

MINUTES
BALMORHEA CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING
JANUARY 8, 2024

MEMBERS PRESENT: MAYOR JOHN L. DAVIS, IKE WARD (6:18), BERNADETTE PORTILLO, ROSA DOMINGUEZ, JOSUE MENDOZA

MEMBERS ABSENT: JOY LEWIS

STAFF PRESENT: SANDRA NAVARRETE, GREG PERRIN-ABSENT, RUSSELL MORRIS,

VISTORS: ROBERT SNYDER, STACIE ROBERTS (6:39)

1. The meeting was called to order by Mayor John L. Davis at 6:04 pm.
2. Mayor John L. Davis led the Pledge of Allegiance.
3. Josue Mendoza made a motion, seconded by Bernadette Portillo to approve minutes for December 11, 2023. Motion Carried 3-0.
4. Rosa Dominguez made a motion, seconded by Bernadette Portillo to approve bills and adjustments as presented. Motion Carried 3-0.
5. Reports
 - A. ESD 1&2 December 2023 report was read by Robert Snyder. Mr. Snyder reported that the contract expired with the ambulance company on December 2023. The ESD#2 has officially taken over. A trailer has been stationed at the worksite to make sure the ESD can provide coverage. Construction is still in progress and move in date is still in March 2024.
 - B. City Clerk gave a status on the fraudulent checks. Clerk stated that she had made contact with TransPecos Bank and Chelsea had advised her that she had passed on the information to JP Morgan and Chase and this process might take up to 90 days to resolve. Clerk added that calls have been made to Reeves County Sheriff's Department but Deputy Rubio has not returned calls. Mayor Davis stated that the dollar amount on the check is federal and we may not get anything back from the Sheriff's office.
 - C. Water Operator Russell Morris reported that he had done some winterizing up over at Huelster well. Taped up all exposed pipes and purchased a new heater. Mr. Morris stated that he had a conversation with Greg Perrin and that Mr. Perrin had expressed something about some generators. Mr. Davis responded that the City did have some generators but they are not ready at this time. Mr. Morris responded that he was talking about the generators that are stored in the back of City Hall. Mayor Davis added that the large generator

that Mr. Perrin is talking about is sitting in the City yard. The generators stored back behind City hall are for the lift station, pump room at City yard, City hall and emergency rescue unit. Mr. Morris also reported that he has not been able to clear up as many alleys due to people fencing them in or having personal items in the alleys. The sewer ponds are next in line to clean and it will require the use of the skid steer to complete. Mayor Davis stated that if the residents are taking possession of the alleys they need to keep them clean and clear. The sugar cane in the alleys need to be cut and grubbed. Mr. Morris added that he had gotten the information to buy a new sprayer that would be placed on the back of the ATV at a cost of \$287.00. Mayor Davis added that the old sprayer needed to be fixed. Mr. Morris responded that the pump for the old sprayer would cost \$200. The sprayer is busted and the pump won't click but the tank is good. Mayor responded as long as it will be put to use its ok to purchase a new one but it would be good to fix the old spray because then we would have 2 units.

D. Rosa Dominguez stated that BEDC had submitted monthly minutes but was still in the process of organizing a few things out but everything is going well.

6. Commissioner Paul Hinojos explained that the Reeves County Road & Bridge had done the road repair on San Angelo Street and the repair that was used this far was the 1st course repair which is the big rock. They will be returning when the weather warms up and do the 2nd course and that will be the small rock and the road will be much smoother. On the 16th the County has asked Reeves County Water District to stop running water in the canals so that they can widen the school entrance to that area. The time of completion might take 30 days. Upon completion all school traffic will come in from there. Then the City blocks will be saved from all the school traffic by using that as the main entrance go towards the school. The expense to work on that road was around \$250,000 that included labor and material. This also included 4th, 5th and 6th street. Mr. Hinojos stated that the City Clerk had asked him, "What would be the cost to repair a complete street?" Mr. Hinojos responded, what you see from San Angelo Street to Houston Street runs about \$10,000 a mile. We would be using a weak emulsion that is not that expensive but the rock itself for a mile is about \$6000 for 250,000 tons, labor cost is about \$3,000 a day and emulsion is around \$900. This would equal to \$10,000 a mile for the 1st course. For the 2nd course the emulsion would be thicker and would require the smaller rock and this is where it gets expensive. The emulsion for this one is around \$18,000 per mile, the rock is \$6,000 and labor cost is the same. Which this would be a total of \$27,000 a mile. If you all go with both, the cost would be around \$37,000 per mile. Mr. Hinojos stated that if the City wants this you all need to initiate and say this is what we want to do, the City can state what they are willing to provide. After talking to Sandra and looking at City revenues from taxes the City can't really do a whole lot. If you all can buy the rock he will try to get Reeves County to put in the rest. This will be an inter local agreement that states we are working together. Mayor Davis responded, we have the money to buy the rock. Mayor Davis added that before the County pours that second layer of rock the road will be dug up where the one manhole is. It will be dug up back towards the school. There will be some work done to upgrade the sewer line from an 8' inch line to a 10' inch line at the manhole. This is the Balmorhea State Park Project to bring in the sewage from the park to the City of Balmorhea Sewer system. It will be traveling on the north side of HWY17. Then they will bore under HWY17 canal and will travel on the side of San


Angelo Street until reaching the destination of the manhole which will be dug up across. Mayor Davis added, that when this process begins he will notify Reeves County Engineer Curtis Wilson. Mr. Hinojos stated that the City needs to decide what it is that they want and measure the roads that they want repaired. Starting a maintenance program for the road repairs would be the ideal thing to do. This would be a plan instead of letting the roads get bad. Rosa Dominguez asked if the roads that are going to be considered will be 2 lane. Mr. Hinojos responded, that the road measurement is 24 feet and is considered a normal size. Mr. Hinojos added that at this point what Reeves County needs for the City of Balmorhea is guidance. What is it that you want and what can you contribute. Reeves County and City of Balmorhea do have a inter local agreement but we need an actual plan and attach a map of the streets that need to be worked on. Mayor Davis stated that in the next meeting the City will get a plan together to present to Commissioners Court. Hopefully this work can get scheduled for April or May 2024. Mr. Hinojos added that he had delivered a \$15,000 check to the Balmorhea Volunteer Fire Department after realizing it was sitting in the Reeves County budget and had not been used. Mr. Hinojos stated he was amazed at how the City of Balmorhea can function with the little bit of money they have. Mr. Hinojos added, he is just a phone call away if ever there is a question, concern or a need. Mayor Davis stated that the City of Balmorhea appreciates everything Commissioner Paul Hinojos and Reeves County does for this community.

7. Ike Ward made a motion, seconded by Bernadette Portillo to amend Employee Manual for discrepancy in calculation of vacation days earned per pay period. Correction made to change 0-4 years of service to accrual rate 13 days per year to correction of 0-4 service accrual to rate of 9.75 days per year. Motion Carried 4-0. Mayor Davis added that when it comes to clock in/out documentation is important. If we are in a middle of an emergency we need to get it done. Every employee should clock in/out if not you will be dismissed. There should be no writing or changes on the time cards once you have clocked out and if there are changes it must be initialed by a City Council member. On call documentation will be allowed to be written on time cards the following work day.
8. After some discussion Mayor Davis suggested that the employee get paid in 2 biweekly checks for the accrued vacation time due to situations that the Council approved and starting this fiscal year only 5 days will be allowed to be carried over per employee handbook. Bernadette Portillo made a motion, seconded by Josue Mendoza to approve to handle paying employee accrued vacation time prior to the change in employee manual. Motion Carried 4-0.
9. Mayor Davis stated that this line item was approved a couple a months ago but there was some question on establishing a Municipal Court, so the Municipal Court was tabled. After some discussion it was clear that there had been some bad communication or confusion between the two topics. City Clerk clarified that this invoice has no connection with designation of a Municipal Court. This is an invoice that will cover updating current ordinances or any future ordinances that can be created software. Bernadette Portillo made a motion, seconded by Rosa Dominguez to approve invoice #276409 in the amount of \$2,537.50. Motion Carried 4-0. Stacie Roberts asked if there can be an explanation as to what Civic Plus is. Mayor Davis explained, that back in October line item of designation a Municipal Court was addressed but tabled.

Purchase of this program or software was approved previously to that meeting. This service will help us with revising or correcting ordinances. The services will include a link that will be available on the city website for the residents to visit and read all ordinances for the City of Balmorhea. Bernadette Portillo added that surrounding cities have used these services to upgrade and publish their ordinances. Mrs. Roberts asked if the Municipal Court item had been approved and Mayor Davis responded, yes that item was approved in November 2023 which was the following month from the time it was tabled. Mrs. Roberts asked if the Mayor had an idea of when there will be a Municipal Judge, maybe a webpage that would give the City some information. Mayor Davis responded, that these services need to happen first.

10. Josue Mendoza made a motion, seconded by Ike Ward to adjourn meeting at 7:26 pm.

PASSED AND APPROVED THIS 12 DAY OF FEBRUARY, 2024.


JOHN L. DAVIS, MAYOR


SANDRA NAVARRETE, CITY CLERK