

MINUTES

City Council
City of Arco
January 08, 2024

Attending the first meeting of the New Year were Mayor Grady Parsons and Council members; Ben Tessmer, Bobbie Reese, and Danny McCurdy; City Clerk Maribel Cahalan, Deputy Clerk Dana Jensen, and Maintenance Supervisor Tony Chisham. Guests included Tom Cammack, Christy McCurdy, Amanda Darland, Rebecca Lange, Donna Murray, David Sollender, Camille Miller, David Noel, and Rosanne Smith.

Mayor Parsons called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and lead the Pledge of Allegiance. Mayor Parsons announced that in good faith the evening agenda needs to be amended to include action on the increase of the Mayors authorized spending limit. Council member Ben Tessmer made a motion to amend the agenda to add this action item. Council member Danny McCurdy seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Minutes from the December 11, 2023, City Council meeting was reviewed by the Council members and approved upon motion.

Public Comments – no one signed up for public comments.

2024 started off with the swearing-in ceremony for newly re-elected Council member Ben Tessmer. Afterwards, Mayor Parsons asked the Council to consider and accept the appointment of Amanda Darland to fill the vacant Council seat that was not filled at the last election. After some consideration, Council member Tessmer made a motion to recommend Amanda Darland for appointment for the vacant council seat. The motion was seconded and passed.

City Clerk Maribel Cahalan performed the swearing in ceremony for Councilman Tessmer and for Ms. Darland. So, now that the Council seats are filled to start the 2024-year, Mayor Parsons recommended Council member Ben Tessmer take on the role of Council President. All the Council members agreed.

Camille Miller/Forsgren – Update Arco Sewer System Facility Planning Study (FPS), Copper / Lead Pipe Discovery and Replacement Cost Estimate, Seepage Testing Contract – Camille Miller and David Noel engineers with Forsgren were in attendance to present and to discuss the next steps to move forward with the Letter of Intent to DEQ to fund sewer system planning for the future. Part of the grants request process is completion of an evaluation and ranking of alternatives for the City of Arco sewer treatment system. Forsgren presented preliminary estimates for three viable options to maintain or upgrade the City sewer treatment facility. Whatever option is sought, cost will run from \$7 million to \$13.2 million, but the differences are that a more expensive capital investment option may result in lower annual operational and maintenance costs. All these factors need to be taken into consideration for a feasible sewer treatment facility plan that will look ahead possibly twenty to sixty years ahead. The City would like to get in line right now for possible funding for upgrading the City sewer treatment system. Operational costs for the existing system or a new system will not be going down any time soon, but the City is looking for outside capital funding sources and estimates for future sewer system operation and life cycle costs.

Next, Ms. Miller presented the cost estimate for a grant request to complete the city waterline Copper / Lead Pipe Discovery and Replacement. 3H Construction, Rexburg, Idaho, estimates the project costs at \$695,250. Forsgren proposes proceeding with this grant request to DEQ. There is no cost obligation to the City at this stage of searching for funding.

Ms. Miller also presented a status report on the ongoing seepage testing at the sewer lagoon facility. This is a multi-year project under a contract issued by the City of Arco to Forsgren for \$20,000. Ms. Miller stated that \$17,000 has been spent to date. Therefore, the remaining \$3,000 will be spent as planned. However, Forsgren estimated that an additional \$5,000 will be needed to complete the final phase of testing that will occur in the spring of 2024. Ms. Miller will submit the Letter of Interest for the City.

Engineer David Noel with Forsgren presented the Power Point Evaluation Matrix. Of how important it is on ranking for these projects. PROCESS COMPARISON AND SELECTION TABLE was ranked by Council members.

Forsgren requests authorization to increase the contract amount to \$25,000 to complete the study. Council President Tessmer made a motion to amend the seepage testing contract authorization from \$20,000 to \$25,000. Motion passed.

Review and Discuss each Council Members designated Responsibilities – Arco Ordinance, Chapter 2, Section 2.08, describes assignments for the four Council members to cover, water, sewer, streets and alleys, parks and recreation hall, airport, and fire department. For 2024, Council President Tessmer will continue to oversee the water department. Council member McCurdy will continue to oversee and provide coordination of the sewer department. Council member Reese will oversee and coordinate with City staff for parks, recreation hall, and collaborate with airport board and the fire department. And newly seated Council member Darland will oversee and work with City staff on streets and alleys.

Increase Mayor Spending Limit – Council President Ben Tessmer referred to the Work Meeting that was held prior to tonight's Council meeting. Based on the discussion and decision of the 6:30 p.m. meeting, Council President Tessmer made a motion to increase the Mayor's authorized spending limit to \$5,000. Councilman McCurdy second the motion. Motion passed.

Bills – Councilman McCurdy made a motion to approve payment of bills in the amount of \$23,553.09. Motion passed.

Roundtable – Clerk Cahalan and Deputy Clerk Jensen wished everyone a Happy New Year and welcomed Councilwoman Darland.

Mayor Parsons suggested that the City Council might want to think about putting a City Planning & Zoning committee in place for 2024.

Mayor Parsons also commented that the earthwork for additional Greenbelt landscaping began last week.

Councilwoman Reese along with Maintenance Supervisor Chisham commented that the newly scraped earth seems to be a tempting attraction for four-wheeler fanatics to cut cookies and make tracks. City staff plan to install steel guard rails to block off the work area and to protect the earthwork investment on the Greenbelt landscaping project. We ask that you please tell your children, friends, family, visitors, and neighbors to protect and avoid this investment in the Greenbelt. This newly cleared ground will be planted with field grass, in the Spring.

Council President Tessmer noted that preliminary inspection of current sewer treatment facility operational costs suggests that one of the upgraded sewer system options could result in a ninety percent power cost reduction. These savings could be redirected to staffing or other operational costs of a new sewer treatment system. To maintain the status quo of the current sewer treatment facility has a projected cost of \$7 million, therefore, every option needs to be looked at.

New Councilwoman Amanda Darland asked the other Council members to let her know their expectation of her, and asked about protocol for handling any emergencies relating to streets or alley issues.

Councilwoman Reese asked about the progress of City staff in obtaining the Idaho Department of Transportation online street and road management courses. The completion of Training certificates would improve the City's grant requests. Councilwoman Reese would also like to see the installation of surveillance cameras for the parks. This is a high priority for 2024. Lastly, Ms. Reese sent a "shoutout" to the Sawtooth Club for providing bus rides home to patrons on New Year's Eve.

Adjournment – Motion to adjourn was made at 8:36 p.m. The next regular Council meeting will be on Monday, January 22, at 7:00 p.m. at the City Office.



Dana Jensen, Deputy Clerk



Ben Yessmer, Council President