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## **City of Choteau**

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### OFFICIAL MINUTES OF THE APRIL 29, 2014 MEETING

#### OF THE CITY COUNCIL

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

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

There were no citizens present.

#### 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 15, 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

#### VOTE ON STREET CLOSURE APPLICATION - SWIM TEAM

Mayor Conatser explained that Annalee Erickson is in favor of the closure but the Methodist Church would prefer to have 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue NW open on the 6<sup>th</sup> of July as it is a Sunday. They have no problem with the 5<sup>th</sup>. Mayor Conatser stated the closure on Sunday could be after church services are over. A motion to close 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue NW from Division Street to 1<sup>st</sup> Street NW on Saturday, July 5<sup>th</sup> from 7 a.m. until 7 p.m. was made by Council Member Merja, seconded by Council Member Crawford. The motion passed with all in attendance voting aye.

#### NEW BUSINESS

#### VOTE ON RESOLUTION NO. 781 - IRS COMPLIANCE FOR REIMBURSEMENT

Finance Officer Rogers explained that if the resolution passes, the city will be able to be reimbursed for the money we spend before we have signed contracts so we can make draw downs from the grants and loans. A motion to approve Resolution No. 781 was made by Council Member Owen, seconded by Council Member Crawford. The motion passed with all in attendance voting aye.

#### VOTE ON REVOLVING LOAN FUND RECOMMENDATION - BUCK'S SPORTING GOODS

Mayor Conatser stated that a loan application was received from Buck's Sporting Goods. They are requesting a loan of \$7500. It is the recommendation of the Revolving Loan Committee to approve the loan. A motion to approve the recommendation was made by Council Member Lannen, seconded by Council Member Merja. The motion passed with all in attendance voting aye.

#### AUDIT REPORT

Mayor Conatser reported that according to the audit report, the City is doing things the right way and that Finance Officer Rogers is doing a great job. Finance Officer Rogers stated that there were a few recommendations but we are already doing them. Council congratulated Finance Officer Rogers on a job well done.

#### DISCUSSION ON COMPOSTING

Council Member Merja reported that the last time he spoke with Lew Clark he did not seem interested in taking it on. He stated that he spoke with County Sanitarian Corrine Rose and since our compost pile would be less than 1,000 tons per year, there are not as many restrictions. He is

considering talking to the county commissioners to see if we could use the old county shop ground by the threshing grounds, should the city decide to take it over. He further stated that we need to do something or the garbage rates are going to have to go up, especially since the rates have not been increased since 2004. He stated that we would need to install a fee box. Council Member Lannen suggested using the tree farm area for composting. Council Member Owen asked Public Works Director Hirsch if it is feasible for the City to water it and turn the piles over. He replied that he would have to have someone do it and there are DEQ permits to fill out. It would also have to be watched to make sure no one drops off branches. Mayor Conatser asked if Council Member Merja and Public Works Director would sit down and discuss the issue and maybe come up with a recommendation for the next council meeting.

CLAIMS

A motion to pay the claims for April was made by Council Member Merja, seconded by Council Member Owen. The motion passed with all in attendance voting aye.

PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR’S REPORT

Public Works Director Hirsch reported that there is a fiber optics crew in town and they are buying water from the water salesman. The crew cleaned the UV lights, swept streets, fixed a few water meters, graded alleys, filled pot holes, and started helping with the wastewater project. He had some community service kids that cleaned the park.

FINANCE OFFICER’S REPORT

Finance Officer Rogers reported that she has been working with Rural Development on the funding for the Waste Water Treatment Plant. Mayor Conatser stated that she is also working on the sidewalk replacement project.

MAYOR AND COUNCIL REPORTS

Council Member Merja reported that an employee of the Nursing Home talked to him about the fiasco with the hospital and the nursing home. He stated that as council members we have no say in the decision but could be in the community and talking to the community about this. Helping the community understand that what needs to happen is what is best for Choteau.

Council Member Owen reported that she and Public Works Director Hirsch went to Augusta to see their recycling operation. She stated that it is a good set up but it is unique to them. They have a transfer station and it is a manned site. She stated it will still cost the City money to recycle as well as time. She does not know where to go from here. She stated that if it comes down to the almighty buck, we might as well stop doing it. Public Works Director Hirsch stated that if we continue to recycle we could have Montana Waste do it. Council Member Owen replied that it would cost money also. He continued to say that we would have to charge for recycling. Council Member Lannen stated that we may have to raise garbage rates to cover recycling. Finance Officer Rogers explained that we are going to have to take a good hard look at the rates. Council Member Owen suggested we look at the possibility of re-negotiating our assessment rates with NMJRDD. She further suggested that if we are looking at the possibility of raising rates that we look at including recycling and composting and include them in the increase. Mayor Conatser reported that we can have Mr. Bridgeford from Montana Waste come to the next meeting. Finance Officer Rogers stated that we need to make a decision before summer because the crew cannot keep running back and forth to Great Falls. Council Member Owen stated that we should just stop the program. She does not know what we can have in place in the next month or two. Finance Officer Rogers replied that Montana Waste can be in place with just a phone call. Council Member Owen suggested we contact Lincoln to see what they are doing. Mayor Conatser stated that he does not want to give up on recycling. He said there are enough people in town that would use it but we may have to start charging for using it. Mayor Conatser asked Council to come up with some ideas for the next meeting and he will get together with Public Works Director Hirsch to discuss hours and dollars. Council Member Crawford suggested including in the figures costs for extra garbage for yard waste and recyclables should the program be stopped and containers that are cracking and breaking due to weight issues.

Mayor Conatser reported that Finance Officer Rogers and Deputy Clerk Corey will be in Billings next week for Clerks Institute. He will be in Billings from May 7-9.

Council Member Owen clarified that the next meeting will be May 13<sup>th</sup> and will be the only meeting in the month of May. This meeting is technically the first one in May. We will be back to the regular schedule in June.

Mayor Conatser reported that there will be a meeting on Friday, May 2, 2014 at 9:00 a.m. at City Hall with MDOT to discuss closing the bridge in Augusta from July 7<sup>th</sup> to August 7<sup>th</sup>.

ZONING PERMIT REPORT FOR APRIL 2014

Name	Address	Description
Mike Bowers	322 1 <sup>st</sup> Avenue NW	Cement Slab
Rachael Newmiller	11 9 <sup>th</sup> Avenue SW	Fence
Mark Major	709 9 <sup>th</sup> Avenue NW	Front and Back Deck

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:56 p.m. was made by Council Member Lannen, seconded by Council Member Crawford. The motion passed with all in attendance voting aye.

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John W. Conatser, Mayor

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Jodi L. Rogers, Finance Officer

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