

MAY 19, 2020

The Town Council met in regular session at the Town Hall at 8:30 a.m.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by President Blaylock.

Present were: BLAYLOCK, ALSOP, WADE, WATSON, AND WILLIAMS along with Clerk-Treasurer Karla Atkins and Attorney Erin Bauer.

The following visitors were present: David Flanders, Randy Pease, Dan Barton, and Connie Weinzapfel.

Councilman Watson made and Wade seconded a motion the minutes of the previous regular meeting be approved. All were in favor. Motion carried.

Councilman Williams reported tree work should be completed at the cemetery soon.

Councilman Alsop made and Watson seconded a motion that David Vonderscher be appointed to the Park Board to replace Meagan Patterson. All were in favor. Motion carried.

President Blaylock asked for suggestions for salary adjustments. Councilman Watson made and Wade seconded a motion that a special meeting be scheduled to discuss this. All were in favor. Motion carried.

Councilman Alsop made and Wade seconded a motion that Town Hall be reopened to the public on June 1. All were in favor. Motion carried.

There was discussion on the Ribeyre Gym Restroom contract. President Blaylock stated he has spoken with Ribeyre Gym management, and they say the cost of \$1,800 for the six month contract still stands. However, they would also require that the Town pay to have the restrooms cleaned after every use. President Blaylock commented the New Harmony Business Associates feel the restrooms are a necessity, but they have not agreed to commit anything to help cover the cost. He is not in favor of the Town covering 100% of the cost. It was noted that cleaning after every use is not state mandated, but is a recommendation. This is what the Ribeyre Gym management has chosen to require, and they have not set a date as to when this will no longer be required. Councilman Williams made and Alsop seconded a motion that once the Ribeyre Gym management lifts the mandate of having the restrooms cleaned after each use, that the Town offer a short-term sponsorship, maybe three months, of opening the restrooms, while something is worked out with the Business Associates for the long run. President Blaylock stated if the Town agrees to the three month contract, there is no incentive for the Business Associates to contribute, in his opinion. Councilman Alsop suggested that a special meeting be held with some of the Business Associates members. Attorney Bauer suggested that they be invited to the next meeting. Councilman Wade pointed out the three month period could be during the winter when few visitors are in Town. The following vote was taken: ayes – Williams; nays – Blaylock, Alsop, Wade, and Watson. Motion denied. President Blaylock agreed to contact Jeff Smotherman and Chris Laughbaum and request their attendance at the June meeting. Councilman Alsop feels more than one person should attend on behalf of the Business Associates.

Councilman Alsop made and Wade seconded a motion the shelter house reopen on June 1, or later, if things change. All were in favor. Motion carried.

Councilman Alsop made and Wade seconded a motion the Murphy Park restrooms reopen on June 1. There was discussion about adding a sanitizing station or adding more cleanings. All were in favor except Councilman Williams. Motion carried.

Councilman Alsop made and Wade seconded a motion the playground equipment at Maclure and Murphy Parks be reopened on June 1. All were in favor. Motion carried.

Councilman Alsop made and Williams seconded a motion that a full refund be given to Julie Newton for the shelter house rental fee she paid but was cancelled by the Town. All were in favor except Councilman Blaylock. Motion carried.

President Blaylock reported two trees need removed at 906 Brewery. He has one estimate for the work and is in the process of getting another.

President Blaylock presented a quote from B & S Home Improvements for \$1,525 to replace the front door at Town Hall. Councilman Wade stated he would rather give the work to a local contractor. He commented the office door at the Town garage also needs replaced. Councilman Wade made and Watson seconded a motion the discussion be tabled until the next meeting so additional estimates can be obtained. All were in favor. Motion carried.

President Blaylock opened the required public hearing on Ordinance 2020-1, which sets the rates and charges of the water utility. He also read the Ordinance in title only. David Flanders suggested that Council rescind the currently proposed ordinance as he feels it is inequitable. He believes very low users should pay a lower minimum, and higher volumes should pay more per gallon instead of less, to discourage waste. President Blaylock stated the Town needs to maintain and improve the infrastructure. Dan Barton asked numerous questions regarding fire hydrants which have been replaced in the past few years. President Blaylock stated he did not have exact numbers on the projects. Mr. Barton asked if the proposed increase is for previous or future expenditures. President Blaylock stated it is for both. Mr. Barton commented no mention was ever made that a 30% increase was on the table, and that makes a total of a 60% increase in less than ten years. President Blaylock stated the funds are being constantly monitored. Councilman Williams commented he does not understand the math, but he would like Council to consider the numbers Mr. Flanders is proposing. President Blaylock compared the Town's rates to a nearby Town that recently had a rate increase. Councilman Williams asked if the increase could be spread out over a longer time period. President Blaylock recommended the Ordinance be passed as proposed, since all advertising, etc. has been completed. Councilman Watson made and Wade seconded a motion that Ordinance 2020-1 be adopted. All were in favor except Councilman Williams. Motion carried.

Councilman Wade made and Alsop seconded a motion the claims be allowed and the Clerk pay the same. All were in favor. Motion carried.

Councilman Alsop reported on dog feces in front of businesses downtown. President Blaylock commented he feels the only way to stop this it so make a plea to the public.

There being no further business, Councilman Wade made and Watson seconded a motion the meeting be adjourned. All were in favor. Motion carried and the meeting was adjourned at 9:37 a.m.

Alvin Blaylock, President of Town Council

Attest:

Karla L. Atkins, Clerk-Treasurer