

# MINUTES–CITY OF ASHTON

## COUNCIL MEETING

Wednesday, January 8, 2025

6:00 p.m.

714 Main Street

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*The purpose of the Agenda is to assist the Council and interested citizens in the conduct of the public meeting. Careful review of the Agenda is encouraged. Testimony from the public will be solicited for any item or issue listed under the category of **Public Hearings**. The Mayor will not normally allow audience participation at any other time. Idaho Law prohibits council action on items brought under this section except in an emergency circumstance. Questions concerning items appearing on this Agenda or requests for accommodation of special needs to participate in the meetings should be addressed to the Office of the City Clerk or call 208-652-3987.*

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**PRAYER OFFERED BY: Teresa Hansen**

**CALL TO ORDER & WELCOME**

**PLEDGE LED BY: John Kaelberer**

In Attendance: Tom Mattingly, Teresa Hansen, John Kaelberer, John Scafe and Nate Finley.

Also in attendance: City Clerk Stegelmeier, Deputy Clerk Warnke, P&Z Administrator Bowersox, Chief Griffel, City Attorney Angell and Justin Angell.

Mayor Mattingly welcomed everyone and opened the meeting at 6:00 pm.

### **1. CONSENT AGENDA: ACTION ITEM**

*Being considered routine by the City Council, these items will be enacted by one motion unless requested by a Councilman or a citizen that one or more items be removed for later discussion.*

- A. **Minutes** – Approval of Meeting Minutes 12-11-2024
- B. **Treasurers Report** - As Submitted
- C. **Payables** – Bills for Council approval as a result of City expenditures
- D. **Employee Expenses** – As submitted

City Clerk Stegelmeier explained that many of the regular bills had not arrived yet so she will need to pay some of them prior to the next council meeting. The Mayor will sign the checks and they will appear in the next meeting's payables report.

Councilman Kaelberer made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Councilman Finley seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

### **Regular Business:**

*Each speaker will be allowed a maximum of 5 minutes unless repeat testimony is requested by the Mayor/Council.*

#### **1. Utility Bill Discussion – City Clerk Stegelmeier, Kathryn Stronks**

City Clerk Stegelmeier asked the Mayor to amend the agenda by adding a discussion with Kathryn Stronks about utility bills. City Clerk Stegelmeier had forgotten to put Kathryn on the agenda by mistake. Kathryn thanked the Mayor for letting her speak to the Council. She explained that she came to talk about an overdue bill that she had been sent because she is the property owner. Her and her husband own a trailer park and there is a trailer owner who is behind on their utility bills. Katherine explained that she did not know that they were behind on their bills until she suddenly got a bill for \$800 from the City. There was no prior notification and it was overwhelming to get that bill right before Christmas and right after paying taxes – regardless of when it was it would have been troubling although during that time it was especially troubling. When she spoke to City Clerk Stegelmeier she was told that there is no written policy of when or how to send those kinds of bills out. Katherine explained her opinion that when someone gets behind – the City should not let them get more than 60 days behind because

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something like \$800 would seem insurmountable to someone who is behind in their bills. It would be like trying to climb Mount Everest for them. That time would also be the time to let the landlords know what was happening. Katherine is also concerned about the meter being pulled, etc. before they can work on this problem. Katherine would like the City to have a written policy of how to handle these situations. Mayor Mattingly said that the City will address the problem. Katherine asked if the Council or Mayor had any questions for her – what are their thoughts on this kind of timeline? Councilwoman Hansen asked City Clerk Stegelmeier how many months the trailer owner was behind. City Clerk Stegelmeier asked Deputy Clerk Warnke how far behind they were. Deputy Clerk Warnke explained that she felt really bad about the situation. The trailer owner was behind but was making little payments here and there so it was hard to keep up with how far behind they were. There are over five hundred accounts so sometimes it is hard to make sure that someone is keeping up. When Deputy Clerk Warnke prepared the bill to go out to the Stronks', she was planning to pull that bill and send it along with a letter of explanation of next steps but billing day got hectic and she forgot. Katherine feels like if there was a written policy in place, something like this would not have happened. City Clerk Stegelmeier explained that she really likes Katherine's suggestion about the 60 days and she will get a policy put together. Mayor Mattingly thanked Katherine for her discussion.

### **2. Water Study Update – City Clerk Stegelmeier, Kyle Jones**

Kyle Jones is here to give an update of the water study. He had hoped to have a little bit of a document ready to present to the Council but it is not quite ready. He has a good amount of the document put together but it has taken him a little longer than he had hoped. City Clerk Stegelmeier asked if he knew through his study whether the City will need a new well. He said he is not ready to answer that question yet. Kyle said he will be ready and come next month with more information. Mayor Mattingly thanked Kyle for his time.

### **3. Wastewater Screen Project Update – City Clerk Stegelmeier, Jaden Jackson, Justin Angell **ACTION ITEM****

City Clerk Stegelmeier explained that Justin Angell is here to help if the Council needs more information but the issue she wanted to discuss on the project was the SCADA system for the evaporators. There is a less expensive alternative but in the documents from the engineer the information about why it is less expensive is not clear. The difference is about \$2500. City Clerk Stegelmeier would like to ask the Council to give her approval to make a decision when she and Justin speak with the engineers – that decision being choosing the option that makes sure that the system will work to make the evaporators work best and be safe for the public works department. Justin explained that if the information comes to their phones it would be best. If the information is coming to them on how everything is working out there, it would be more beneficial. Mayor Mattingly asked if he wanted the evaporators to talk to them separately or together. Justin replied that from the information we have- we cannot tell which option is best. Councilman Scafe said that the quicker they know that there are issues with the evaporators on their phones, the quicker they can fix them. Justin said that if they can shut them off from the phones, they can avoid blowback from the evaporators and other problems. Councilman Finley explained that high tech is here and we need to keep up. City Clerk Stegelmeier then explained that everything is done in the building except the screen which should be here in February. Justin said the pole is in and the electrical is still working on the communication (SCADA) system. City Clerk Stegelmeier will make the decision after speaking with Justin and the engineers and then report at the February meeting.

### **4. Sign Project Bid Document Review – City Clerk Stegelmeier **ACTION ITEM****

City Clerk Stegelmeier explained that she included the documents she had been sending out on the sign bids so that the Mayor and Council could give her any suggestions. The bids have not been coming in very uniform and have been really high. Councilman Kaelberer asked if the items that were not needed

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had been eliminated. City Clerk Stegelmeier explained that the traffic control can be a lot less than what was required by ITD and that was what item number one eliminated. Councilman Scafe said it looked good and he thought that the City was just late in the season on bidding last year. City Clerk Stegelmeier will get the information out to bidders.

### 5. American Dog Derby Update – Councilman Scafe

Councilman Scafe gave the Council an update on the race. The committee will still plan the event for in town but if the snow is not deep enough, they will move out to Bear Gulch. This year's race will be dedicated to Ray Gordon who was a long-time musher and supporter of the race. Councilman Scafe is also making sure to coordinate with the City on the snow, etc. The committee is excited and it looks to be a good year for the American Dog Derby. Mayor Mattingly thanked him and his committee for their work in brining this event to Ashton each year.

### 6. Council Schedule – City Clerk Stegelmeier **ACTION ITEM**

City Clerk Stegelmeier went over the upcoming schedule with the Council. She also explained that PSI has had to raise their rates due to a rise in Fremont County rates. It will be about a 3.2% adjustment. A public hearing is not needed but it will need to be done in February so that the Sanitation Fund will balance. Councilman Scafe said people just do not understand that the City is just trying to break even. The spring and summer Association of Idaho Cities meeting dates were discussed.

### 7. Executive Session – City Attorney Angell **ACTION ITEM**

I.C. 74-206 Certain City-related matters may need to be discussed confidentially as a matter of law (Acquisition of real property, personnel matters, attorney-client communications) subject to applicable legal requirements, the Council may enter executive session by roll call vote to discuss such matters.

**(f) To communicate with legal counsel for the City of Ashton to discuss legal ramifications of and legal options for pending litigation.**

Mayor Mattingly asked City Attorney Angell if he still had business for an executive session. City Attorney Angell explained that the Council could forgo having an executive session this month.

## 8. ADJOURNMENT

Councilwoman Hansen made a motion to adjourn. Councilman Finley seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

The meeting ended at 6:26 pm.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Cathy Stegelmeier, City Clerk.

Attest

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Cathy Stegelmeier  
City Clerk

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Tom Mattingly  
Mayor