

Fairfield Town Council Meeting Minutes
March 12, 2024

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

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

Also Present: Vonnie Jacobson, Choteau Acantha; Collette Anderson, Great West Engineering; Tracie Roeder, Librarian; Agnes Kolste, Friends of the Library; Brian Colesworthy, Teton County Planner; Bob Loss and Kris Ingenthron, community members.

Approval of Minutes: Councilor Hoyt made a motion and Councilor Brown seconded the approval of the February 14, 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) Tracie Roeder, Librarian, said the Library had received \$25,000 in grants so far in 2024. Of that, \$8,000 from Sun River Electric will go toward shelving and the \$10,000 from American Library Association will go toward updating the south door that doesn't meet ADA regulations. Jr. Women's gave money for shelving and Friends of the Library gave money for other expenses. Tracie said that Brad Opiem is the contractor doing the work. She mentioned an outlet that needed to be disconnected and a floor vent that needed to be moved. She planned on donating the old shelves being removed. Mrs. Comer stated that they would need to be advertised as surplus property since the building and contents were funded by taxpayer money. Mayor Tacke said she could list the shelves with the Town's surplus sale to save a little money on legal ads if she wanted. She would need to get the information and pictures to Mrs. Comer so she could list them with the Town's surplus property.

Mrs. Roeder asked if she could have a work session with the Town on budget money that the Choteau, Dutton and Fairfield Libraries receive from the county. She felt there was a gross disparity between service population statistics and funding levels between the three libraries. In the 23/24 fiscal year budget, Choteau with 2,891.6 people served received \$78,739 (41%), Fairfield with 1,895.2 people served received \$44,097 (23%), and Dutton with 1,439.2 people served received \$61,084 (32%), leaving \$6,243 (4%) reserved for Teton County Library Board expenses. She asked for the Town's support to get funding appropriated correctly. Nick Dale said they have the same problem with the Fire Department funding. They have tried for years to fix the problem but the county will not address the issue.

Mayor Tacke asked Mrs. Roeder about a sign being built by the FFA. Mrs. Roeder stated that they are making a sign to go on the east side of the building and the Johnsons are paying for the sign. Mayor Tacke told Mrs. Roeder to check with our public works department before the sign is installed in the ground as there are sprinkler pipes in the ground and they would have to mow around the sign.

- B) With no further discussion or questions for Mrs. Roeder Councilor Hoyt made a motion and Councilor Brown seconded to proceed with shelving only building improvements that were being paid by grant funding. The motion carried by a vote of 3 ayes and 0 nays.

- C) Collette Anderson of Great West Engineering, explained that they were working on the Phase Two Water Project PER. In her last meeting with the Council and Public Works Department, it was decided to continue replacing water pipes to get rid of more leaks. She stated that they were out last week to look at the water supply source. Mrs. Anderson said that amendment one of Task Order #12 covered grant writing and submission for the water project PER. She would schedule work sessions and public hearings in the near future. With no discussion or questions for Mrs. Anderson, Councilor Brown made a motion and Councilor Hoyt seconded to approve task order #12 amendment #1 – grant writing for phase two of the water system improvements. The motion carried by a vote of 3 ayes and 0 nays.

Mrs. Anderson said that the wastewater PER was more involved and would take more time than the water PER. They will be collecting data and doing site visits in the early spring. They are evaluating the current system to figure out the best way to proceed with the project.

Mrs. Anderson mentioned that the Mayor had talked with Jeremiah Theys about updating the Town's ordinances. The cost estimate would be about \$20,000 to update the ordinances. They just completed updating the ordinances for Three Forks and Mrs. Anderson said she would mail the updated ordinances to Mrs. Comer to see what Three Forks did.

- D) Mayor Tacke thanked the City of Choteau for letting the Town of Fairfield use their durapatcher. He explained that with the street chip seal project this spring, Nick and Chuck would have to do a lot of prep work ahead of the chip sealing. They don't want to hold up Choteau from doing their streets, so the Mayor, Nick and Chuck looked at a few DuraPatchers at Normont in Great Falls. Of the five DuraPatchers they looked at, Nick and Chuck liked the 2016 DuraPatcher model 125 DJT trailer mounted asphalt patching machine with approximately 950 hours for \$57,900. Mayor Tacke said this DuraPatcher came with a warranty and a thirty day trial period. The purchase of this DuraPatcher would not be until the 2024/2025 budget year. With no questions, Councilor Staigmiller made a motion and Councilor Brown seconded the approval to purchase the 2016 DuraPatcher with 950 hours for \$57,900 on the 2024/2025 budget year. The motion carried by a vote of 3 ayes and 0 nays.
- E) Mrs. Comer stated that they received only one bid for the extra chip seal project from Hard Rock Road Building & Utilities Inc. The bid came in at \$285,566.60 which was approximately \$28,000 higher than anticipated. She budgeted approximately \$311,333 for chip sealing, which included \$32,321.50 of Town contribution to chip seal the balance of the streets in the water project. Mrs. Comer said it will be close, but there should be enough for the entire chip seal project. Mrs. Comer stated that she would submit the HB 355 (SLIPA) grant application within the next week. If successful in getting this grant, they would be able to complete the project easily. Mrs. Anderson stated that it looked like the water project may come in under budget so we could do a change order for the balance if the Town came up short on funding. Councilor Staigmiller asked if they found enough chips to do all of the chip sealing. Mayor Tacke said they thought they found enough chips for the project. Councilor Hoyt made a motion, seconded by Councilor Staigmiller to accept Hard Rock Road Building & Utilities Inc.'s of \$285,566.60 for the extra chip seal project. The motion carried by a vote of 3 ayes and 0 nays.
- F) Councilor Hoyt made a motion, seconded by Councilor Staigmiller to approve the revised snow removal policy. The motion carried by a vote of 3 ayes and 0 nays.
- G) Mayor Tacke stated that there was some equipment and miscellaneous items the Town would like to get rid of as we are no longer using them. He asked Council to allow him to have a sale of surplus items. Councilor Brown made a motion, seconded by Councilor Staigmiller to approve the sale of surplus items. The motion carried by a vote of 3 ayes and 0 nays.
- H) Brian Colesworthy, Teton County Planner, explained that the Town was within one mile of the Beck subdivision so the Town could review and comment on the proposed subdivision and access to public streets. Mr. Allen Beck's preliminary plan was to sell three undeveloped lots. It will be the purchaser's responsibility to add all utilities and curb and guttering. He said that the county planning board may put

any of the Town's comments into the conditions. He added that any improvements had to go through DEQ. They are only allowed one well per ten acre subdivision and it can only be 35 gallons a minute. It is a buyer beware situation. Mr. Colesworthy said he contacted GID and Bureau of Reclamation about the proposed subdivision. Mayor Tacke stated that Mr. Beck had approached the Town about annexing into Town the beginning of 2023. He gave Mr. Beck the Town's Annexation and Subdivision Rules & Regulations. He added that they made it known that there would need to be grinder pumps and a lift station installed at his expense. The Town never did hear back from Mr. Beck. Nick stated that if those three properties wanted to be annexed into the town at a later date, there would be no street or alley access, no loop lines for the water, and no fire truck access or turnarounds. Mrs. Comer read a letter from a community member opposing the subdivision as the Town had a continual water shortage in the spring every year and wondered how this subdivision would get water. Mr. Colesworthy stated that all comments would be noted and on public record.

- I) Council reviewed the draft letter to be sent to the county planner. They wanted to add that due to the design in our current subdivision regulations, the Town of Fairfield does not assume or guarantee annexation of the Beck county subdivision. After adding the above statement, Councilor Brown made a motion, seconded by Councilor Hoyt to approve sending the comments and concerns letter on the Beck Minor Subdivision to the Teton County Planner. The motion carried by a vote of 3 ayes and 0 nays.
- J) Vonnie Jacobson of Jr. Women's Club talked about food trucks coming to Fairfield during Swim Days. She felt that since a large crowd was provided during Swim Days, food trucks owners should have to pay a special fee to have their food truck at the event. Maybe charge a reduced rate for extra days. She felt that there should be only local food trucks on Saturday of Swim Days. Mrs. Jacobson felt that was a decision for the Council to make, not the Swim Day committee. Mayor Tacke stated that they would have to put a policy in place and update the application and ordinance. Councilor Staigmiller felt that if they implemented this policy, they would need to do it for all events, not just Swim Days. Mayor Tacke suggested tabling this item, to allow more time to research the ordinance, policy and application and see what other cities and towns did. Councilor Brown made a motion, seconded by Councilor Hoyt to table this item until the next regular meeting. Motion carried by a vote of 3 ayes and 0 nays.

Committee Reports:

- A) Fairfield Volunteer Fire Department: Fire Chief, Nick Dale stated they had received a \$10,000 grant from Mountain View Co-op to go toward SCBA's. Nick reminded everyone that Firemen's Fun night was this Friday evening.
- B) Teton County Sheriff's Report: No one was present from the Sheriff's Office but the report was submitted for February. No report from the Prosecuting Attorney, and the JP had no cases for the month of February.

Business Licenses and Zoning & Encroachment Permits: There was one zoning permit submitted from NW Energy to upgrade the natural gas city gate station and transmission pipeline. Current structures would be removed and replaced with a single 13' wide x 15' long building, valving, new piping and fencing. 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 mentioned that the encroachment permit was outdated and that he was working on updating that permit. He also stated that we still need a person to represent Fairfield on the Teton County Planning Board Committee.

Department Reports:

- A) Public Works Department, Nick Dale reported that the well levels are extremely low and are not recovering. They plan to shut well 4 down this week as it is dangerously low and well 7 will be shut down soon as it is starting to pull sand. Most of the other wells are static in the single digits. He added that water restrictions will more than likely be put in place in the near future.
- B) Clerk/Treasurer, Tammy Comer stated that the County Planning Board meeting is March 21, 2024 at 5:30 pm to discuss the Beck subdivision just Northeast of Fairfield. Public is welcome to attend and offer comments during that meeting.

Mrs. Comer stated that the Swim Day Committee donated \$23,836 to help with some major pool repairs the Town had paid for in the past year and one half. The Town replaced the sand filters, repainted the pool, repaired two pumps, replaced the pool covers, purchased a backflow preventer, two lifeguard chairs and two umbrellas. Mrs. Comer thanked the Swim Day Committee for their generous donation to offset these major expenses at the pool.

Town Council Reports: Councilor Brown asked what happened with the skate park idea that was presented to them a while ago. Councilor Hoyt stated that Katie Dailey's son Roman was going to do research on layout and funding the skate park and come back to the council with more details as soon as he could.

Approval of Monthly Claims: Councilor Brown made a motion and Councilor Hoyt seconded the approval of claims 966082-966124 for \$39,319.98. The motion carried by a vote of 3 ayes, and 0 nays.

Public Comment: Bob Loss, community member, asked how the Town could get more water to supply the residents in Fairfield. Nick Dale said that our engineer and a hydrologist were here to evaluate the water supply. They would have more information when they present on the Water PER update.

Councilor Staigmiller made a motion and Councilor Hoyt seconded to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried by a vote of 3 ayes, and 0 nays. The meeting adjourned at 8:42 p.m.

The next regular Town Council meeting will be Wednesday, April 11, 2024, at 6:30 pm in the Town Office.

Loren B. Tacke, Mayor

ATTEST:

Tammy L. Comer, Clerk/Treasurer