

Harlowton City Council Minutes
August 11, 2020
Harlowton City Hall

A regular meeting of the Harlowton City Council, held August 11, 2020 opened at 7:00 pm with the Pledge of Allegiance. Minutes of the July 28, 2020 council meeting were approved as written. Minutes of the July 28, 2020 phase five water project public hearing were approved as written.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Mayor Otten updated the council on Biegel's Bar ownership transfer. An email from attorney Karen Hammel was sent to Steve Olson in response to his requests (see attached). The city has not received a response back from Steve Olson at this time.

Paul reported that he and Rob Elwood had attending the Wheatland County Commissioners meeting on August 5, 2020 to discuss the Tucker Town Sewer District. The county agrees that they would need to be responsible for the lateral lines that serve individuals. The city is responsible for the main line to goes to the city lagoon. County attorney Lynn Grant will do research on setting up a rural sewer district for the county. Mark Feist and Kevin Holmquist were in attendance at the commissioners meeting. At this time, discussion of annexation of these residents (within the TTSD) has been suspended.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Jack Runner reported that the library is using the donation from the Federated Church to purchase LED lights in the library, laptops and a television. The library is working on the fiscal year 2021 budget. Library employees' reviews have been completed by the library board.

Rob Elwood reported that the ordinance committee did not meet this week.

Bob Schuchard reported that there was nothing new happening with the tree board at this time.

Kathie Newland reported that there will be Harlowton Railyard Project public meetings on August 14, 2020 at 3:00pm and 5:15pm to gather input from the community. These meetings will be hosted by WWC Engineering.

Charley Bennett reported that he had been locked out of the pool and had not been informed of the change of locks on the gate at the pool. Paul reported this had been done as Charley had a former employee come and do chemical testing on the pool without anyone's knowledge. Charley responded that he was not able to get ahold of Jesi to confirm that testing was being done. Charley also responded that he was at the city shop and was told by the mayor that the boiler at the pool was not going to be replaced. Charley reported that he has had complaints of the pool being dirty (floating debris) and that the deep end of the pool has dirt on the sides.

NEW BUSINESS

Frank Brouillette made the motion to go to a closed session to discuss the performance of pool manager Jesica McKeever. Kathie explained to Jesica that she had the option to request the discussion to remain in the public meeting or to allow a closed session for the discussion. Kathie explained the difference being in the open meeting, minutes are public knowledge, while the closed session minutes are not open to the public. Jesica chose to discuss the issues in a closed meeting. The motion to go to a closed session was seconded by Rob Elwood. Motion passed unanimously. The public in attendance were asked to leave until the closed session was finished. Council moved to closed session at 7:11pm. Public session reopened at 7:55pm. The public were allowed to return to the council meeting.

There was no action on closed session discussion.

PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR REPORT

Bob Schuchard reported that the phase 4 water project is on schedule. The main line replacement along the highway is scheduled to be done on August 12, then commencing to the 28 service line installations, then to A Ave SE. Paving will start on the highway on August 12, then move to Central Avenue.

There are currently three water main breaks. One pertains to the water main that currently runs under Bob Willems storage building/container (on Third Street NE) and serves Nathan and Debbie Davis' property. Instead of having to move Willems' storage container, the city will provide water service to the Davis' through a main located on the north side of their property. Normally a connection to a private residence is the property owners' responsibility; however, because this is being done as a convenience to the city, the city will cover the cost of this connection. There was a water break at the Chief Joseph Park. Caution tape had been installed around it; however, people took down the caution tape as they wanted to enter the playground.

Bob reported that during the recent Gally's music event (August 8, 2020) the city's road closed signs and some cones were taken and have not been returned. This is a common occurrence at these types of events. Bob recommended that people requesting street closures be responsible for providing their own street closure signs.

Bob reported that he had informed the new owners of 409 1st St NE (formerly Jim Widdicombe) that there is a city main located under that house.

MAYOR REPORT

Paul informed the council that resident Loren Richter (102 3rd St NW) had talked to him and Bob about getting a sign moved that he claims is in his yard. Bob reviewed the location and stated that the sign is on city right-of-way. The cost to replace the sign with the currently required "break-away" design would be about \$700.00 and would be Loren's responsibility to pay.

Paul asked the council if they would consider approving a resolution setting a dollar limit for items that could be determined as "junk" rather than sellable items. Karen Hammel will be consulted to review this.

Paul reported that he and Kathie had participated in a conference call regarding the refinancing of one of the sewer bonds. A resolution will need to be passed at the next council meeting to adopt the bond resolution.

Paul updated the council on the property that Greg Berg had asked if he could purchase (see June 23, 2020 council meeting minutes). Karen had recommended a registered survey be done in order to identify the exact location. A registered survey would cost \$3,500 to \$4,000. The process to close or abandon the street would need to be done first. Karen will be consulted on the process.

Lara Brisco has been offered and has accepted the position as Harlowton City Clerk-Treasurer. Her first day will be August 19, 2020.

Kathie let the council know what the cost of the Black Mountain Software ACH and email bills modules would be; however, she informed them that she would not have sufficient time to get the program going before her last day. She will work on getting the cost included in the fiscal year 2021 budget and update the new clerk-treasurer on the council's request to get this module implemented.

ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING

The next council meeting will be August 25, 2020 at 7:00pm at the Harlowton Public Library Conference Room.

There will be a phase 5 water project public hearing at 6:00pm at the library conference room prior to the council meeting on August 25, 2020.

A bond resolution for refinancing the sewer bond will need to be approved.

The new city clerk-treasurer will need to be sworn in at the next council meeting.

CLAIMS

Ron Teig made the motion to pay claims, checks #22607-22635, from July 22, 2020 through August 7, 2020. There were no other questions or comments. Frank Brouillette seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 8:17 pm.

Council Members Present: Charley Bennett, Frank Brouillette, Rob Elwood, Jim Kalitowski, Jack Runner, Ron Teig

Employees Present: Bob Schuchard

Paul Otten, Mayor

Kathie Newland, Clerk