

# City of Choteau

## OFFICIAL MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 16, 2024 MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL

This meeting was held at City Hall and via ZOOM.COM.

Council Present: Mayor Chris Hindoien, Council Member Stewart Merja, Council Member Sara Coccoli, Council Member Heather McCartney-Duty and Council Member Polly Cunningham

Staff Present: Finance Officer Tom Frownfelder, Public Works Director Lightner, Outgoing Public Works Director Maples

Citizens Present: Melody Martinsen (Acantha), Brian Colesworthy

### CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Hindoien called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

### APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

A motion to approve the minutes of the January 02, 2024, council meeting was made by Council Member McCartney-Duty, Council Member Cunningham seconded the motion. The motion passed with all in attendance voting aye.

A motion to approve the minutes of the January 09, 2024, council meeting was made by Council Member Merja, Council Member Coccoli seconded the motion. The motion passed with all in attendance voting aye.

### REQUESTS TO BE OUT OF STATE

Council Member Cunningham will be out of state and miss the meetings on February 06 & 20, and March 05.

### NEW BUSINESS

#### VOTE ON UPDATING CHECKING ACCOUNT SIGNATURES, Res. No. 914

Due to the change in Public Works Director from Mike Maples to Colin Lightner, we will need to update the signatures on the bank accounts. Res. No. 914 will list the checking account signers as Mayor Hindoien, Council President Merja, Finance Officer Frownfelder, and Public

Works Director Lightner. The resolution also specifies that investment accounts only require the signatures of Mayor Hindoien and Finance Officer Frownfelder. A motion to approve Res. No. 914 was made by Council Member Coccoli, Council Member McCartney-Duty seconded the motion. The motion passed with all in attendance voting aye.

## CLAIMS

A motion to approve additional claims for January 2024, check #22299 – 22324 for a total of \$53,970.12 was made by Council Member Merja, Council Member Coccoli seconded the motion. The motion passed with all those in attendance voting aye. Council Member Merja inquired about when the Water Project Phase 1B would be put to bid. We do not have an exact date, but it should be in the next month or two according to Great West Engineering.

## REPORTS

See council packet for reports from City Attorney Hindoien, City Attorney Stutz, City Court, Finance Officer Frownfelder, and Building Permits.

## COUNCIL COMMENTS

Public Works Director Lightner

- The Richem Well and Wastewater Treatment Plant both made it through the week of negative temps with no major issues. We had to temporarily close the cardboard recycling and water salesman, but they are both back up and running. We are still working on bringing power to the new recycling area, and hope to have that running soon. We did have some sewer mains freeze over the weekend, but got them up and running quickly.

Council Member Merja

- The Choteau Wrestling Classic only had ten teams due to the weather. The Choteau Speech and Drama State Tournament is next week, and should bring approximately 800 people to town, which greatly benefits our businesses. There are also upcoming volleyball and basketball games.

Council Member McCartney-Duty

- She said that people she has talked with are anxious about the upcoming public meetings concerning dogs and animal control.

Council Member Cunningham

- She inquired if the City is still issuing dog licenses during the month of January. Finance Officer Frownfelder explained that we are still maintaining the same routine, and an ad

should have been in the Choteau Acantha recently reminding people to license their dogs and cats.

- She said that the dog park is still being used, and the attendees seem to be keeping it clean.
- The library is getting through its current employee downfall, along with the help of Marsha Hinch and Friends of the Library. They have advertised to replace the library administration position.

Council Member Coccoli:

- None.

Mayor Hindoien

- He will be heading to Helena to attend the board meeting for The League of Cities and Towns.
- He has been getting several phone calls from Municode Civic Plus, the same company that hosts our City Code online, who is heavily pushing the City to utilize their online resources for tracking digital media websites. There is Montana code that says digital media can be considered for record retention and available for public records requests. He plans to follow up with some attorneys to see if we truly need to do this, as the service is very expensive.
- We hope to complete the land purchase for the new well site by the end of the month. We are waiting for signatures from the other party for closing documents.

## PUBLIC COMMENT

Brian Colesworthy gave an update on the floodplain review. He had a member of the public come to his office with information concerning the CFS high flow rates for the Teton River. This person believes that the high rate the DEQ and DNRC are suggesting is not correct, and seems to have viable data to prove otherwise. If this is true, it could affect the severity of the changes to our flood zones.

Brian Colesworthy also talked about the upcoming community roundtable that the Choteau Area Port Authority will be hosting on January 18<sup>th</sup>. They plan to have most of the non-profit organizations come together and discuss events and how they can help each other. There is also a Bear Smart Trivia Night event that will be hosted at Copper Creek Coffee on January 26. Heart of the Rockies is helping Bear Smart find additional funding sources.

Melody, from the Choteau Acantha announced that the Library Board meeting for tomorrow has been cancelled and is planned for January 24<sup>th</sup> in Fairfield. Also, the Choteau Arts Pie Social is planned for January 20<sup>th</sup> and will have some great music and food.

## ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 5:59 pm

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Chris Hindoien, Mayor

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Tom Frownfelder, Finance Officer