

MINUTES OF THE TOWN OF BEARCREEK COUNCIL FEBRUARY 4, 2023 MEETING

Mayor Surwill called the Bearcreek council meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. Feb. 4, 2023, in the Town Hall. Council members Cristan, Jenkins, and Hogan (by phone) were present. Rob Surwill, Animal Control Officer; Loni Hanson, Zoning Director; and Dean Webb, Public Works Director were in attendance. Audience present were Jack Owens, Skip Boyer, and Steve Repac.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Council member Jenkins moved to accept the Dec. minutes, financial reports, and budget vs actual reports as presented. Council member Cristan seconded the motion which carried 3-0. There were no January minutes as there wasn't a meeting in January.

There was no correspondence.

No public comments were received.

Dept. Head reports was started with Dean who reported there was a water leak since Dec. 28<sup>th</sup> that hasn't surfaced. It is running in the old sewer line by the creek. He thinks it is coming between 3<sup>rd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> St. We are wasting 16,000 gallons a day from the leak. Rural Water gave Dean a listening machine but with the ice it isn't allowing him to hear the water running. He will continue to search for it and hopefully when the frost comes out the leak will surface. Dean advised that when the power went out, he had to manually run the water system to fill the tank. Loni reported that she had given out 2 applications for zoning. Rob advised that animal license applications were trickling in, but there hadn't been any calls.

There were no items addressed under council concerns.

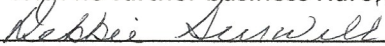
Under unfinished business the Mayor advised the Town need to appoint their representative to the County Historical Commission. One person, Kim Bader, had expressed interest in the position. Harold moved to appoint Kim as the Town's representative. Paul seconded the motion which carried 3-0.

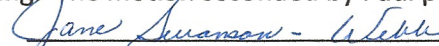
There was no new business.

Under clerks items: (1) the clerk had placed a call to the electrician inquiring when the additional light bulbs would be installed. She had left a message but hadn't heard anything yet. (2) The bills for the non-active water users had gone out with a very favorable response. The calls she had received had been questions. One lady's grandson had gotten the bill and thought it may be a scam, so she called to see if it was legit. Another lady called not knowing that the address shown on her bill was the address of her lots and she had readily access to water. (3) The clerk advised that the ordinances had been scanned and emailed by Junction 7 to the lady doing the web page. When she has completed that the minutes of the last 6 months will be included and any other information the council would like to have included. The agenda will show on the website when it is completed. (4) Jane had checked with the auditor doing the financial audit for the town, but he was out of the office. She had concerns as she was under the impression that his report was to be submitted to the State by Dec. 31, 2022, but advised the council that the State knows he is doing the audit as the contract is submitted to the State for their approval.

Steve Repac said he had a question, not a comment. He wanted to know who the auditor was. Jane responded that the State sends her a list of the State approved auditors who can perform these services. It was Denning out of Kalispell. Mr. Repac then stated that he had a question for Dean about the leak. He wanted to know if the leak was in the service line or the main. Dean responded it was the main line. Mr. Repac wanted to know what kind of pipe it was - not iron pipe? Dean assured him there was no iron pipe in the water system. He questioned how it would be fixed, dig it up, saw it off and replace it with another pipe. Dean answered yes. Mr. Repac commented that Rural Water had referred to \$6,000 - \$7,000 per water leak. Dean responded there was no way to estimate the cost as you didn't know what you may find. He explained that in the frost it cost a lot more. Skip Boyer agreed that you couldn't estimate a water break cost. Mr. Repac started talking about what Rural Water had said in her presentation on charging non-active water users, therefore the Mayor said the council was moving forward. Mr. Repac said that's what a council meeting is for so that the people may ask questions. The Mayor reminded him that he had 3 minutes to comment in the public comment session. Mr. Repac argued that when you have a public comment session you can't ask questions, just comments. The Mayor responded that you could ask questions at that time as well, but the agenda is past that. Mr. Repac said you said comments so the Mayor advised she would ask for public comments and questions in the future, but now they were moving on.

With no further business Harold moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion seconded by Paul passed unanimously.

  
Debbie Surwill, Mayor

  
Jane Swanson-Webb, Clerk