Ekalaka Town Council

Minutes

Town Office, 103 N Main Street March 3rd, 2025 @ 5:00 pm

1. Call Regular Meeting to Order

- a. Roll Call Council: Mayor Buck Kratzer called the meeting to order at 5:12 pm. Andy Wright and Rex McCord were present.
- b. Employees' Present: None
- c. Appointed Officials Present: Carol Spencer and Kamely Harkins
- 2. Pledge of Allegiance
- 3. Public Comment/ Complaints: Walt Anderson was present. No complaints or comments.
- 4. Presentation on Petitions and Communications: None
- 5. Unfinished Business * Action Item
- 6. New Business * Action items

a. Transfer-site hours for summer and attendee (discussion)

The council requested revising the summer hours for the transfer site in early spring as current attendees are unable to attend on Tuesdays through the spring and summer. The council discussed opening the dump on Tuesdays and allowing residents to use it. Andy moved to table the summer hours until they need to be addressed. Carol seconded, no discussion. The motion passed with 3 ayes and 0 nays.

b. Walter Anderson's survey research and associated cost (discussion)

The council asked Walt if he was interested in researching the town's platting. Walt was very willing and seemed excited to help the town get the survey issues fixed for the future of Ekalaka residents. Walt informed the council that he had already done some research and found an original survey stake on the courthouse lawn. He thinks it could be a potential starting point. Walt also asked the council to keep residents updated on what is happening and explain the process. The council agreed with Walt and stated that the town would inform its residents about the process. Walt let the Council know that he is happy to volunteer his time for this. Council member Andy said the town would be willing to pay for his service since the town knows this will be a long process. Andy also explained to Walt that the town must establish the ownership of streets and alleys. Andy asked if the Clerk could contact Wally, the lawyer, to inform Walt where to start the research. Andy also explained that the idea behind the town plat is to help residents purchase property without issue and to ensure that what they have purchased is what they own, not someone else's garage. Carol also agreed that we need an article in the paper to educate the residents.

c. *Clean-up Day (pick a day)

Kamely wants to schedule a clean-up day when residents can take tires and furniture to the transfer site for a reduced fee. Carol moved to set a clean-up day for the same day as the Chamber yard sale, and Andy seconded the motion. The council discussed the possibility of keeping the transfer site open later that day and agreed that the town would publish the date in the paper.

d. *MOU with weed board

The memorandum of understanding with the weed board clarifies that the weed board will assist the town in identifying noxious weeds and help the town obtain someone with a turf license, as the weed board does not currently hold that license. Carol moved to accept the MOU from the weed board; Andy seconded the motion. There was no discussion. The motion passed with 3 ayes and 0 nays.

- 7. Minutes from the last meeting(s): read, correct (if needed), and approve. Carol moved to approve the minutes of the regular meeting held on February 5th, 2025. Andy seconded; there was no discussion. The motion passed with 3 ayes and 0 nays.
- 8. **Claims Approval** Carol moved to approve claims totaling \$14,252.89. Rex seconded. No discussion. The motion passed with 3 ayes and 0 nays.

9. Reports of Officers:

- a) Public Works Director: The current applicant withdrew their application. The council discussed the need for a CDL requirement qualification for the position. Kamely will contact MMIA to determine the stipulations. Kamely reported that the UV system was experiencing some issues and that she was attempting to resolve them. Kamely also told the council that she had some water shut-offs due to pipes breaking in the cold weather. The town also received some complaints about the sewer freezing. Kamely had Michael help open the manhole and ensure the sewer was not frozen. Kamely also changed some meters and has a few more to update.
- b) Mayor: Buck signed the contract with Southeast Garbage Removal LLC before the meeting.
- **c)** Attorney: The attorney reported to the clerk that he worked on a quiet title petition and a case in city court.
- d) Council: none

10. Reports on Standing and Special Committees:

- a) Administrative (Clerk/Treasurer): Kamely reported that the town had a good turnout for the dog rabies clinic and that many residents licensed their dogs. Kamely thinks that the town may have 3 residents to serve on the study commission; she will contact them. Kamely canceled service with G & G Garbage, given that the town no longer has a contract with them and chose to go with Southeast Garbage Removal instead. Kamely is exploring grant opportunities to upgrade the water meters to radio technology. Grants are currently on hold. Kamely had a meeting with the software company where they introduced bill pay, a service that would provide a login for residents to access their accounts and make payments with credit cards. This would enable real-time payments, saving steps for the clerk. The mayor asked Kamely to add bill pay to next month's agenda.
- **b)** Law Enforcement: none
- c) Library: Town received January's minutes and February's finances.
- **d)** Fire Department/Committee: Andy explained to the council that the EVFD met with the ISO insurance representative, and their rating will increase from a 5 to a 9. That means residents' home insurance may increase by 30% due to the inability to store the structure fire truck while filled with water. EVFD is trying to find a shop big enough to hold the structure fire truck until their building is completed.
- **e)** Pool: The committee met and discussed the possibility of waiting for an FWP grant that would serve as a matching fund. If that is possible, the whole project will be completed. The committee also discussed keeping the pool open one more year before demolition. Some students are also working on this project and will publish an article in the paper to keep residents informed about the pool's status.
- f) Safety: The council held a quick safety meeting with Kamely during the regular council meeting.
- 11. **Announcements:** Kamely will be away from March 10th to the 14th, attending Montana Rural Water and Wastewater classes to prepare for the exam. Andy said he would start guiding in April, so he may not always be available.
- 12. Next Meeting Date: April 2nd, 2025, at 5 pm
- 13. **Adjourn:** Carol moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:15 pm. Andy seconded, no discussion. The motion passed with 3 ayes and 0 nays.

*Items up for action without discussion at a previous Council meeting may or may not be accepted for action by the Council at the Council's discretion.