

**CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**  
**March 18, 2024 @ 7:00PM**  
at Notus City Hall, 375 Notus Rd, Notus, ID, 83656

**1. Meeting Called to Order**

Mayor, David Porterfield called meeting to order at 7:08 PM.

**2. Roll Call**

Roll call was taken with the following results: Councilwoman Bonnie Emly, Council President, Steve Ahlborn, and Councilman Rob Hartsock were present. Also present were Mayor, David Porterfield and City Planner and Engineer, Antonio Conti. Councilwoman, Lupita Connor was absent.

**3. Pledge of Allegiance**

**4. Public Concerns/Comments, limited to 3 minutes each**

Resident Randall Taylor was recognized by the Mayor. Mr. Taylor stated that he spoke last meeting about giving away city property but as it is back on the agenda, apparently no decision was made. He wants to reemphasize there are rules and ways that it has to be done. He knows in the past there have been offers to purchase the property and that is better than giving it away. He has nothing against the what the gentleman wants to do with it, he just doesn't think that is in the best interest of the City. Property is a valuable asset, even though it is technically land locked. But if you give it away, then you have no control over it. Then if he turns around and finds it is land locked and he sells it to someone else, whatever he gets, he gets. And the City is out in the dumpster again. That's just my opinion. Check the laws that I gave you that says its got to go up for bid before you can declare it as nonvaluable, so you can throw it in the gutter. If anyone has questions, I'm not hard to find. Doug Reese was recognized by the Mayor. Mr. Reese asked what are you going to do with the property? Mayor stated that we would address that topic later in the meeting if he would like to stay.

CLERK NOTE\*\* City Attorney Bryan Norton joined meeting.

**5. Consent Agenda, Action Items**

**5.1 Disbursement List**

Emly motioned to approve the disbursements in the amount of \$4357.60. Ahlborn seconded. Roll call was taken with the following results: Emly; yes, Ahlborn; yes, Hartsock; yes. Motion carried.

**5.2 Council Meeting Minutes**

Hartsock would like his comment that it should parent run project not a City run function, added to topic 6.1 of the meeting minutes from March 4<sup>th</sup>. City Clerk will review the audio recording, add more details, and bring back to Council for approval.

**5.3 Committee Meeting Minutes: Library, Community Events, Vision Tomorrow**

NONE

**6. Staff/Professional Reports**

**6.1 Library Liaison**

Councilwomen Bonnie Emly reported that Librarian Rhonda Wickland is working with local artist, Diana Devlin and will be holding an arts and crafts session for adults soon. Rhonda continues reading with the daycare and kindergarten children.

**6.2 Treasurer**

Council has the financial report in packet to review.

### **6.3 Public Works**

Mayor stated we will come back to this when Public Works Supervisor gets back, onto 6.4.

CLERK NOTE\*\* Tyler has returned to give his report:

Tyler reported that the water problem is temporarily fixed, but will need more work. The Notus Rd and Purple Sage intersection has been fixed. Notus Parma Hwy District did the work. He is supposed to have his annual DEQ water system inspection on Wednesday. Also there has been some kids jumping the fence to get to the sewer pond area. He is going to put up more no trespassing signs but the fence is in really bad condition. Sewer discharge is going well. He will be stopping soon as the pond level is getting low. Mayor commented that the Notus Post office Clerk called to thank Tyler for getting the graffiti painted over on the walls of the building. We have some signs that were also tagged.

CLERK NOTE\*\* now back to 7.1.

### **6.4 City Clerk**

City Clerk, Loretta Vollmer reported from the google profile that 15 phone calls were initiated, 56 asking for directions, 23 website views, 3 Community Center rentals, 5 burn permits issued, 53 credit card payments received and 1 building permit for solar panels was issued.

### **6.5 Public Safety and Law Enforcement**

Police report was in council packets. 50 calls/patrols/enforcement for last month totaling 31 hours. Caldwell fire Protection District reported one request for service in the month of February.

## **7. Business**

### **7.1 Building Stronger Veterans, Land Donation request, ACTION ITEM**

Mayor asked council what their desire is. If it is to donate then we would go through the process and hold a public hearing. Or is it their opinion not to donate the land?

CLERK NOTE\*\* Mayor stated that since Tyler Martin has returned, we will go back to item 6.3

CLERK NOTE\*\* Back to topic 7.1

Hartsock is not in favor of donating the land. He supports Veterans but this is not going to benefit the citizens of Notus. Emly would like to thank the next door property owner, Doug Reese for taking care of the property so well and asked if they ever wanted to buy the property? Ahlborn commented that the program Adam has suggested is brand new and even he, doesn't know what to expect. Maybe best to wait and at some point, it (property) could be a strategic asset. Hartsock motioned to not donate the land to Building Stronger Veterans at this time. Ahlborn seconded. Roll call was taken with the following results: Hartsock; yes, Ahlborn; yes, Emly; yes. Motion carried.

### **7.2 April Fair Housing Declaration, ACTION ITEM**

Ahlborn motioned to approve April Fair Housing Month Declaration. Emly seconded. Roll call was taken with the following results: Ahlborn; yes, Emly; yes, Hartsock; yes. Motion carried.

### **7.3 Community Center Reader Board, Discussion and Clarification, ACTION ITEM**

Mayor stated that there seemed to be some confusion about who would be putting the letters on the board. There was a request from a community member, not Lupita, to allow them to come pickup the letters. Mayor indicated to them that it was to be Lupita that was to pick up the letters. After some conversation it was decided that City Employee, Tyler would put the meeting information on the board. Lupita came to city hall after we were closed, asking mayor to let her in to get the letters, which he did. Mayor asked Council what their thoughts were on this. Discussion. Council understood that Lupita was going to be the one to put the letters on the information board. Hartsock stated that the City should oversee what is put on the board. There was concern that the suggestions made at the last Council meeting were not followed. Ahlborn suggested a document that goes along with this that gives city some control of approved items to go on the board. Like city council meetings, holiday festivities, public

meetings. Those types of events. City Attorney stated that the city should be careful about opening the board to the public. He stated case law that indicated that if it is open to the public, City cannot determine what is placed on the board. Mayor stated that the city should have control over what is put on the board and the care taken with the (fragile) letters. Attorney stated that the city can ask a member of the public to put the city approved messages on the board. Ahlborn commented what was discussed in last meeting that Lupita would be putting up the letter that she receives from the City. Discussion. Ahlborn motioned to direct staff to create a policy and add approved events to be put on the reader board and allow the city to add community members or staff to an approved list of those that can put up the lettering on the reader board. Emly seconded. Voice vote. All in favor. Motion carried.

#### **7.4 Well #2 Rehabilitation, ACTION ITEM**

Mayor stated the well #2 is on the higher side of DEQ allowed arsenic levels. Currently it is at 84% which is considered drinkable. Currently well #4 with 2 booster pumps and VFD's supplies water to the city now, but we need a backup (redundant) water source. The 2022 water facility plant suggested a new well be drilled. DEQ has indicated that before we can service any new developments, we need to have a redundant water source. Well #2 cannot do that. Public Works Supervisor, Tyler Martin stated that one big issue with well #2 is the rising arsenic levels. We may be able to drill well #2 deeper to get out of the arsenic. We would need a new pump and electrical system. We could rehab the elevated tank or direct pump into the water line to the ground storage tank. The well house roof will need to be taken off as well as some of the exterior walls to allow room to work on the well and pump. City Engineer, Antonio Conti stated that if we drill #2 deeper the pipe casing would have to be smaller, so it wouldn't pull the same amount of water. He will be contacting DEQ or the Department of Water Resources to see how the current well was constructed. As far as a new building that is a choice as a well head does not need to be inside. He is still waiting on DEQ to get him the construction plans to see how well #4 and well #2 are connected. A new well could cost over a million dollars but could be drilled on the same parcel of land. We could do exploratory well drilling to see what is down there but now you're drilling twice. It does increase your costs. There are no guarantees when drilling a well. Thing to remember is we are currently not in compliance with DEQ. Ahlborn asked about the amount of water needed for fire protection or lack of water pressure (needed for redundant water source). Antonio commented that Mountain Waterworks didn't have a water model for the system (in the facility plan) so assumed it was an educated guess. Using the height on the water tower and multiply by the factor and that is the water pressure you have. The systems used to work together and not much has changed in town. Worth exploring if you want to spend up to 200,000 to retro fit the tank for 100,000 gallons of water when you have 300,000 gallons in the (ground) tank. Mayor acknowledged it is hard to figure what the best choice is. Drilling is so unpredictable. Antonio commented that it is but the thing to remember is as we sit right now, we are not in compliance with DEQ. So, something needs to be done. Then there is the funding issue. Well rehab funds may be available from USDA Rural Development, DEQ Clean Water but there are not many grants to work on this problem. Ahlborn would like to get exploratory numbers to know what's down there, even if we have to do it again. We would know. It's our best chance for something least expensive. But we won't know, unless we explore it. If we can't find grants to pay for it then citizens are going to have to pay for it. Mayor stated it may be an easier pill to swallow if we are trying to rehab than to drill new. Ahlborn stated that would tell us one way or the other. Seeing what the cost is to explore it. Mayor commented that if we do explore it is going to make a mess with expense scattered around that whole process. Ahlborn commented that he would like to see quote of what we need, to see what's there. Mayor stated that what we need tonight is a direction from Council. Hartsock commented that we should do the exploratory to find out, so we know what way to go. It's going to be expensive, to rebuild (rehab) a well or to drill a new well. Although it is not a guarantee. Are we patching or fixing. We only have so many people to divide the cost up. Mayor stated that if we have to do a new well, we want it to be a lot better than well #4. One limitation of well #4 is the building is so small you can barely get in it. Antonio stated that if we don't have a reservoir, you don't need a pump house. One alternative is you drill in the same area as well #4 and then tie into the same tank. So, you do not have to build a new pump house. Ahlborn asked about getting numbers to Council for exploratory. Hartsock asked for maybe a plan A and B to look at. Table the decision and bring back cost estimates and plans.

### **7.5 Water System SCADA Repairs, ACTION ITEM**

Public Works Supervisor, Tyler Martin reported that last Thursday we started getting reports of low water pressure. He got up to the well and water was coming out the door. One of the fittings on the chlorine injection system had blown off. That pipe is always full of water and under pressure so a full stream of water was hitting the wall, above the door. A lot of water got into a lot of our electrical equipment. He got everything dried out, fixed, and called Control Engineers to come check out the damage. The POC looks OK, but the IO module cards were damaged. Those are the communications. (water level, pressures, VFDs, etc.) The problem with water pressure tonight was that the communications was so messed up that nothing was telling the well pump to come on, so our tank had no water. He manually turned on the well pump. Water is back on and filling the tank but without the normal communications, he has no idea what the water level is in the tank. So for the next few days he will have to manually turn on the pumps. With a full tank we have enough water for 3-4 days. He has had Control Engineers order the parts at a cost of almost \$2,000.00. Damage could get worse as they replace these IO module cards and run the system, possibly finding more issues caused by the water. It did ruin our internet modem (\$120) and probably our system battery backup (\$80). Plus, all the work that Control Engineers is doing. The well problem he did not think would happen. Ahlborn asked what can we see in the future in a way of avoiding this? We did talk in the past that they are both in the same building. (water, chlorination, electrical controls, and panels) Building a separate building to separate them, so they are not getting shot with water. Tyler stated that the other injection point we have is pointed directly at the electrical panel. He is thinking of putting up a rod and hanging a shower curtain to protect it, just in case. Discussion. Ahlborn stated that since this is a maintenance repair, really doesn't need a motion to get it fixed. Ahlborn suggested that Tyler get all the things needed for the repairs and take care of this as soon as possible.

### **7.6 City Attorney Meeting Attendance, ACTION ITEM**

Mayor stated that comments were made to try and control our budget by limiting the City Attorney attendance time. Hartsock commented that money is well spent on the Attorney. We never know when things come up. Things can get out of control quickly. Ahlborn was looking at cost per meeting. He appreciates the Attorney's input. He would like to see the breakdown of the attorney time to see if there is a way to keep costs down. We will continue to have the City Attorney at every meeting.

## **8. Mayor & Council Comments**

Mayor stated that Councilwoman Emly has submitted her resignation letter. Her last meeting will be April 1. He thanked her for the years of service she has given to the city. City Clerk reminded everyone that the next meeting will be a public hearing in the Community Center and of the Easter Egg Hunt coming up on the Saturday before Easter. Mayor stated that we are the recipient of a \$100,000 LHTAC grant for chipseal. This will be available next fiscal year, not this year.

## **9. Adjournment**

Hartsock motioned to adjourn at 9:35 pm. Emly seconded. All in favor. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted by Loretta Vollmer, idCMC Notus \_\_\_\_\_

Approved by David Porterfield, Mayor \_\_\_\_\_