



NORTH BONNEVILLE CITY COUNCIL

Mayor Brian Sabo
Councilmember Terry Norris
Councilmember Margie Lee

Councilmember Travis Randall
Councilmember Judie Whitcomb
Councilmember John Acton

City Council Meeting Minutes March 10, 2020 7:00 p.m.

Refer to www.northbonneville.net for full audio

Meeting Call to Order: 7:00pm

Roll Call: Present; Mayor B. Sabo, Councilmembers T. Randall, T. Norris, J. Whitcomb. Absent; Councilmembers J. Acton, M. Lee (arrived at 7:02pm)

Pledge of Allegiance

Agenda Changes & Additions: T. Randall asks to excuse J. Acton. Mayor Sabo adds a talk by Chief Pat Bell and the PUD

Public Hearings: N/A

Consent Agenda:

- **Approval of February 25th meeting minutes. Approval of the March 1st Half Vouchers for \$19302.10.** Motion by T. Randall, second by T. Norris. Passed 4-0

Guest Presentations:

- **Chief Bell will discuss the upcoming Emergency Operations Seminar which will include covid19 emergency services preparedness.** Pat Bell states that EOC will arrive here on March 19th to update hazard mitigation plan wording. Been questioned about actions surrounding coronavirus. We are only allowed to suggest evacuation or to shelter in place, but we do not enforce this. If it becomes a pandemic, it will start with the county or state. Take regular precautions such as handwashing, stay home if sick, etc. I will try to transmit the meeting on Facebook live. T. Norris asks if it becomes a pandemic, will you provide masks or respiratory equipment? Chief replies that it is a big cost and already running low in supply. Make your own sanitizer at home if needed. Masks will likely be reserved for health care workers. Mayor Sabo shares that the city is getting daily updates and printouts that we have on display at City Hall. We've already started a 4x per day sanitizing schedule. T. Randall mentions that it is transmittable up to 14 days on some surfaces. Assistant Chief Greg Johnson states that the virus requires the N19 mask, which is not just a normal dust mask. N19 will not work with facial hair. Mayor Sabo mentions that this country has beat a lot of viruses but will be on top of updates as they come.
- **PUD Liz Green: (not verbatim)** Councilor Travis Randall came to our meeting to discuss his concerns about the PUD rates. I listened to the meeting audio from your last council meeting and there are several points I'd like to clear up. First, in a couple months there have been anonymous letters sent out via Facebook and that bothers me. The letter states the rate hikes are outrageous and my husband agrees. It states that there have not been base rate changes since 1938 which is not true, but if the base kept up with inflation it would be much more. We want to give people a true cost of service and we hired a firm. I want to state that Dan Boyes and John are here, we are a quorum and we've announced that we would be here tonight. The

big increase is due to the cost of running. The increases are based on a lot of study. We are thinking of fixed income folks and we know this is difficult. Another point on the letter was that residential are subsidizing industry when it was the other way around and now it has been evened out. It also mentions the price range having peak hours which is not true. We don't have peak hours. Please show up to meetings with your concerns and call us with your questions. We hardly get meeting participation and we would like that. The meetings are on the 1st and 3rd Tuesdays at 9am. We have been told that the morning time doesn't work, but we've had rate hearings in the evenings and still nobody showed, and it saves OT time for the employees. Another rumor was that we've had executive sessions and made people leave meetings. This is not true – we've only had executive sessions for union bargaining and manager's review. As commissioner, my job is to keep it above water. Travis mentioned "shady stuff going on", and I'm not aware of this. If you think I'm doing shady stuff, please talk to the other commissioners. Mentioned millions of dollars on studies with no bids, etc... This is slanderous, false, and irresponsible. The manager did due diligence and looked at three companies for the study. He as firsthand knowledge of the company chosen, and the staff was involved. There was also a lot of talks of Smart Meters regarding radiation, sends info to hub every 12 seconds, etc... I'm not an engineer. As a citizen, from what I've studied, there are less radio frequencies even than smartphones. This doesn't lessen the concern, but we are still gathering information on them. The point being is that we just don't know and wouldn't decide on these for several years. We want plenty of time to vet them and know what is best for the rate payers. I'm a rate payer, too and have concerns on privacy issues. I don't want your private information. The last thing I want to address is that we have gotten free trucks from Clark PUD. They don't give anything for free and they wear out their equipment. Travis states that he heard this from an employee and Liz responds that you should ask to use their name for a reference before trusting information. I would appreciate that you would recant your on the record false statements. Mayor Sabo says that he doesn't like rate hikes either but there were public meetings regarding the hikes before they were passed and nobody showed up to those meetings, but now complain about the hikes. This started last year, and you can follow the website and see all of it. Liz states that they are all up for election every two years. I encourage you to ask questions and call us, that's what we're here for. We have been working with agencies regarding costs, especially power. We buy all our power from Bonneville Dam, so it is questioned as to why it's so high when we are so close. Our staff is working hard on the website with a FAQ section and should be a rate calculator soon. PUD Manager says that it is an amazing difference between us and large cities for rates. We charged 73 million less in the last 19 years that Portland. The "shady stuff" comment offended me personally. We did save some money on used trucks because we bargain shopped. Liz states that the bottom line is that if you have PUD questions, you should call us or visit skamaniapud.com. We have 6,000 people in the county vs. Clark who has several thousand. Keep in mind we are splitting the cost between less people, and the cost of our supplies are the same as larger cities. Travis Randall thanks the PUD for allowing him to come and answer questions and says he will rectify his misstatements.

Public Comment: Chief Pat Bell to PUD – Say we have a metered post on private property, even if not used, we pay \$39. But all have infrastructure that's switch ready. John says they pull meters for free but you would pay to reinstall. The hookup charge is nowhere near the water hookup fees. Liz says to call the front office for the cost structure. John says with separate meters are many separate base charges and you should get an overall CT meter. Come talk to us. Chief says we've asked questions on this before but maybe weren't asking the right questions.

Councilmember Comments: T. Randall thanks all for coming and thanks the PUD for coming and addressing all the questions and clearing up hearsay. I apologize for insinuating about "shady

stuff” but have seen a lot recently about backdoor deals. I should have talked to you first. I don’t mind stirring the pot and you were polite and answered my questions. What I heard wasn’t true and things were left open that I assumed. I encourage people in the county to come to you – you were willing to answer questions. Transparency and perception from hearsay are important and I now feel comfortable asking you questions. Thank you. T. Norris thanks Travis for stirring the pot and asking the questions.

Mayor’s Comments: Our revenue is down 40% this year vs. last year at this time. Our usual revenue in March gives a boost. I’ve discussed with department heads about putting a freeze on spending for other than needed items. It’s a little frightening with travel down and retail sales down from the virus. We are watching the numbers daily. Thank you for coming.

Chief Administrative Officer Report: Speaking of money, we must spend some upcoming. We MUST do the Windows upgrade, but other items like the server upgrade, licensing, hardware upgrades, and new utility software are going to come in phases for saving purposes. \$10,589 is the total for all of these with Phoenix Technologies vs. almost double that with other companies. Just the Windows upgrade and switching to Phoenix for IT will be \$455 immediately and the costs of bringing them on as our IT provider, but they are less expensive on all fronts. Their presentation was very thorough and provided me with analytics on all our equipment that I was able to keep, and no other company has done this.

City Attorney’s Report: The PDA has hired an attorney. Liz brought up the minutes and I wanted to explain that all that is legally required in the minutes are the “action” items such as votes. The detail is entirely up to the council. If they want more, they can request it. Deanna responds that she had started with full detail but pared down to action minutes. The council did request a little more detail, but then added to the minutes to refer to audio for more detail. Ken replies that the refer to audio statement was great for transparency.

Unfinished Business:

- **PDA and Store Status Update:** Mayor Sabo says that there is not much to report due to Josh having difficulties accessing systems. Josh mentions that they are going through an audit at the time. Ken asks about his access and states that they should contact the LCB. Germaine, a member of the board, says that the auditor won’t have a report for about 30 days. The doors are open for now. I wanted to clarify that triangular communication has caused a problem with Josh reporting to the Council and wants to have Josh run any financial reporting by the board before presenting. Mayor Sabo brings up that the council has the authority to come through and audit all items at any time. Josh is the main communication between the board and us and he has applied for receivership. Germaine states that it would be more comfortable for the board to see the documents beforehand. Josh says that he has done a couple of reports and have sent them to the board. January and February reports have not been delivered yet and we need to be on the same page. Ken thanks the board for their hard work through this but wants you to understand that this all fell apart because of poor communications with council from the board. There has been insufficient oversight from the supporting agencies in many PDA’s. The board needs to work things out with Josh for the best methods of communication with the council and he is an important liaison. It scares the Mayor to hear that there is another problem with communication. It needs to stay completely available and transparent and that’s all I’m asking for is to be in the loop with what’s being reported. You guys will have a lawyer and an accountant. Germaine states that one of her concerns is that reports can come up with different numbers and they just need to be on the same page. T. Randall says that he trusts Josh to deliver accurate information and has so far. 2+2 is 4 and it should be pretty black and white. Germaine

says otherwise and that reports can come out differently based on criteria, and Josh agrees that reports can be sliced many ways. Mayor Sabo says this is frustrating and he attends the PDA meetings. We have to know what is going on and we need numbers more often to keep an eye on it. Germaine says that is what the oncoming accountant is for and they don't want to spend all this money for inaccurate reporting. Mayor states that we haven't had any updates for a few weeks. T. Randall thanks Germaine for work on the board and the Mayor agrees and mentions that the new board members stepped into a mess. We just need to keep getting information. Judy Whitcomb brings up that this has been a mess for a long time, and we need to take the info as it comes.

New Business:

- **Excuse Councilor J. Acton.** Motion by T. Randall, second by T. Norris. **Passed 4-0**
- **Review and Approval of IT Upgrade Proposal:** B. Sabo reiterates Deanna's statement about having to piece by piece our IT needs due to funding. Deanna states that she will have something to be approved by the next meeting. B. Sabo states that contracts need to pass through Ken first and we will vote at next meeting.

Closing Public Comment: N/A

Closing Council Comments: T. Randall thanks all for coming. Big turnout and thank you to the PUD, PDA, Fire Dept. representatives. I apologize again for any misinformation from our previous meeting regarding the PUD and I thank you for the clarifications. The info I saw was on your letterhead and I apologize that it was false.

Adjournment: 8:11pm

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