

**Fairfield Town Council Meeting Minutes**  
**February 14, 2024**

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

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

Also Present: Vonnie Jacobson, Choteau Acantha; and Megan Caffyn and Chelsea Schilling, Jr. Women's Club.

Approval of Minutes: Councilor Dauwalder made a motion and Councilor Staigmiller seconded the approval of the December 13, 2023, regular meeting minutes. The motion carried by a vote of 3 ayes and 0 nays. Councilor Hoyt made a motion and Councilor Brown seconded the approval of the January 10, 2024, regular meeting 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) Megan Caffyn and Chelsea Schilling of Jr. Women's Club gave a presentation to install a 5 mini house play area in the volleyball sand area at the north end of the park. The play area would consist of mini houses made of maintenance free material, a sidewalk and picnic tables inside in the common area, and gravel between the mini houses to make it easy to mow around. The size of the mini houses will fit approximately half a dozen eight year olds. AJ Concrete would donate the concrete, gravel and their time. Summit Structures would donate their time to install the mini houses. They estimate the total cost to be around \$34,000. Caffyn and Schilling said that they plan to fundraise and write grants to raise the money for this project. Their goal is to have the play area complete by the spring of 2025. They added that this play area will be no additional work for the Town's Public Work Department. They will have groups take care of trash and keep the area clean. Council expressed concerns of vandalism, broken glass, squatters, and cleanup and care falling back on the Town's Public Work Department. Caffyn and Schilling assured council that it would be no extra work on the Town and stated they would add security lights and cameras in the play area for extra protection for the children. Chuck Dale stated that the length should be good but may need to look at the width to ensure it would not interfere with the sprinklers. Caffyn and Schilling asked Council for their approval to proceed with the project.
- B) Councilor Hoyt made a motion and Councilor Dauwalder seconded to approve the Jr. Women's Club to proceed with the new mini houses play area in the volleyball sand area at the north end of the park. The motion carried by a vote of 4 ayes and 0 nays. Caffyn and Schilling thanked council then left the meeting.
- C) Mrs. Comer explained that every ten years the town needs to put to a vote to see if the residents of Fairfield would like to review the way their local government is run. The cost of this review is estimated at approximately \$17,000. If passed by the voters of the Town of Fairfield, a study commission would be established to conduct the review. Councilor Dauwalder made a motion and Councilor Staigmiller seconded to approve Resolution #451 calling for an election on the question of conducting a local government review and establishing a study commission to do so. The motion carried by a vote of 4 ayes and 0 nays.

- D) Mayor Tacke explained that the Department of Labor is requiring all cities and towns to have a lockout/tagout policy. He added that Nick and Chuck do have the kit that goes with the policy. With no questions, Councilor Dauwalder made a motion and Councilor Staigmiller seconded to approve Resolution #452 adopting the Town of Fairfield's lockout/tagout policy. The motion carried by a vote of 4 ayes and 0 nays.
- E) Mrs. Comer said she had not heard of any other project suggestions for the State-Local Infrastructure Partnership Act (SLIPA) grant funding, so the Town plans to do additional street chip sealing as stated in Resolution #453. The additional chip seal project would consist of 343,500 square feet and cost approximately \$257,900 of which, the Town would contribute \$211,400 from gas tax funds 2820 and 2821, and \$46,500 would come from the SLIPA grant funding. Chuck Dale stated that the streets in this additional chip-seal project were a high priority and do not have water lines, so it would not interfere with any future phases of the water project. He said he was excited to get even more streets repaired. Mrs. Comer stated that they hope to have this chip seal project completed at the same time as the streets being chip sealed as part of the water project, late spring or early summer 2024. Councilor Hoyt made a motion, seconded by Councilor Brown to approve Resolution #453 recommending a funding priority list for State-Local Infrastructure Partnership Act (SLIPA) to the Montana Department of Commerce. The motion carried by a vote of 4 ayes and 0 nays.
- F) Mayor Tacked asked the Council if they had decided whether or not to allow the tug of war and the burn out area during the Live Your Dash Car Show. Council supported the event and agreed that both were fun to watch, but they pose a huge liability to the Town and would damage the streets even more than their current state. After wishing the organizers the best of luck with the car show, Councilor Brown made a motion, seconded by Councilor Staigmiller not allowing the tug of war or the burn out area for the Live Your Dash Car Show. The motion carried by a vote of 4 ayes and 0 nays.

#### Committee Reports:

- A) Fairfield Volunteer Fire Department: Fire fighter, Chuck Dale stated everything was good and there was nothing new to report from the fire department.
- B) Teton County Sheriff's Report: No one was present from the Sheriff's Office but the report was submitted for January. No report from the Prosecuting Attorney, and the JP had one case for the month of January. Council asked if they could see the specifics to the hourly report.

Business Licenses and Zoning & Encroachment Permits: There was one zoning permit submitted for new asphalt and a new concrete sidewalk at the new Huhn Dental building, 606 Central Avenue. After Nick and Chuck made sure all setbacks were met as set on the permit, they approved the permit listed above.

#### Mayor's Report:

- A) Mayor Tacke explained that the wells were at least a foot lower than this time last year in which Chuck Dale confirmed that at least three wells are in the single digit level. Chuck Dale mentioned that well two had not recovered, so they are not using that well. Mayor Tacke said we need to prepare for water restrictions this spring, which would include not watering grass and flowers. He added that private wells are not allowed to be used during water restrictions as they come from the same aquifer which would affect the town wells. Mayor Tacke said he was trying to be proactive and get the word out early to make people aware of the situation. Even after the water arrives in the canal, it takes at least two weeks for the water level to come up. Mayor Tacke said they would post ads in the newspapers, post on the town website and Facebook page. Mrs. Comer added that the town office is encouraging the residents of Fairfield to sign up for text notifications. Those residents who don't have access to the town website or Facebook page would be able to text notifications of water restrictions. Mayor Tacke stated that the pool may need to be slowly filled for fire suppression in the event of a fire emergency. He said that if water restrictions were put in place, they would be enforced.

- B) Mayor Tacke reported that Hard Rock, the contractor for our water project, received the “811 Superhero” award from the Montana Utility Coordinating Council & 811 One call Center. Hard Rock was nominated by 3 Rivers for safe excavation practices in and around utilities for the water project designed by Great West Engineering.
- C) Mayor Tacke stated that he and Vonnie Jacobson were asked to be on the hiring board for the sheriff's office for hiring a new deputy.

Department Reports:

- A) Public Works Department, Chuck Dale stated Nick would be out until February 29<sup>th</sup>. He reported that the plow truck was down and may be expensive to fix. He added that the plow was too heavy for the dump truck. He was using the skid steer to plow the snow until he got the plow fixed. He mentioned installing a plow on the bucket truck in lieu of rebuilding the plow for the dump truck.
- B) Clerk/Treasurer, Tammy Comer reported that they were awarded \$40,000 in grant funding from MCEP for the Wastewater PER. She stated that she had invested \$1,500,000 in the STIP program in mid-January and it gained \$4,592.61 in interest already. Interest in STIP is holding at an average of 5.25 percent.

Mrs. Comer mentioned that Institute conference is May 5-9 at Fairmont Hot Springs. She asked council to let her know if any of them would like to attend the elected officials conference May 7-9 and she would get them enrolled for the conference. She asked to move the council meeting to May 15<sup>th</sup> due to the conference dates were the same week as the council meeting. Council agreed to move the meeting to Wednesday, May 15<sup>th</sup>.

Town Council Reports: Councilor Dauwalder stated that he did not like the stage location that was discussed at the December meeting. He felt the stage location would be best suited where it has been for Swim Days. He said putting the bleachers in the pine trees provides great shade for the entertainment.

Approval of Monthly Claims: Councilor Brown made a motion and Councilor Dauwalder seconded the approval of claims 966037-966081 for \$50,109.12. The motion carried by a vote of 4 ayes, and 0 nays.

Public Comment: none

Councilor Hoyt made a motion and Councilor Dauwalder seconded to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried by a vote of 4 ayes, and 0 nays. The meeting adjourned at 7:54 p.m.

The next regular Town Council meeting will be **Tuesday, March 12, 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