

MINUTES OF THE VERNAL CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING HELD
MARCH 2, 2022 at 7:00 p.m. in the Vernal City Council room, 374 East Main,
Vernal, Utah 84078.

PRESENT: Councilmembers Nicholas Porter, 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 Nick Porter.

APPROVAL OF CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 16, 2022: *Councilmember Ted Munford moved to approve the minutes of February 16, 2022. Councilmember Corey Foley seconded the motion. The motion passed with Councilmembers Everett, O’Driscoll, Munford, Foley and Porter voting in favor.*

INTRODUCTION OF NEW POLICE OFFICERS - CAHILL OLDHAM, TARRY WHITE AND ORION YOUNG: Chief Dylan Rooks reported that it has been a while since he was able to introduce new police officers as it is hard to find people who want to do that job. The City embarked on a new strategy to hire applicants willing to go to the academy which is a sixteen week program in Salt Lake City away from family. He explained the City hired Orion Young and Cahill Oldham in July and Tarry White a few months later. They all passed the academy and their field training and are now working on their own. They are all good guys, eager to get to work and are fun to have around. The police department is still not fully staffed, and the remainder of the department needs to be commended for their hard work and dedication to the job. The Mayor and Council welcomed Officers Young, Oldham and White to the City.

REQUEST APPROVAL OF FUNDS FOR MARVELOUS EXTREME BULL MADNESS - TONJA LOFTHOUSE: Tonja Lofthouse exclaimed that she was excited for this event this year. The community rallied behind them last year, and asked Vernal City to be part of the enthusiasm. Mr. Lofthouse explained they started this program in recognition of their son who was killed in a motorcycle accident. They contacted the PRCA to help make it bigger and the plan is to have 40 bull riders each night with a specialty act. Last year the event was shown on the front page of the PRCA business magazine. Councilmember Ted Munford asked about their balance sheet. Tonya explained that they ended with a negative balance the year before and last year they ended with \$5800. Quinn Bennion explained that the City sponsored this event in the amount of \$1000 last year. After further discussion, *Councilmember Ted Munford moved to approve a \$1000 sponsorship. Councilmember Nick Porter seconded the motion. The motion passed with the following roll call vote:*

Councilmember Munford.....aye;

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

REQUEST FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE PLANNING COMMISSION MEMBERSHIP:

Allen Parker explained that Dr. Brian Edes has served on the City Council in a different State in the past and is interested in public service. He has indicated his willingness to serve on the Planning Commission. Dr. Edes stated he did spend years on the Council and dealt with many variance problems. He stated he is excited to serve. *Councilmember Corey Foley moved to appoint Brian Edes as a regular member of the Planning Commission. Council 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 FOR FUNDING FOR START OF DOWNTOWN VERNAL ALLIANCE AND JOIN MAIN STREET AMERICA PROGRAM – QUINN BENNION AND LAURA CHYNOWETH:

Laura Chynoweth explained that she is the Chair of the Downtown Vernal Alliance and she met with the attorney to set up the Downtown Alliance as a non-profit. It was decided the best way to accomplish this was to go under the umbrella of the Charitable Friends of Ashley Valley. They also met with representatives of Main Street America. Quinn Bennion explained that meeting was to discuss the Utah Main Street program as funding was authorized last year by the Utah Legislature to help cities update their downtowns. The City is in a pretty good position with the steps that have already been taken to be classified as a Tier 2 City under that program. If that happens, a funding request will be presented to join that program. The City will need to provide initial funding in the amount of \$1000, and joint the Utah Main Street America program at a cost of \$295. The funds will come from the community outreach line item. Laura Chynoweth stated she was impressed with the progress to revitalize downtown and be listed as a Tier 2 City. *Councilmember Nick Porter moved to approve \$1300 for the Vernal Downtown Alliance and joint Main Street America. 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.

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REVIEW OF FAÇADE GRANT PROGRAM: Quinn Bennion presented the revised façade grant program to the Council. All the recommendations from the last presentation have been incorporated. Councilmember Dave Everett thanked Quinn for his work on this project and working with all the businesses that are interested in updating their locations. He noted that this will attract more foot traffic and build excitement for downtown. Quinn Bennion reminded the Council that the first \$175,000 is a rural economic development grant from the State of Utah through the County and has to be spent by July. The most significant change to the façade grant program is the eligibility as new and old structures will be eligible. Mayor Doug Hammond clarified the business has to be within the CRA boundaries. Quinn Bennion answered yes, for commercial properties only. The other items modified were the first \$175,000 will be awarded on a 50/50 basis, after that it will be 60/40. Councilmember Nick Porter stated he still feel that is necessary to get it spent. Councilmember Corey Foley asked if the loan would be finalized to fund the requests. Quinn Bennion stated that will be funded in May and is a reimbursable program so they have to spend the funds first. Councilmember Corey Foley suggested there be a provision for material delays that gives the business sixty days to follow-up for the grant. There was some discussion regarding how to handle delays with construction for the first \$175,000 grant award. Councilmember Dave Everett stated this program will encounter unique situations and the committee can review and discuss them. Allen Parker stated the application date will be the date used for any compliance issues that come up. There was some discussion regarding adding murals back in as qualified improvements. The consensus of the Council was to leave them out for now. Quinn Bennion stated that one element that has been left very flexible is the historic look for some buildings. The City may want to encourage the restoration to the historic look. Councilmember Ted Munford stated there will have to be a list of properties that would qualify for that as some places are not that old. Carl Morton reported that the Library started a historic buildings list for this area. Councilmember Nick Porter stated it should be optional with a possible extra incentive if they do that. Councilmember Corey Foley asked if patio dining would be included. Quinn Bennion stated if they can take it with them, it will be excluded. Mayor Doug Hammond stated this is going in the right direction. Quinn Bennion stated he did receive a question about a property owner being allowed to do more than one grant. He suggested a waiting period of at least 12 months between projects. Councilmember Ted Munford agreed so the funds can be spread around to more businesses although the City does not want to dampen their enthusiasm. Councilmember Dave Everett stated it can be at the discretion of the committee after they evaluate the project as it will increase the tax base. Councilmember Nick Porter stated that may be needed for small businesses as larger ones may not need as much help. Councilmember Corey Foley suggested there be a limit of \$100,000 in 18 months. After further discussion, the consensus of the Council was to list a cap of \$100,000 over an 18 month period. Quinn Bennion stated the last item is for demolition. If someone purchases a property and needs to demolish the building, the City can help pay for the demolition so they can rebuild. Councilmember Corey Foley suggested there be a limit of \$100,000 for that type of grant program. The consensus of the Council was to have a separate program for demolition.

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REQUEST THE APPROVAL OF STIPEND FROM ASHLEY VALLEY SEWER MANAGEMENT BOARD TO CITY REPRESENTATIVES:

Councilmember Dave Everett stated that the Board for the Ashley Valley Sewer Management Board is structured differently than the City and has a requirement for the City to approve them paying a stipend for a Council member to serve on that Board. The amount is \$3440 a year. Quinn Bennion stated the funds come from that Board. Councilmember Dave Everett stated there are two representatives on that board from each water company. *Councilmember Nick Porter moved to approve the payment. 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.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS.

Bird Scooters:

Quinn Bennion explained that the Bird scooters were removed for the winter months and they are ready to bring them back. They were pleased with the use and Roosevelt is also going to get some scooters.

Pickle Ball Courts:

Quinn Bennion explained that the original site for pickle ball courts was 100 South by the conference center, and now another location being considered is Independence Park by the Middle School. That park is under utilized and the courts may interject more energy there and already has parking and restrooms. There is funding from Uintah County, Vernal City, Uintah Basin Health, and Rocky Mountain Power to build the courts. A presentation will be made to the Recreation District next week to consider the courts. Councilmember Dave Everett stated that would be a good location. Councilmember Robin O’Driscoll asked if the trees would be impacted. Quinn Bennion stated no.

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

Mayor Doug Hammond

ATTEST:

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Roxanne Behunin, City Recorder

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