

Moscow City Council



Regular Meeting ~Minutes~

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Laurie M. Hopkins
City Clerk

208.883.7015

Monday, July 19, 2021

7:00 PM

**Council Chambers
206 E. Third St.**

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

PRESENT: Mayor Bill Lambert, Art Bettge, Sandra Kelly, Maureen Laflin, Gina Taruscio, Anne Zabala

ABSENT: Brandy Sullivan

STAFF: Gary J. Riedner, Mia Bautista, Bill Belknap, Tyler Palmer, Jen Pfiffner, Alisa Anderson, Evan Timar, Dana Rand, Francisco Sanchez, Laurie M. Hopkins

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Councilmember Zabala led the Pledge of Allegiance.

CONSENT AGENDA

1. All Consent Items (ACTION ITEM)

A. Approval of Moscow City Council July 6, 2021 Minutes - Laurie M. Hopkins

B. Disbursement Report June 2021 - Sarah Banks

Staff presented the June 2021 Accounts Payable Report to Public Works / Finance Committee on July 12, 2021. The Committee received the report and approved the disbursements as presented.

ACTION: Receive the Disbursements Report for the month of June 2021.

C. Third Quarter Financial Report April 1, 2021 to June 30, 2021 for FY2021 - Sarah Banks

The financial report for the third quarter of Fiscal Year 2021 (April 1, 2021 to June 31, 2021) was presented to the Public Works / Finance Committee on July 12, 2021 and recommended for approval.

ACTION: Approve the FY2021 Third Quarter Report.

D. Indian Hills Eighth Stormwater Utility Easement Vacation - Bob Buvel

In 2010 The Indian Hills Trading Company, LLC granted a stormwater utility easement necessary to convey stormwater running off the Indian Hills Eighth Development through what would later become the Indian Hills Ninth development. Improvements installed within Indian Hills Ninth, Phase Two, replaced the conveyance structure within the subject easement rendering the easement unnecessary. This vacation releases the City of Moscow rights associated with said easement. This was reviewed by the Public Works/Finance Committee on July 12, 2021 and recommended for approval.

ACTION: Approve the Indian Hills Eighth Stormwater Utility Easement Vacation.

E. State/Local Agreement – Construction – 3rd Street Safety Improvements Phase 1 and 2 - Nate Suhr / Alisa Anderson

The City applied for grants in 2017 and 2018 and was awarded both through the Local Highway Technical Assistance Council (LHTAC) under the Local Highway Safety Improvement Program (LHSIP) which is managed by LHTAC on behalf of the Idaho Transportation Department (ITD). The combined projects are located on Third Street (aka Hwy. 8) Lieuallen Street to 150' east of Lilly

(Phase 1) to Jackson Street (aka US Hwy. 95) Phase 2. The project will remove and replace concrete sidewalk, upgrade ADA pedestrian ramps, install curb and gutter while eliminating unused existing driveway, and include installation of LED luminaires to increase night-time visibility.

The City has been awarded \$419,986 in federal funds for Phase 1 construction requiring a match of \$280,474 with total project costs estimated at \$496,423; in addition to a Phase 2 award of \$335,410 in federal funds requiring a match of \$22,199 with total project costs estimated at \$361,688. Phase 1 and 2 combined total federal grant funding is \$1,175,878, city match of \$302,673, and total construction project costs of \$1,478,551. The Moscow Urban Renewal Agency is contributing \$107,750 (included in the City match listed above) to the LHSIP projects to assist with funding for the luminaires as part of their goal to improve infrastructure amenities within the Legacy Crossing District. This item was reviewed by the Public Works/Finance Committee on July 12, 2021 and recommended for approval.

ACTION: Approve the State/Local Agreement(s) (Construction) and corresponding Resolution(s), Project Nos. A020(483) Key 20483 and A021(997) Key No. 21997 3rd Street Safety Improvements Phase 1 and 2.

F. Community Development Block Grant Contract - Park Improvements - Alisa Anderson / Nate Suhr

The City applied for a \$225,000 Idaho Community Development Grant (ICDBG) for Public Parks Improvements from the Idaho Department of Commerce (IDOC) on September 21, 2020 and received notice of award for the full amount on November 2, 2020. The request included ADA improvements at both Mountain View Park and Indian Hills Park. The proposed combined projects will create an interconnected system of ADA available parking, pathways, and facilities that will allow full use of both parks for all members of the community. Staff anticipates the completion of both park projects in the late fall of 2021. This was reviewed by the Public Works/Finance Committee on July 12, 2021 and recommended for approval.

ACTION: Approve the Community Development Block Grant Contract for the Mountain View Park and Indian Hills Park ADA Access Projects.

Bettge moved and Laflin seconded to approve the consent agenda as presented. Roll Call Vote: Ayes: Unanimous. Nays: None. Abstentions: None. Motion carried.

REGULAR AGENDA

2. Staff Recognition Report - Gary J. Riedner

Palmer described the Public Works and Services Employee of the Year program which is nominated by the employees and recognizes the people behind the scenes. Francisco Sanchez who works in the Conveyance division. He has been an impeccable employee, positive attitude, and knows his impact to the city. Sanchez thanked everyone and said it was an honor to work for the public and to be selected knowing there are many colleagues that are worthy of this award. Mayor Lambert said he is a great example of an employee that makes it happen.

3. Mayors Appointments (ACTION ITEM)

Mayor Lambert put forward Olivia Sivula for appointment to the Fair and Affordable Housing Commission (FAHC). Bettge moved and Kelly seconded to approve Olivia Sivula to the FAHC. Roll Call Vote: Ayes: Unanimous. Nays: None. Abstentions: None. Motion carried.

4. Public Comment and Mayor's Response Period (limit 15 minutes)

Lydia McRoberts, Director of Legislative Affairs for ASUI said she is working on voter registration and will be attending more Council meeting. If any student issues come up, she would like to work on them with the City.

5. Confirmation of Appointment of Bill Belknap as City Supervisor as of January 7, 2022 – Gary J. Riedner / Mayor Lambert

Mayor Lambert presented Bill Belknap for appointment as City Supervisor beginning January 7, 2022. He said Belknap has over 20 years of experience in local, county and state government with over 18 years at the City.

Bettge moved and Taruscio seconded to appoint Bill Belknap as City Supervisor as of January 7, 2022. Roll Call Vote: Ayes: Unanimous. Nays: None. Abstentions: None. Motion carried.

Belknap thanked the Mayor and Council for the opportunity and is humbled and honored in the trust expressed. It is his distinct pleasure to have worked with Gary for most of the years at the City and is excited for Riedner to move into his new chapter. Belknap said he has big shoes to fill but sometimes duty calls. He thanked his wife and family and looks forward to continue working with his coworkers at the City. He is excited to continue and build upon on the great example of service, excellence and commitment Riedner has demonstrated over the last 27 years as City Supervisor.

6. Amendment to City Code to Address Management Reorganization (ACTION ITEM) – Gary J. Riedner / Mia Bautista

The City, as a municipal corporation of the State of Idaho, has the authority to exercise all powers and perform all functions of local self-government in City affairs that are not in conflict with the general laws or the constitution of the State of Idaho.

On October 7, 2019 the City Council passed Resolution 2019-19 authorizing the implementation of the reorganization management model and directed staff to prepare ordinance revisions to align with said model, which included the creation of new positions, along with the elimination of specific positions. More specifically, the new management model was implemented to aid the City Supervisor in providing effective oversight of the entirety of the City Operations. The reorganization created four operational groups, with the City Supervisor maintaining and continuing to provide overall administration and oversight. The reorganized management model is intended to be a framework which supports the efficient use of increasingly scarce public resources by encouraging teamwork and aligning collaborative interests, thereby creating greater opportunities for the City to move forward into the future. This proposed ordinance revision addresses the changes approved by Council in 2019, and makes additional job description and job position changes that are in line with the reorganization. This was reviewed by the Administrative Committee on July 12, 2021 and recommended for approval.

The Titles and Chapters that are impacted by the new reorganization model and are incorporated in the proposed ordinance are as follows:

Title 1, Chapter 1

Title 2, Chapters 3, 9, 11, 12, 13, and new chapter 14

Title 3, Chapters 11 and 14

Title 4, Chapters 1, 3, 5, and 7

Title 5, Chapters 1, 3, 11, 12, 13, 15, 16 17, and 18

Title 6, Chapters 1 and 2

Title 7, Chapters 9 and 11

Title 10, Chapters 14 and 17

PROPOSED ACTIONS: Review the proposed draft ordinance and approve the Ordinance under suspension of the rules requiring three complete and separate readings and that it be read by title and published by summary; or consider the Ordinance on first reading and that it be read by title; or reject the Ordinance; or take such other action deemed appropriate.

Riedner introduced the item as written above and described the four distinct work groups the reorganization creates. Council passed and approved a resolution authorizing staff to move to the new management style in October 2019. The Mayor and City Council is not seeding any authority to staff that isn't already in place by ordinance or law. The City Supervisor and deputy's meet regularly to discuss city-wide operational policy which allows the City Supervisor to take some task issues and move them to deputies which in turn allows the City Supervisor to focus on mayor/council relations and general oversight of operations. There are references throughout the City Code to positions that are no longer in the management organization. Mayor Lambert said succession was a large discussion when talking about the reorganization. The only change to the model since 2019 was the shift of Information Systems to Administration, Finance and Public Safety Group.

Zabala felt the City is already reaping the benefits and can see that in the succession of the City Supervisor position. She was pleasantly surprised the City Council and Commissions were added to the chart. Zabala moved to approve the ordinance under suspension of the rules requiring three complete and separate readings and that it be read by title and published by summary. Kelly seconded. Roll Call Vote: Ayes: Unanimous. Nays: None. Abstentions: None. Motion carried.

Mayor Lambert read Ordinance 2021-09:

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF MOSCOW, IDAHO, A MUNICIPAL CORPORATION OF THE STATE OF IDAHO; PROVIDING FOR THE AMENDMENT OF MOSCOW CITY CODE TITLE 1, CHAPTER 1, TITLE 2, CHAPTERS 3, 9, 11, 12, AND 13, TITLE 3, CHAPTERS 11 AND 14, TITLE 4, CHAPTERS 1, 3, 5, AND 7, TITLE 5, CHAPTERS 1, 3, 11, 12, 13, 15, 16, 17, AND 18, TITLE 6, CHAPTERS 1 AND 2, TITLE 7, CHAPTERS 9 AND 11, AND TITLE 10, CHAPTERS 14 AND 17; PROVIDING FOR THE ADDITION OF CHAPTER 14 TO TITLE 2; PROVIDING FOR THE REORGANIZED MANAGEMENT MODEL; PROVIDING THAT THE PROVISIONS OF THIS ORDINANCE BE DEEMED SEVERABLE; AND PROVIDING FOR THIS ORDINANCE TO BE IN FULL FORCE AND EFFECT FROM THE DATE OF ITS PASSAGE, APPROVAL AND PUBLICATION ACCORDING TO LAW.

7. Recommendation to Declare Certain Past Due Utility Bills Uncollectable and Reinstate Collection Policies (ACTION ITEM) – Gary J. Riedner

In April, 2020, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the City suspended certain past-due utility billing collection practices, including assessing of late fees and water shut-off procedures. These practices were suspended to provide relief to utility billing customers who were suffering financial hardship because of the effects of the pandemic. In the interim since April 2020, the City has implemented new enterprise-wide financial software, and on February 16, 2021 the City Council adopted Resolution 2021-01, which implemented a revised utility billing procedure, which placed the responsibility for payment of utility bills on the owner of the property being served by the utility. This revised utility billing procedure was implemented for the March, 2021 billing cycle.

Staff is requesting authorization to declare past due utility bills for billing periods prior to the March, 2021 billing cycle as uncollectable, as described in the attached memo from the City Supervisor. Declaring such past-due utility bills uncollectable provides relief to some utility customers from the effects of the pandemic. Staff is also requesting authorization to return to the practices of assessing late fees and shut-off procedures to assist in collection of past-due utility bills. This was reviewed by the Public Works/Finance Committee on July 12, 2021 and recommended for approval.

PROPOSED ACTIONS: Authorize declaring past due utility bills for billing periods prior to the March, 2021 billing cycle as uncollectable, as described in the attached memo from the City Supervisor, and to return to the practices of assessing late fees and shut-off procedures to assist in collection of past-due utility bills, or take such other action deemed appropriate.

Riedner introduced the item as written above adding the amount of unpaid, past due utility bills incurred prior to March 2021 billing cycle totals \$143,054 and is not in privity of contract with the property owners. If declared uncollectable, it would coincide with the revised utility billing procedure which was implemented for the March, 2021 billing cycle. Residential customers total 61.5% of the total. The sewer utility will have the highest amount of revenue loss at \$62,622, 43.8% of the total.

Lambert asked if anyone from the public wanted to comment. No one spoke up.

Riedner said staff has been following council direction and not collecting past dues. Laflin said she is in support. It helped citizens when they needed it. The amount of time it would take City staff to collect money from individuals the City has no information on would be ridiculous. It is prudent on both levels of helping people and being fiscally responsible.

Taruscio would like to know how many residents this helped. Kelly is in favor of this and feels bad those that struggled and yet still made payments. She recognized and thanked those that went out of their way to pay their bill.

Zabala would also like information such as a breakdown of SFH as renters versus owners; young versus old. She appreciates this will be offset by revenues for the current year.

Bettge moved to authorize declaring past due utility bills for billing periods prior to the March, 2021 billing cycle as uncollectable, as described in a memo from the City Supervisor, and to return to the practices of assessing late fees and shut-off procedures to assist in collection of past-due utility bills. Kelly seconded. Zabala added this is the right thing to do and the right time to go back to normal practices. Roll Call Vote: Ayes: Unanimous. Nays: None. Abstentions: None. Motion carried.

REPORTS

City Council

Moscow Urban Renewal Agency – Bettge said the Agency sold two more lots in Alturas. There was a reduction in price on one lot that has had difficulty in construction due to topography.

Moscow Volunteer Fire Department – Bettge said the Department discussed updates to the Lexipole program, policies and procedures and establishing quantifiable metrics for keeping volunteers in good status.

Palouse Knowledge Corridor – Zabala reported the executive director position is open.

Moscow Pathways Commission – Kelly said the Commission is planning for the annual bike tour.

Transportation Commission – Taruscio reported the Commission discussed shared mobility and geofencing and intra-city transit between Moscow and Pullman;

Mayor

Mayor Lambert said the budget workshop was last week and the public hearing is on August 2, 2021. Rendezvous in the Park takes place July 24 and a Cal Ripken regional tournament begins Thursday with 7 teams from four states. It will be a great time to showcase the playfields and the city.

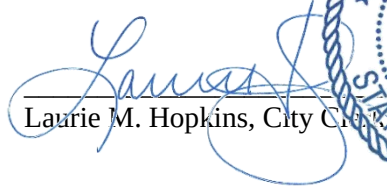
Staff

No report.

ADJOURN

It was moved, seconded and mutually agreed upon to adjourn at 7:59 p.m.

ATTEST:


Laurie M. Hopkins, City Clerk




Bill Lambert, Mayor