

City of Tetonia
Tetonia City Council
Regular Meeting Minutes
December 10, 2024 @ 7PM

OPEN MEETING

- Call to order by Mayor Schindler
- Pledge of Allegiance led by Mayor Schindler

Roll Call by Carol Lenz, City of Driggs Finance Officer – In attendance: Councilmembers Blaine Ball, Ryan Bonilla, Mandy Rasmussen, Mayor Brent Schindler. Absent: Councilmember Aaron Hansen. Also in attendance: City Attorney Bart Birch (8:23pm), P&Z Consultant Ashley Kohler (via telephone), and Public Works Director Clint Moulton.

Public in Attendance: Justin Mehlhaff, Rick Miller, McKay Porter, Jason Nelson, Morgan Beard, and Danielle Clegg

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

PUBLIC HEARING: None

ACTION ITEMS

Fence Permit Approval, 6247 S Main

The fence at 6247 S Main was installed without a permit and is out of compliance. Kohler, P&Z Consultant, recommended that the City's P&Z Commission review the fence application which it did at its December 2024 meeting. Kohler explained that, based on its review of existing City code 9-10-6-4 and Design Standards, the P&Z Commission has recommended that the fence along Main Street be reduced in height to 3' and at such time that a commercial use is constructed along the front of the property, a 6' screened fence may be approved as part of a future Design Review application.

Mehlhaff, property owner, addressed the Council. He requested approval of the fence as installed stating 1) he believes the fence looks better than the residence, 2) installation has reduced public view of his property, and 3) privacy has increased due to a reduction in traffic light and noise.

Lenz suggested a compromise, allowing the fence to remain as installed for a period not to exceed two years. If a commercial business is not in place in front of the residence by the end of the two-year timeframe the fence height would be reduced as recommended by P&Z. Kohler countered, requesting approval as P&Z recommended.

Following discussion by Council, Bonilla moved, as amended, to follow the recommendation of the P&Z Commission to reduce the installed fence height to 3' facing Main Street, leaving the post height at 6', with fencing height reduction to be completed by May 31, 2025. Rasmussen 2nd. The motion carried unanimously.

Approval of Admin Contract for Block Park Grant

The City has been awarded a \$245,000 Idaho Community Development Block Grant (ICDBG) #ICDBG-24-VI-23-PK to go toward improvements at Ruby Carson Memorial Park, i.e. the Tetonia Public Parks Project. Council was tasked with review and requested approval of a \$24,500 contract with Altura to administer the grant for the City. Miller, representing Altura, was on hand to answer questions. He confirmed that Tetonia is in District 7 and outlined the timeline for the project with contract approval. The first step in the timeline is conducting an environmental review, which Altura will contract. Once the environmental review is completed and accepted, the State will release funds to the City.

The next step in the timeline will be design and request for construction bids. Miller will work with Forsgren Engineering on design and bid completion in Spring 2025. Construction should be completed by Fall of 2025. One possible hold-up to construction completion may be the timing of the proposed pre-cast restroom which has a lead time of six-to-nine months.

After discussion, Ball moved to approve the ICDBG-24-VI-23-PK administration contract with Altura, at a cost not to exceed \$24,500, pending contract review by the City's attorney. Bonilla 2nd. Motion carried unanimously. [Birch, City Attorney, approved the contract as proposed after review at the meeting]

Approval of 2025 Liquor License Applications

Four 2025 liquor applications were presented for approval: Badger Creek, Dave's Pubb, Grandview General Store, and the Tetonia Club. Ball pointed out the non-compliance issues by the Tetonia Club in 2024. Rasmussen questioned whether or not the City could deny a license renewal based on music issues. Birch stated he will review State code but he does not believe the City can deny licensure based on other events not tied to alcohol related issues e.g. serving a minor. Birch did confirm that the City can deny temporary permits such as those required for special events. He believes the City can suspend an approved license; however, he recommended that City Clerk/Treasurer Beard be consulted since she has researched the City's options.

Bonilla moved to approve the four (4) 2025 liquor applications as presented. Rasmussen 2nd. The question was called with Bonilla and Rasmussen, aye; Ball, nay. The motion carried.

Xpress Bill Pay, Credit Card Processor

Council was asked to approve changing the City's credit card payment processor from Access Idaho to Xpress Bill Pay (XBP). Lenz noted that the City of Driggs has used XBP for years. It interfaces seamlessly with Caselle software and should save hours of work for Clerk/Treasurer Beard. Lenz did caution the Council that it is committing to a minimum term of use for three-years and that XBP will charge for every transaction plus standard monthly fees. Rasmussen responded that she had "done the math" and estimates that current processing takes Beard's time at a cost of nearly \$5,700 per year.

In addition to streamlining Beard's time, XBP should also improve the customer's experience. Customers can either make payment as a guest or create an XBP account. With an account, customers can see two-years of history, set-up monthly auto-payments, and opt out of receiving a monthly bill choosing to receive a bill via email instead. Set-up and training are quick with customer use estimated to be up and running by March 2025.

Bonilla moved to approve contracting with Xpress Bill Pay as proposed. Rasmussen 2nd. Motion carried unanimously.

CONSENT AGENDA

- November Claims
 - Ball questioned the \$636.00 gravel expense to Action Excavation. Moulton, Public Works Director, responded that it was for filling pot holes. Ball requested that future gravel have a placidity rating for dirt roads.
 - Fremont-Madison Irrigation District \$40 Assessment Fee. Lenz responded that it was probably an annual fee to be part of the District.
 - Teton County Tax Collector fees are for the Transfer Station not property taxes.
 - Rasmussen noted the Verizon phone plans expense of \$691.72, questioning whether or not the Council had decided to move all phone plans to Silver Star. Ball responded, “at final conversion to fiber”.
 - Ball moved to approved November claims as presented. Rasmussen 2nd. Motion carried unanimously.
- November Minutes
 - Ball moved to approve the November minutes inclusive of the Mayor’s edits. Bonilla 2nd. Motion carried unanimously.
- Past due accounts were reviewed by the Mayor and the Council with notice letters to be sent to accounts discussed.
- Staff reports were presented/reviewed.

ENFORCEMENTS, COMPLIANCE UPDATES

- Fence compliance, 3039 Central Avenue

The property owner has not brought the fence into compliance. Concern is the amount of junk behind the fence. Efforts to contact the owner, who resides in California during the winter, have not been successful. Per Attorney Birch, the City does have the option to sue the owner for all costs that the City pays to remove the junk. If adjudicated in the City’s favor, i.e., a court order with monetary judgement, the City could then place a lien on the property and eventually auction the property at a Sheriff’s sale. Mayor Schindler and Attorney Birch will craft a letter to be sent certified to the property owner.
- Water Tower Locks

Moulton reported cutting off seven or so locks put on the access gate by Crown Castle/Cell Tower vendor personnel. He has had to replace as many locks put on by the City. Although vendor personnel have been friendly, cutting and replacing locks has become an issue. Consensus was reached by Council to send each vendor a letter notifying them of the issue and that each occurrence will be subject to a fine from the City. If the issue continues, vendors may be required to obtain prior access permission from the City.

DISCUSSION

- Silver Star Fiber Optic Project Review
M Beard, Nelson, and Porter, all Silver Star representatives, gave a review of the fiber optic project in Tetonia. They reported:
 - Main fiber is in; push now is for hooking up in homes
 - 93% take rate to transition from copper to fiber
 - Last equipment piece should be received within two weeks; Silver Star will be sending out a letter encouraging those who have not signed up to do so and for those who have signed up to schedule in-home installation
 - Silver Star invested \$0.5 Million in Tetonia on this project which could translate into a 4-8% increase in property value with fiber connection
 - Final closeout of the project is anticipated in late Spring 2025
 - The project has gone so well in Tetonia that Silver Star will be modeling other projects the same
 - “Thank you” – Tetonia has been great to work with

- Supplemental Insurance Offers
Presented at the request of City Clerk/Treasurer Beard, the request is for the City to sign up with Washington National to provide supplemental insurance, similar to Aflac, for staff. Opting in would be voluntary with the premiums paid 100% by individual staff at the level each selects. Although Council did not object to offering a voluntary supplemental insurance plan, the request will be brought back in January as an action item.

MAYOR’S UPDATES

- The Postmaster has asked again for permission, which was not granted, to put mail boxes on Main Street due to a lack of space in the present building. Mayor Schindler will work with the Postmaster to determine alternatives/possible options.

- The blinking crosswalk by the Horn Gallery building is not working correctly. Ball asked if the original vendor is known. He may have a contact for a company that works on similar lights and will provide the contact information to Clerk/Treasurer Beard.

EXECUTIVE SESSION per IC 74-206-XX: None

ADJOURN MEETING

8:36pm Ball moved to adjourn; Rasmussen 2nd. The motion carried unanimously.

Brent Schindler, Mayor

Attest: _____
Jacque Beard, City Clerk