

City of Choteau
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**OFFICIAL MINUTES OF THE OCTOBER 6, 2015 MEETING
OF THE CITY COUNCIL**

Present were Mayor Jack Conatser, Council Member Stewart Merja, Council Member Dan Lannen and Council Member Rose Crawford. Council Member Jill Owen arrived at 7:15.

Staff present was Public Works Director Kelly Hirsch and Deputy Clerk Mary Corey.

Citizens present were Melody Martinsen of the Choteau Acantha, Dillon Lane of Pacific Steel, Tina Nolevanko of Pacific Steel & Recycling, Jim Patterson of DOWL, Brooke Richins of the playground committee, Jesse Crawford, Kathleen Moscatello, Rich Lusky, Polly Cunningham, Cody Yeager, Harold Yeager, Beth Barlow, Mark Donaldson and Lindsey Donaldson.

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 15, 2015 meeting was made by Council Member Lannen, seconded by Council Member Crawford. Council Members Lannen, Crawford and Merja voted aye. Council Member Owen had not yet arrived.

REQUESTS TO BE OUT OF STATE

None

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

NEW BUSINESS

BETH BARLOW - TOURISM

Beth Barlow gave a presentation on two conferences she attended, The Montana Downtown Conference in Kalispell and the Tourism Town Hall Meeting in White Sulphur Springs. Presentations included: Montana Downtown, Infrastructure Crucial to Growth, Getting and

Retaining Businesses, Jobs, Merging Generations, Tax Increment Financing and many others. She stated that the presentations were exceptional. One thing that she stressed was to make sure 3 Rivers will be able to handle any potential growth our community might have. There are also programs that might be available to us. She would like to bring some of the speakers to Choteau to give us more information on programs that might benefit Choteau. Council thanked Beth for her presentation.

PRESENTATION FROM PACIFIC STEEL

Mayor Conatser introduced Dillon and Tina from Pacific Steel. Mayor Conatser asked them to explain where recycling is at the moment and why we are seeing more and more scrap piles in the city. They explained that the price of scrap metal has gone down because there is not as much demand from overseas as there was a couple of years ago. At that time, scrap was selling for \$200-\$250 a ton, it is now selling for \$5-\$10 a ton. They do not expect prices to go up that high again. In fact, they will be going down even further. They think that the people who are collecting it expect the prices to go back up but it is not going to happen. They suggested considering a donation project to help clean up. The funds that are received can be donated to the Teton County Food Pantry, Neighbors Helping Neighbors, schools etc. Residents could take the scrap to Great Falls or Pacific could bring a container to Choteau. Beth Barlow asked how they ship scrap. Tina responded by rail and truck. Beth suggested they partner with Choteau and use our rail line. Tina asked if we have an available rail spur. Mayor Conatser stated that we do. Council Member Owen asked about electronics recycling. Tina replied that they do, they are an R2 facility. They are heavily audited and have only limited places they can send them to. They charge \$2.50 per pound to recycle TV's, monitors etc. It is extremely expensive to recycle. Council Member Lannen asked about cardboard. Dillon replied that they take it but there is not a lot of value in it right now. They are willing to help with our recycling issues so whatever they can do to help, they will. Council thanked Dillon & Tina for their presentation.

APPROVAL OF PAY REQUEST #2

A motion to approve pay request #2 was made by Council Member Lannen, seconded by Council Member Merja. The motion passed with all in attendance voting aye.

VOTE ON SAFETY EQUIPMENT POLICY

Mayor Conatser stated that there is a policy change in the packet for safety equipment. He reported that we will be purchasing coats for the city crew. Council Member Merja asked if he was able to purchase the coats locally. He replied that they could not get the same type of coat but the logo stitching will be done by Black Sheep Sports. A motion to approve the safety equipment policy was made by Council Member Merja, seconded by Council Member Owen. The motion passed with all in attendance voting aye.

VOTE ON CITY JUDGE JOB DESCRIPTION

Mayor Conatser stated that Mike Fasbender will be retiring at the end of the year. This policy meets all MCA codes. A motion to approve the City Judge Job Description was made by Council Member Crawford, seconded by Council Member Owen. The motion passed with all in attendance voting aye.

CLAIMS

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

PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Public Works Director Hirsch reported that the crew cleaned sewer mains, drained sprinklers and have been cleaning between the railroad tracks.

FINANCE OFFICER'S REPORT

None

MAYOR AND COUNCIL REPORTS

Council Member Lannen stated that Cody Yeager and Harold Yeager are trying to put together a meeting to address the grizzly bear situation. Mayor Conatser introduced Cody Yeager. Mr. Yeager stated that bears are attracted to the feedlot. They are spooking cattle, tearing open grain bins and he has employees that are afraid to walk around the lot. He is also afraid to let his kids walk to school. He would like to get the bears off the endangered species list so they can be hunted and managed. He stated that there will be a meeting tomorrow night at 7:00 p.m. at the Choteau High School auditorium. Council Member Merja stated that the laws are written, they just need to get off the list. He is in support.

Mayor Conatser reported that there will be a growth policy meeting at 7:00 p.m. on October 13, 2015 at the Teton County Annex building.

Mayor Conatser stated that the sidewalk project is nearing completion and the Scott's are doing a great job.

Mayor Conatser thanked Harold Yeager for inviting him up to see his operation and visit with the firefighters. Mr. Yeager stated that they are spending money in our community. The

firefighters appreciate Choteau's hospitality and conveyed their thanks. Mr. Yeager asks the council to continue to support the airport.

Mayor Conatser thanked Harold Yeager for bringing in Pacific Steel & Recycling to talk to us. He stated that Choteau will be cleaned up.

Nate White asked if the property that needs to be cleaned up is private property or City property. Mayor Conatser replied that it is both. Mr. White asked if the standards are the same for both cases. Mayor Conatser replied that it is. Mr. White asked if there is a list of properties. Mayor Conatser replied that there is a number of properties that have been looked at, they will all be contacted. First by a personal visit, then a letter. Mr. White asked for a copy of the list. Council Member Merja stated that would be an invasion of property.

ZONING PERMIT REPORT FOR SEPTEMBER 2015

| Name | Address | Description |
|------|---------|-------------|
| None | | |

PUBLIC COMMENT

Council Member Merja stated that the playground committee is trying to find a spot that will appease everybody but knows that is not going to happen. He stated that the playground will be tailored to what our community came up with. It needs to be visible so people passing through will stop. Council Member Owen stated that it is narrowed down to two locations. There are lots of different parameters to look at such as lighting, size of the area, parking, security, etc. Brooke Richins explained that the two locations suggested are the current location and the south end of the Pavilion. The steering committee is going door to door to see where the community would like to have the playground and asking them to write down their preference and why. The results will be presented to council for the final decision. Some of the pros for the current location are: convenient, already a playground, extremely visible, main meeting place for local events, has a picnic area, lots of foot traffic and young trees. The cons are: it is close to a residential area, borders highway, no handicapped parking spaces and two trees will need to be removed. The south side of the Pavilion pros are: not close to residential areas, room for further development, foot traffic, young trees by the road, close to the bathrooms and lights can be on 24/7. The cons are: it is a heavy semi-truck area, unknown amount of trees and stumps that need to be removed, it is already set up for an RV park and people don't want that changed, brush on the creek poses a child predator issue, unknown campers camping, and it is hard to see from the main road into town. She will bring a stack of letters to a council meeting with the wishes of the community and let council decide where to put it. Lindsey Donaldson asked how big the playground is going to be. Brooke replied that it will be 145' by 82' at its widest. Council

Member Owen stated that Finance Officer Rogers would like to have the proposed playground footprints put on the website for people to look at. Brooke will look into it.

Jim Patterson of DOWL reported that the pay request was for the aggregate piers that have been completed. He made a video in case anyone would like to see it as well as his daily log. He stated that the contractor has used approximately 10 percent of the contract monies and 11 percent of the contract time. Concrete will be done in the next week or so. He also encouraged anyone to come out and see how the project is progressing. He reported that he was called by Public Works Director Hirsch about excessive dust from the trucks and the problem was taken care of.

Kathleen Moscatello stated that she was bit by a pit bull on September 20, 2015 while she was riding her bike on pig alley. She explained that this is the second time the dog has bitten someone. Mayor Conatser replied that it was the same owner but a different dog. The one that bit Kathleen was destroyed and was found not to have rabies. The dog owner has been cited by both the city and the county. He explained that after the last dog bite, procedures were set up between the city, sheriff's office and sanitarian's office, they worked.

Rich Lusky stated that he put a fence up around his yard.

Polly Cunningham stated she is happy the city is enforcing the ordinances. She is glad the city of taking care of it and appreciates their efforts.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:55 p.m. was made by Council Member Lannen, seconded by Council Member Crawford. The motion passed with all in attendance voting aye.

John W. Conatser, Mayor

Mary E. Corey, Deputy Clerk