

MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF  
THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF  
CONRAD, COUNTY OF PONDERA, STATE  
OF MONTANA, HELD AT CONRAD CITY HALL  
ON JANUARY 17, 2023

The City Council of the City of Conrad, County of Pondera, State of Montana, met in regular session at the Conrad City Hall on January 17, 2022, at 6:00 p.m.

Present: Mayor Miller, Aldermen Cates, Breeding, Hunsucker, and Schoenrock; Police Chief Padilla; and Finance Officer Ritter. City Attorney Jones present by phone.

Absent with permission: PWD Zimbelman

Guests present: None

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Miller at 6:00 p.m.

Motion by Alderman Breeding, second by Alderman Cates to approve the minutes from the January 3, 2023, regular meeting, as presented.

Motion Carried Unanimously

Claims #26939 through #26974 (refer to the claims register).

Motion by Alderman Breeding, second by Alderman Schoenrock to approve claims as presented.

Motion Carried Unanimously

Water contracts: None

Correspondence: Letter from Conrad Pathway Committee Chair, Maria Cates requesting Genevieve Rankin funds for pathway projects.

Public Comment: None

Mayor Miller presented the December 2022 Library report for Library Director Christensen. For the month of December, the library visits remained steady. Program participation was significantly lower compared to last year; several absences from after school programs and Christmas Stroll Recital due to illness. There were 1,998 items checked out which included physical items, digital checkouts from MontanaLibrary2Go/Libby app and the Hoopla Digital app. There were 181 computer users and 19,513 separate Wi-Fi sessions. In addition, there has been consistent use of printer/copy machine, fax machine, and notary services. Additionally, the annual community library survey will assist in directly improving library services and aid in the strategic planning process. Nelson Architects is in the process of drafting an AIA contract for services in preparing a Preliminary Architectural Report for the Library building. Shelby Glass received the replacement exterior doors and materials after several months of delay; it was decided that installation will wait until the PAR has been completed.

The Library Director, who is also participating in the City Growth Policy update, provided the following update on the process: The Growth Policy

subcommittee of the Planning Board met with the Planning Department Manager of Stahly Engineering on January 10, 2023. This meeting covered the reasoning behind creating and implementing a Growth Policy, legal requirements, and a proposed schedule for development extending into October 2023. The group discussed some potential goals regarding community growth and brainstormed ideas on how to get useful community input. The next Growth Policy meeting will be online on March 2, 2023.

Finance Office Report: Finance Officer Ritter presented analytics from the on-line payment portal. There are 11 accounts set up with auto-pay and 69 accounts set up for one-time payments; which is ~16% of city customers who signed up for this service in just under one month. The logo has been well received and the city is in the process of implementing the logo where applicable. The website has been launched and is a work in progress but is up and running with pertinent city information. Finance Officer Ritter is working with a consultant on closing entries and the audit for the City of Conrad is tentatively set for February 27, 2023. Information has been being sent to the auditors ahead of time which will enable much of the audit work to be done prior to the visit, hopefully reducing the time the auditors spend on-site.

Police Department Report: Chief Padilla presented with the December 2022 activity report for the Police Department. The number of service calls was approximately 155 reported to PCSO Dispatch and/or Conrad Police Department. There was 8 arrests, 2 alarms, 4 assaults/harassments, 5 burglary/thefts/shoplifting reports, 2 court orders/civil papers, 3 criminal mischief/trespass/vandalism reports, 4 domestic incidents, 1 lost/found property report, 16 medical emergencies, 4 noise/nuisance complaints, 5 suicide/mental health calls, 11 suspicious activity/vehicles, 2 wanted/missing persons, 20 citizen assists, 5 civil standbys, 10 information only calls, 4 vehicle lockouts, 1 VIN inspection, 5 welfare checks, 3 utility complaints (water, sewer, and power), 5 juvenile complaints, 2 DUI assists, 16 traffic initiated reports, 6 sheriff's office assists, 2 MHP assists, 12 ambulance assists, 1 fire department assist, 2 Toole County assists, 1 DHHA CPS assist, 1 Cut Bank Police department assist, 1 Lincoln Police department assist, and 9 animal calls (7 dogs, an owl and a horse). Year-end situational reports include: 42 accident reports, 57 arrest reports and 160 offense reports. The new record management system is behind a bit in implementation however, the goal is to have it up and running by the end of February. The new car's radar system is scheduled to be installed next week. Mayor Miller asked how many of the accident reports are due to ice. Chief Padilla will review and bring to the next meeting. Mayor Miller would like a three-year trend of police calls, if possible.

Mayor Miller presented with the appointment of Mary Klette to the Zoning Commission.

Motion by Alderman Hunsucker, second by Alderman Breeding to appoint Mary Klette to the Zoning Commission.

Motion Carried Unanimously

Mayor Miller recuses herself from agenda item #9. Per City Attorney Jones, Jamie Miller would like to privately lease office space from the City of Conrad. Miller has a private consulting business. There is potential for a conflict of interest by virtue of her position as Mayor. Miller has an obligation to disclose the conflict. She would need to avoid using her position as Mayor to exercise any undue

influence over the consideration of her request. The City Council would need to have the Council President preside over the discussion/action item, move to waive the conflict of interest pursuant to MCA §7-5-4109(2), and then approve/deny the request. City Attorney Jones suggests a dollar amount should be approved. Per Attorney Jones, Miller suggested \$100/mo for use of the City's services. City Attorney Jones would put together a month-to-month lease with the Council's direction; the agreement would need to be signed by the Council President in place of the Mayor. City Attorney Jones suggest adding either party could back out of the agreement at any time with no repercussion.

Motion by Alderman Breeding, second by Alderman Hunsucker to waive the conflict of interest and to allow Jamie Miller the private lease of office space from the City of Conrad.

Ayes 4  
Nays 0  
Absent 0

Motion Carried Unanimously

Motion by Alderman Cates, second by Alderman Schoenrock for City Attorney Jones to write up a month-to-month agreement for [Mayor Miller's consulting firm] Kirsten-Miller, LLC in the amount of \$100/mo.

Ayes 4  
Nays 0  
Absent 0

Motion Carried Unanimously

Mayor Miller presented the City/County Growth Policy Cost Sharing Agreement provided by City Attorney Jones. This agreement is still in discussion with the County. The agreement language amount shared is \$7,500. Per the City Attorney, the County requested additional language be added to allow for further discussion if the amount the engineering firm cost exceeds this amount County Attorney Lennon provided the added language to City Attorney Jones for inclusion in the agreement, if agreed on by the City. Per Attorney Jones, the language can be included in the agreement as requested.

Motion by Alderman Breeding, second by Alderman Schoenrock to approve the Growth Policy Cost Sharing Agreement with the amended language, by City Attorney Jones.

Motion Carried Unanimously

Mayor Miller presented with discussion on the annual Blue Sky villa (BSV) (Horizon Lodge Apartments, Inc.) revised Surplus letter provided to the city. The revised letter included a FY21-22 Balance Sheet. It was noted the letter shows a balance of the surplus funds as reduced by the amount of "committed to projects" which is a misrepresentation pro forma. Discussion with the Council ensued, and it was agreed the intent of the annual letter is to verify surplus funds, per the lease agreement language. It was discussed that it would be acceptable if the BSV letter presented the surplus fund amount, after accrued payables and without the 'committed to' amounts reduced from the total balance. The 'committed to' forecasted amounts could be included in the letter separately, just not as a reduction from the surplus

amount. It was agreed this format would allow for a better-informed decision on the surplus funds. The city had recently provided BSV a templated letter that could be used and would also help satisfy the pro forma. Request will be made to Blue Sky Villa to change the letter as stated above.

Motion by Alderman Breeding, second by Alderman Schoenrock to table until a revised letter in the new format is submitted to the city.

Motion Carried Unanimously

Discussion/Action on Resolution 23-1280 Authorizing the Sale of Police Department Surplus Property. Property includes a 2010 Ford Crown Victoria 4dr Sedan and a 2013 Ford Explorer Police 4dr Sport Utility for resale.

Motion by Alderman Cates, second by Alderman Breeding to approve Resolution 23-1280 Authorizing Sale of Police Department Surplus Property.

Ayes 4  
Nays 0  
Absent 0

Motion Carried Unanimously

Other business: Update on the water/sewer/garbage rate increase; is pending information from the Montana Rural Water Systems. The zoning process needs to be better defined for the City and Zoning Board. There are zoning questions coming into the city that may require zoning board meetings; the process is to be reviewed. The Genevieve Ranking funds have been received (a total of \$10,014.32). There have been three requests for funding: Conrad Splashpark, Conrad Park & Rec and the Conrad Pathway Committee.

Items to appear on next agenda: BSV Reserve Fund Surplus Letter and Genevieve Rankin funding disbursement requests.

There being no further business to come before the Council, motion by Alderman Schoenrock, second by Alderman Cates to adjourn the meeting at 7:53 p.m.

Motion Carried Unanimously



Mayor Jonnie Miller

Attest:

Heather Patten  
Finance Officer