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City of Choteau

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OFFICIAL MINUTES OF THE SEPTEMBER 16, 2014 MEETING

OF THE CITY COUNCIL

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

Staff present was Deputy Clerk Mary Corey. Finance Officer Jodi Rogers and Public Works Director Kelly Hirsch were excused.

Citizens present were Melody Martinsen of the Choteau Acantha, Under Sheriff Steve Gjerde, Stacy Reynolds and Rich Lusky.

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 September 2, 2014 meeting was made by Council Member Lannen, seconded by Council Member Merja. The motion passed with all in attendance voting aye.

REQUESTS TO BE OUT OF STATE

None

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT - PROJECT UPDATE

Mayor Conatser reported that the procurement bid documents have been published in the paper. The floor plan for the pump building is pretty much done and the potable water supply is still up in the air. We are looking at using a cistern instead of putting in a well. Kevin Johnson of DOWL HKM will check to make sure this is a viable option. We still have not heard anything on an easement for gas and telephone lines. This will need to be resolved shortly. He stated that if an easement cannot be obtained, we can use propane instead of Natural Gas and cell phones instead of land lines. He reported that we still do not know what we will do with the lagoon. The DEQ has come up with an idea to transition the lagoon into a constructed wetland. We would not have to remove the sludge from the lagoon with this option. It remains to be seen if this would be a viable option because of our ground and surface water conditions. We will not know until early 2016 if this would be a possibility for us.

Mayor Conatser reported that in the next 30 days we will:

Receive bids for the main wastewater treatment process equipment.

Evaluate and rank proposals and award project to equipment manufacturer.

Update the engineer's estimate reflecting the selected vendor.

Finalize site and building elevations based upon selected vendor's equipment.

Initiate architectural and structural design of the pump building.

Initiate structural design on the head works building and sand drying beds.

Mayor Conatser stated that in between now and then, the city is going to install a fence, work on an access road and start hauling in fill. We are looking at 14,000 cubic yards or the equivalent of 1400 loads. By being able to haul the fill ourselves, it will save the city a lot of money.

NEW BUSINESS

DISCUSSION ON COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT - SARAH CONVERSE

Ms. Converse was not in attendance.

DISCUSSION ON CODE NUMBERS 8-9-1, 2 AND 4 - STREET OPENINGS

Mayor Conatser stated that Public Works Director Hirsch asked him to bring this to council's attention. This code comes into play when someone repairs a water or sewer line, they are required to return the street/alley to its original condition. He wants the public to be aware that there are ways to do it and to do it right. Council Member Crawford asked if when they come in to get a permit, if we should give them a copy of the code so they know what is expected of them. Mayor Conatser said that is the way it should be. Council Member Owen asked how long they are responsible for the street repair. Mayor Conatser replied that one year would be a reasonable expectation.

DISCUSSION AND VOTE ON FIREWORKS FOR HOMECOMING SEPTEMBER 19, 2014

Ms. Reynolds is asking for permission for fireworks donated by Darlene Ferris to be shot off during homecoming. She stated that Ms. Ferris has given permission to have them shot off on her property. They are small fireworks that were purchased from the Booster Club. Some of the fireman have volunteered to shoot them off and there will already be a fire truck there. A motion to approve the request was made by Council Member Merja, seconded by Council Member Crawford. The motion passed with all in attendance voting aye.

LAW ENFORCEMENT REPORT

The Law Enforcement report for August 2014 was submitted for Council's review.

CITY JUDGE'S REPORT

The City Judge's report for August 2014 was submitted for Council's review.

PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Mayor Conatser reported that recycling went well. There were 24 patrons this Saturday and 30 last Saturday. Council Member Owen asked Ms. Martinsen if Jennifer Swanson talked to her about doing a positive piece on recycling instead of the negative one printed in the last paper. She replied that unfortunately, the recyclers are not following the rules. There has been trash left outside the fenced area, out of range of the cameras. Mayor Conatser reported that we purchased another camera.

FINANCE OFFICER'S REPORT

None

MAYOR AND COUNCIL REPORTS

Mayor Conatser reported that he and Finance Officer Rogers attended a Montana League of Cities and Towns legislative planning session in Great Falls today. They met the new interim director for the League as Alec Hanson has retired. They discussed what the issues in our communities are that are important to us. He stated that the main issue was wastewater funding. They also discussed gas tax funding for street maintenance. They would like to make it more equitable for small cities and towns.

Mayor Conatser stated that our sidewalk replacement package is done. It is too late in the year to start so we will have to wait until spring.

Council Member Merja reported that a citizen asked when we were going to put power in the campground. They had seen it in the paper. Mayor Conatser replied that he would find out for him. He is not sure of lighting requirements. He further stated that we are waiting to see if the Choteau Campground sells. If it does not sell before the end of the year, we are going to look at putting electric hookups in our campground along with parking pads. If it does sell, we will just make routine improvements.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Rich Lusky stated that the city put in gravel parking pads at the campground but campers are parking under the trees instead of on the pads. Mayor Conatser replied that if we do put in electrical hook-ups, there will be designated spots and campers will be asked to use them.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:38 p.m. was made by Council Member Crawford, seconded by Council Member Owen. The motion passed with all in attendance voting aye.

John W. Conatser, Mayor

Mary E. Corey, Deputy Clerk