

CITY OF

MAYOR

Tim Stearns

*"A Valley
Of
Friendliness"*



COUNCIL MEMBERS

Adam Blackburn

Jackie Hagberg

Kevin Pieters

Cory Schurman

The Steamboat Rock City Council met in special session January 17th, 2022, 6:30 p.m. in the City Council chambers and available via zoom due to COVID-19 restrictions. Present were Mayor Stearns and the following council members: Adam Blackburn, Kevin Pieters, and Jackie Hagberg, absent: Cory Schurman. Also present were Melissa Johanson, Johnnie Ogden, Jon and Mariah Schurman, Jim Kramer, John Schuller, Scott Williams, Renee Oltrogge, and Suzie DeVries via zoom.

Mayor Stearns called the meeting to order. Hagberg moved, seconded by Blackburn to approve the posted agenda. Absent: Cory Schurman. Motion carried unanimously.

Mayor Stearns announced we will not have the Councilmember appointment and swearing in of the new Council Member due to the posting not yet published in the local newspaper.

Mayor Stearns read the comments submitted by Suzie DeVries regarding her thoughts on the new councilmember stating that though she believes Jon Schurman is very capable, she believes there was little effort put into this choice and that a female should have been chosen.

Mayor Stearns explained the process applied for appointing a new Councilperson. In the prospect list were three men and two women. Mayor Stearns developed an informal scoring model to be used in the decision making process. The issue of nepotism had been researched. While not a great idea, City Clerk Oltrogge had done research and found there is no legal basis against and it is actually common in small Iowa communities. Issue of having a more gender balanced council was researched. Again, while that is a good practice, there was no legal basis for or against. The duty of the Council is clearly stated to pick the best person to fill the vacated position. Mayor Stearns reminded everyone that is why City council members are chosen by election to represent the people so that every decision does not require a municipal vote.

Mayor Stearns discussed the future of the schoolhouse building and opened the floor to discussion. Mayor Stearns read the idea submitted by Suzie DeVries who believes it should be sold with no further public funds used towards repairs. Mayor Stearns explained that idea would mean selling the property for the \$91,000+- balance still owed on the roof, window, and furnace installations. Other ideas from the people in attendance began with : spend money on a hazardous materials/ asbestos study. No one wanted to lose or diminish the park. Demolish the entire building complex at an estimated cost of \$320,000 resulting in green space or parking. There are limited DNR cost share grants available for demolition. They are very restricted, limited in dollar amount, and require a large amount of the materials to be reused/ recycled. This option eliminates the current location of City Hall. Another option is a partial demolition of everything except the gymnasium (which receives much use). Then relocate City Hall to on the gymnasium stage. Mayor Stearns explained a few ideas that have been discussed if we keep the full building with having luxury suites, daycare center, two Hostel rooms, and apartments. All would require studies to be completed prior to applying for those grants but there may be grants for portions of those studies. This would include but are not limited to: Hazardous materials/ asbestos studies, study by structural engineers, architectural review, State building code reviews, feasibility studies on just about every proposed use.

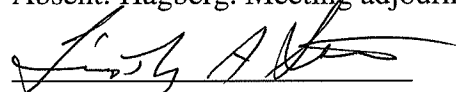
Hagberg and Pieters would like to get the building back on the tax rolls. Jim Kramer asked why the playground/shelter would have to be part of the sale. Mayor Stearns advised we could survey and exclude those areas from a sale. Mariah Schurman advised we need to look at a financial analysis of each idea and discuss it

from there. Jim Kramer expressed concerns with selling the building and the affect on the town and park area outside. Blackburn believes we have a bright future with the river project. Then what is the best way to tie into tourism? What is the best return on investment if we spend \$1 million? Mariah suggested the tear down will eliminate the unknown with this building in the future. Current costs include the loan at \$25,000 a year, upkeep each year is about \$25,000 per year and electric usage is around \$8,500 per year. Mayor Stearns advised we need to figure out a few good ideas and crunch the numbers on each option. The breakdown of costs for the building will be prepared for the 2/14/22 regular Council meeting. In summary the ideas all include acquiring an asbestos survey and estimates on removal if required. Mayor Stearns will have numbers together for each option and will work finding on asbestos survey providers and cost.

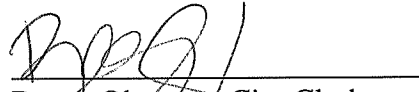
Blackburn moved, seconded by Hagberg to research an asbestos survey and pursue a grant for such.
Absent: Cory Schurman. Motion carried unanimously.

Public comments: DeVries also believes the businesses in town should have a city code stating what property can be used for and include an implementation time line.

Pieters moved to adjourn the meeting, Blackburn seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.
Absent: Hagberg. Meeting adjourned at 7:43 pm.



Timothy A. Stearns, Mayor



Renee Oltrogge, City Clerk