

MINUTES OF THE VERNAL CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING HELD
MAY 18, 2022 at 7:00 p.m. in the Vernal City Council room, 374 East Main, Vernal,
Utah 84078.

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

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Councilmember Ted Munford.

APPROVAL OF CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES OF MAY 4, 2022:
Councilmember Nick Porter moved to approve the minutes of May 4, 2022 regular meeting. Councilmember Dave Everett seconded the motion. The motion passed with Councilmembers Everett, O’Driscoll, Munford, Foley and Porter voting in favor.

INTRODUCTION OF FACILITIES TECHNICIAN COLBY KEEL- WAYNE SMITH.
Quinn Bennion reported they could not attend this meeting ad will be introduced next meeting.

GREEN DINO FOLLOW-UP DISCUSSION AND FUNDING UPDATE – QUINN BENNION: Quinn Bennion explained the repair of the green dinosaur has gained a lot of attention on Facebook and in the Media. For those not familiar, a community survey on what should be done with the green dinosaur known as T-Rex was conducted with over 2800 responses. A GoFundMe account was set up through a local non-profit and so far over \$17,000 has been raised. Anyone who chose to do a direct donation was able to do that and so far \$2500 has been raised bringing the total donation amount to close to \$20,000. The funds will go toward repairs scheduled for this summer. Mayor Doug Hammond stated it is great to have the community involved. Councilmember Dave Everett agreed this was a very positive approach and the citizens feel their voices were heard.

PROPOSAL BY QUEST CRYPTO TO FUNDRAISE FOR DINOSAURS IN VERNAL WITH NFT: Quinn Bennion gave a brief introduction of a new concept called NFT, non-fungible token which is a financial security consisting of digital data stored on a block chain. He was contacted by Mike Waters to consider a proposal to continue fund raising for T-Rex and other dinosaurs, current and maybe future, using NFTs. Michael Waters, owner of Quest Crypto, stated he saw the story on the T-Rex dinosaur falling into disrepair and realized he could help raise funds for the repair and promote Vernal City. His company would produce the NFT, and do all the marketing and media coverage. He explained his company is currently working on another large fund raising effort for the jaguar reserve in Belize and has been in the NFT market for three years. An NFT for the dinosaurs is like purchasing a digital backpack with coupons or other items that can be traded. He noted that NFT’s are a billion dollar industry. The initial cost is usually \$150,000 and 25% of the NFT sales. The initial fee will be waived and all funds from the sales

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will come back to the City for the repair of T-Rex up to a specific dollar amount decided by the City. After that amount is raised, then his company will take a cut. Councilmember Ted Munford stated this sounds amazing and asked why he would be willing to do this. Mike Waters answered that his motivation is his family loves the dinosaurs and wants to be a part of saving them or even expanding dinosaurs in Vernal. KSL and the Salt Lake Tribune are ready to run a follow-up story. Also a pod cast is scheduled with Silicon Slopes. A website will be created and powered by Quest. This project will allow his company to get their name out there and the City would be the first to use NFT to drive tourism. Councilmember Dave Everett commented that he could relate as the City is a small municipality that can move quickly and has the dinosaur wow that can be used as a tourist attraction. Mike Waters agreed that the NFT market is flooded with celebrities and this offering will be unique. Quinn Bennion noted that government is not the best risk takers and it is hard to understand NFT's and what the commitment of the City would be. Mike Waters stated there would be zero financial commitment from the City. Councilmember Dave Everett asked if this was legally allowable for a government entity. Carl Morton added if someone feels scammed once they purchase an NFT who will take care of it and who sets up the coupons or rewards. Mike Waters stated they will take care of any complaints. The economic development organizations can help with a travel package. Councilmember Robin O'Driscoll stated this concept is a little too late for T-Rex as the amount needed has almost been reached. She suggested it be looked at for other dinosaurs. Mike Waters stated the City would determine how the funds are spent. Councilmember Nick Porter stated he does see this as a way to market this area. Quinn Bennion stated that Travel and Tourism with Uintah County is interested in hearing how NFT's can help tourism. He explained that he has received a draft contract and suggested if the Council decides to move forward to direct the staff to finalize the contract and authorize the Mayor to negotiate the final contract. *After further discussion, Councilmember Dave moved to consider issuing NFT contingent upon review of the final contract and possibly a phone poll or special meeting to expedite it. 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.

REQUEST FOR AMENDMENT FOR VERNAL CITY MUNICIPAL CODE SECTIONS 16.20.410, 16.04.305, 16.45.080, 16.48.045 AND ORDINANCE NO. 2022-05:

Allen Parker reminded the Council that they discussed this issue and held a public hearing to consider how to address pets in the downtown commercial and mixed use zones. Currently, if someone lives within those zones and has a pet it must be kept indoors. This draft ordinance is more refined to consider various situations and property rights to mesh with neighboring properties. This amendment to the code accomplishes three things. It strikes out the section added not allowing pets outdoors, moves zoning pet regulations to the section dealing with specific uses and considers apartment

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residences who have a small patch of land to have a pet kenneled outside. Those pets must be screened with a completely sight obscuring wall. The Planning Commission reviewed this draft ordinance, again, and has issued a positive recommendation. Councilmember Ted Munford asked if there is any regulation to make sure an animal is not kept in an area that is too small. Allen Parker answered there is a code governing animal cruelty. Councilmember Dave Everett voiced his concern regarding an animal having no visibility and asked if, for the sake of the animal, if they could have a gate or window. Councilmember Ted Munford stated it is not requiring a cover, just a wall. Councilmember Robin O’Driscoll clarified this ordinance will not allow chain link with slats. Allen Parker answered that is correct. After further discussion, *Councilmember Dave Everett moved to approve Ordinance No. 2022-05. 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.

UPDATE FACADE GRANT PROGRAM: Allen Parker reported that there has been a lot of activity with 16 applicants requesting the façade grant for varying amounts and upgrades of their buildings. The most expensive project is \$350,000 and the smallest is \$6000. So far, nine of those applications have been approved. The total project valuation so far is \$1 million dollars. The hardest part seems to be finding a contractor and materials. Councilmember Corey Foley sated this program helps the community. The Council thanked Allen for the report.

REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF UDOT FEDERAL AID AGREEMENT FOR VERNAL AVENUE PROJECT: Quinn Bennion explained this is the agreement with UDOT for the grant received from the Joint Highway Program that was applied for and received over a year ago. This agreement needs to be approved to move forward with the design. Local matching funds are required in the amount of \$567,000 or 27%. The grant is \$1.5 million dollars to rebuild Vernal Avenue from 200 North to 200 South. As this project progresses, the public and business community will be engaged in the final design. The project will be bid out spring of 2023 and constructed next summer. Councilmember Corey Foley asked if it will coincide with the upgrade of the downtown Swains block. Quin Bennion answered yes. The City portion will be funded either by a CIB grant, ARPA funds, or another grant. *Councilmember Robin O’Driscoll moved to approve the UDOT Federal Aid Agreement for the Vernal Avenue project. Councilmember Nick Porter 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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ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS:

Freedom Fest. Quinn Bennion reported that the planning for Freedom Fest is in full swing and publicity will begin soon. Activities are scheduled for Monday, July 4th including parade, field of flags, a festival and fireworks.

Redevelopment Grant: Quinn Bennion stated the City has applied for a redeveloping grant from the State using ARPA funds in the amount of \$1.2 million dollars. If successful, the funds can only be used for water, sewer, storm water and broadband projects.

ADJOURN: There being no further business; *Councilmember Nick Porter moved to adjourn. Councilmember Corey Foley 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)