CITY OF BENKELMAN

REGULAR MEETING

MONDAY, MARCH 27, 2023

The City Council met in the Council Chambers at 6:30 p.m. for the Regular Meeting. Present: Mayor Tammy Buffington (arrived at 7:50 p.m.); Council Members Nicholas Baney, JoAnn Decker, Barbara Pinkerton, Deb Stamm; City Clerk Diane Rosenfelt; City Superintendent James Summers; Acting Police Chief/Sheriff Smith. Absent: City Attorney Tawna Holmstedt. Others Present: Larry Boyd, Linda Jones, Becky Brown, Trevor Horner and Deputy Ryan King. Tanya Flint was present by phone.

Following the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag of the United States of America, President of Council, JoAnn Decker called the meeting to order and stated that we follow the open meetings law, which is posted on the south wall by the main entrance.

President of the Council JoAnn Decker told those in attendance that Mayor Buffington is at the Hester Foundation meeting and will be here shortly. Council Members had no comments.

Tanya Flint was on the phone to discuss the Bike Ride Across Nebraska (BRAN). This year will be BRAN’s 41st year organizing a ride across Nebraska, and Benkelman is the starting point for this year’s ride. The ride starts Sunday, June 4th with support staff arriving June 2nd and most of the riders arriving June 3rd. The City of Benkelman can provide the following:

* Park Bathrooms will be available.
* Trash Receptacles will be provided at the football field.
* The city will be available if there is a need for electrical help.

Trevor Horner asks to have Bobbie put a dumpster down at the fairgrounds for soccer that is going on and ball will be starting. Trevor also asked to be put on the agenda next month for the ballpark.

Sheriff Smith discussed issues he is dealing with on loud mufflers. The city will put a reminder in the newspaper of this violation along with the fines that can be issued. Sheriff Smith also discussed the red light not working at the Grade School, the city crew will check on this issue and also provide Sheriff Smith with a double sided stop sign for when we have an issue with this.

City Clerk/Treasurer Diane Rosenfelt reported to the council on an audit finding issue dealing with USDA required reserves underfunded by $11,980; this was not correct as we are overfunded by $29,258 because of paying one bond off.

Council member Nick Baney made the motion to approve special conditions for the CDBG Grant 22-DTR-003.

* Approve/Adopt Procurement Standards and Code of Conduct
* Approve/Adopt Proposed Fair Housing Action
* Approve/Adopt Limited English Proficiency (LEP)
* Approve President of the Council Signature on Statutory Checklist and State Statute 58.6 Other Requirements

Motion was seconded by Deb Stamm. Ayes: Baney, Decker, Pinkerton, Stamm; nays: none. Motion passed.

The City Council had a discussion on forgiving OOR Loan on 708 Cheyenne Street because of Hardship. The initial loan/grant was dated December 3, 2019, in the amount of $16,940. Council member Nick Baney made a motion to forgive ½ of the OOR Loan on 708 Cheyenne Street in the amount of $5,717.19, seconded by Barb Pinkerton. Ayes: Decker, Pinkerton, Stamm, Baney; nays: none. Motion passed.

There was no report from the CRA as they did not meet March 8, 2023, because they did not have a quorum.

Acting Police Chief/Sheriff Smith gave the monthly Police Report.

Council member Barb Pinkerton made the motion to transfer money from Sales Tax in the amount of $24,415.00 to pay Low Down Farms for the road work to the new City Shop, seconded by Deb Stamm. Ayes: Pinkerton, Stamm, Baney, Decker; nays: none. Motion passed.

**CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS:**

Council member Nick Baney made a motion to approve the consent agenda with changes to Low Down Farms if needed and follow up on 1209 D Street, seconded by Barb Pinkerton. Ayes: Stamm, Baney, Decker, Pinkerton; nays: none. Motion passed.

* Approve Minutes of February 20, 2023, Regular Meeting.
* Approve Treasurers Report.
* Approve Bills.
* Approve write-offs in the amount of $1,374.65.
* Planning Commission Minutes: Approved Demo Permit for Rebecca Brown for 1209 D Street; Chain Link Fence for Seth Stute at 907 A Street; Chicken Coop for Dustin & Elya McEvoy at 1103 A Street; Dog Kennel for Dawn Rosenbach at 609 Eagle Street.
* Approve SDL to Uppa Crik Hops LLC/Uppa Crik Hops Taproom-Dundy County Alumni Social.

Deputy Clerk, Lynette Behlke had information in the council packets concerning Disconnects & Door Hangers. The city council agreed that we do not need customers to have 3 reminders (utility bill, disconnect notice & door hanger) to know when their bill needs to be paid. Council member Nick Baney made the motion to quit hanging door hangers for disconnects, seconded by Barb Pinkerton. Ayes: Baney, Decker, Pinkerton, Stamm; nays: none. Motion passed.

Council member Nick Baney made a motion to hire the (4) lifeguards that we have applications for at this time and re-advertise again. The new guards receive $14.00 per hour and the ones coming back will receive a .50 cent an hour raise. This motion was seconded by Barb Pinkerton. Ayes: Decker, Pinkerton, Stamm, Baney; nays: none. Motion passed.

The office will be updating Ordinances for electrical, water and sewer rate increases to be ready for next month.

The city will be researching a grant to get another Baler for the recycling center.

Enclosed in the packets was a Water Report that was submitted by Jeremiah Unger (attached to these minutes).

City Clerk/Treasurer Diane Rosenfelt gave her monthly report (attached to these minutes).

City Superintendent James Summers gave his monthly report.

Council member Nick Baney made a motion to accept James Summers resignation as of March 31, 2023, and thanked him for his service and knowledge, seconded by Barb Pinkerton. Ayes: Pinkerton, Stamm, Baney, Decker; nays: none. Motion passed.

Council member Nick Baney made a motion to hire (3) three part-time outside employees and (1) one adult, at $14.00 per hour and the ones coming back will receive a .50 cent an hour raise, seconded by Barb Pinkerton. Ayes: Stamm, Baney, Decker, Pinkerton; nays: none. Motion passed.

Council member Nick Baney made the motion to go into Closed Session at 7:32 p.m. with Council, City Clerk/Treasurer and James Summers to discuss City Superintendent job and wages, seconded by Deb Stamm. Ayes: Baney, Decker, Pinkerton, Stamm; nays: none. Motion passed.

President of the Council JoAnn Decker stated that the subject matter to be discussed in Closed Session shall be limited to City Superintendent job and wages.

Mayor Tammy Buffington entered the meeting at 7:50 p.m.

Council member JoAnn Decker made the motion to come out of Closed Session at 8:09 p.m., seconded by Nick Baney. Ayes: Decker, Pinkerton, Stamm, Baney; nays: none. Motion passed.

Council member JoAnn Decker made a motion to hire Tim Smith as interim City Superintendent and advertise in the McCook Gazette and Benkelman Post for one week, seconded by Nick Baney. Ayes: Pinkerton, Stamm, Baney, Decker; nays: none. Motion passed.

Meeting adjourned at 8:27 p.m.

JoAnn Decker, President of Council

ATTESTED:

Diane L. Rosenfelt, City Clerk