

City of Choteau

OFFICIAL MINUTES OF THE APRIL 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 Colin Lightner, Deputy Clerk Wendy Wright-Yeager and Wastewater Treatment Plan Operator Levi Warehime.

Citizens Present: Jim Bouma, Melody Martinsen (Acantha)

CALL TO ORDER

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

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Council Member Cunningham asked Jim Bouma to clarify if the RV campground he is proposing would be a year-round facility, as reflected in the minutes. Jim Bouma responded that it would not but that occupancy would be determined based on current weather conditions. The statement was stricken from the record and a motion to approve the minutes of the April 02, 2024, council meeting was made by Council Member McCartney-Duty; with a second by Council Member Merja. The motion passed with all in attendance voting aye.

REQUESTS TO BE OUT OF STATE

Council Member Cunningham will be out of state on May 7th, 2024

OLD BUSINESS

VOTE ON CONTRACT FOR 1B WELL SITE CONSTRUCTION

A motion to put the item back on the table was made by Council Member Merja; with a second by Council Member Cunningham. The motion passed with all in attendance voting aye.

The city received 2 bids for the digging of the new water well; Public Works Director Lightner stated that both companies were reputable and trustworthy. After reviewing the bids, a motion

was made by Council Member Coccoli to award the job to HL Ventures; with a second by Council Member Merja. The motion passed with all in attendance voting aye.

NOISE PERMIT

Finance Officer Frownfelder advised the council that no new information had been received from the requesting party, so the decision was made to keep the item table at this time.

NEW BUSINESS

VOTE ON REAPPOINTMENT OF CHUCK HLAVAC to the JOINT CITY/COUNTY AIRPORT BOARD

We received a letter from Chuck Hlavac, expressing his interest in continuing his position as the City of Choteau representative on the Airport Board. A motion was made to accept by Council Member Merja; with a second by Council Member McCartney-Duty. The motion passed with all in attendance voting aye.

VOTE ON PRE-APPROVAL OF PROPOSED RV PARK AND CAMPGROUND – JIM BOUMA

Mayor Hindoien advised Jim Bouma that the State of Montana requires a DPHHS review for RV parks and that a subdivision review is also required. Jim Bouma advised the Council that he was just looking for conditional approval from the City before beginning the paperwork for the State and County. A motion to table the item until the paperwork was completed was made by Council Member Coccoli; with a second by Council Member McCartney-Duty. The motion passed with all in attendance voting aye.

VOTE ON MAY COUNCIL MEETING DATES

Mayor Hindoien, Finance Officer Frownfelder and Council Member Cunningham will all be out of town on May 7th, 2024. A motion was made to move the meeting to April 30th, 2024 by Council Member McCartney-Duty; with a second by Council Member Cunningham. The motion passed with all in attendance voting aye.

CLAIMS

A motion to approve claims for April 2024, check #22441-22455 for a total of \$89,170.56 was made by Council Member Coccoli; seconded by Council Member Cunningham. The motion passed with all those in attendance voting aye.

REPORTS

Reports from City Judge, City Attorney, Public Works Director, and Zoning Administrator are available for review in the Council Packet upon request.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Council Member Coccoli

- Water loss still at 35%. Council Member Merja stated he spoke to an engineer who says this is normal for a municipality. Public Works Director Lightner advised there are still service line leaks and main leaks that they are locating. This brought the discussion to the new water meters and Council Member Merja inquired where we are in the process of replacing the old meters. Public Works Director Lightner advised that the new meters are not as advertised and that some are freezing and breaking, while others are needing battery replacements already. Though we have installed 254 out of 710 new meters.
- Arbor Day Celebration will be held on April 26th, 2024 at 10:30am
- Soroptomists are set to begin work on the walking path as the weather improves.
- Congratulations to Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator Levi Warehime for obtaining his water certification.

Council Member McCartney-Duty

- She talked about the recent work session for animal ordinances. She said there was a good turnout, and believes they are making some headway on ordinance revisions. The latest meeting attendees stated that “less is more” and they removed parts of the ordinance draft. May be finished by summer after public hearings.

Council Member Cunningham

- Lots of things going on in town on April 21st, 2024. Author event at the library, BearSmart event at the Weatherbeater and the retirement party for Al Wiseman, who is stepping down from his position on the Old Trail Museum board.

Council Member Merja

- BearSmart meeting was held on Monday evening. Bear proof garbage cans were suggested for high-risk areas. Public Works Director Lightner advised that there are many obstacles in implementing this suggestion, as the city does not currently have a garbage truck that can accommodate them, they are hard to open for the residents, and that the alleys in town are not wide enough to accommodate the type of truck needed to empty them. Council Member McCartney-Duty stated that Big Sky has 4000 bearproof cans; maybe we could reach out to them for more information.

Mayor Hindoién

- Chip sealing for areas affected by the water line work last summer should begin around June 19th, 2024.
- Recycle Center getting good reviews from the public. Compost is available to the public, but please be considerate of other residents and take only what you need.
- Melody Martinsen at the Acantha has built a community calendar on their website that is live.
- Will get well bid moving forward; have Collette at Great West put together a Notice of Award.
- Road construction continues north of town with delays in travel; projected completion date of July 1st, 2024.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 6:17 pm

Chris Hindoiem, Mayor

Tom Frownfelder, Finance Officer