

Mayor Larson called the regular City Council meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Present for roll call were Mayor Larson, Mayor Pro Tem Boyd, Council member Glanc, and Council member Hilton. Council member Maurer was absent. Also present were City Administrator Patrick Rondinelli, Finance and Administrative Director Debra Overton, Public Works Director Dennis Erickson, Police Chief Justin Perry, Plaindealer reporter Tori Sheets, and eighteen citizens.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mayor Larson asked for any corrections to the minutes of the February 21st Council meeting. Hearing no comments, Mayor Larson stated the minutes stand approved as written.

CITIZENS COMMUNICATION

Councils Response from Citizens Communication, February 21st

Mayor Larson read the responses that were provide in the Council packet. She stated that a request from a citizen for a reduction in the amount of material that can be deposited on a property without a permit has been received. Mayor Larson asked Council if they would like to direct staff and the Planning Commission to review this regulation and provide feedback on possible changes.

Mayor Larson asked Public Works to follow up on a request for grading on 9th Street.

Bevin Campbell

Bevin Campbell expressed her and her son Arlo's concerns about smoking in the City, noting that there is an excessive amount of smoking on Main Street; that it is difficult to avoid; that it is a health issue; that she is aware that the Business Watch is currently discussing this topic; and suggested that the City consider designating a smoking area. She stated that there is also a problem with trash on Main Street, noting that there are a lot of cigarette butts on Main Street after a busy weekend in the summer; and that garbage cans are overflowing. Mayor Larson suggested that Campbell join the Business Watch group to help come up with a solution to these issues.

COUNCIL AND COMMITTEE REPORTS

Council Member Boyd

Community Development Committee Presentation

Council member Boyd reported that the Community Development Committee presentation has been postponed until the next Council meeting.

Expenditures for the Period Ending March 6th

Council member Boyd reported on his review of expenditures for the period ending March 6th, noting that everything was in order.

Council Member Hilton

Beautification Committee Meeting, February 7th

Council member Hilton read the update that was provided in the Council packet, noting that the next Beautification Committee meeting will be on April 11th and that Erickson will be attending.

Mayor Larson

Review of Financial Reports

Mayor Larson referred to the Lodging Occupancy Tax report in the packet, noting that occupancy was down 16% and that the dollars collected was down 14%.

OTHER

Council member Boyd noted that the employee dinner is on Wednesday evening; that Rondinelli's attendance at the Emergency Managers Conference was invaluable for Ouray County and the City; that Lezah Saunders was recognized as Volunteer of the Year for the State of Colorado through Emergency Management; and that the High School basketball team is going to the State Championships on Thursday in Greeley. Rondinelli noted that there will be a sendoff parade on Main Street Wednesday morning at 8:00 a.m.

Mayor Larson noted that the City has received a request from the Director of the Colorado Outdoor Recreation Office asking Council to send a letter of support encouraging the Outdoor Retail Show to relocate to Colorado. Council agreed to write a letter of support.

Mayor Larson provided an update on the Pool Project, noting that the colder weather has delayed pouring the cement, however once it warms up they get back on schedule.

Mayor Larson said that last fall Council approved changing the hours of the Council meetings to 6:00 p.m. during Mountain Standard Time, noting that Daylight Savings Time begins on March 12th and that the next Council meeting will be at 7:00 p.m. She asked if Council would like to discuss changing the Council meeting time to 6:00 p.m. permanently. Rondinelli noted that there was a short survey on the City Facebook page asking Citizens what times they prefer, noting that there were six responses all of which like the earlier time. Mayor Larson asked the audience how many of them would like to have the meetings held at 6:00 p.m. and the majority of the audience raised their hands. Council agreed they would like discuss this at the next meeting.

ADMINISTRATOR REPORT

Rondinelli noted that Noll is out on a personal day and will be back in the office tomorrow; that the Community Development Coordinator position closed on Friday and eight applications were received; and that interviews are tentatively scheduled for next week.

CONSENT AGENDA

There were no Consent Agenda items.

ACTION ITEMS

There were no Action Items.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Via Ferrata Proposal

San Juan Mountain Guides (SJMG) representative Nate Disser presented the proposal to build a Via Ferrata in Ouray's Uncompahgre Gorge, noting that SJMG, Chris Haaland of Canyon Bridge LLC and Andrew Klotz have done extensive research, planning and analysis regarding the intended route; engineering specifics; ongoing maintenance; operations budget; and the economic impact of a Via Ferrata in Ouray. Disser provide information on the history of the Via Ferrata; the increasing popularity in the US; that it fits with the character of the City; and that it would increase tourism during the shoulder seasons. Disser explained that the route would be one way: that it would be open from May through October; that rungs will be removed daily to discourage after hours use; that bridges would be removed during the off season; that there would be no impact to the ice climbing routes; and that signage is a critical part of the plan. There was discussion about ongoing funding sources; how the operation would be managed; the timing of completion; whether to charge a fee; who oversees

the construction; the potential for additional phases; management of concessionaires; and modifications that would be needed to the easement with the County. Council discussed whether to postpone any decisions until the next Council meeting to allow for further public input.

Business owners and residents Bill Leo, Bruce Gulde, Michelle Poirier and Jeff Skoloda expressed their support of the Via Ferrata. Ouray Chamber Resort Association representatives Heidi Pankow, Kris Hinkson and Kat Papenbrock also provided their support. Papenbrock provided additional information on Via Ferrate's that are located in the US and Canada.

Council member Glanc stated her concerns about a conflict of interest with respects to SJMG profiting from this project, noting that she is in favor of the project but has some questions. Disser explained that SJMG and others working on this project are mainly doing it for the betterment of the community. Rondinelli stated that he has made it very clear to SJMG that if Council moves forward with this project that it does not become SJMG Via Ferrata, noting that it is a City asset and that all guide services will be provided with the same opportunities. He said that he has had many discussions with SJMG and they are in support that structure and agree that an agreement will be drawn up to outline these requirements. Council agreed they were satisfied with the proposal and required agreements and wanted to take action on the item.

Council member Hilton moved and Council member Boyd seconded the motion to approve the Via Ferrata Proposal. Council member Glanc asked that an agreement be drawn up to clearly state the City's ownership of the facility and that the City has access to all financial information. Council member Hilton moved to amend the motion and Council member Boyd seconded the motion to approve the Via Ferrata Proposal with the request that SJMG work with staff to develop a detailed agreement that would clearly outline that the Via Ferrata is a City owned asset, is operated by the City and that the City has full access and review of all finances related to the project. The agreement will be drawn up by the City Attorney and presented to Council at a later date. The motion was unanimously approved.

ADJOURNMENT

At 7:30 p.m., Council member Hilton moved and Council member Boyd seconded the motion to adjourn. The motion was unanimously approved.