



**CITY OF BELLEVUE
COMMON COUNCIL
March 25, 2024**

The Common Council of the City of Bellevue, Idaho, met in a Regular Meeting, on Monday, March 25, 2024, at 5:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers of the City of Bellevue Offices, located at 115 E. Pine Street, Bellevue, ID 83313.

Call to Order: Mayor Johnson called the Regular Meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

Roll Call:

Present

Chris Johnson, Mayor

Christina Giordani, Council President

Robin Leahy, Council Member

John Carreiro, Council Member

Diane Shay, Council Member

Shaun Mahoney, Council Member – *via Zoom (lost Zoom contact at approximately 6:45 p.m.)*

Excused:

Jessica Obenauf, Council Member

Roll Call was conducted; all Members were present with the exception of Council Member Obenauf; Council Member Mahoney attended the meeting *via Zoom*.

Staff Present:

Rick Allington, City Legal Representative

Greg Beaver, Fire Chief

Kirt Gaston, Marshall

Shelly Shoemaker, City Treasurer – *via Zoom*

Shane Garrison, Contractor Water - *via Zoom*

Michelle Snarr, City Clerk

Others in Attendance: Jeff Pfaffle, Suzanne Wrede, Tom Bergin, and Tony Evans - *via Zoom*,

1. Notice of Agenda Compliance:

The posting of this regular meeting agenda complied with Idaho Code §74-204. The regular amended meeting agenda was posted within forty-eight (48) hours prior to the meeting at the Bellevue City Hall, Post Office, and on the city website on *March 21, 2024*.

Motion: President Giordani moved the notice agenda was in compliance with Idaho Code §74-204. Council Member Carreiro seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

2. Call for Conflict as Outlined in Idaho Code §74-404:

Mayor Johnson called for conflict from any Council Member or staff Member with any agenda item. No conflict was noted.

3. Public Comment: (for Items of Concern Not on the Agenda):

Mayor Johnson opened the meeting for public comment at 5:36 p.m. He said the city has a new website in progress, and it should be available in approximately three (3) months. The website has the capability of notifying interested individuals concerning agendas, minutes, public hearings, etc.

Suzanne Wrede, 24 Muldoon Canyon

Ms. Wrede addressed the council. She indicated the council members asked the residents to elect them, and they are on a path that is a replica of the detrimental sewer bond that featured repetitive sewer rate increase and the completion of a dysfunctional sewer plant.

It remains difficult to obtain information, and the community has been excluded from participation. She was billed \$80 for a records request, and after reviewing the documents, she believes they are misleading and false figures are clearly printed in the bond ordinance ballot as well as misleading information about Bellevue's current indebtedness. She questioned why the city chose a special primary election rather than having the bond election on the presidential election in November, and she wondered why the last bond required a super majority to pass but this bond was produced under the “§19-72” (note: wrong section, should xx” statute enabling a simple majority to pass.

Ms. Wrede's opinion is the figures presented are based on an unsupportable simple interest rate; and the bond would likely cost an additional \$3-million dollars or more. She can't find any evidence or documentation that supports the city's claim that it can expect to pay a 2.5% interest rate, and it be printed on the official ballot.

She suggested that Mayor Johnson and President Giordani were excited about \$3.3 million dollars and matching funds. She believes there is a risk of losing the funds due to the drive to obtain the funds, and it negates the value of the grant to the city. The value of the grant would be offset by the matching cost of the loan and bond. She pointed out the history of the previous sewer bond; the sewer fees increased at least three (3) times, and the city has nothing to show for it. The bond would create a proposed minimum of \$400 in new taxes for each household.

Ms. Wrede questioned about the roads, the lack of staff at city hall, and the council's neighbors that are in the path of this project. She inquired about engagement with property owners related to the easements and property sales; if the necessary acquisitions have already been agreed to; how the numbers compare with the \$1-million dollars reserved for land acquisitions and easements; and if the city anticipated pursuing eminent domain if required to obtain land and/or easements.

She said it is upsetting to see inaccuracies in the ordinance and on the official ballot presented to the community. She asked what basis the council did their due diligence to vote yes to creating an ordinance that tells the voters the city is debt free; how the 2.5% interest rate was calculated, it was accepted as truthful, and the ordinance indicates the fees and interest will be less than 20% of the cost of the value of the bond.

She pointed out the rising inflation, and her predicted rate increases that would affect residents to provide funds for an exclusive water project rather than a general operating fund. It was Ms. Wrede's opinion that this decision has far reaching implications, and she is concerned that the council hasn't had sufficient time and input to examine the many aspects.

Ms. Wrede went on to discuss another matter related to a test exchange that occurred earlier in the day with Mayor Johnson and presented documents to the council and referred to the text. She was upset at his response, and others being cc'ed on the message (bond counsel and engineering). Mayor Johnson said he provided her with the information needed to contact the bond counsel to answer her questions and asked her to be civil. He said he appreciated her comments.

Council Member Mahoney lost contact with Zoom at approximately 6:45 p.m. and was not available for the remainder of the meeting.

Tom Bergin, 501 South Main Street

Mr. Bergin addressed the council. He indicated he is a new resident and saw in the newspaper that there is some American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) money available through Blaine County. He explained he doesn't know if cities are available for the distribution of ARPA funds, but he suggested that the council explore that option further

and see if Bellevue could tap into the \$200,000. He thought it would be unlikely they would give all the money to one applicant. He indicated that he informed the commissioners when the money became available; he thought they should not make small plans but should make a large plan for that kind of resource. He is not aware if any larger plan has been made.

Mr. Bergin said the only reason he came to the meeting was to see if the money was something the city could tap into. As he understands, ARPA funds are available for water, wastewater, and broadband infrastructure; and inquired if there is something the city may be able to utilize in one of those categories. He offered to do some research for such an application.

Mayor Johnson informed Mr. Bergin that last year the city applied for ARPA funds for approximately \$50,000 for water and \$50,000 for wastewater. He said the city received the first \$49,999 for water to go toward some of the planning the city did with its current project. He went to say, the city is making an amendment to the wastewater application to amend the request from a screw press dewatering to focus more on the city's Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA). Mayor Jonson explained the city has already submitted an application on this next round for the city's valve situation at the main tank, and it is estimated to be \$47,000.

Mayor Johnson expressed appreciation to Mr. Bergin for bring the matter to the city's attend.

Public Comment closed at 6:48 p.m.

4. Consent Agenda:

- a. Approval of Common Council Meeting Minutes
- b. February 12, 2024, Regular meeting
- c. Approval of Claims: March 12, 2024, through March 25, 2024
- d. Department Head Reports
- e. Treasurer Report, Month of February 2024, Shelly Shoemaker, Treasurer

Discussion followed regarding the draft minutes. Council Member Shay referred to page 5 and noted the 2020 ordinance went to Planning Commission (not the City Council) and referenced page 6, which refers to *Bluebell* and the Karl Malone parcel. She said it should be "extend to *the Southern Bell Business Park* and the Karl Malone parcel."

It was pointed out that an invoice on the claims payable report has an invoice for \$100. Mayor Johnson noted it is for a civil penalty fee, he would speak with Marshal Gaston and Mr. Allington regarding an appeal process then the city can start enforcing the civil penalties. He stated the main goal is to get into compliance not fine people.

Ms. Shoemaker addressed the council and reported on the city's finances for the month of February 2024. She informed the council that overall, the General Fund is at 41.65%. President Giordani said she noticed the street items on the report. Ms. Shoemaker informed the council the Streets Department does the majority of the work rather than the contractors. She added during the budget process last year, there was money put in the water and wastewater fund, and the council was unsure about the amounts being juggled between streets and water.

Mayor Johnson explained that typically, in the past, streets, water and wastewater were all in one budget. He added he is trying to get some apprenticeships onboard with the city to reduce contractor costs; however, it is a challenge economically and with housing issues. He stated they do appreciate Mr. Ellsworth and Garrison, but they city needs to move the operation of water and wastewater inhouse.

Motion: President Giordani moved to approve the consent agenda. Council Member Carreiro seconded the motion. Council Members voting aye: Members Giordani, Carreiro, Leahy and Shay. Members voting nay: None. The motion passed unanimously. Council Members Mahoney and Obenauf were not present for the vote.

6. **New Business:**

a. Consideration and Approval Resolution 2371, A Resolution of the City of Bellevue, Idaho, Authorizing the Mayor to Enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) By and Between Blaine County and the City of Bellevue for the Cost Sharing of Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory

Mayor Johnson introduced Resolution 2371; it is a resolution to enter into a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with Blaine County for greenhouse gas emissions inventory cost sharing. The item was initially reviewed during the February 12, 2024, council meeting. He inquired if there were further questions.

Motion: President Giordani moved to adopt Resolution 2371, A Resolution of the City of Bellevue, Idaho, Authorizing the Mayor to Enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) By and Between Blaine County and the City of Bellevue for the Cost Sharing of Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory. Council Member Carrerio seconded the motion. Council Members voting aye: Members Leahy, Shay, Giordani and Carreiro. Members voting nay: None. The motion passed unanimously. Council Members Mahoney and Obenauf.

b. Consideration of Discussion and Council Decision Regarding a Modification to the Findings of Fact Conclusion of Law and Decision for Strahorn Phase II, Pertaining to 11-4-8: Street Improvements Requirements (q): Council Finding: Two Streetlights are proposed. The Streetlights shall match the Streetlights that were placed in Block 1

Mayor Johnson introduced the proposed modification for the findings for Strahorn Phase 2, pertaining to Street Improvement Requirements. The council's findings have two streetlights proposed that need to match the existing streetlight that are placed in Block 1.

Mayor Johnson informed the council that he and Mr. Pfaffle discussed the modification. The concerns pertaining to this are safety and security and keeping in compliance with the dark sky ordinance. He added it is not about the cost of the streetlights, rather it is about putting the funds to better use; and he believes there is plenty of light in the area. There are some concerns from the Marshal's office, and the engineer declined to make a statement. He went on, Mr. Pfaffle has asked to install a fence in the area instead of the streetlighting. If security and safety become an issue, the Council can readdress the concern.

Mr. Pfaffle addressed the Council and proposed to exchange fencing for the two streetlights. After some complaints regarding ATVs, snowmobiles, etc. he thought it would be a better solution to install a fence. He said if there are two intersections, stop signs are necessary. During the winter, when it is dark, if the intention is for hiking, there may be a need for streetlighting. Mr. Pfaffle said he is not asking to eliminate an improvement; he is asking to do something else in exchange so the council can determine if they want a string of streetlights.

President Giordani pointed out in Phase 1, each stop sign has a streetlight; however, in Phase 2, the two stop signs closest to the mountain do not have streetlights. Originally, the streetlights at Slaughterhouse Road and the bike path were a potential location. In Phase 1, the bike path crosses the main loop, and he probably wouldn't have put streetlights in the bike path crossing the connecting road.

President Giordani liked the idea of a fence and thought it would create a nice barrier. She asked if there were any other options. Council Member Shay expressed concern on both sides of the matter; however, she understands both sides as well. She indicated they do not want to light up the canyon; however, it is a safety perspective. Are they going to wait to do streetlighting until Phase 3 until something bad happens? Marshal Gaston agreed. It is a safety concern; more lighting is the best option. President Giordani stated she likes the streetlights in Phase 1 and believes there are a lot of families in the area. She likes both the streetlights and the stop signs. Council Member Shay expressed she did not like the idea of a fence.

Mayor Johnson said he would like the trail with the fence line, and it coordinating with a grooming service. He stated he wants the trail used and safe. The city can't keep the trail open in the winter with the exceptions of snowshoeing and cross country skiing. He reiterated he wants the trail kept as safe as possible, and he likes the fence. The infrastructure is in place if it is determined the streetlights are needed.

Mr. Pfaffle told the Council he would install the streetlights in the future, if the Council determined they were needed. He said the streetlights were not required by the Planning and Zoning Commission; there were accidentally left on the plan. He said he would like to install the fence as Phase 2 starts to develop. The security bond still includes landscaping around the pump station and a sign that was misspelled. In addition, there is \$47,000 for the streetlights; the fencing is approximately that amount or more.

Mr. Pfaffle informed the Council he isn't trying to "not spend money;" he is trying to spend it in a better way. If the city determines the streetlights are needed, the Council could say no to Phase 3. Mr. Allington confirmed that Mr. Pfaffle was willing to install the fence in lieu of streetlighting. Mr. Pfaffle said he would like to install a fence as opposed to the streetlighting. Mr. Allington indicated that the item is more of a modification to the improvements; the item is not an amendment to the findings of fact.

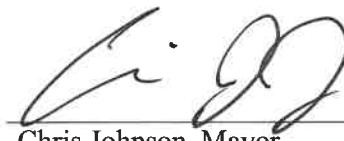
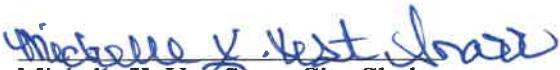
Council Member Leahy liked the fence. She referred to the landscaping in the area of the booster station, and she prefers xeriscape and natural vegetation. She thinks they don't need to plant trees in the area just to water them. Mr. Pfaffle explained the first trees died. He thinks he will have the trees replaced with xeriscape. Mr. Pfaffle said he would install the fence between the first lot and booster station.

President Giordani liked the fence with the option to install the streetlights if needed. She thinks the existing fence is a good looking fence, and it defines the trail.

Motion: President Giordani moved to amend the agreement and to hold off on the streetlighting that has been referenced tonight and to install fencing along the bike path. Council Member Shay seconded the motion. Council Members voting aye: Members Shay, Leahy, Carreiro, and Giordani. Members voting nay: None. The motion passed unanimously. Council Members Mahoney and Obenauf.

10. Adjournment:

With no further business coming before the Common Council at this time, Council Member Carrerio moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:35 p.m. President Giordani seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.


Chris Johnson, Mayor
Michelle K. Vest Sharr, City Clerk