

MINUTES OF THE VERNAL CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING HELD
JUNE 21, 2023 at 7:00 p.m. in the Vernal City Council room, 374 East Main, Vernal,
Utah 84078.

PRESENT: Councilmembers Nicholas Porter, Robin O’Driscoll, Ted Munford, Dave Everett, and Corey Foley and Mayor Doug Hammond.

WELCOME: Mayor Doug Hammond welcomed everyone to the meeting.

INVOCATION OR UPLIFTING THOUGHT: The invocation was given by Councilmember Ted Munford.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Councilmember Robin O’Driscoll.

APPROVAL OF CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES OF MAY 17, 2023:
Councilmember Nick Porter moved to approve the minutes of May 17, 2023. Councilmember Dave Everett seconded the motion. The motion passed with Councilmembers Everett, O’Driscoll, Munford, Foley and Porter voting in favor.

APPROVAL OF CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES OF JUNE 7, 2023:
Councilmember Ted Munford moved to approve the minutes of June 7, 2023. Councilmember Corey Foley seconded the motion. The motion passed with Councilmembers Everett, O’Driscoll, Munford, Foley and Porter voting in favor.

INTRODUCTION OF LESLIE IVERS - GABBY BLACKBURN: Gabby Blackburn introduced the new business license clerk Leslie Ivers who was, unable to make it tonight. She has been working hard updating the system and will also do the minutes for the Planning Commission.

INTRODUCTION OF IVAN MERRELL - KEITH DESPAIN: Keith Despain explained that Ivan Merrell is the new utility supervisor and has been here for 4 weeks now, and there has been a 180 degree turn in the water department since that time. three more employees have been hired in that department to build the team back up. Ivan Merrell stated he is grateful for the opportunity and spend a lot of years in public safety and utility construction before accepting this job. He stated he is glad to be here. Mayor Doug Hammond stated he appreciates him being here.

INTRODUCTION OF SYDNEY MILLETT – QUINN BENNION: Quinn Bennion introduced Sydney Millett, the new innovation hub manager, and indicated he is excited to have her here. She has had a lot of briefings with Lori Haslem and is jumping in and coordinating with Travis Campbell with Uintah County. She comes to the City from the Chamber of Commerce.

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Sydney Millett stated they may know her as Sydney Migliori as she just got married and is excited to be here. The Council welcomed her to the City.

CONSIDER APPROVAL OF BUDGET REOPENER #1 FOR FY2023 BUDGET-ORDINANCE NO. 2023 -10: Carl Morton reminded the Council of the public hearing for this item at the last meeting. There were not a lot of differences from the original budget. One change is \$150,000 for potholes that was moved to the streets department. The general fund allowed to be retained is 35% of the revenue. The City is over that amount, so funds need to be moved so he suggested the Council approve moving \$1.4 million dollars into the capital improvement fund (CIP) and paying off a CIB bond at a little over \$300,000. Councilmember Corey Foley asked if that bond is the one with the highest interest rate. Carl Morton answered yes it has a 2.5% interest rate. He noted there are two more at 2.3%. Paying off that bond will free up \$80,000 a year. *Councilmember Ted Munford moved to approve Ordinance No. 2023-10 approving the FY2023 budget reopener with the two changes discussed – moving funds into the CIP fund and paying off the bond. Councilmember Robin O’Driscoll seconded the motion. The motion passed with the following roll call vote:*

Councilmember Munford.....aye;
Councilmember O’Driscoll.....aye;
Councilmember Everettaye;
Councilmember Porteraye;
Councilmember Foley..... aye.

REQUEST TO ADOPT FY2024 BUDGET - ORDINANCE NO. 2023- 11: Carl Morton reported that this is the same budget during the public hearing with the cost-of-living and salary adjustments approved by the Council. That adjustment is \$360,000. Councilmember Corey Foley clarified the adjustments will be effective August 1st and will be approximately \$67,000. Carl Morton agreed. Quinn Bennion reported the one-time adjustment will be calculated at the same time as long as the employee has met their probationary period. Carl Morton stated the benefit line items also had to increase in the amount of \$269,000. Councilmember Nick Porter moved to approve Ordinance No. 2023-11. Councilmember Corey Foley seconded the motion. The motion passed with the following roll call vote:

Councilmember Munford.....aye;
Councilmember O’Driscoll.....aye;
Councilmember Everettaye;
Councilmember Porteraye;
Councilmember Foley..... aye.

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CONSIDER APPROVAL OF CERTIFIED TAX RATE - ORDINANCE NO. 2023 -12:

Carl Morton explained that every year the County auditor generates a suggested certified tax rate based on the amount of property tax funds received the year before minus any new growth. Based on that formula, the rate actually decreased. The projected property tax is \$427,000 with the certified rate. Quinn Bennion reminded the Council that property tax is roughly 5% of the budget which is good in sense it is a very low, however, it is a challenge when the main tax collected is not as stable as property tax. Councilmember Dave Everett stated his property tax to the City is around \$50 for services provided that is a bargain. Carl Morton reported that is around 3% of the entire property tax bill. After further discussion, Councilmember Nick Porter moved to approve Ordinance No. 2023-12 approving the certified tax rate. Councilmember Dave Everett seconded the motion. The motion passed with the following roll call vote:

Councilmember Munford.....aye;
Councilmember O’Driscoll.....aye;
Councilmember Everettaye;
Councilmember Porteraye;
Councilmember Foley..... aye.

CONSIDER APPROVAL OF UTAH MAIN STREET PROGRAM TIER 1 AGREEMENT:

Quinn Bennion reminded the Council of the discussions and work to revitalize downtown. The Utah Main Street program has been reintroduced which also helps enhance and revitalize downtowns. The City has applied to become a tier 1 City under this program and then apply to become a tier 2 City next year. This agreement formalizes the City’s interest in the program and is committed to certain things to revitalize downtown. Some of the items required is to have a downtown committee and way to help businesses improve so the City is well on the way to qualify as a tier I. Councilmember Dave Everett moved to approve the Utah Main street program. Councilmember Ted Munford seconded the motion. The motion passed with a unanimous vote with Councilmembers Everett, Munford, Foley, Porter and O’Driscoll voting in favor.

CONSIDER APPROVAL OF LETTER OF SUPPORT FOR THE UBAOG SELF-HELP HOUSING PROGRAM WITHIN VERNAL CITY:

Gabby Blackburn explained that Uintah Basin Association of Governments (UBAOG) is requesting a letter to support to set up a self-help housing program in Vernal City. The program helps families, under supervision of a contractor, build homes using sweat equity to cut down on costs. There are qualifications to participate and income guidelines. The participants are required to put in 30 hours per week with the help of family and friends. Quinn Bennion indicated it has been some years since this program has been initiated in Vernal City. There has to be a minimum of four homes and they prefer six. Councilmember Robin O’Driscoll moved to approve submitting a letter of support for this program. Councilmember Nick Porter seconded the motion. The motion passed with the following roll call vote:

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Councilmember Munford.....aye;
Councilmember O’Driscoll.....aye;
Councilmember Everettaye;
Councilmember Porteraye;
Councilmember Foley.....aye.

REQUEST FOR APPOINTMENT OF NEW PLANNING COMMISSION BOARD MEMBER:

Gabby Blackburn indicated there is one last vacant seat on the Planning Commission and Ryan Balch has applied to be involved. He is very involved in community service and she recommended he be appointed. Councilmember Dave Everett moved to approve the appointment of Ryan Balch to the Planning Commission. Councilmember Ted Munford seconded the motion. The motion passed with the following roll call vote.

Councilmember Munford.....aye;
Councilmember O’Driscoll.....aye;
Councilmember Everettaye;
Councilmember Porteraye;
Councilmember Foley.....aye.

Administrative Reports:

Water reduction order:

Quinn Bennion applauded the other water districts for helping out with the recent water problem at the treatment plant. There were many misunderstanding out there with the need for conservation until the plant could be at full capacity. Councilmember Ted Munford stated usually the plant is able to draw from Red Fleet when there is too much turbidity at the springs, this time that was not the case. Quinn stated this brought up a lot of questions and how the City can do more to get the word out. He thanked Ivan and Keith for their work on this problem. Mayor Hammond noted that the flowers were being watered using the water from the building with a tank in the back yard

Chip Seal Program:

SSD1 has a chip seal program and is willing to look at the road by Aggie Blvd. The City’s contribution for the project is to sweep and prep the road. They will also add east Main at a cost of \$80,000.

Business License Issue:

Gabby Blackburn reported that the motel that was not in compliance with the health department did pass the last inspection.

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ADJOURN: There being no further business; *Councilmember Nick Porter moved to adjourn. Councilmember Dave Everett seconded the motion. The motion passed with a unanimous vote and the meeting was declared adjourned.*

Mayor Doug Hammond

ATTEST:

Roxanne Behunin, City Recorder

(S E A L)