CITY OF BENKELMAN

CITY COUNCIL MEETING

MONDAY JANUARY 17, 2021

REGULAR & VIRTUAL MEETING

The City Council met in the Council Chambers at 6:30 p.m. for the regular and virtual council meeting. Present: Mayor Robert Rhoades; Council Members JoAnn Decker, Barbara Pinkerton, Deb Stamm, Nicholas Baney; City Superintendent James Summers; Deputy Miller; City Clerk Diane Rosenfelt. Absent: City Attorney Jon Schroeder and Acting Police Chief/Sheriff Nichols. Others Present by Phone: Jess Vanden Berge; Five Rule Planning and Keith Carl; Hanna:Keelan: By Zoom: Bobbi Pettit; Five Rule Planning and Paul Higgins: In Person: Matt Clause and Jeff Tidyman; Engineering International, Buck Menuez, Sharon Rhoades, Larry Boyd, Carl & Linda Seabolt, Pam Shaw, Marily Chamberlain, Ryder Chamberlain, Justin Schorzman, Tish Burrell, Jason & Amy Frederick, Larry Sargent and Jan Bremer.

Following the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag of the United States of America, Mayor Rhoades 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.

Mayor Rhoades welcomed all in attendance to the meeting and welcome to 2022. Mayor Rhoades spoke about an application that is into the County Zoning of a new feedlot 20-25 miles north of town and what this would do for the community.

Jan Bremer was in attendance and questioned the city not pro-rating bills. She had her meter read out in the middle of the month and a renter move in; they both paid the full base rate for electric, water, sewer and garbage along with their usage. Ms. Bremer feels that the city is double billing for these services. This is the way it has been done for years and with checking with our City Attorney he had checked with a couple of communities, and they do the same thing. The city does not charge for read ins and read outs, but the customers pay the full base rate when they receive utilities. The City Council will take this under advisement and City Clerk Diane Rosenfelt will check with other communities our size and bring back to the council next month.

Paul Higgins spoke to the council over Zoom. Mr. Higgins gave an update concerning the airport and visiting with the City of McCook and their City Manager. Paul believes there are lessons to be learned and that he believes it would be a good idea for the City Council and Mayor of Benkelman to visit with the City of McCook and work together and gain knowledge of the struggles that all communities are dealing with.

Council member JoAnn Decker made the motion to accept the bid from Jesse Mallett for the demolition of the property at 214 Dakota in the amount of $4,500.00, seconded by Deb Stamm. Ayes: Baney, Decker, Pinkerton, Stamm; nays: none. Motion passed.

Matt Clause of Engineering International updated the council on the new city shop. They have been working on the plumbing and the building is on site, we should see some progress here soon.

Shawn Prochaska of RVW Inc. had an e-mail for the council to update them that the 15 KV reclosers are ordered and they plan to get going on the rest of phase one soon. They have not yet started phase two.

Bobbi Pettit and Jess Vander Berge of Five Rule Planning updated the council on the VPR Program and that it is time to renew the contract. They also discussed filing liens on the 7 properties that did not pay the first fee. To file the lien, they would need to have a title certificate to obtain the accurate legal description of the property and the accurate ownership. This would cost $125 per property. Council member JoAnn Decker made the motion to extend the VPR Contract for $750.00 for another year, seconded by Deb Stamm. Ayes: Decker, Pinkerton, Stamm, Baney; nays: none. Motion passed.

Council member JoAnn Decker made the motion to file liens on the properties that have not paid the 1st fees and have a title search done, seconded by Nick Baney. Ayes: Pinkerton, Stamm, Baney, Decker; nays: none. Motion passed.

Keith Carl of Hanna:Keelan gave a report on the updating of the City of Benkelman, Nebraska Downtown Redevelopment Area: Blight & Substandard Determination Study.

Buck Menuez President of the CRA gave an update on the CRA and the Coordinator’s Report.

Deputy Miller gave the monthly Sheriff’s report.

**CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS:**

Council member JoAnn Decker made a motion to approve the consent agenda, seconded by Barb Pinkerton. Ayes: Stamm, Baney, Decker, Pinkerton; nays: none. Motion passed.

* Approve Minutes of December 20, 2021, regular and virtual meeting and special meeting of January 10, 2022.
* Approve Treasurers Report.
* Approval of Bills.
* Approve Application for April Henderson part-time at Recycling & Dump for the wage she was making.
* Planning Commissions Minutes: Old Scrapbook Heaven Building/616 Chief, no permit needed: Scoop Media-Benkelman Post/513 Chief, permit approved: Chad Lucas/1105 Buffalo Street, building permit approved with the condition of moving front of building 25’ back from property line.
* Approve Special Designated License for Uppa Crik Hops LLC (dba, Uppa Crik Tap Room).

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 (attached to these minutes).

Meeting adjourned at 7:55 p.m.

Robert Rhoades, Mayor

ATTESTED:

Diane L. Rosenfelt, City Clerk