



REGULAR MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL
OF THE CITY OF CONRAD, COUNTY OF PONDERA, STATE OF MONTANA
HELD AT CONRAD CITY HALL ON JULY 16, 2024

The City Council of the City of Conrad, County of Pondera, State of Montana, met in regular session at the Conrad City Hall on July 16, 2024, at 6:00 p.m.

Present: Mayor David Cates, Alderman Amber Schoenrock, Alderman Nathan Hunsucker, Alderman Karla Breeding, Alderman Carrie Doty, Police Chief Cory Smith, Officer Daniel Karlik, Public Works Director David Zimbelman (via phone), Admin/Payroll Clerk Julie Orcutt, Billing Clerk Kim Cooney

Absent: None

Guests: Darryl Burditt, Don McClain, Kurt Christiaens, Tassie Christiaens, Kylie Christiaens, Anne Stordahl

Teleconference Guests: None

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

Action: Read and Approve Minutes of the July 2, 2024 Regular Meeting

- Motion by Alderman Breeding, Second by Alderman Hunsucker, to approve the minutes of the July 2, 2024 regular council meeting, as presented
 - Motion Carried Unanimously

Action: Approve Minutes of the June 4, 2024 Executive Session

- Motion by Alderman Breeding, Second by Alderman Hunsucker, to approve the minutes of the June 4, 2024 executive session, as presented
 - Motion Carried Unanimously

Action: Approve Minutes of the June 18, 2024 Executive Session

- Motion by Alderman Breeding, Second by Alderman Hunsucker, to approve the minutes of the June 18, 2024 executive session, as presented
 - Motion Carried Unanimously

Action on Claims & Payroll:

Claims #s 28215, 28221, 28223, 28225-28262 (refer to the claims register/claims approval list):

- Motion by Alderman Hunsucker, Second by Alderman Breeding, to approve the claims and payroll, as presented
 - Motion Carried Unanimously



Water Contracts: None

Correspondence: None

Public Comment: (no action taken) Agenda Items and/or Not on Agenda Items

Anne Stordahl spoke on behalf of the Conrad Swim Team and thanked the City and City Pool staff. She reported that the swim team has had a wonderful season, and even though they have a younger team this year, they consistently work hard and have brought home some trophies. They are improving in athletic ability and building strong character. She added that swim team is so much more than swimming, in that it trains the kids to have an excellent work ethic, and the discipline required to achieve a goal. She thanked the City and Pool staff for their part in teaching Conrad's next generation these valuable life skills.

Mrs. Stordahl said they plan to attend another council meeting in early spring to request permission for pool use next year by Conrad Swim Team, and potentially for hosting the Best of the West Divisional competition in July 2025. She thanked City employees for all the work they do, recognizing that managing the pool can be challenging at times.

Mrs. Stordahl spoke with Mayor Cates earlier about concerns they would like to address prior to the season starting next year, and was grateful to the Mayor for addressing their concerns thus far. She is optimistic about working together with the City to make swim team and the pool a continued success. She concluded by thanking the City for the future of the kids of Conrad by providing lifeguards and a safe surrounding, and most of all for promoting lifelong skills around the water for Conrad's kids and families. She noted that President Heidi Barney was unable to make the meeting.

Mayor Cates thanked her for the report.

Discussion/Action: Public Works pay raise (\$1.00/hour) for Boyd Matheson

Public Works Director David Zimbelman said Mr. Matheson has completed his "2A" distribution test and is really excelling in taking calls. He's moved into that role faster than Director Zimbelman has seen anyone do before, and he's done a great job. He's a great team player and deserves a raise.

Director Zimbelman added that Mr. Matheson still has two more tests to complete, and the "2A" is on the water side of things. He has shown great poise so far and there is no doubt that he will accomplish the remaining tests. Director Zimbelman has is amazed at how Mr. Matheson has jumped right into the job.

Alderman Doty asked if Mr. Matheson would receive another raise when he passes the remaining tests. Director Zimbelman responded that he would like to give him incremental raises as long as he continues to demonstrate progress.

- Motion by Alderman Hunsucker, Second by Alderman Breeding, to approve a \$1.00/hour raise for Public Works Water-Wastewater Operator I Boyd Matheson, effective July 1, 2024
 - Motion Carried Unanimously



Discussion/Action: Hire and swear in new Police Officer

Kylie Christiaens was sworn in as a new Patrol Officer I by Mayor Cates. Chief Smith presented her badge. Since Ms. Christiaens was approved for hire at the previous meeting, no action was taken.

Discussion/Action: Resolution taking Jamie Miller off all 1st Liberty accounts and adding David Cates and Julie Orcutt as signers

- Motion by Alderman Breeding, Second by Alderman Hunsucker, to approve Resolution 24-1305 taking Jamie Miller off all 1st Liberty accounts and adding David Cates and Julie Orcutt as signers
 - Motion Carried Unanimously

Discussion/Action: Resolution adding Julie Orcutt to STIP as a signer and removing Hilary Ritter
Mayor Cates reminded Council of the City's account with the Short Term Investment Pool (STIP) for the State.

- Motion by Alderman Hunsucker, Second by Alderman Breeding, to approve Resolution 24-1304 adding Julie Orcutt to STIP account as a signer and removing Hilary Ritter
 - Motion Carried Unanimously

Alderman Breeding suggested a better tracking process for updating financial accounts during staff turnover. Mayor Cates agreed that the process could be streamlined.

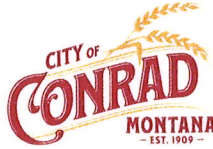
Discussion/Action: Website Management Agreement with Fence Line Design
Mayor Cates reminded staff that this is an ongoing contract that allows Lacey Vermulm to post and manage the City's new website. The City could manage it, but her costs are reasonable and she's very responsive. The clerks will continue to send updates to Ms. Vermulm.

- Motion by Alderman Breeding, Second by Alderman Hunsucker, to approve the Website Management Agreement with Fence Line Design
 - Motion Carried Unanimously

Discussion/Action: Request to use the City Pool for a Free Open Swim for the Community
Pool Manager Tami Haines requested a family free day at the City Pool on behalf of Heidi Melton of Family Connections in Great Falls. Family Connections would pay the standard pool party fee of \$75/hour from 1:00-5:00 p.m. on a date TBD. The City will supply the lifeguards and scheduling will be done by the pool managers to determine a date for the event.

- Motion by Alderman Doty, Second by Alderman Hunsucker, to approve the request by Tami Haines on behalf of Family Connections of Great Falls to use the City Pool from 1:00-5:00 p.m. for a Free Open Swim for the community, to be paid by Family Connections for \$300 on a date TBD
 - Motion Carried Unanimously

Discussion/Action: Use of Ballfield Complex for Youth Soccer August 26th to September 30th, 2024
Mayor Cates said as part of their agreement with the Baseball Complex, the soccer team is requesting specific dates for the youth soccer program.



- Motion by Alderman Hunsucker, Second by Alderman Doty, to approve youth soccer at the ballfield complex for Youth Soccer August 26th to September 30th, 2024
 - Motion Carried Unanimously

Alderman Doty shared that the Baseball Complex is a “diamond” for Conrad. People enjoy coming to Conrad for baseball events because of the facility.

Discussion/Action: Moving Raymond James accounts to Stockman Wealth Management

Mayor Cates explained that Raymond James is hard to work with and hard to get a hold of. Switching to a local firm will improve communication and overall control of the account. He noted that that account has about \$2.1M in CDs.

Mayor Cates offered to get Eric George on the line if anyone had questions. The company is currently in Helena and will be opening a branch in Great Falls soon. He indicated that the fees are actually lower than Raymond James because the City gets a discount. He added that Mrs. Rogers agreed with the decision to move the investment.

- Motion by Alderman Breeding, Second by Alderman Hunsucker, to approve moving Raymond James accounts to Stockman Wealth Management
 - Motion Carried Unanimously

Discussion/Action: Request to adjust sewer average due to leak – Joe & Sherri Judisch

Mayor Cates gave an overview of the request. Discussion about how to make an adjustment, given that it’s been a year since the leak apparently happened.

Mr. McClain asked if they went over the allotted amount. He said if they stayed under, the City wouldn’t allow an adjustment in the past. The customer far exceeded the allowable gallons in this case.

Further discussion. Alderman Hunsucker suggested 29,000 gallons, given the information provided.

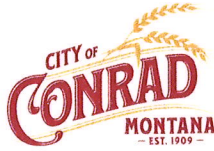
- Motion by Alderman Breeding, Second by Alderman Hunsucker, to use the 2023 sewer average for the 2024 sewer average from July through December 2024 for 304 S Virginia Street
 - Motion Carried Unanimously

Discussion/Action: PAC request to use the SW corner of the Pool Park for Shakespeare In the Park, and have access to power, August 9, 2024

Discussion about potential conflict with National Night Out. The PAC will use another section of the park.

- Motion by Alderman Breeding, Second by Alderman Doty, to approve request by Pondera Arts Council to use the SW corner of the swimming pool park for Shakespeare In the Park, and have access to power, August 9, 2024
 - Motion Carried Unanimously

Executive Session: None



Other Business:

Mayor Cates announced that budget the planning session will be held sometime during the week of August 12th and will be a public meeting, but not a public hearing.

The first public hearing will be held August 20th, and the final public hearing, close-out and budget approval will occur September 3rd. Mrs. Rogers has been frontloading much of the budget and believes everything can be done in one council meeting.

Mayor Cates noted that not all of the numbers will be in until mid-August. After Mrs. Rogers briefs Council on the budget during the planning session, the first public hearing will open August 20th and remain open until the September 3rd meeting when the budget is approved.

Further discussion. The Mayor confirmed that the only thing that is done at the council meeting is opening the public hearing and closing the public hearing, and possibly approving the budget.

Mayor Cates announced that Alderman Hunsucker has turned in his resignation, effective July 31, 2004, and he will be sorely missed. He added that it's been a pleasure to have served with Alderman Hunsucker for over 4 years, and he can't say enough about his contributions to the City. His intuition and common sense have been very advantageous to the Council, and he brought the City through a very difficult time. Mayor Cates wished Alderman Hunsucker the best in his future endeavors, and told him not to be a stranger.

Alderman Hunsucker said that he's learned a lot from sitting in the Mayor's seat. He now knows how to pray for leadership and extend grace in a whole different way. Serving as Mayor has taught him to be humble and to be a better Christian.

Alderman Breeding said of all the years she's spent on Council, and all the turnover she's seen, Alderman Hunsucker has been one of the best.

Alderman Schoenrock reminded Council that this creates a vacancy for an Alderman in Ward 1. The Mayor said the City has 30 days to fill the vacancy, so there is time to post the opening on the websites.

Mayor Cates accepted Alderman Hunsucker's resignation with sadness.

Items to Appear on the next agenda:

- a. City Judge contract

Mayor Cates stated that Judge Shaw has requested additional payment for Clerk of Court LeAnn Kellogg. Discussion on what previous judges and clerks have been paid.

The request is for the City to pay Ms. Kellogg \$800 for 60 hours per month, an increase of \$350 per month over her current \$450 per month. Ms. Kellogg is currently working full-time for the County, plus benefits, in addition to her contract with the City. Discussion on when work for the City is accomplished, given her full-time work for the County.



Alderman Hunsucker said that the contract specifies paying the Judge and the Clerk of Court directly, rather than the County. According to the City contract, time spent on the City is supposed to be on their own time to prevent "double-dipping," although there is some overlap.

Alderman Schoenrock said she would like to know how many cases have been handled by the Judge's office. She would like a list of trials, both judge and jury.

Mayor Cates explained that Judge Shaw and Clerk of Court Kellogg spent some extra time last year getting up to speed with a new program. However, access to records is much easier and faster now.

Discussion on the current contract which specifies that the City pay \$100 per month for expenses, and 50% of training (travel expenses) for which the County pays the other 50%. Alderman Schoenrock stated that everyone (other clerks) gets the same option for training as Ms. Kellogg. She stated that 60 hours would be an average of 3 hours per day per month that she would be working for the City on top of her full-time County job.

Alderman Schoenrock noted that the City attorney's bill has been going down, so she is interested in seeing how much the Judge and Clerk of Court have had to work to justify the request for pay raise.

Further discussion.

Chief Smith reported only 4 fireworks complaints and 2 firearm complaints over the 4th of July holiday and surrounding days allowed by City Code.

Meeting Adjourned

There being no further business to come before the Council, Motion by Alderman Doty, Second by Alderman Hunsucker, to adjourn the meeting at 7:01p.m.

- Motion Carried Unanimously

A blue ink signature of David Cates, written in a cursive style.

Mayor, David Cates

A purple ink signature of Amber Schoenrock, written in a cursive style.

Attest:
Council President, Amber Schoenrock