

Moscow City Council



Regular Meeting ~Minutes~

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Laurie M. Hopkins
City Clerk

208.883.7015

Monday, August 16, 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, Brandy Sullivan, Gina Taruscio

ABSENT: Anne Zabala

STAFF: Gary J. Riedner, Mia Bautista, Jen Pfiffner, Tyler Palmer, Amanda Argona, Megan Cherry, Evan Timar, Mark, Laurie M. Hopkins

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Council President Bettge led the Pledge of Allegiance.

CONSENT AGENDA

1. All Consent Items (ACTION ITEM)

A. Approval of Moscow City Council August 2, 2021 Minutes - Laurie M. Hopkins

B. Disbursement Report July 2021 - Sarah Banks

Staff presented the July 2021 Accounts Payable Report on August 9, 2021. The Committee received the report and approved the disbursements as presented.

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

C. Renewal of Intermodal Transit Center Lease with SMART Transit - Gary J. Riedner

The City currently leases space in the Intermodal Transit Center to Regional Public Transportation (RPT) dba SMART Transit. The initial lease was executed on September 4, 2012, and the term was three years, expiring on September 30, 2015. In 2016, an amendment extended the term of the original lease for an additional five (5) years, expiring on September 20, 2020. Due to an oversight on the part of both the City and SMART, the lease was not renewed prior to expiration. SMART has been occupying the Intermodal Transit Center under the terms of the prior lease, pending the negotiation of a new lease. The attached lease has been updated and prepared by the City Attorney and reviewed by SMART Transit Executive Director Ben Aiman and the SMART Transit Board. This was reviewed by the Administrative Committee on August 9, 2021 and recommended for approval.

ACTION: Approve the Lease Agreement Between Regional Public Transportation (dba SMART Transit) and the City of Moscow, and approve the Resolution authorizing said Lease.

Bettge moved, Taruscio 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

Timar recognized Marc Branscome who be the new Idaho Regional Director for PNCWA. Marc was President of the North Idaho Operators section for PNCWA from 2013 – 2018, and has been the Vice

President of NIOS from 2018 to present. His role as Regional Director starts on September 15th for a 3-year term. Branscome said he has been volunteering for the organization for many years and appreciates the opportunity to serve.

3. Mayors Appointments (ACTION ITEM)

None offered.

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

Dan Schoenberg (Moscow) spoke on public relations issues in regards to the budget. He feels the average student and citizen in Moscow only see “green” going out of their pockets. He suggested a communication pattern so citizens can talk about the budget in advance of the public hearing so there is less surprise. See attached letter passed out at the council meeting.

5. Public Hearing: Proposed FY2022 Fee Resolution (ACTION ITEM) - Gary J. Riedner

Any fee increase being proposed by more than 5% or any new fees require a public hearing pursuant to Idaho Code 63-1311A. Additionally, as required by Idaho Code 63-1311, the City's fees collected shall be reasonably related to the actual cost of the service provided. Staff will discuss proposed fee increases for the FY2022 budget year, which support the FY2022 budget adopted by City Council after a public hearing held August 2, 2021. The fee increases are due to the additional costs associated with the delivery of services, including administration, operations and maintenance.

PROPOSED ACTIONS: Conduct the public hearing and after considering testimony, approve the attached FY2022 Fee Resolution with or without changes; or take such other action deemed appropriate.

Riedner went through an explanation of how land use fees are determined including costs for issuance, publication, and staff time. Fees are also restructured from time to time and are related to providing service. Using the Supreme Court calculation, General Facilities Charges are underfunded. Staff put together a 10 year plan for getting it back to normal. Mayor Lambert said the stormwater fees are mandated and implementation was delayed last year due to COVID. Riedner added the fee started out over \$12.00, reduced to \$9.00 and staff was able to cut it back even more to \$7.92. The first few years will be cleaning and assessing the system. Determining capital can then be assessed.

Mayor Lambert opened the public hearing at 7:27 p.m.

Victoria Seever (Moscow) said the City is about providing services and services cost money and do increase. The stormwater fee is federally required and she doesn't want the City to pay \$150,000 per day if not in compliance. She sees how much staff finds ways to reduce costs and work efficiently throughout the year.

Dan Schoenberg (rural Moscow) spoke on the deposit for water sewer garage (WSG). More than 70% of tenants that move haven't paid the last month WSG bill. The property management/owner must deal with the aftermath. If there are other charges that consume the deposit, the property management/owner has to pursue the tenant. With the WSG bill approximately \$120, he felt it should be raised from \$100 to \$130-135. He appreciated the comments on tax relief and on the new stormwater fee. He felt there should be more education regarding WSG bills, especially with the large group of students coming back into town. Schoenberg explained even though owners had a tax break last year, assessed value went up so rents were not lowered but not raised either.

Ken Grubs (Moscow) said his taxes for his home are more than one month social security tax. Taxes from 2011 to 2022 went up 34%. His pay increase at the U of I over 10 years was 11%. Cost of eating out is rising. A 5% increase sounds reasonable. However, there are many people in this similar situation where if increases continue, he won't be able to pay his bills.

Mayor Lambert closed the public hearing at 7:44 p.m.

Sullivan commented the City has to ensure services to every citizen of Moscow and it costs money to do so. Costs go up and if fees are cut, the City could not provide the services. She suggested talking to the legislature and request an increase to the home owners exemption.

Bettge also stated fees are paid for services received. He would consider increasing the WSG deposit fee to \$135. Staff didn't increase the deposit fee because they were trying to reduce the impact to the residents.

Taruscio appreciated Grubs perspective and agrees with Sullivan it costs money to provide services. She has watched staff work with minimal resources. She doesn't want to have increases in fees but need to do so that services remain high.

Kelly said it is sticker shock when every penny counts and can be the difference between going out or eating leftovers. She knows it is difficult with the increase but grateful the City took the \$1.6 federal relief funds. She is impressed with staff who work diligently with what we have. Sullivan reiterated the stormwater fees were planned for last year and postponed, staff didn't receive raises last year, and this year the budget/taxes/fees are returning more to the level of 2020.

Mayor Lambert added a citizen can challenge the \$7.92 stormwater fee based on their own situation.

Laflin said it is important to educate citizens on the difference between last year's budget and this year's budget. It could be done incrementally through the Daily News and a press release.

Sullivan supported the increase in the deposit fee. Riedner said \$120 was the average prior to the increase to WSG fees. Consensus of the Council was to raise the deposit fee to \$125.

Bettge moved to approve the attached FY2022 Fee Resolution with the increase of the WSG deposit from \$100 to \$125. Kelly seconded. Roll Call Vote: Ayes: Unanimous. Nays: None. Abstentions: None. Motion carried.

6. Open Container Ordinance Revisions for Downtown Events (ACTION ITEM) – Gary J. Riedner / Mia Bautista

The City of Moscow has sponsored and approved community events such as Art Walk, and the Vandal Town Block Party, as well as the expansion of sidewalk cafés, and has approved events in downtown Moscow and in Moscow's parks where the City Council passed resolutions allowing for the vending and responsible consumption of beer and/or wine under certain conditions during an event. As the City Council wants to foster a vibrant downtown community atmosphere, and encourage and promote downtown businesses to collaborate in making these events successful, staff has been requested to review the process for the creation of an Entertainment District. Within the Entertainment District, community events could be held, and upon adoption of a resolution of the City Council, the sale and responsible consumption of beer and wine could occur. In order to allow the consumption of beer and wine outside of sidewalk cafés or a beer garden, the City would have to create an exemption to Moscow City Code 10-1-12, commonly known as the "open container" ordinance, which prohibits the possession of alcoholic beverages while present in a public place or a place where the public has permitted access, including public streets and/or public rights-of-way in the City, except in accordance with specific regulations adopted by the Council by Resolution.

The draft Ordinance included in the packet contains necessary revisions to the Moscow City Code to allow the creation of an Entertainment District to be defined by the map attached to the draft Ordinance and to allow the inclusion of the Entertainment District as an additional exemption to the

open container prohibition. This was reviewed by the Administrative Committee on August 9, 2021 and recommended for adoption of the ordinance.

PROPOSED ACTIONS: Approve the Ordinance creating the Entertainment District and including the Entertainment District as an additional exemption to the open container prohibition 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. If someone left the venue, the person would be in violation of the open container law. Most likely the entire area would not be completely closed for an event due to still needing to move traffic. Mayor Lambert said he is very excited about this update to the code. The town needs to be showcased and livened up a bit. This isn't about drunken brawls. It is similar to when Rendezvous requested a beer garden for the first time. Riedner explained that the application process is by event. This is not a suspension of the open container law all the time. Every application that requests alcohol will come before City Council.

Mayor Lambert asked for public comment.

Samantha Martinet (Moscow), Executive Director for the Chamber of Commerce, said over the last few weeks the entertainment district has been discussed with business owners and there is broad enthusiasm. It will bring out the cherished features of the downtown and reinforce and enhance that vibrancy.

Stefan Yahtzee (Moscow), owner of Pour Company, said this is a great move and will bring people from outside of Moscow into the downtown.

George Skandalos (Moscow), citizen and local business owner, said the Council has made great decisions over the last year. This is something that will be well received by the business community but also the surrounding area at large. What makes Moscow special are events in the downtown. He thanked the Council for all the decisions this last year.

Alan Espenschade (Moscow) said Moscow has a vibrant downtown community. It will be fun to invite people from outside the community to the downtown. It will create comradery, community, and a good time.

Chloe Rambo (Moscow) Moscow Food Co-op, said this is one more opportunity to bring the community together.

Dan Schoenberg (rural Moscow) said it reminds him of the exemption of the open container for the Vandal games. He said private parking lot driveways are sometimes blocked during events. He hopes when looking at applications, driveways are reviewed so that businesses are able to do what they do. He feels this change is very good for the downtown.

Bettge asked for clarification regarding the question of parking restrictions. Palmer explained different events can have different parking requirements. An example is using a food truck that doesn't necessarily close the street.

Kelly said she loves this idea. With a beer garden, parents and children are separated. This is family friendly and allows the participants to enjoy as a community.

Laflin is looking forward to future events as it is another thing that can enhance Moscow.

Bettge moved to approve the Ordinance creating the Entertainment District and including the

Entertainment District as an additional exemption to the open container prohibition under suspension of the rules requiring three complete and separate readings and that it be read by title and published by summary. Seconded by Kelly. Roll Call Vote: Ayes: Unanimous. Nays: None. Abstentions: None. Motion carried.

Mayor Lambert read Ordinance 2021-11 by title:

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 9, CHAPTERS 6 AND 8 AND TITLE 10, CHAPTER 1; PROVIDING FOR THE INCLUSION OF AN ADDITIONAL EXEMPTION TO THE OPEN CONTAINER PROHIBITION; PROVIDING FOR THE PROVISIONS OF THIS ORDINANCE TO 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. American Rescue Plan Act – National Endowment for the Arts Grant (ACTION ITEM) - Alisa Anderson / Megan Cherry

The American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (“Rescue Plan”) is designed to fuel the nation’s recovery from the devastating economic and health effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. Funds allocated to the National Endowment for the Arts (“Arts Endowment”) represent a significant commitment to the arts and a recognition of the value of the arts and culture sector to the nation’s economy and recovery. Grants will be made to eligible organizations to support operational costs. Rescue Plan funds are intended to support day-to-day business expenses/operating costs, and not specific programmatic activities. Eligible grant activities and costs include salary support for one or more staff positions and may be used to support existing jobs, new jobs, or to restore jobs that were furloughed or eliminated due to the pandemic. Additional eligible costs include fees/stipends for artists and/or contractual personnel to support the services they provide for specific activities as part of organizational operations. Artist fees/stipends should be related to work with a tangible outcome, such as performances, presentations, workshops, and/or the creation of artwork. Funding may also be used for costs associated with health and safety supplies for staff and/or visitors/audiences (e.g., personal protective equipment, cleaning supplies, hand sanitizer, etc.) in addition to marketing and promotion costs. Awarded applications will be notified in November 2021 with the grant project period for two years starting January 1, 2022 and ending December 31, 2023. The Arts Department for the City of Moscow is requesting to submit a grant request not to exceed \$100,000 to support staffing costs, marketing and promotions, and artist/fees and stipends. This item was reviewed by the Public Works/Finance Committee on August 9, 2021, and forwarded to the full Council for further consideration.

PROPOSED ACTIONS: Approve staff to submit a grant application under the American Rescue Plan Act through the National Endowments for the Arts for an amount not to exceed \$100,000, or take such other action deemed appropriate.

Cherry introduced the item as written above. The National Endowment for the Arts is trying to keep arts programs in place. They look to support organizations that have limited experience of the arts based on ethnicity, disabilities, economical and geographically challenged. Moscow is geographically challenged as it is disconnected from the core of the arts world. Moscow aligns with the goals of this program. This grant would support the FY2022 temporary collection artist honorarium, evaluation of approaches to maintaining Moscow public art and to offset the administrative assistant salary from April 2022 to September 2023.

Sullivan felt the plan for how to use the money is excellent and moved to approve staff to submit a grant application under the American Rescue Plan Act through the National Endowments for the Arts for an amount not to exceed \$100,000. Laflin seconded. Roll Call Vote: Ayes: Unanimous. Nays: None. Abstentions: None. Motion carried.

REPORTS

City Council

Moscow Volunteer Fire Department – Bettge said the Department is continuing to discuss the Lexipole document to be sure the Department is within the legal standards for operations and procedures.

Farmers Market Commission – Bettge reported the Commission is discussing issues on how to judge what is local and not local; completed a branding for the FM.

Moscow Arts Commission – Sullivan said the Commission received the final report from the outgoing poet laureate; creation of a palm card of what they have been doing and how people can support the arts; Third Street Gallery schedule is set.

Parks and Recreation Commission – Sullivan said the strategic planning workshop is this Thursday.

Moscow Pathways Commission – Kelly said the annual tour will take place on September 14 and the opportunity for citizens to send photos of them riding on pathways.

Fair and Affordable Housing Commission – Taruscio said the Commission is discussing survey's and questions; asking if their commission will be involved with how the affordable housing budget item monies are allotted; presentation from citizens action group regarding climate change and housing.

Planning and Zoning Commission – Taruscio said there was a series of public hearings.

Transportation Commission – The Commission reviewed the same subdivisions from P&Z in regards to transportation; intercity transit community interest.

Mayor

Mayor said the Mayor's Golf Tournament was held and had 25 teams and full sponsorship. The funds raised are going to the Moscow food bank. Bettge added his team ended 12 over par and received the worst team award.

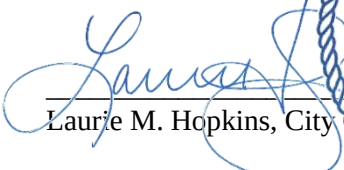
Staff

Riedner reminded the Council the annual employee appreciation picnic will take place Tuesday the 24 at the aquatics center.

ADJOURN

It was moved, seconded and mutually agreed upon to adjourn at 8:48 p.m.

ATTEST:


Laurie M. Hopkins, City Clerk




Bill Lambert, Mayor

August 16, 2021

Mayor and Moscow City Council

RE: 2022 Budget and Public Relations

When this evenings vote on the fee resolution is complete we will have a good idea of the impact of taxes and fees in 2022 on the average family in Moscow as it relates to the City of Moscow.

City of Moscow 2022 Budget	
Base Taxes and fees	Budget Increase <i>(Pending Fees)</i>
3% Property Tax Increase	\$187,814
New Construction	\$60,586
5% Water Fees	\$440,343
2.25% Sewer Fees	\$183,764
Storm Water Fees	\$1,251,924
Property Tax Relief Expiration	\$1,640,000
Total Out of Pocket Moscow Citizens	\$3,764,431

If my calculations are correct, the amount of dollars moving from the citizen's pocket to the city budgets related to basic (*property taxes 3%, property tax new construction, WSG fees, Storm water fees, and property tax relief expiration*) taxes and fees will increase **\$3,764,431.00**. This calculates to an average of approximately **\$146.10** per person, including children this next year.

At Palouse Properties we have begun working on ways to communicate with the owners for whom we manage and the tenants who live in this community about the coming increases and the impact on rental rates and operational expenses in the coming year. Given the magnitude of the increase we feel it will be much better to be proactive in this communication rather than waiting for the sticker shock coming between November 1 and early 2022.

We are recommending the City Council discuss the merits of organizing and publicizing the impact of the collection of taxes and fees upon the citizens. It matters not if they are home owners, business owners, retirees, students, renters, kids in K-12 or part of the work force, this will have a fundamental impact on everyone. I remember this year when the city (we) had a problem of contamination in the recycling roll carts and the amount effort and resources expended to communicate with the general public what was occurring. I would certainly hope that the current increases would merit a response that rises to the level of the increased taxes and fee collection for FY2022.

If there is a way in which we could assist in this public relations effort please let us know.

Respectfully,



Dan Schoenberg