Mayor:
David Cates

City Council:
Amber Schoenrock
Carrie Doty
Karla Breding
Darryl Burditt

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MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF CONRAD, COUNTY OF PONDERA, STATE OF MONTANA HELD AT CONRAD CITY HALL ON OCTOBER 6th, 2026

The City Council of the City of Conrad, County of Pondera, State of Montana, met in regular session at Conrad City Hall on Tuesday, October 6th, 2026, at 6:00 p.m.

Present: Mayor David Cates, Alderman Darryl Burditt, Alderman Karla Breding, Alderman Carrie Doty (remotely), Police Chief Andy Lund, Public Works Director Dave Zimbelman, Library Director Tiffany Christensen, Administrative Clerk Julie Orcutt, City Clerk Jerad Walston, City Attorney Daniel Jones.

Absent: Alderman Amber Schoenrock (with permission).

Guests: Ryan Ries, Wendy Judisch, Cheryl Curry, Connie Sutherland, David Baggs, McKenzie Graye

Teleconference Guests: Jody Hellegaard, Ross Hanson, Cheryl **Doe**, Sas **Doe**

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

1. Action: Read and approve minutes of September 15th, 2026, regular council meeting.
   - Motion by Alderman Karla Breding, Second by Alderman Darryl Burditt, to approve the minutes of the September 15th, 2026, regular meeting, as presented.
     - Motion Carried Unanimously

2. Action on any Claims and Payroll:
   Claims: 30084 - 30137
   Total: $208,518.41
   Payroll: $145,839.94
   - Motion by Alderman Karla Breding, Second by Alderman Darryl Burditt, to approve the claims as presented.
     - Motion Carried Unanimously

3. Action on Water Contracts: None

4. Correspondence: None

5. Public Comment (no action taken):
   - n/a

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6. Department Reports:
   - Police Department
     - Police Chief Andy Lund reported on Police activity for September, noting the apprehension and subsequent release of a gopher snake posing as a rattlesnake.
   - Public Works
     - Public Works Director Dave Zimbelman reported on public works activity for September, noting recent water testing revealing no detection of PFAS.
   - Public Library
     - Library Director Tiffany Christensen reported on library activity for August and September, noting the completed installation of the library's new solar panels, and introducing the upcoming fall children's programming.

7. Discussion/Action: NCMRWA system.
   - During the discussion about connecting to the NCMRWA system, there were many questions raised regarding the logistics, costs and even the necessity for an alternate water system, both by concerned citizens, as well as the Public Works Director, Dave Zimbelman.
   - As the decision will likely determine whether the city continues to use its current water system at all, council members expressed the need for further research and a more comprehensive plan that answers all questions and concerns.
   - Motion by Alderman Karla Breding, Second by Alderman Darryl Burditt, to move forward with discussion regarding the NCMRWA system by submitting a list of question to NCMRWA and hold a public hearing.
     - Motion Carried Unanimously

8. Discussion/Action: Conrad Swimming Pool Revenue Report.
   - Administrative Clerk Julie Orcutt discussed the annual financial report for the Conrad swimming pool, noting significant financial losses reaching over $38,990 this year alone, which does not include the additional $13,000 splash park loan payment and upcoming $60,000 pool resurfacing project.
   - Faced with a projected loss of more than $100,000 for the 2027–2028 fiscal year, council members considered increasing pool fees for the first time in nearly two decades, alongside potential increases to dog and business licenses, to offset the general fund deficit and bring fees to be more in line with similarly sized municipalities.
   - Motion by Alderman Carrie Doty, Second by Alderman Karla Breding, to move forward in creating a proposal to increase certain municipal fees.
     - Motion Carried Unanimously

9. Discussion/Action: New Codification Contract.

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- Motion by Alderman Karla Breding, Second by Alderman Carrie Doty, to approve the new Codification Contract with American Legal Publishing, as presented.
  - Motion Carried Unanimously

10. Discussion/Action: Conrad Chamber's request for Trunk or Treat.
    - Motion by Alderman Karla Breding, Second by Alderman Darryl Burditt, to approve the Conrad Chamber's request for Trunk or Treat, as presented.
      - Motion Carried Unanimously

11. Discussion/Action: Town Hall date re. CPD/PCSO consolidation.
    - After crediting Police Chief Andy Lund for his efforts in staffing the City Police Department with exceptional police officers, council members noted that the initial decision to explore a potential department merger with the county was an emotionally driven reaction to past staffing shortages and was unwarranted.
    - Motion by Alderman Karla Breding, Second by Alderman Darryl Burditt, to cancel any further meetings or discussions regarding CPD/CPSO consolidation.
      - Motion Carried Unanimously

12. Discussion/Action: Connie Sutherland request.
    - Local property owner, Connie Sutherland, expressed strong frustration regarding the city's lack of ordinance enforcement, specifically pointing to unmaintained weeds and long-term parked vehicles.
    - Connie cited specific examples, referencing what she considers an 'abandoned property', adjacent to her own property, as well as safety concerns regarding a motorhome parked at an intersection, which Connie has reported to be the cause of multiple near-miss traffic collisions.
    - Motion by Alderman Karla Breding, Second by Alderman Darryl Burditt, to direct the mayor to request the Public Works Department to mow the property located at 312 S. Maryland, bringing it in compliance with Ordinance #407.
      - Motion Carried Unanimously

10. Executive Session: None

11. Other Business: None

12. Items to Appear on the Next Agenda:
    - Alderman Karla Breding to be absent, with permission, for Tuesday, 10/20/2026, Regular Council Meeting.
    - Regular Council Meeting on Tuesday, 11/03/2026, to be rescheduled for Wednesday, 11/04/2026.

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- Public Hearing for Ordinance regarding Building Code Updates.

There being no further business to come before the Council,

13. Motion by Alderman Karla Breding, Second by Alderman Darryl Burditt, to adjourn the meeting at 8:02 PM.
    - Motion Carried Unanimously

Mayor, David Cates

Attest: Amber Schoenrock
~~City Clerk, Jerad Walston~~ Amber Schoenrock

CITY OF CONRAD CORPORATE SEAL STATE OF MONTANA