'S REPORT

Finance Officer Rogers reported that she has been working on getting the funds and accounts set up for the sewer project. She further stated that the budget reports are in the council packet for review.

MAYOR AND COUNCIL REPORTS

Council Member Crawford had someone ask her if the potholes in the alleys were going to be filled. Public Works Director Hirsch replied that the alleys are going to be graded.

Mayor Conatser stated that the LDS Church, Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts are wanting to clean up our community. Brooke and Lindy are starting on the playground project. Lots of people are showing their community pride and trying to clean up the city and make it look presentable. He further stated that if we can get our zoning ordinances where we can enforce them, the city will start enforcing its own zoning codes.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Sarah Richardson stated that she, along with Logan Yeager and Matt Heimbeck, are representing Pack 4051. They are hoping to do a service project and would like to plant trees around the city for Arbor Day. They would like to plant some along the Soroptimists walking path and possibly the baseball diamonds.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:50 p.m. was made by Council Member Crawford, seconded by Council Member Merja. The motion passed with all in attendance voting aye.

John W. Conatser, Mayor

Jodi L. Rogers, Finance Officer