

**Fairfield Town Council Meeting Minutes  
December 13, 2023**

Mayor Loren Tacke called the regular meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Those Present: Council Members: Ron Dauwalder, Carmen Staigmiller, and Chuck Brown; Public Works Department, Nick Dale; and Clerk/Treasurer, Tammy Comer.

Also Present: Vonnie Jacobson, Choteau Acantha; Mike Johnson, Ray Schmidt, Jason Stott and Justin Cleveland, Community Members. Collette Anderson via phone at 7:13 pm.

Councilor Dauwalder made a motion and Councilor Staigmiller seconded the approval of the November 8, 2023 Capital Improvement Plan public hearing meeting minutes. The motion carried by a vote of 3 ayes and 0 nays. Councilor Staigmiller made a motion and Councilor Dauwalder seconded the approval of the November 8, 2023 regular meeting minutes. The motion carried by a vote of 3 ayes and 0 nays. Councilor Brown made a motion and Councilor Dauwalder seconded the approval of the November 29, 2023 water/wastewater priorities and investment opportunities work session minutes. The motion carried by a vote of 3 ayes and 0 nays.

Public Comment: None

Agenda Changes, Deletions, or Additions to Reports: None

Old Business: None

New Business:

- A) Mike Johnson stated that the Lion's Club was in the planning phase of a permanent stage in the park. They had chosen this as their project for the year. He felt it was a good improvement in the park. The location of the stage would be close to the sidewalk and electrical box 7-Electric installed a few years ago for Swim Days. The dimensions would be twenty-five feet long (running north/south), fifteen feet wide (running east/west) and twelve feet high. It would be similar to the one at the Park Inn. Nick said it would be a good spot for it and any irrigation pipe could be easily moved. AJ Concrete & Pumping, Summit Structures, and 7-Electric have all agreed to help with the project. Mike explained that there would be no maintenance and would be level with the grass for easy mowing and no problems for ADA regulations. The covering would be like a pergola that has wood slats. Vonnie Jacobson asked if they had spoken to any bands to see if the pergola covering would suffice. She said in her experience with Swim Days, most bands wanted a closed roof covering to protect their equipment. Ray Schmidt added that they wanted to do this improvement to the park for many occasions, not just Swim Days. Nick mentioned that it would also keep heavy vehicles off of the park, as most of the vehicles enter at that very spot. Council agreed that the park was busy year round and would be a great addition to the park. Mayor Tacke thanked Mike and Ray for their time and dedication to the community. With nothing further, Mike and Ray left the meeting at 6:54 pm.
- B) Jason Stott stated the Live Your Dash Car Show would be May 4, 2024. He would like to have the street closed on 5<sup>th</sup> Street between Central Avenue and the alley at 7-Electric. They planned on having food trucks again and bouncy house and/or games for the kids in the park. He expressed his concerns about the burnouts done on Central Ave. He didn't want to see anyone get hurt. He mentioned having a roped off burnout box between Faster Bassett and Mills Car Lot on 5<sup>th</sup> Street South. He could charge \$5 per burnout and the winner would get a trophy and/or plaque. Councilors expressed their concerns of the condition of the streets and the burnouts causing more damage to the already failing streets. Other concerns were brought up about liability to the town. They also wanted to know if other towns allowed burnouts in their town. Councilor Dauwalder made a motion and Councilor Staigmiller seconded to

approve closing the street on 5<sup>th</sup> Street between Central Avenue and the alley at 7-Electric for the Live Your Dash Car Show on May 4, 2024. The motion carried by a vote of 3 ayes and 0 nays. With no other discussion, Jason Stott left the meeting at 7:08 pm.

- C) Oath of Office: For the term beginning January 1, 2023, Mayor Tacke swore into the position of Councilors, Chuck Brown and Carmen Staigmiller.
- D) Mrs. Comer had heard about STIP (Short-term investment pool) with Montana Board of Investments from the auditor while he was here for the audit. The money in the checking account was not earning any interest so he suggested the STIP. STIP is offered to municipalities to allow them to invest their money, earn interest, and still have the money liquidable. There are few options for municipalities to invest. After looking into the STIP program and talking with a member of the local bank, Mrs. Comer reported that the money would earn better interest with the STIP program. One downfall was that STIP was not FDIC insured, but they have been in operation since the 70's without any issues. She also talked about the settlement money for the lagoon project, explaining that that money would not be used until a plan was in place and construction began to fix the lagoon. She suggested putting the \$663,000 into a twelve month cd at the bank which would earn 4.25% interest. Councilor Staigmiller asked if they would send out statements and where would the interest be allocated for the STIP interest. Mrs. Comer stated that statements would be available and she would apply the interest between the general, water and sewer funds based on each fund balance in STIP. Council concurred with Mrs. Comer's suggestions for the STIP program and the CD for the lagoon settlement money. Councilor Brown made a motion and Councilor Dauwalder seconded the approval of Resolution #450 authorizing participation in the Montana Board of Investments Short-Term Investment Pool. The motion carried by a vote of 3 ayes and 0 nays.
- E) Water Superintendent, Chuck Dale has passed his CPO (Certified Pool Operator) certification test. Councilor Dauwalder made motion, seconded by Councilor Staigmiller to increase his pay \$0.50 per hour. The motion carried by a vote of 3 ayes and 0 nays.
- F) Wastewater Superintendent, Nick Dale has passed his CPO (Certified Pool Operator) certification test. Councilor Staigmiller made motion, seconded by Councilor Brown to increase his pay \$0.50 per hour. The motion carried by a vote of 3 ayes and 0 nays.
- G) Collette Anderson of Great West Engineering said she understood that the Council's top priority was moving forward with phase two of the water project with the wastewater system repair being equally important. She explained the town can apply for grant funding for one construction project during a grant funding cycle which is every two years. Mrs. Anderson said that she and Austin, also of Great West Engineering, visited the lagoon site. She explained that the wastewater PER would be more complex and take extra time to collect data for the ground water and the flows. They know there is a capacity issue since no data had been collected to size the lagoon properly. It takes time to collect the data as flows change during different seasons of the year. She also wanted to get a handle on the I & I. Collete and her team are brainstorming ideas on how to fix the issues with the lagoon. She anticipated it taking a year or more to complete the PER. They would apply for construction project grant funding in 2026. Mrs. Anderson said that both planning grants were submitted and she is waiting for approval. She said she would put together a contract for the Council to review and approve at the January council meeting. With nothing else, Mrs. Anderson left the meeting at 7:28 pm.

#### Committee Reports:

- A) Fairfield Volunteer Fire Department: Fire Chief, Nick Dale stated the tender was back after getting the tank reinforced.
- B) Teton County Sheriff's Report: No one was present and no report was submitted from the Sheriff's Office. No report from the Prosecuting Attorney, and the JP had one case for the month of November.

Business Licenses and Zoning & Encroachment Permits: There were two zoning permits submitted. One to replace a fence in the back yard at 420 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue South and one to install new asphalt at the back of the building, and a sidewalk on the west side of the building for ADA egress at 606 Central Avenue. After Nick and Chuck made sure all setbacks were met as set on the permits, they approved the permits listed above.

Mayor's Report:

- A) Mayor Tacke reported that MMIA had some changes for the pool policy. Once we complete those changes, we will have the pool policy ready for council review. He hopes to have it ready for the January council meeting.
- B) Mayor Tacke stated that the town doesn't have a lock out tag out policy so he would be working on that soon. He has Nick and Chuck's support. He will send the draft policy to MMIA to review and hopes to have that policy ready for the February council meeting.

Department Reports:

- A) Public Works Department, Nick Dale thanked council for the raise. He reported that they had pumped 3,710,900 gallons of water during the month of November. He was concerned that well 2 had not come back to its normal level for the past two years so it is still offline. Run time is down about one hour per day. He added that there were a lot of leaks fixed on the town's side during phase one of the water project.
- B) Clerk/Treasurer, Tammy Comer had nothing new to report.

Town Council Reports: None

Approval of Monthly Claims: Councilor Brown made a motion and Councilor Staigmiller seconded the approval of claims 965946 and 965947 for \$364,553 and claims 965948-965991 for \$45,476.63. The motion carried by a vote of 3 ayes, and 0 nays.

Public Comment: none

Councilor Staigmiller made a motion and Councilor Brown seconded to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried by a vote of 3 ayes, and 0 nays. The meeting adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

The next regular Town Council meeting will be Wednesday, January 10, 2024, at 6:30 pm in the Town Office.

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Loren B. Tacke, Mayor

ATTEST:

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Tammy L. Comer, Clerk/Treasurer