

Stevensville Town Council Meeting Minutes

for THURSDAY, JUNE 22, 2023, 6:00 PM 206 Buck Street, Town Hall

CONDENSED MINUTES

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

Mayor Gibson called the meeting to order, Councilmembers Barker, Brown, Lowell and Michalson were all present.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Public Comments (Public comment from citizens on items that are not on the agenda)

4. Approval of Minutes

a. Town Council Meeting Minutes for 05/25/2023

Mayor Gibson: introduced town council meeting minutes for 05/25/2023.

Councilmember Barker: make a motion to approve town council meeting minutes from 05/25/2023.

Councilmember Michalson: 2nd

Mayor Gibson: motion and a 2nd. Public comment? Seeing none. Further discussion on the minutes, seeing none, Jenelle please take the vote.

Councilmember Barker: aye.

Councilmember Brown: aye.

Councilmember Lowell: aye.

Councilmember Michalson: aye.

Mayor Gibson: passes 4-0

b. Town Council Meeting Minutes 06/08/2023

Mayor Gibson: introduced town council meeting minutes for 06/08/2023.

Councilmember Lowell: make a motion to approve.

Councilmember Brown: 2nd

Mayor Gibson: motion and a 2nd. Public comment? Seeing none, further discussion on the minutes? Seeing none, Jenelle please take the vote.

Councilmember Barker: abstain

Councilmember Brown: aye.

Councilmember Lowell: aye.

Councilmember Michalson: aye.

Mayor Gibson: passes 3-0, 1 abstain.

5. Approval of Bi-Weekly Claims

a. Claims #18381, #18401-#18422

Mayor Gibson: introduced claims #18381, #18401-#18422.

Councilmember Barker: make a motion to approve #18381, #18401-#18422.

Councilmember Lowell: 2nd.

Mayor Gibson: motion and a 2nd. Public comment on the claims? Council comment on the claims?

Councilmember Lowell: I just had a question on the codification of ordinances.

Jenelle Berthoud, Town Clerk: that was one time, and it was the codification of the building codes, and the "j" turns, and then Municode did that update within our system and then there will be hard copies as well sent to us.

Councilmember Michalson: I have one question about that Jenelle, how does that process work? When we did the "j" turns you send it to them, and they do the codification in the book and send us a bill.

Jenelle Berthoud: that is correct, it goes in the Municode book and on the website.

Councilmember Barker: Miller Law Firm, I see two different prices for this we have one in May and one in June.

Mayor Gibson: it did not go up, what has happened here Ross Miller gets \$200.00 per hour, and this has to do with water court. There has been a lot of work. The objectors have all withdrawn so there should not be as much work coming up for water court.

Councilmember Barker: Northwest Hardware, it is just listed as Steve and then the one above it there is nothing there. Just curious what those are. And then bike path and then something giving back.

Jenelle Berthoud: I think if I remember that the bike path was for some sprinkler parts.

Councilmember Barker: I just have never seen them broke out like that before.

Mayor Gibson: like we talked at the last council meeting, Melanie has stepped in to do the claims, remember there were two separate one's last time so that may be why they are different. Any further discussion, seeing none Jenelle please call for the vote.

Councilmember Barker: aye.

Councilmember Brown: aye.

Councilmember Lowell: aye.

Councilmember Michalson: aye.

Mayor Gibson: passes 4-0

6. New Business

a. Informational: HDR Engineer Report, Water and Wastewater Capacity

Mayor Gibson: introduced new business item a. A representative from HDR is here if you have any questions.

Councilmember Barker: do we need a motion?

Jenelle Berthoud: no, this is just informational.

Councilmember Barker: I need some clarity about the wastewater capacity. After reviewing the information, we are at capacity for the wastewater is that what I am gathering.

Mayor Gibson: no, we have 427 to go, is that correct.

Cora with HDR: we have 472 homes that could still be connected.

Councilmember Barker: I thought that was on the water.

Cora: 437 for the water. 472 for the wastewater. There have been a portion of those that have been approved but have not been built yet.

Councilmember Brown: my question is that would put the plant at max capacity.

Cora: correct, the wastewater plant can only handle 472 more additional homes to what is hooked up right now.

Councilmember Brown: we only have 437 that can be hooked up to water.

Cora: correct.

Mayor Gibson: we went through, and we did not want to publish it for all of the developers, but we have calculated all of the others approved. The only one at this time that has been approved is the 6 lots on phase one of Burnt Fork Estates.

Councilmember Brown: when we are at max capacity is that any wear and tear on it? Do we need to be concerned about pumps?

Cora: yes, the more wear and tear then there is replacements.

Mayor Gibson: through the water rights process, we have been talking about the need for another well. Later I am going to talk about the ARPA, which HDR is involved with, when we fix the leaks, our capacity should go up.

Councilmember Michalson: however, it does not add adequate volume for fire flow, 500 gallons per minute what is that about.

Cora: after the water comes out of the well fields, it is stored in the tank in addition to the leaks there are some suspicions that the tank leaks. You need to store enough water to hit that high fire flow.

Mayor Gibson: this was news to me, but it has been known for some time.

Councilmember Michalson: we don't have that met do we.

Cora: no, the town has not met that requirement for a long time. It plays into the rates for insurance in commercial buildings.

b. Discussion/Decision: Special Event Permit for 2023 Scarecrow Festival

Mayor Gibson: introduced special event permit for 2023 Scarecrow Festival.

Gretchen Spies: I just wanted to say that we have changed things from previous years, we are not going to have scarecrows on the bike path. We are also taking over the Rocky Mountain parking lot, so that we can have the kids dance two nights in a row. We have already talked to Jim about this, and he can move the Brewfest closer to his building. Bring the scarecrows all the way down to Ahava. Wagon rides, we are only cutting off third street from Main to College.

Councilmember Michalson: I make a motion to approve the 2023 scarecrow festival.

Councilmember Lowell: 2nd

Mayor Gibson: motion and a 2nd. Any other questions?

Councilmember Brown: I see that you have on there a highway or street closer, is that Montana Highway or city streets?

Gretchen: city streets.

Councilmember Brown: is that an application?

Mayor Gibson: when it gets closer, we get with all of the department heads to work all of that out, but since they are not on Eastside Hwy it does not have to do with MDT.

Councilmember Brown: has anybody talked with Chief Motley about the bon fire.

Gretchen: it is just a pit for the kids.

Councilmember Brown: it is in an enclosed container.

Councilmember Barker: with the changes that you have made they are not all included in this application?

Jenelle Berthoud: she does not have to put on there that she is not using the bike path because it does not belong to the town. The bank parking lot is private. Project 59870 paid their fees for the street closures.

Mayor Gibson: any other questions. Jenelle, please take the vote.

Councilmember Barker: aye.

Councilmember Brown: aye.

Councilmember Lowell: aye.

Councilmember Michalson: aye.

Mayor Gibson: passes 4-0

c. Discussion/Decision: Purchasing of Water Meters

Mayor Gibson: introduced new business item c. Purchasing of water meters

Councilmember Michalson: make a motion to approve the purchasing of water meters.

Councilmember Barker: 2nd

Mayor Gibson: motion and a 2nd. Any questions Mr. Kruse is here.

Councilmember Lowell: I was going through the finance, and it says that you already spent \$25,904.00 on meters. And you are in the negative.

Steve Kruse, Public Works Supervisor: I have spent \$15,000 and that was already approved last time. I purchased 125 meters on a reduced rate and the company knew they were defective. We paid to get the 20-year warranty. It was less than \$15,000.00.

Councilmember Lowell: it is showing, it would probably have to be.

Mayor Gibson: this is a little off subject; the revenue is not up to date.

Councilmember Lowell: this might be something that Gina wants to look at.

Steve Kruse: I would too. I need to see what was coded.

Mayor Gibson: isn't there only one place that we can get these from, Israel? The problem is that we have all of these meters that are not reading, and people are paying 83.00 to water their lawn.

Steve Kruse: on additional information on this in 2011 the manufacturer had a bad run of meters they notified the town not too long after that, last year we starting seeing a dramatic rise in meters that were not reading. Which is a substantial loss in revenue. When a meter doesn't read, we are charging only the base amount of gallons when in the summer a meter can read 25,000 gallons a month. I am still negotiating with these people, they gave us a list of the meters that are bad and the ones that are, are from 2011. Every meter that I have taken out, I have put

in about 100. We fix 100, read the next month and then it shows another 100 are not reading that tells me that number died that month. Our salesman called and if we buy a big lot we get a reduced rate, I am also working on them standing behind their product.

Councilmember Michalson: so if we are showing in the negative, and we need to get these, where are we going to get the money.

Steve Kruse: I am going to budget these for next year. It take up to 6 months to get them.

Councilmember Michalson: okay. We can work that into the budget.

Councilmember Brown: if I am hearing you correctly, you are hoping that by purchasing the meters and replacing the meters in the city we should be able to recoup plus.

Steve Kruse: in theory yes, but what is frustrating to us is we will go and put in 40 meters in a month and literally we wait and then come back and it got better by 3. They are all from 2011, there will be a point that we replace and see

Mayor Gibson: any other comment, public comment? Seeing none, Jenelle please take the vote.

Councilmember Barker: aye.

Councilmember Brown: aye.

Councilmember Lowell: aye.

Councilmember Michalson: aye.

Mayor Gibson: passes 4-0

d. Discussion/Decision: Purchasing of a Lawn Mower

Mayor Gibson: introduced new business item d. purchasing a lawn mower.

Councilmember Michalson: make a motion to approve the purchasing of a lawn mower.

Councilmember Barker: 2nd

Mayor Gibson: motion and a 2nd. Public comment? Seeing none, further discussion. It went out for bid, got 4 bids.

Councilmember Lowell: is it for this budget year?

Steve Kruse: yes.

Councilmember Lowell: Here again I was going through just the expenditures and you would be using cemetery, roads and a forestry. That would only be \$15,000.

Mayor Gibson: my understanding there was \$8,000 that was not spent.

Steve Kruse: if you look at cemeteries I budgeted for irrigation and there is \$8,000 there.

Councilmember Lowell: I got that, and I took \$1,000 out of roads and \$5263.00 out of the forestry and there is ground maintenance out of the parks for \$1,300.

Steve Kruse: I got four bids, (bids are located in the packet). John Deere and Bad Boy are the cheapest bids. Bad Boy, \$11,000 and John Deere, \$11,500. I did the same thing that you did, but we cannot use out of roads. But I do have funds in the general fund.

Councilmember Brown: are you down a mower? And I assume that mower can't be fixed.

Steve Kruse: it was purchased in 2010 and it has 1700 hours on it, apparently the repair shop made it aware ten years ago that things needed to be fixed. And the quote is \$8,500 to fix it.

Councilmember Lowell: do you have a preference?

Steve Kruse: my preference is one that I can have tomorrow, they are all good.

Mayor Gibson: any more questions? Public comment?

Jim Crews, 316 9th Street, Stevensville: public comment, questions regarding the procedure to buy them. Is this in the capital improvement budget? Did we put out an RFP? Mr. Crews gave his opinion on how to put out

Mayor Gibson: any further questions?

Councilmember Michalson: I will make motion to approve the purchase of the John Deere lawn mower.

Councilmember Lowell: 2nd.

Mayor Gibson: motion and a 2nd. Any further discussion on the lawnmower?

Councilmember Barker: I don't know if it is a mis-quote, but I do not see \$11,000 on the John Deere.

Steve Kruse: it was on the Bad Boy. To clarify, Jim, each one of these bids was given the same specifications.

Councilmember Brown: it was stated that the lower bid was from Bad Boy.

Councilmember Michalson: amend my motion, I make a motion to approve the Bad Boy.

Councilmember Lowell: 2nd.

Mayor Gibson: motion and a 2nd. any more discussion about the Bad Boy. Seeing none Jenelle take the vote.

Councilmember Barker: aye.

Councilmember Brown: no.

Councilmember Lowell: aye.

Councilmember Michalson: aye.

Mayor Gibson: passes 3-1

e. Discussion/Decision: Requesting to Publish an RFP for Street Repairs, Spring Street and Railroad Ave

Mayor Gibson: introduced new business item e. it was SB 536 the pothole bill, it passed, I have been in contact with them to see how much we get. Just a request to get the RFP out for these bids.

Councilmember Michalson: make a motion to publish an RFP for Street Repairs, Spring Street and Railroad Ave.

Councilmember Lowell: 2nd

Mayor Gibson: motion and a 2nd. Public comment? Seeing none, any further discussion? Jenelle, please take the vote.

Councilmember Barker: aye.

Councilmember Brown: aye.

Councilmember Lowell: aye.

Councilmember Michalson: aye.

Mayor Gibson: passes 4-0

f. Discussion/Decision: Use A2Z Personnel Services to Perform Hiring of Temporary Employees

Mayor Gibson: introduced new business item f. Use A2Z Personnel Services to Perform Hiring of Temporary Employees.

Councilmember Michalson: make a motion to use A2Z Personnel Services to Perform Hiring of Temporary Employees.

Councilmember Barker: 2nd.

Mayor Gibson: motion and a 2nd. I will Steve address this.

Steve Kruse: I am down 2 full time employees. Not having very good luck attracting applicants. I contacted A2Z and let them know what I am looking for. They take care of everything, this is short term, seasonal.

Mayor Gibson:

Jim Crews: public comment, I have questions and am open to questions. What is the minimum criteria for this contract? What are the terms of this agreement? Has the town attorney reviewed this contract? Mr. Crews gave his comment to the contract with A2Z and the town. Safety manual does the town even have one.

Mayor Gibson: thank you, yes, the attorney has reviewed it.

Councilmember Michalson: as I discussed this with you yesterday, we disagree on this, and I review it as a contract. I think that if we are going to go with this it needs to go out for bid.

Mayor Gibson: we can do an RFP, but we just approved a mower and no one to run it.

Councilmember Michalson: I would like to amend this and put out an RFP for this service.

Councilmember Barker: 2nd

Mayor Gibson: motion and a 2nd. Any further discussion?

Councilmember Barker: I agree with the terms and the cost to the town. There are a lot of different places to do this.

Mayor Gibson: there is another option, for the short term, to hire part time mowing from a landscape company, a service not a contract.

Councilmember Lowell: we have to have somebody out with the parks and pools, I don't agree with the contract, but I do agree with hiring someone with a landscape company.

Mayor Gibson: if you would like to amend this to go with a service you can.

Councilmember Brown: the council just approved buying a lawnmower.

Mayor Gibson: you are still going to need it, how old is the other lawnmower?

Steve Kruse: two others.

Councilmember Brown: there are two lawnmowers, and no one to mow. Who is going to use the new lawnmower?

Steve Kruse: we have someone to put in the seat, but right now we are falling behind.

Mayor Gibson: if you want to make another amendment to let us seek out a company that would be okay.

Councilmember Michalson: I make an amended motion to have the town seek out a part-time service until we find someone to do it.

Councilmember Lowell: 2nd.

Mayor Gibson: motion and a 2nd.

Steve Kruse: how to we go about obtaining a service, do I have to talk to three. And go with the low bid. What I am finding is people are booked.

Councilmember Lowell: I would think that if you find someone to do it.

Mayor Gibson: we have a motion to amend and a 2nd.

Councilmember Barker: no.

Councilmember Brown: no.

Councilmember Lowell: aye.

Councilmember Michalson: aye.

Mayor Gibson: motion fails 2-2

g. Discussion/Decision: Stevensville Airport Board Access to Government Surplus Site

Mayor Gibson: introduced new business item g. Stevensville Airport Board Access to Government Surplus Site

Jenelle Berthoud: we attended the Airport Board Meeting on June 13th and discussion came up from their board about having the ability to look for things that are usually free, they are looking for two board members that can be on this site. They may need some funds for shipping.

Councilmember Lowell: make a motion approve the Stevensville Airport Board Access to Government Surplus Site.

Councilmember Barker: 2nd

Mayor Gibson: motion and a 2nd. Public comment? Questions.

Councilmember Barker: I do not see this in the packet.

Jenelle Berthoud: it is just a website.

Councilmember Brown: I thought that we agreed at the airport board meeting that they would need shipping funds. Make an amendment to include on this agenda item to the amount of \$1500 according to the purchasing policy. Money needs to be in their budget.

Councilmember Barker: 2nd.

Mayor Gibson: motion and a 2nd the amended item. Any more discussion on the amendment.

Councilmember Barker: aye.

Councilmember Brown: aye.

Councilmember Lowell: aye.

Councilmember Michalson: aye.

Mayor Gibson: passes 4-0

Mayor Gibson: now we will go back to the original motion. Already have a motion and a 2nd.

Councilmember Barker: aye.

Councilmember Brown: aye.

Councilmember Lowell: aye.

Councilmember Michalson: aye.

Mayor Gibson: passes 4-0

h. Discussion/Decision: Compensation for the Town Clerk to cover Airport Manager Duties

Mayor Gibson: introduced new business item h. Compensation for the Town Clerk to cover Airport Manager Duties. Both myself and Jenelle if you approve this would be the contact, temporary. \$1.00 per hour and it is temporary.

Councilmember Barker: make a motion to approve Compensation for the Town Clerk to cover Airport Manager Duties.

Councilmember Michalson: 2nd

Mayor Gibson: motion and a 2nd. Public comment?

Jim Crews: public comment, I heard that one of the duties for the clerk is to chase problems with the leases. That is a duty of the billing clerk. That is what she is supposed to do. Councilmember Brown did a lot of work to tract this down.

Mayor Gibson: it was a personnel issue; I will not get into it.

Councilmember Barker: no.

Councilmember Brown: no

Councilmember Lowell: aye

Councilmember Michalson: no.

Mayor Gibson: for your information, and I will ask Jenelle, we won't have anyone to do it. motion fails.

Jenelle Berthoud: that is correct the information on this will not go out at this time.

Councilmember Lowell: there is not much to doing them, once the lease are there.

Mayor Gibson: I just think that we have had some serious circumstances since day one. you might want to come down and see what is done. I have some past minutes here in 2019 when the council approved the former mayor to get up to \$25.00 per hour to do certain duties, no one tracked his payroll or anything.

i. Discussion/Decision: Compensation for the Utility Billing Clerk for Assistance in the Finance Department

Mayor Gibson: introduced new business item i. Compensation for the Utility Billing Clerk for Assistance in the Finance Department.

Councilmember Michalson: make a motion to approve Compensation for the Utility Billing Clerk for Assistance in the Finance Department.

Councilmember Lowell: 2nd

Mayor Gibson: motion and a 2nd. Any public comment? Seeing any further comment?

Councilmember Barker: I am not sitting here, and I feel like I am being bullied. I am not going to be sit here and be told that it is only .25 cents it is only \$1.00. Yes in 2019 it did get us into trouble because there were no limits, but I am not going to take it. Stop, it is my forum, this is what we are hearing, it has to stop somewhere. We gave them what they asked for with their raises when the budget went through, I do not agree with it.

Mayor Gibson: that is fine, I just brought up a point, the attorney has reviewed these, and it is totally legal and it is different than what happened in 2019. Further discussion, seeing none, Jenelle call for the vote.

Councilmember Barker: no.

Councilmember Brown: no.

Councilmember Lowell: aye.

Councilmember Michalson: no.

Mayor Gibson: motion fails.

j. Discussion/Decision: Consent to the Mayors Appointment of Gina Crowe as the Director of Finance & HR

Mayor Gibson: introduced new business item j. Consent to the Mayors Appointment of Gina Crowe as the Director of Finance & HR. There was a structured interview, I am going to admit I forgot, it was not to deceive the council and higher Gina without the council's approval. I admit that mistake, but I am glad that I made it, she has already found a savings of about \$10,000 for next year.

Councilmember Lowell: make a motion to the appointment of Gina Crowe.

Councilmember Barker: 2nd

Mayor Gibson: motion and a 2nd.

Jim Crews: public comment, this does not reflect on you, I am a proceduralist. I follow the law. Previous administration blew this off and we just can't continue to do it. A finance officer cannot take office until it has been filed with the clerk and recorder, we need to start following these things. Recited state and town laws. Just ask in the future that we do this properly.

Mayor Gibson: thank you. we have before you, I have not changed signatures at the bank until we had this meeting.

Councilmember Michalson: How much per hour.

Mayor Gibson: \$30.00 per hour. Payroll things, she is also meeting with me about updating the revenue. We take the vote.

Councilmember Barker: aye.

Councilmember Brown: aye.

Councilmember Lowell: aye.

Councilmember Michalson: aye.

Mayor Gibson: passes 4-0

7. Board Reports

Councilmember Brown: Jenelle and the mayor have been part of it. The cell phone should be with Jenelle, the other one was broke. They are hoping to have all of their CARES money in by now. Chapter 2 of the master plan should be at the next airport board meeting in July. Mayor did say that they are putting out the manger job as a stipend. They are asking for the police department to do extra patrols, because they have had some problems with some people walking through and helping themselves to things. I did find two well logs. Let's look into this.

Mayor Gibson: I talked to Steve Kruse, and there are many private wells up there.

Councilmember Brown: it is city property.

Councilmember Lowell: many years ago.

Mayor Gibson: I have been told that the water is not safe to drink.

Councilmember Brown: my question is that they only have a lease, and they are putting in wells on city property, then when they vacate the lease can we take over those wells. That might be something that we look into.

Mayor Gibson: I have talked to Councilmember Michalson about the Planning & Zoning Board, and we have that grant to help with the growth policy.

8. Town Council Comments

Councilmember Michalson: as you know, we have had one of our own miss a couple of unexcused and absences from a meeting and we are the governing body and we have to discipline our own and we have to set an example, if it happens again, I will be coming before with an agenda item of public sensor.

Councilmember Brown: I would like to ask how we are coming along with the government website and getting off of Godaddy.

Jenelle Berthoud: we had to do a re-write now that we have a new finance officer, so we sent that letter to them hoping to hear back soon. It is going fairly smooth.

Councilmember Lowell: I have been wondering about all of our CD's, Rocky Mountain Bank has sold.

Mayor Gibson: that is a good question, Gina came to me this week and we went through those CD's, next week we are going to look through those.

Gina Crowe: they are all over and there are about 14 of them, some have maturity on December 2023 and December 2026. Altogether about one million dollars. First Security has a CD with a higher rate.

Councilmember Lowell: I have noticed on the revenues that last year the interest totaled \$800.00 is all.


9. Executive Report

Mayor Gibson: I think that I mentioned that we started the ARPA process, the department heads are to have their requests back by the 27th. Our intent is to sit down and go over everything, the levies, the lighting districts. There is going to be extra revenue in the levies, because the property owners are going to get hit pretty hard. I have been in conversation about the levies, a friend of mine sent me tax levies 101. I will get that out to you. We did not raise the levies and I do not want to. One more thing, there have been a lot of rumors about me and my health it has been a struggle and I have been to a few specialist recently as recent as Monday, there might need to be some surgery, I am on a different kind of treatment. My intent at the very least is to get through this budget, I will not be here for a full four-year term. My intent would hopefully be March, depending on what happens. This other stuff that I am doing right now is working pretty good. I have been to see just about everyone. I just want you to know that my intent is next year unless something happens.

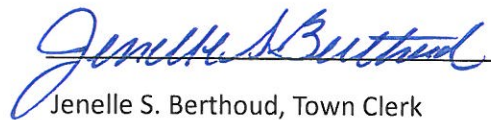
10. Adjournment

APPROVE:

ATTEST:



Steve Gibson, Mayor



Jenelle S. Berthoud, Town Clerk