



CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Council in Attendance:

Mayor Logan Monson
Councilmember Cheryl Bowers
Councilmember Chris Ewald
Councilmember Erik Grover
Councilmember Kellen Nielson

Tuesday, July 25, 2023 at 7:00pm

50 West 100 South Street,
Blanding, Utah 84511

Meetings are live streamed at:

<https://www.youtube.com/@blandingcity7442>

Staff Members in Attendance:

City Manager - David Johnson
City Engineer - Terry Ekker
City Finance Director - James Francom

City Community Dev. Dir. - Bret Hosler

Economic Dev. Dir. - Ben Muhlestein

Police Chief- JJ Bradford

Fire Chief - Corey Spillman

Others: Corrine Johnson, Andrea Jeppesen, Kelly Jeppesen, Destiny Bingham, Kennedy Bingham, Lacey Ivins, Chezney Ivins, Emri Black, Navy Nieves, Joe B. Lyman, Nicole Black, Kevin Black, Keri Jensen, Scoot Flannery, Kathleen Pugh, Kendall Laws

Mayor Monson called the meeting to order at 7:00pm

Prayer was offered by Councilmember Cheryl Bowers

Declaration of Conflict - None

1. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.
2. **Councilmember Bowers moved to approve the consent agenda moving the presentations to the next item on the agenda and approving the minutes from the June 27, 2023 Council Meeting. Councilmember Nielson seconded the motion. Mayor Monson repeated the motion and asked for discussion. Hearing none, he called for a vote.**

Those voting Aye:

**Councilmember Bowers
Councilmember Ewald
Councilmember Grover
Councilmember Nielson**

Those voting Nay:

None

Constituting all members thereof, Mayor Monson declared the motion carried.



PRESENTATIONS

1. Outstanding Citizen of the Year - Andrea Jeppesen, Mayor Monson

Mayor Monson explained the nomination process for this award and that a committee makes the final selection. The 2023 Outstanding Citizen of the Year is awarded to Andrea Jeppesen for her countless hours of dedication and commitment to improving the City of Blanding, volunteering and making a difference in the schools, serving in her church and neighborhood, and as a devoted wife and mother.

2. Little Miss Blanding Recognition - Mayor Monson

Mayor Monson reported that the inaugural Little Miss Blanding had a number of girls aged 10 to 12 who participated under the direction of pageant director Lacey Ivins. He then introduced the new Little Miss Blanding royalty: Queen Kennedy Bingham daughter of Blake and Destiny Bingham, First Attendant Chezney Ivins daughter of Tyler and Lacey Ivins, Second Attendant Emri Black daughter of the late Taylor and Marci Black, and Third Attendant Navy Nieves daughter of Ronnie and Mandy Nieves.

PUBLIC INPUT

Mayor Monson requested to hear comments from Terry Ekker and David Johnson prior to hearing from public input participants.

- Terry Ekker thanked the Mayor, Council, and Community for the opportunity he had to provide public service as City Engineer for over 19 years. He stated that living in Blanding has been a great place to raise his family and they now have an opportunity for him to take another position elsewhere. He stated they will miss Blanding but hope to come back to retire here in the future.
- City Manager David Johnson submitted his formal resignation effective immediately per the mutual separation agreement he entered into with the City. He expressed appreciation for Mayor Monson and former Mayor Joe B. Lyman as well as the many council members, staff, private and governmental agencies, and citizens he has worked and interacted with during his time as City Manager and for their unflinching commitment to the Community. Mr. Johnson proceeded to highlight the accomplishments that had occurred during his 2+ years as City Manager and the impact these have and will have on the community in the future. He stated that he understands the City wants to go in a different direction and he respects the Mayor and Council for each of their efforts and wanted that to be made clear publicly. Lastly, he thanked those individuals and family who took the time to warmly welcome his family and make them feel loved, appreciated, and part of the community. Kindness goes a very long way.
- Former Mayor Joe B. Lyman requested that Mayor Monson read his prepared comments which in part stated David Johnson was always respectful and professional and he never heard him speak in a derogatory manner against the Mayor, Council, Staff, or community members. He is saddened it was not reciprocated.
- Andrea Jeppesen remarked on how wonderful it is to live in Blanding and thanked the Mayor and Council for the hours of service they give. She stated that developing relationships is the most important thing we can do and she hopes open communication in the future will help to move Blanding in a positive direction.
- Nicole Black wanted to publicly express her support for David Johnson and the great things he has done for the community. She appreciates the Johnson family for all they have done to support the schools and rec programs.
- Keri Jensen echoed the things that have been said and to express her deep sadness over the turn of events with David Johnson's recognition. She can't speak to his professional responsibilities as a City Manager, but she can speak to the hours he has spent volunteering and mentoring the youth of the community. She can't believe there isn't a way to work this out. She doesn't feel it is the best

- direction for the City. Mr. Johnson and his family will be a great loss to the City.
- Scoot Flannery remarked on the 8 years he has worked with Terry Ekker on projects and how great it was to work with someone who genuinely cares about the community. He thanked David Johnson for the time they spent working on projects for the City as well as the time Mr. Johnson invested in being a track coach for his daughter.
 - Kathleen Pugh expressed her sorrow that David Johnson was resigning as a City Manager. Her only experience has been interacting with him, his wife, and children and the many things they have contributed to the community. She feels bad their family hasn't had the same experience she has had moving to this community.
 - Kendall Laws wanted to inform the City Council of what is happening with the planning process with the Bears Ears Monument. The City has cooperating agency status and the next meeting is on Monday, July 31, 2023. The draft document is about 700 pages and he recommends they read it in preparation for the meeting. There are rules against him speaking publicly about the process but if any of them have questions, he can speak with them privately as part of his day job. Cooperating agencies have advanced notice to voice their concerns and then it will be available for public comment at a later date.

REPORTS

1. Mayor Report

- Mayor Monson informed Council there is a follow-up meeting on Thursday, July 27, 2023 to recap the 4th of July celebration.

2. Council Reports

- Councilmember Bowers thanked Mayor Monson for his efforts with the Outstanding Citizen of the Year award and the Little Miss Blanding pageant.

3. City Manager Report - David Johnson

- Dedicated Wellness Center water line is complete.
- The pool furnace has been fixed.
- The new deep well is now at 1400 feet and the casing is being installed.
- Parks and Trails Master Plan impact fees were previously discussed. Mayor Monson will need to meet with Zions Bank.
- Pickleball Court pre-construction meeting has been held with construction starting in the next week. The majority of the project will occur in late September or early October.
- The General Plan is headed to the Planning Commission for review and feedback after which it will come back to the City Council.
- Safety Shades status remains the same.
- White Mesa Mill raw water agreement has not yet been completed. The plan was to meet with them soon to discuss.

4. Finance Reports - James Francom

- A new detailed check register was presented for review. Councilmember Bowers asked if the grant money had already been received for the KP Ventures Well Drilling expenditure. Mr. Francom stated it will be reimbursed.
- Councilmember Ewald asked what the chlorine expenditure was for to which Mr. Francom responded it was for the water treatment plant.

5. Public Works Status Report - Terry Ekker

- He has been working with Navajo Nation to identify the location to install the water meter for Westwater Community which will be on West Center Street.
- The Tantalus AMI project is in the process of coordinating the integration with

Pelorus.

- The Natural Gas Master plan is in the final review and a final report will be submitted to the City Council at a later date.
- Councilmember Nielson inquired about the status of the carbon free project. Mr. Ekker reported it is still moving forward and will be a big topic of discussion for the City Council late fall into early winter.
- Steel solar project will be online approximately two weeks after the original deadline.
- Blanding City is in the study process for a Natural Gas plant or smaller plants throughout the state for UAMPS members.

6. Water Report - Terry Ekker

- Waiting for the monsoon season to start to help increase water storage.
- Drywash currently has about 80 acre feet for upper ditch users.

7. Police Report - Chief Bradford

- Testing for 7 applicants to fill the new officer position will occur on Monday, July 31, 2023. The chosen candidate will take Officer Palmer's spot while he moves into the new SRO position with the schools. Two of the applicants are P.O.S.T certified; one from San Juan County and one from Carbon County.
- Chief Bradford reported there have been several compliments for the professional way Officers are handling calls and traffic stops.

8. Recreation Report

- David Johnson reported that David Palmer and Kristen Bayles were attending a Parks and Recreation Certification session. There were no questions on the Recreation Report.

9. Economic Development - 4th of July Recap, Ben Muhlestein

- The 2023 4th of July Celebration was a successful event. Traditional events as well as two new events were included. Mr. Muhlestein thanked the multitude of sponsors and volunteers that oversee the events as the celebration would not be successful without them.
- Bears Ears Farms event had over 4,000 attendees.
- Grayson Music Festival met their goal and provided more vendor opportunities which in turn provides additional sales tax revenue for the City.
- There was a larger than normal attendance at the Mayor's Breakfast.
- Large attendance at the fireworks and the band received numerous compliments.
- Midnight Madness concluded at 7:00 am on July 4, 2023.
- There are a number of improvements for consideration and Mr. Muhlestein invited any Councilmembers that would like to attend the recap meeting on July 27, 2023.

BUSINESS ITEMS

1. Resolution 07-25-2023-1 - Firefighter Personnel Policy , Corey Spillman

- Chief Spillman asked if any of the Councilmembers had any questions about the proposed updates on the firefighter personnel policy. Councilmember Ewald asked Chief Spillman if he felt good about the policy to which he responded he did. Councilmember Nielson stated he hoped it would generate more volunteers. Councilmember Bowers reiterated that the hourly wage would be paid for training and callouts and addresses anyone that is already a City employee. David Johnson stated he believed the hourly rate would promote a higher commitment from new and existing firefighters.

Councilmember Nielson moved to approve Resolution 07-25-2023-1 - Update to

Personnel Policy Regarding Part-Time Firefighters. Councilmember Ewald seconded the motion. Mayor Monson repeated the motion and asked for discussion. Hearing none, he called for a vote.

**Those voting Aye: Councilmember Ewald
Councilmember Bowers
Councilmember Grover
Councilmember Nielson**

Those voting Nay: None

Constituting all members thereof, Mayor Monson declared the motion carried.

2. Resolution 07-25-2023-2 - Price Dispatch Agreement, David Johnson

- San Juan County made the final decision to move to Price, Utah for dispatch services. Therefore, Blanding City's portion for the first year is \$32,000. Chief Bradford reported that the City is benefitting from this service with police calls, fire calls, public works issues, and EMS services. Councilmember Nielson asked if Chief Bradford had any concerns to which he responded that Price Dispatch has been very responsive and the police have been able to respond to calls while the caller is still on the line with Dispatch.

Councilmember Ewald moved to approve Resolution 07-25-2023-2 - Contract for Dispatch Services with Price, UT. Councilmember Bowers seconded the motion. Mayor Monson repeated the motion and asked for discussion. Hearing none, he called for a vote.

**Those voting Aye: Councilmember Ewald
Councilmember Bowers
Councilmember Grover
Councilmember Nielson**

Those voting Nay: None

Constituting all members thereof, Mayor Monson declared the motion carried.

3. Resolution 07-25-2023-3 - DWR Project Assignment Order, David Johnson

- The DWR has funding set aside to improve access plans for boating and fishing. Blanding City has partnered with DWR to accept the funding via a pass-through method for the design work being prepared by Jones and DeMille. Currently the plans will be for the west side of Recapture. If there are excess funds they will go towards plans for the east side of Recapture.

Councilmember Grover asked if the City has any liability to which Mr. Johnson responded there would be no attachment for ownership.

Councilmember Nielson asked Scoot Flannery with Jones and DeMille if the process of pass-through funds is common to which Mr. Flannery responded it is a typical practice.

Councilmember Bowers stated she is excited about the improvements to Recapture Reservoir.



Councilmember Bowers moved to approve Resolution 07-25-2023-3 - Assignment Order with Jones & DeMille for Design Work at Recapture Reservoir in Behalf of the Division of Wildlife Resources. Councilmember Ewald seconded the motion. Mayor Monson repeated the motion and asked for discussion. Hearing none, he called for a vote.

Those voting Aye: Councilmember Ewald
Councilmember Bowers
Councilmember Nielson

Those voting Nay: None

Those Abstaining: Councilmember Grover

Constituting all members thereof, Mayor Monson declared the motion carried.

4. Resolution 07-25-2023-4 - Streets Project Bid Award, Terry Ekker

- Mr. Ekker reported that the bid opening for the Streets Project was held on Tuesday, July 18, 2023. Two bids were received with LeGrand Johnson as the low bidder in the amount of \$1,145,062.80. He recommends awarding the bid to LeGrand Johnson. With the funds the City has available, there would be funds to complete the project and leave enough for concrete participation, crack sealing and other street funding needs.

Councilmember Grover moved to approve Resolution 07-25-2023-4 - Awarding Streets Project Bid to LeGrand Johnson. Councilmember Nielson seconded the motion. Mayor Monson repeated the motion and asked for discussion. Hearing none, he called for a vote.

Those voting Aye: Councilmember Ewald
Councilmember Bowers
Councilmember Grover
Councilmember Nielson

Those voting Nay: None

Constituting all members thereof, Mayor Monson declared the motion carried.

CLOSED SESSION

Councilmember Nielson moved to enter a closed session for personnel. Councilmember Bowers seconded the motion. Mayor Monson repeated the motion and asked for discussion. Hearing none, he called for a vote.

Those voting Aye: Councilmember Ewald
Councilmember Bowers
Councilmember Grover
Councilmember Nielson

Those voting Nay: None

Constituting all members thereof, Mayor Monson declared the motion carried.



Council entered a closed session at 8:28 p.m.

Councilmember Grover moved to leave the closed session. Councilmember Ewald seconded the motion. Mayor Monson repeated the motion and asked for discussion. Hearing none, he called for a vote.

| | |
|--------------------------|--|
| Those voting Aye: | Councilmember Ewald Councilmember Bowers Councilmember Grover Councilmember Nielson |
|--------------------------|--|

| | |
|--------------------------|-------------|
| Those voting Nay: | None |
|--------------------------|-------------|

Constituting all members thereof, Mayor Monson declared the motion carried.

Council re-entered an open meeting at 8:50 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

Councilmember Ewald moved to adjourn the meeting. Councilmember Grover seconded the motion. Mayor Monson repeated the motion and asked for discussion. Hearing none, he called for a vote.

| | |
|--------------------------|--|
| Those voting Aye: | Councilmember Ewald Councilmember Bowers Councilmember Grover Councilmember Nielson |
|--------------------------|--|

| | |
|--------------------------|-------------|
| Those voting Nay: | None |
|--------------------------|-------------|

Constituting all members thereof, Mayor Monson declared the motion carried.

Council adjourned the meeting at 8:51 p.m.

By:

Lisa S. Rarick, Clerk

