

MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING

MALTA CITY COUNCIL MALTA CITY HALL

October 24, 2023

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: PC Sheriff Jerry Lytle, Scott Thompson - FWP Wildlife Manager, Thomas Sutton - FWP Malta Area Wildlife Biologist, Drew Henry - FWP Regional Supervisor – Region 6, Shelly Dunbar, Leila Sintler and Kari Hould from PCN

Mayor Demarais opened the meeting at 5:00pm.

COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE MAYOR

1. Mayor Demarais informed Council that he had legal counsel draw up a sewer agreement because a resident wanted to hook up a new service line to their business. The new sewer service line installation would cross city streets and he wanted to insure that everything was done correctly.

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

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

Councilpersons Rummel and Hicks presented claims.

Councilperson Wiederrick moved to approve claim checks 28675 to 28697, 2nd by Councilperson Sintler. Motion carried unanimously.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS, COMMITTEES & MEETINGS ATTENDED

1. PWD Truelove thanked Council for letting him attend the Montana League of Cities & Towns Conference.
2. PWD Truelove reported that the leaf truck would be out picking up leaves as long as the weather cooperates.
3. PWD Truelove reported that there had been two digs since the last council meeting and the next dig would be on 3rd Street East depending on the weather.
4. PWD Truelove reported that Hillcrest and Veterans Park bathrooms had been closed and winterized and he would be closing and winterizing the Rest Area and Trafton Park bathrooms by the end of the week.
5. PWD Truelove reported that the city crew had patched pot holes around town.
6. PWD Truelove reported that the city had just had a Water System Sanitary Survey and had a significant finding on the small water tank and the City would have to have an action plan on how to correct the finding.
7. Mayor Demarais asked PWD Truelove to have the sweeper make a trip around the Courthouse because of all of the leaves raked in to the street from the Courthouse lawn. Mayor Demarais was worried because if left in the gutter the leaves would clog the storm drains in the area.
8. Clerk Bond presented Council with the current check register and the current shut off list.

9. Clerk Bond reminded Council about the St. Mary Diversion Project meeting on November 6th at 2:00pm in the Council Chambers in City Hall.
10. Clerk Bond presented Council with a list of checks from 2019 – 2022 that have not cleared the bank. Clerk Bond reported that Montana Code Annotated 7-6-4303. Cancellation of municipal warrants and check was printed on the bottom of the check list and she would be adding the warrant cancellation on the next Council Meeting Agenda.
11. Clerk Bond thanked Council for letting her attend the MLCT Conference. Clerk Bond reported that at a Montana Municipal Interlocal Authority workshop she learned that they would be combining the Madison and Mission Insurance Plans. So, in the future they would be offering two insurance plans instead of three.
12. Sheriff Lytle presented Council with the third quarter (July 1 to September 30) 2023 report. There were 1185 calls for service with 52.07% being for the City of Malta.
13. Sheriff Lytle reported that he had hired a new deputy, Jed Crittenden.
14. Sheriff Lytle reported that Deputy Roberts had taken over the duties of the K-9 trainer and would be attending training in November. This was followed by much discussion about the drug problem in Malta and drug related traffic stops in the county.
15. Councilperson Wiederrick asked if there was a specific distance for vehicles to park from the curb and a truck parking too close to the corner on the truck route. This was followed by much discussion about the need to paint the curbs around town.
16. Councilperson Wiederrick informed Council that last year there were complaints about the parking at the Event Center during the Specialty Fair because after the vendors parked in the parking lot there was limited room for the public. Councilperson suggested that the vendors park behind the Event Center. After some discussion, it was decided that PWD Truelove would open the gate behind the Event Center and assure that there was adequate parking for the vendors.

PUBLIC COMMENT

1. None.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Representatives from the Montana Fish Wildlife & Parks Scott Thompson - FWP Wildlife Manager, Thomas Sutton - FWP Malta Area Wildlife Biologist, Drew Henry - FWP Regional Supervisor – Region 6, introduced themselves to Council. Scott Thompson stated that urban deer issues were difficult because there is no hunting in city limits. Cities need to come up with their own plans and have them approved by FWP. It's not FWP telling Malta what to do. It's up to Malta to construct a plan that works for Malta.
Mayor Demarais asked what the best way to count deer was. Thomas Sutton stated to treat it like a trend and count them every so often.
Next the discussion went to aggressive deer and Scott Thompson stated that aggressive deer can be euthanized without a plan.
Councilperson Sintler asked why the deer couldn't be sedated and transported out of town. Scott Thompson responded that with the possibility of the deer having chronic wasting disease they didn't want to risk relocating diseased deer.
Councilperson Sintler asked about people feeding the deer. Thomas Sutton stated that this is a problem that needs to be stopped. Scott Thompson stated that the Game Wardens can handle the purposeful feeding issues.
Drew Henry stated that the removal of attractants and planting deer resistant plants are a good way to keep deer away. Scott Thompson stated that they would provide the city with their list of deer resistant plants.

Mayor Demarais stated that some residents love having the deer in town and some hate it and he would need Council's help to come up with a plan. Councilperson Rummel stated that he wanted to read the plans from other cities/towns provided by FWP before constructing a plan for the City of Malta. This was followed by much discussion about how other cities/towns are doing to manage the urban deer populations. At the end of the discussion Mayor Demarais thanked the FWP representatives for attending the meeting.

2. Mayor Demarais presented Council with the proposal to sponsor the Great Plains Dinosaur Museum's CDBG Grant. Councilperson Hicks moved to sponsor the CDBG Grant application, 2nd by Councilperson Sintler. Mayor Demarais called for a roll call vote. Councilpersons Hicks Aye, Sintler Aye, Wiederrick Aye, Rummel Aye. Motion Carried.
3. Mayor Demarais presented Council with the PhillCo 2023 Contribution. Councilperson Rummel moved to pay the PhillCo 2023 contribution, 2nd by Councilperson Wiederrick. Mayor Demarais called for a roll call vote. Councilpersons Rummel Aye, Wiederrick Aye, Hicks Aye, Sintler Aye. Motion Carried.
4. Mayor Demarais presented Council with the Trafton Lift Station Contractor Pay App 9 for \$25,000. Councilperson Hicks moved to approve the payment of Pay App 9, 2nd by Councilperson Sintler. Mayor Demarais called for a roll call vote. Councilpersons Hicks Aye, Sintler Aye, Wiederrick Aye, Rummel Aye. Motion Carried.

OTHER COMMENTS

1. Councilperson Wiederrick asked where the zoning permit fees go. Clerk Bond responded that they are posted to the Planning Account in the General Fund.
2. Councilperson Rummel informed Council that the Great Plains Dinosaurs Museum had been winterized.
3. Councilperson Sintler asked about the letter requesting garbage service charges not be charged because no one was living in the house. Clerk Bond stated that there are no vacation rates.
4. Councilperson Rummel started a discussion about the complaint letter about dogs at large and dog poop in Trafton Park. This was followed by some discussion about what to do about the issue. Mayor Demarais requested that a sign be put up requesting dog be kept on leash and dog owners clean up after their dogs.

With no other business, Councilperson Wiederrick moved to adjourn, 2nd by Councilperson Sintler. Motion carried unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 6:19pm.

Mayor

ATTEST:

Clerk/Treasurer