

TOWN OF DRUMMOND
SEPTEMBER REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING

09/26/2023

CALL TO ORDER: Mayor Gail Leeper called the September Regular Council Meeting to order at 7:17pm. Present were Mayor Leeper & Council Members McLure, Clute, Powell, and Stuart; Town Clerk-Treasurer Wight and Public Works Director Harrington. Town Attorney McGill was absent.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Mayor Leeper led the Pledge of Allegiance at the Public Budget Hearing and Adoption Meeting, prior to the Regular scheduled Town Council Meeting.

PUBLIC IN ATTENDANCE: Alexis Lafer and Brian Lafer; Bernadetta M Wangler Bailey.

GUEST ON AGENDA: Will Sprayberry had asked to be placed on the September Agenda, to discuss Non-Attorney Judges. He wanted the opportunity to run for that position. He is placed on the agenda if he comes in.

That position was fulfilled last year, during the election which is every four years.

GUEST COMMENT: Our guests all shared in their desire to attend a Council Meeting, to learn what all is involved. Further mentioning a desire to see more community involvement in the Town.

Bernadetta extended her appreciation, for the lighting at night in Drummond.

Mayor Leeper praised the guests, for coming, their desire to learn and be involved in the community. She also went on to mention her desire for others to learn and take more involvement.

As our guests were not familiar with public meeting forum; Mayor Leeper took a moment, answering questions and educating our guests on how an agenda is set up: giving guests the opportunity to speak, then leading into the structured outline of line items. She also let our guests know, when someone would like to discuss certain agenda line items, they contact Town Hall and asked to be placed on the agenda.

Mr. Lafer discussed the confusion of the yield road sign and the stop sign located by Pfendler Post and Pole and the East Bound onramp to Interstate 90.

Council President McLure asked Mr. Lafer for clarification on his identity, as to the Town of Drummond.

Mr. Lafer, clarified his identity as to Drummond; Brian Lafer residing at 44 N. Main. Further extending his relation to the town of Drummond with individuals he's known from the past, living in the community. He expressed his admiration for the Town of Drummond and his plans to continue residing here with his wife, hopefully raising is family.

Mayor Leeper informed Brian, Front Street is an actual Highway, the Town of Drummond doesn't maintain it; nor do don't own it.

The Highway has an easement; anything that happens on the Highway, whether be the Town of Drummond putting up a sign or another entity, it has to go through the Department of Transportation.

North and South Main was also discussed.

Mr. Lafer stated, he wanted to come to the Town Council Meeting first, prior to contacting the State.

Mayor Leeper provided Brian a contact person that he could reach out to; Rick Skaggs.

LAW ENFORCEMENT: The Town Council was provided a report from the Sheriff.

- Law Enforcement Contract is coming up for renewal; Mayor Leeper will start reviewing current contract. Town Council will be provided a copy of the current contract to be familiarized themselves with it, for when negotiations begin.

There has been a written 2% annual increase in the current contract.

Sherrif Dunkerson will attend Town Council Meeting to discuss Law Enforcement Contract.

MINUTES: Mayor Leeper asked for a motion to approve the August Regular Meeting minutes. Council Member Powell made a motion to approve the August Regular Meeting minutes. Council Member Clute seconded the motion. All yeas, none opposed. Mayor Leeper concurred.

CLAIMS: Mayor Leeper asked for a motion to approve the claims. Council Member Powell made a motion to approve the claims. Council Member Clute seconded the motion. All yeas, none opposed. Mayor Leeper concurred.

INVESTMENTS: Investment sheet provided to the Town Council.

FINANCIALS: Financial sheet provided to the Town Council.

- **Sewer Investment CD** – Information discussed within Budget Hearing. Mayor Leeper noted, CD maturity information and transfer to Sewer Cash Operating provided on Financial Sheet.

MAYOR'S REPORT:

- **Headwaters Report** –

- **Flint Creek Child Care:** They will be placing satellite office in the old Physical Therapy Building. They are going leasing that building, starting approximately October.

- **Food and Egg Grants:** There are currently a lot of Food and Egg Grants available.

Headwaters will be going to Farmer Boy Eggs to discuss Grant opportunities.

Mayor Leeper is unaware if Drummond School has tried to look into Grant Funds for the Green House, she had discussed that opportunity to them several times in the past.

Council Member Powell asked about Titan Meats; Mayor Leeper mention they had not wanted to go that route.

Mayor Gail notified Town Council the full Headwaters Report will remain at Town Hall for their review.

- **Action Inc. Report** -

- **Needs Assessment:** Community Needs Assessment meeting consensus shows the following needs for our community:

- **Home Health**
- **Housing**
- **Mental Health Help**

- **Youth Programs (Ages 14-21)**

Mayor Gail notified Town Council copies would be made available, if they would like; otherwise, report will be a Town Hall.

- **Joint Session** – Will be held at the Drummond Library Thursday, October 5th at 6:00PM; Drummond is Hosting.

Mayor Leeper asked the Council Members, if they have any agenda items, they would like placed on the agenda to have them in by this Thursday.

- **DNRC Flood Plain Meeting** – Will be held at the Drummond Library Tuesday, October 3rd at 6:00PM; DNRC will be conducting that meeting. Mayor Leeper asked that the Council attend.

Mayor Leeper extended a courtesy call to Paul, at the Chalet; with Mayor Leeper being on the Planning Board, she knows this will affect him.

- **Montana League of Cities and Towns Conference** – Mayor Leeper and Clerk-Treasurer Wight will be attending the October 11th - 13th meeting in Helena.

TOWN ATTORNEY: Absent for today's meeting; however, she will be attending Joint Session.

PARKS:

- **Park and Campground upkeep** – Been busy at the campground; the grounds continue to look good.
- **Robert Dillon Tree Service** – Tree Service is still coming; he also fights fires and that is where his people are placed when needed.

- **Areas of Tree Service:** Campground, Old 911 Building and Town Hall.

- **Edwards Gulch:** Rob also, followed up with looking at Edwards Gulch to make sure it is maintained and not overgrown.

ROADS:

- **Northwestern Energy** – Mayor Leeper notified Council Member Powell, there has been no word back yet from Northwestern Energy about them coming and fixing areas.

Mayor Leeper did speak with Paul Babb, regarding having a representative from Northwestern Energy coming to the LEPC meetings, which is every other month for Local Emergencies.

Mayor Leeper did get a contact name and number that she will give to Council Member Powell.

The hole was patched by them, located in front of Swedes; it is taking some time to get the other areas taken care of.

- **Blackfoot** – Mayor Leeper had a meeting with Blackfoot Representatives JB and Butch Friede, talking about the updated internet line up at Philipsburg and Skalkaho. Blackfoot is projecting Spring of next year to start in Drummond.

Blackfoot will attend a Town Council Meeting prior to starting in Drummond.

Mayor Leeper extended an invitation to Blackfoot Representatives to attend the Joint Session meeting, October 5th.

Discussion was made regarding staging areas and available maps to assist Blackfoot.

- **Potholes** – Council Member Powell and Paul discussed the patching completed on South Main. Council Member Powell extended appreciation for areas patched on South Main and the entrance to the Campground.

Council Member Powell and Public Works Director Harrington discussed areas to fill prior to weather changing; if time permits.

- **Snowplowing and Sanding** – Discussion was made regarding conserving sand by not doing the whole streets and focus more on intersections. Sand will continue to be placed in high traffic areas such as the School, Seniors, Post Office.

We are making progress with the problem areas on Broad Street, getting that area cleared out and ready for snowplowing. We have received the no parking signs; they will be concreted in movable buckets to be placed on Broad Street; No Parking Oct 1 – May 1.

FLOODPLAINS:

- **DNRC** - Library has been reserved for October 3rd Floodplain Meeting with DNRC.
- **Dyke Plate** – Council Member McLure and Public Works Director Harrington discussed planning to have dyke plate removed next week, definitely if it snows; to prevent getting frozen in place.

SEWER:

- **Xylem** – Council Member Clute stated, we are on calendar to service sewer pumps. They had told us we would be placed on service rotation when the pumps were purchased, but no one placed us on the service rotation schedule. They are to be serviced before the end of October.
- **Nash** – Council Member Clute also stated, we are having a problem getting a hold of Nash; we can't get anyone to call back regarding getting on the schedule to clean out the Lift Station.

The degreaser is not doing its job, it's just sitting on top.

Discussion was made of alternatives to have sewer cleaned out with another Company such as Sweet Pea, since everyone has called trying to get on Nash's schedule and it has been 2 ½ weeks.

Generate is working fine.

- **Conference Call** – Waste Water Facility Upgrade Conference call with Funding Agencies was today; it is coming along very good.

Engineer Brad Koon, with Triple Tree Engineering, stated again the scope of the project:

Removal of Sludge, put in a Three-Cell Lagoon and the Lining of the Lagoon; it looks like they are going to have to put in the UV Disinfectant. Engineer Koon doesn't think we will need it, but the SRF Funding Agency wants us to do it now because there is funding available now to help with it all.

Bids will be going out in the Spring for the Waste Water Facility Upgrade. Brad believes the Three-Cell should take care of it all; which is what we had talked about in the beginning, when preparing for the project.

Clerk-Treasurer Wight got documents to USDA regarding the sewer structure and rates, they requested. One of their questions, was if we were going to be raising sewer rates this year. We stated we were not raising them this year, but the probability is we were going to have to next year.

Mayor Leeper expressed to Council, she believes we will be getting a lot of forgiveness, because we have been very diligent on the sewer project which started in 2005; we are now on that last phase. They may forgive our existing loan, but then we would have to take out another loan to finish the four-million-dollar project; however, 95% of that project is funded through Department of Commerce, DNRC and SRF.

We have our next Funding Agent conference call scheduled in December. Engineer Koon will be amending budget numbers and getting them to the funding agencies.

Bids are still planned for the Spring, all of the testing one so far has turned out well.

Council Member Powell asked, if the funding Agencies could force the Town to put in the UV Disinfectant, which they could or we risk the funding agencies pulling out.

The Town does not discharge now; with the leak study done, we came in under. Once the Bids come in, we could plea our case; if those bids come in high.

CITY COURT:

- **Maintenance** – Judicial Room needs new telephone. Current phone wasn't allowing messages to come in and wasn't ringing. A new phone was purchased.

NEW BUSINESS: None

OLD BUSINESS:

- **Solid Waste** – Mayor Leeper and Attorney McGill went to the Commissioners Meeting for the MOU (Memorandum of Understanding). Town of Drummond signed the MOU, The County did not want to sign it due to the verbiage the Town got to Dump for Free For All Time; even though the Town's Approved Minutes are the only records out there, there is no County records, there is nothing at the County Attorney's from 1993; there is only our records.

The Commissioner's did not sign the MOU, so we are back to where we were, The Town gets Free Dumping.

Discussion was made as to the Commissioner's originally wanting the MOU and to their decision not to sign. Further discussion, led to the Town of Drummond not abusing the Free Dumping, and how Rodeo figures dumping costs into the sale of the tickets.

- **South Main Bridge** – MCEP still has not made their decision on whether that

\$190,000.00 awarded to Drummond can be passed through to the County or not.

We are in contact with MCEP Lindsey Siebrasse, regarding updates; and are waiting for them to get back with us.

Engineer Koon asked this morning, prior to our phone conference meeting; if we would like him to contact MCEP on the Town's behalf. Mayor Leeper said, yes.

Mayor Leeper addressed Council, reminding them that if we accept those funds, it could put us over for the required audit, and those audits can range from \$20,000.00 to \$100,000.00 or more.

The County can request funding every year for bridges, those Grants open up the 1st of October and closing October 28th.

Discussion was made regarding the cost for the bridge verses the total cost with repaving South Main; which concluded with the Tax Payors of Drummond should not be absorbing those costs.

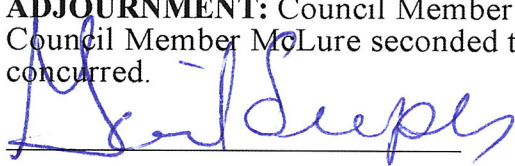
- **Delinquent Tax Letters** – Delinquent Tax Letters were signed by Mayor Leeper and the Drummond Town Council.

The Town does not pad the Budget, so when people don't pay their taxes, it makes a big difference.

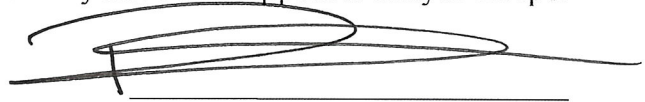
There is currently \$26,528.47 owing in delinquent taxes, not all of that goes to Drummond, but probably half of it does; which may not seem like a lot of money, but it is to Drummond

Next Town Council Meeting scheduled Tuesday, October 17th.

ADJOURNMENT: Council Member Powell made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:55pm. Council Member McLure seconded the motion. All yeas. None opposed. Mayor Leeper concurred.



Gail Leeper, Mayor



Robin Wight, Town Clerk-Treasurer