

Ekalaka Town Council
Minutes
Town Office, 103 N Main Street
September 4th, 2024

1) Call Regular Meeting to Order

a) Roll Call Council: Mayor Buck Kratzer called the meeting to order at 5:07 pm. Adrew Wright, Carol Spencer were present and Melissa Lovec on teams, Rex McCord was absent

b) Employees Present: Calvin Jensen

c) Appointed Officials Present: Kamely Harkins

2) Pledge of Allegiance

3) Public Comment present: Carol Carey, Stefan Livingston, Taylor Kuntz, Mya Yonika, Pam Castleberry, Josh Norris and Toni Kratzer

4) Public Comment/ Complaints: Carol Carey representing the Veterans Park committee, informed the council that the Veterans Park will be hopefully done by Veterans Day this year, She updated the council that they will put a 25 ft tall flagpole, and they are waiting on names to show up to be put on walls. They will also be trimming the tree on the corner; they plan on having concrete on the ground and solar lights for as little maintenance possible. No other public comments or complaints.

5) Presentation of Petitions and Communications: Cassidy Jesperson trailer house addition, Courtney Higgins privacy fence, Robin Kawecki shed: Andy moved to approve all presentation of petition, Carol seconded, no discussion, 3 ayes no nays motion carried.

6) Unfinished Business * Action Items

7) New Business * Action items

a) * Mya Yonika's dogs need to leave town: Mayor explained that there have been multiple complaints about Mya's dogs. Mya was present and was able to give the council explanation that her dogs got out, but the dog that was in trouble prior did not. Mayor explained that he had several statements that all her dogs had been out. Mya also explained that she has done everything to keep her dogs in and that she carries her dog that was previously in trouble with the town to work with her and everywhere she goes. Mayor Kratzer proposed that the pitbull that was previously cited e and given a second chance needs to leave town. Mya left the meeting and said she would be contacting a lawyer. Discussion continued Deputy Josh Norris was present and explained that he would work with the council if the town had clear ordinance and written complaints from the public. Andy moved to table the dog being kicked out of town until further written complaints with pictures and other proofs; Carol seconded. Discussion continued stating the ordinance says 3 complaints and the town will be contacting the town lawyer and checking on what

the town needs to do next, no other discussion. Motion passed to table dog removal 3 ayes 0 nays.

- b)** *Weed Board: discuss MOU knapweed issues. Taylor explained to the council that the last MOU the town had with the County Weed district was in 2016. The weed district no longer has a turf license to spray the town noxious weeds. Taylor also asked the council what they would like to do to proceed to a new agreement. The council deliberated and decided to put it on hold until further time to discuss what to do. Taylor also discussed the noxious weed issue town have Taylor and Stefan have contacted evergreen (Miles City) they have a turf license and have agreed to come to Ekalaka and spray the lots needed in town. The residents would pay for their own lots to be sprayed directly to Evergreen. Taylor made postcards and sent them to all residents in Ekalaka. If they can get more than 10 people to sign up to get sprayed, the mobilization fee would be waived. If not, the Carter County weed district will pay for the mobilization fee to help get these places sprayed and get noxious weed under control. No action was needed informational discussion.
- c)** *Reroute of a Customer water line: One residency will need to move their water line due to the proximity of a creek, Andy moved that the town would endure the cost of relocating the water line for the resident whether the town does the project or contracts the work. Carol seconded the motion, the council discussed that the customer needs to agree with the town. Elston will contact the customer. No further discussion. The motion passed with 3 ayes 0 nays.
- d)** * School to work wage: Kamely has a school-to- work student and thinks it's worth paying her a wage for the 1hr she works per school day. This would teach them to be on time and that if you don't come to work you won't get paid. Andy moved to pay Jillian McGraw \$14.00/hr. for school to work. The council discussed the legality of paying school to work students, Carol told the council that she has never seen or been told that it was illegal, and that other places do pay the school to work students. Melissa seconded the motion. No other discussion. The motion passed with 3 ayes 0 nays.
- e)** * Bridge replacement by Phil Cook: Carol moved to replace the bridge with a culvert upon Lu Strangford's approval, Andy seconded the motion. The council discussed the people with water rights are responsible for maintaining irrigation ditch and bridge. Mayor Kratzer will talk to County Road and Bridge and finding our if we can make an agreement to help the town replace the bridge with a culvert. No other discussion, the motion passed with 3 ayes 0 nays.
- f)** *Reading of Budget Resolution: Mayor Kratzer read the Final Budget Resolution out loud, Andy moved to adopt the Budget and Levy, Melissa seconded, no discussion, 3 ayes no nays
- 8) Minutes from last meeting(s):** read, correct (if needed) and approve August 7th minutes- Carol moved to approve minutes, Andy seconded, no discussion. The motion passed with 3 ayes 0 nays.

9) Claims Approval- for \$241,277.97- Kamely explained why the claims were so high, the contract company has put in for all the parts and pipes that they have at location for the water project, the check will not be leaving the office until the grant money has been received by the town. Andy moved to approve claims for the amount of \$241,277.97. Carol seconded the motion. No discussion. The motion passed with 3 ayes 0 nays.

10) Reports of Officers:

a) Public Works Director- Calvin has been busy jetting sewer lines. The hose on jet truck has dry rot and will need to be replaced. Calvin has been locating manhole covers, He hopes to do mapping of the lines with Montana Rural this spring. The white shed at the shop is falling down. Mayor Kratzer will take a look and maybe it can be replaced with a container. White pickup needs to be replaced. Calvin and Dewey have been at the lagoon picking weeds. Calvin hopes for rain so he can blade roads.

b) Mayor Kratzer- Hopes to get town survey done soon.

c) Attorney- Buck and Kamely will be meeting with Jeff over phone conference Thursday September 5th.

d) Council- no reports

11) Reports of Standing and Special Committees:

a) Administrative (Clerk/Treasurer) Kamely explained to the Council that when we were audited one of the issues was receiving cash with only one person at the office or dump. Kamely asked to implement a no-cash policy to avoid writeups from audits and to avoid fraud issues. Kamely is working with the lawyer to get some ordinances updated and present it to the council and public.

b) Law Enforcement- Josh explained that he loves written things, if we have it in writing he will follow

c) Library- Council received last month's minutes and finances.

d) Fire Department/Committee- Andy mentioned that the fire department was wondering if the well house on the property went with the property.

e) Parks- Calvin fixed the airplane and asked where we could get some lumber to fix the double swing at the park.

f) Pool- No reports.

12) Safety- Melissa, Kamely, Calvin and Elston did a safety slide show before the Council meeting on work safety. Kamely also told the Council that she visited with MMIA, the towns workers comp, and they recommend not allowing community service people to run heavy machinery or a tire cutting machine.

13) Announcements- Kamely will be attending the league conference in October. The regular Council meeting will be scheduled for the 3rd Wednesday of October since Kamely will be gone the 1st week.

14) Next Meeting Date: October 9th, 2024

15) Adjourn- Andy moved to adjourn the meeting at 7pm, Carol seconded. The motion passed with 3 aye 0 nays, meeting adjourned at 7pm.

***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.**