

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

OFFICIAL MINUTES OF THE NOVEMBER 17, 2015 MEETING  
OF THE CITY COUNCIL

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

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

Citizens present were Melody Martinsen of the Choteau Acantha, Rich Lusky, Micah Martin, and Nate White.

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 November 3, 2015 meeting was made by Council Member Merja, seconded by Council Member Owen. Council Members Merja, Owen and Lannen voted aye. Council Member Crawford was excused.

REQUESTS TO BE OUT OF STATE

None

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

SEWER PLANT CONSTRUCTION UPDATE

Mayor Conatser reported that Williams Brother has been busy pouring concrete.

NEW BUSINESS

## VOTE ON FIRE DEPARTMENT OFFICERS

Mayor Conatser stated that Matt Passmore has a military background and will be running the fire department thusly and will have a chain of command in place. A motion to approve the list of officers was made by Council Member Lannen, seconded by Council Member Merja. Council Members Lannen, Merja and Owen voted aye. Council Member Crawford was excused.

## VOTE ON REVOLVING LOAN RECOMMENDATION - NATHEN RUSSELL

Mayor Conatser stated that a Revolving Loan Fund application has been received from Nathen Russell for a landscaping/spraying/sprinkler installation business. A motion to approve the recommendation of the Revolving Loan Committee to approve the loan was made by Council Member Merja, seconded by Council Member Owen. Council Members Merja, Owen and Lannen voted aye. Council Member Crawford was excused.

Council Members Merja and Lannen stated that the by-laws need to be changed so there are consequences if loans are not repaid.

## VOTE ON CITY JUDGE RECOMMENDATION

Mayor Conatser stated that five applications had been received. He explained that Mayor Fifield of Fairfield, BJ Bouray (Council Member from Fairfield), Becky Olsen (Choteau/Fairfield Court Clerk) and himself interviewed the candidates. Their recommendation is to hire Jason Riphenburg from Fairfield. Fairfield will be holding their town council meeting tomorrow night to vote on the recommendation. A motion to approve hiring Jason Riphenburg as the City Judge was made by Council Member Lannen, seconded by Council Member Merja. Council Members Lannen, Merja and Owen voted aye. Council Member Crawford was excused.

## CLAIMS

A motion to pay the claims for October was made by Council Member Owen, seconded by Council Member Lannen. Council Members Merja, Owen and Lannen voted aye. Council Member Crawford was excused.

## LAW ENFORCEMENT REPORT

The Law Enforcement Reports for September and October were submitted for council's review.

## CITY JUDGE'S REPORT

There was no City Judge's Report submitted.

#### PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Mayor Conatser reported that Lindsay Talkington will be taking care of sewer issues and BJ Warehime will be taking care of water issues. He stated that he has received a number of compliments about the leaf crew and the wonderful job they are doing.

#### FINANCE OFFICER'S REPORT

None

#### MAYOR AND COUNCIL REPORTS

Council Member Merja thanked Nate White for cleaning up his yard.

Council Member Owen reported that the Christmas Stroll will be held on December 5, 2015 from 2:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. New this year will be a light parade and an exhibition from students that have been taking dance lessons. The exhibition will take place on the vacant lot between the Full Circle and Burk Lee and Bieler's office.

Mayor Conatser reported that he has received a lot of requests to have more recycling hours. He is going to look into having it open Monday through Friday from 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. and 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. on Saturdays.

#### PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Martin stated that the city judge hiring process should have been open to the public.

#### ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:22 p.m. was made by Council Member Lannen, seconded by Council Member Merja. Council Members Merja, Lannen and Owen voted aye. Council Member Crawford was excused.

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John W. Conatser, Mayor

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Mary E. Corey, Deputy Clerk