

MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING

MALTA CITY COUNCIL

May 12, 2020

Officials present:

Mayor John Demarais

Councilpersons Ward I: David Rummel

William Hicks

Councilpersons Ward II: Bonnie Wiederrick

James Sintler

Clerk/Treasurer: Lorie Bond

Public Works Director: James Truelove

Others attended: Janet Berg, Sheriff Jerry Lytle, Park & Recreation Director Sally Wright, Assistant Park & Recreation Director Jessica Zeiger and Mark Herbert from PCN.

Mayor Demarais opened the meeting at 5:00pm.

COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE MAYOR

1. Mayor Demarais reported that the High School Graduation would be taking place at the football field this year due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Mayor Demarais informed Council that he had given permission for vehicles to angle parking on 5th and 3rd Avenue by the football field during the graduation ceremony.

Councilperson Sintler moved to approve the minutes, 2nd by Councilperson Hicks. Motion carried unanimously.

Councilperson Wiederrick moved to approve the agenda, 2nd by Councilperson Rummel. Motion carried unanimously.

Councilpersons Wiederrick and Sintler presented claim warrants.

Councilperson Rummel moved to approve claim checks 26129 to 26189, 2nd by Councilperson Wiederrick. Motion carried unanimously.

Councilperson Sintler moved to approve April 2020 payroll, 2nd by Councilperson Wiederrick. Motion carried unanimously.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS, COMMITTEES & MEETINGS ATTENDED

1. PWD Truelove reported that the sewage lagoon outfall line installation was complete except for minor cleanup work. The next phase of the project would be completed during the next fiscal year.
2. PWD Truelove reported that the sweeper should be done sweeping the east side of town this week. Next week the sweeper will start sweeping the west side of town.
3. PWD Truelove reported that the new storm water pump located on the south end of 5th Avenue had been replaced and it was back on line. Truelove stated that the old pump from 1961 had failed and had to be replaced.
4. PWD Truelove reported that scoria had been delivered and spread on the ballfield.
5. Mayor Demarais informed Council that the City had a feral cat problem. So far animal control had trapped fifteen cats and PWD Truelove had ordered addition traps.
6. Clerk Bond presented Council with the April financials, the current check register, the current shut off list, the April, payroll overtime, vacation, sick leave report and the revenue and expenditure actual vs budget reports.
7. Clerk Bond reported that the Montana State University Local Government Center was taking registrations for a 2020 Online Municipal Institute Webinar Series. The registration fee was \$150.00 and would give the registrant the ability to earn credits and take part in all of the webinars through April 2021. After some discussion Councilperson

Wiederrick moved to sign Deputy Clerk Laurie Barrett for the training, 2nd by Councilperson Sintler. Mayor Demarais called for a roll call vote. Councilpersons Wiederrick Aye, Sintler Aye, Hicks Aye, Rummel Aye. Motion Carried.

8. Sheriff Jerry Lytle presented Council with the current sheriff's case files report. Sheriff Lytle reported that calls were way down because of the COVID-19 restrictions. Sheriff Lytle stated that the cruises were a great stress reliever for the community.
9. Park & Recreation Director Sally Wright reported that as part of phase 1.5 Governor Bullock had approved the opening of weight rooms on May 15, 2020.
10. P&R Director Wright reported that the weight room membership fee was \$8.00/month and maybe Council would want to consider increasing the fee to \$10.00/month in the future.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

OLD BUSINESS

1. Mayor Demarais presented Council with the Big Sky Turfworx 2020 herbicide/fertilizer service contract. Councilperson Hicks moved to approve the 2020 Big Sky Turfworx 2020 herbicide/fertilizer service contract, 2nd by Councilperson Rummel. Mayor Demarais called for a roll call vote. Councilpersons Hicks Aye, Rummel Aye, Wiederrick Aye, Sintler Aye. Motion Carried.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Mayor Demarais stated that the Phillips County Historical Society had asked the City of Malta if they would donate funds towards the refurbishment of the City owned stagecoach/mud wagon. Councilperson Wiederrick asked about the grant money the Historical Society had received and Councilperson Rummel stated that the grant required matching funds. Mayor Demarais asked Council if they thought the City should donate funds towards the refurbishment and if so how much? Councilperson Rummel moved to donate \$1000.00 towards the refurbishment of the stagecoach/mud wagon, 2nd by Councilperson Wiederrick. Mayor Demarais called for a roll call vote. Councilpersons Rummel Aye, Wiederrick Aye, Hicks Aye, Sintler Aye. Motion carried.
2. Mayor Demarais informed Council that it was time to decide to participate in the Flex Plan or not. Clerk Bond reported that currently two employees were participating in the Flex Program and the admission fees have been increased to \$100.00/month. Councilperson Rummel moved to suspend participation in the Flex plan program, 2nd by Sintler. Mayor Demarais called for a roll call vote. Councilpersons Rummel Aye, Sintler Aye, Wiederrick Aye, Hicks Aye. Motion Carried.
3. Mayor Demarais informed Council that it was time to decide when to open the different facilities now that the Montana Governor had released his COVID-19 phase one guidelines. Mayor Demarais stated that according to the guidelines the city pool may not be cleared to open until the end of June or mid-July. If this is the case it would not be cost effective to open the pool for three or four weeks. Mayor Demarais informed Council that the City would save money if the pool did not open this summer.

Next, Mayor Demarais informed Council that no bathrooms would be opened in the parks until the City knew what the cleaning guidelines would be. Mayor Demarais stated that the gates were closed blocking the road into Trafton Park but people could still walk in to the park. Councilperson Wiederrick asked if it would be okay to open Trafton Park with no bathrooms. PWD Truelove reported that the old bathroom by

the Boy Scout House on the east side of Trafton Park had been damaged and had to be torn down. There is still a bathroom on the west end of the park by the grandstand. Mark Hebert from Phillips County News asked if the pool would be opened this summer. Mayor Demarais stated that the work on the bathhouse needed to be completed. PWD Truelove stated that he had ordered the pool chemicals for the summer season already. Councilperson Wiederrick commented that she couldn't see opening the pool for only a few weeks.

Councilperson Rummel asked about opening Trafton Park. Mayor Demarais stated that signage would have to be in place that there were no bathrooms. After much discussion, Councilperson Wiederrick moved to open Trafton Park with no service with signage and to allow dry camping, 2nd by Councilperson Sintler. Mayor Demarais called for a roll call vote. Councilpersons Wiederrick Aye, Sintler Aye, Hicks Aye, Rummel Aye. Motion Carried.

Mayor Demarais asked Council to decide when to open the gym and weight room in City Hall. Parks & Recreation Director Wright reported that the gym could not be opened at this time but the weight room could be opened on May 15, 2020 with restrictions according to the County Health Nurse. P&R Director Wright reported that the weight room could only have 50% occupancy and they would have a rotating cleaning schedule. Clerk Bond suggested opening the weight room on June 1, 2020. This would give the City Hall custodian time to finish refinishing of the upstairs wood floors. The weight room would have to be closed at a later date if the refinishing work was not completed at this time. Councilperson Rummel stated if the County Nurse says we can open it we should open it. After much discussion, Councilperson Rummel moved to open the weight room when Park & Rec is ready, 2nd by Councilperson Wiederrick. Mayor Demarais called for a roll call vote. Councilperson Rummel Aye, Wiederrick Aye, Hicks Aye, Sintler Aye. Motion Carried.

4. Mayor Demarais presented Council with a letter from Anna Miller from DNRC requesting that the City sign a letter to release the remaining fund on the Legg Lift Sewage Lift Station SRF Loan. Clerk Bond reported that the City's original loan amount was for \$330,000 and only \$322,133 was drawn. Councilperson Rummel moved to have Mayor Demarais sign the release letter, 2nd by Councilperson Sintler. Mayor Demarais called for a roll call vote. Councilpersons Rummel Aye, Sintler Aye, Hicks Aye, Wiederrick Aye. Motion Carried.
5. Mayor Demarais presented Council with the City of Malta Sewage Lagoon RD loan refinancing spreadsheet. Refinancing the RD loan at 4.5% vs CST loan at 3% would save the City \$1,268,403 in the long run. Refinancing using Coal Severance Tax funds the City would have to pay an additional \$13,087/year and the loan would be paid off eight years sooner. Mayor Demarais stated that it would cost the City \$3,500 for Jackson, Murdo & Grant P.C. to complete the refinancing paperwork. Councilperson Hicks moved to pursue the refinancing of the of the Sewage Lagoon RD loan, 2nd by Councilperson Sintler. Mayor Demarais called for a roll call vote. Councilperson Hicks Aye, Sintler Aye, Wiederrick Aye, Rummel Aye. Motion Carried.

OTHER COMMENTS

1. Mayor Demarais informed Council that with all the COVID-19 restriction he had reviewed all of the engineering firm proposals and he would like to bypass the interview process and hire Great West as the City's on call engineering firm. Council had no issue with him doing this.

2. Councilperson Wiederrick reported that she had received an email from PhillCo asking what the City wanted to do with the old National Guard Armory. Mayor Demarais stated that he would be visiting with the armory guy soon and would have more information later. Mayor Demarais stated that usually the National Guard gives cities the first chance to purchase the old armories.

With no other business, Councilperson Wiederrick moved to adjourn, 2nd by Councilperson Sintler. Motion carried unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 6:21pm.

Mayor

ATTEST:

Clerk/Treasurer