

CITY COUNCIL WORKING SESSION

JANUARY 25, 2021
203 Broadway Ave N

PRESENT:

Tom McCauley	Mayor	Regie Finney	Public Works Director
Michael Higbee	Council President	Jeremy Engbaum	Police Chief
Sue Gabardi	Council Member	Autumn Jones	Billing Clerk
Kelly Peterson	Council Member	Teresa Robbins	Asst. P & Z Clerk
Andrew Wright	City Attorney	Concerned Citizens	
Karen Drown	Clerk		

Because of the recent COVID-19 pandemic Buhl City Council made this meeting available telephonically.

CONFIRMATION OF QUORUM:

Karen Drown confirmed a quorum.

CONSENT AGENDA:

1. Minutes of January 11, 2021 – Regular Meeting
2. Bi-Monthly Claims for Payment
3. Clerk Report
4. Treasurer Report

Kelly Peterson moved to approve the consent agenda. Sue Gabardi seconded the motion. There was no discussion and the motion passed.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was no unfinished business.

NEW BUSINESS

Update from Southern Idaho Economic Development: Connie Stopher and Ervina Covcic updated Council on the work that Southern Idaho Economic Development and the REDS program has been doing in 2020. Connie noted they have been very busy but the work is being done differently because of COVID-19. They had done three virtual FAM tours for 14 site selectors and most stated they want to come in person as soon as possible. They have also been busy helping with PPP applications and grant programs helping businesses during this uncertain year. There was also Operation Facelift which the Buhl Chamber of Commerce received funds for flower planters for downtown.

Ervina commented on the work she has been doing through REDS with local business for small business grants. Magic Valley Brewing, Train Station, Bobbins, Farm Girl, Tractors Grille and Oregon Trail Inn have been some businesses taking part in those grants. She also noted she has been helping 1000 Springs Mills work through exporting concerns and meeting the requirements to obtain those export programs. Ervina announced that 1000 Springs Mills had also been named Business of the Year through the College of Southern Idaho. She has continued to work on marketing training with local business, and meet with the Buhl Chamber of Commerce and Buhl Economic Council which is looking at creating a community square.

Review and Consideration of Speed Limits on Burley Ave, Fruitland Ave, and Fair Street: Regie presented information regarding the speed studies that had been done on Burley Ave, Fruitland Ave and Fair Street. The data had been collected and HMM Engineers had computed the findings. Regie summarized the data:

Burley Ave:

Average Speed: 35 mph
Highest recorded: 72 mph
Recommendation: Reduce to 30 mph

Fruitland Ave:

Average Speed: 35 mph
Highest recorded: 80 mph
Recommendation: Reduce to 30 mph

Fair Street:

Average Speed: 27 mph
Highest recorded: 60 mph
Recommendation: Reduce to 25 mph

Regie also noted ways the public will be educated on changes if made through additional signage on streets and social media.

Michael moved to change the speed limits on Burley Ave and Fruitland Ave to 30 mph and Fair Street from Highway 30 to city limits to 25 mph. Kelly questioned because of the growth on Burley Ave if this would need to be revisited in the years to come. Regie noted he didn't feel it would need to be and when the road project happens the improvements will improve safety concerns. There was no further discussion and the motion passed.

Review and Consideration of Swimming Pool Season: Regie and Teresa presented information regarding opening the swimming pool for the 2021 season. They detailed a number of

procedures that will need to happen because of COVID-19 which are going to include cleaning the bathroom after every person, requiring social distancing in and out of the pool, wearing of masks and limiting it to 10 people at a time in the pool and they noted this are duties that will need to be done by separate employee from the lifeguard. Regie stated these procedures are going to require hiring more staff and the biggest problem he knows of is a number of the previous lifeguards that the City of Buhl trained are working at other pools and making up to \$3.00 more an hour.

Michael state the biggest loss from COVID-19 for the citizens of Buhl was the cancellation of the pool season. He added it is an asset to the quality of life for the citizens but it is hard to make it work with requirements. Teresa added that she figured to make the new requirements work and try and run the hours as previous they would need to hire one amazing manager and 18 staff members. She noted they are also recommending not to do swimming lessons because the teacher and students cannot socially distance. Regie recommended still trying to open and look at all the options, he added he would like to open to see the new heater run. Consensus of Council was to continue to push forward and felt it was to early to call it. Mayor McCauley asked Kelly his feeling since he had run it so many years. Kelly noted there are some large hurdles to overcome with this from finding staff to having “guards” to enforce the requirements. He added his concerns about the liability of our citizens and keeping them safe.

Council Concerns – Michael clarified of a meeting was going to be held with the Buhl Rural Fire Protection District on February 15th. Karen did confirm that everyone can meet and she would be sending out an email with previous minutes and request for agenda items. Michael made point of discussion at previous joint meetings and the concerns and difficulties he has seen over the years. He requested an agenda item on the February 8th Council meeting to discuss it further.

MEETING ADJOURNED – Kelly Peterson moved that the meeting be adjourned; Michael Higbee seconded the motion and all were in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 7:14 pm.

Minutes prepared by Karen Drown, City Clerk