

Regular Meeting

The Town of Chester Council held the Regular Scheduled Council meeting on July 12, 2023.

Members Present: Mayor James Dahlen, Council Persons, Garrett Graff, Rachel Ghekiere, Sonja Dahlen and Scott Ross

Members Absent: Tina Neer

Staff Present: Terry Tyler (PWD)
Ashley Wickum (Clerk/Treasurer)

Guests: Dennis Hanson, Stephen Nelson, Emma Wickum

1. Mayor James Dahlen called the regular meeting to order at 6:03 pm
2. Scott Ross made a motion to accept the minutes from the regular council meeting on June 14, 2023. Sonja Dahlen seconded the motion. Motion to approve minutes passed with all voting ayes.
3. Claims were presented to the council for approval. Sonja Dahlen made the motion to approve the claims submitted for payment. Ck # 18976-18994, reissued check #19002 with check #19046., ACH payments -99988E & 99987E & Payroll Advances Ck #18973-18975. Scott Ross seconded the motion. Rachel Ghekiere asked about posting of legal postings as the Liberty County Times office is closing. Ashley Wickum reported the Paul Overlie told her that the Havre Daily News would be the best option for the Town. Ashley will be contacting them as the Budget Hearing will need to be posted. Motion to approve claims passed with all voting ayes.
4. The council reviewed the adjustments and journal entries made in June. Scott Ross made the motion to approve the JV & Adjustments. Rachel Ghekiere seconded the motion. Motion passed with all voting ayes.
5. Public Comment: Dennis Hanson stated he was at the meeting because of the vacant council spot.
6. Sheriff's Office Report: Copied and presented to the council.
7. Pool Manager Report: Pool Manager, Emma Wickum reported to the council that swim lessons went well with 50 kids ranging in levels from mom and me to level 6. The overall feedback with how lessons were taught this year has been very positive. She would recommend that whoever teaches swim lessons in the future look at utilizing both swim university and red cross as they offer different skills for the kids. She used a combination this year and it went well. She was also approached about a program, IRS Lessons, Infant Swimming Resources Self Rescue Program, that teaches safety skills to swimmers. This is a difficult certification, and she is researching what it will take to become certified. Emma would like to run a 2nd session of swimming lessons during the last week of July, it would be small groups, for the kids who weren't able to participate in the first session or whose parents would like to have them do an extra smaller class. There has also been interest in an adult swim option in the morning from 10-12 that she would like to try with the council's permission. Scott Ross asked about the showers in the boy's locker room not working well, there is barely any pressure and no hot water. Emma and Terry were not aware of this and will look into it. The council told Emma to

go ahead with both the 2nd session of swimming lessons and the morning adult swim if she feels she has enough interest and lifeguards to staff it. She believes she does.

8. New Business:

1. Resolution #09-2023 Participation in Bear Paw Economic Development District: Discussion about services. Scott Ross stated that they recently moved to a new building. They are hoping they can retain employees as that will help them to serve the town better. The community benefits from the town being a member. Rachel Ghekiere made the motion to approve Resolution #09-2023 Participation in Bear Paw Economic Development Sonja Dahlen seconded the motion. Motion passed with all voting ayes.
2. Discussion for setting the date and time for budget building and preliminary budget meeting. Date set for July 18, 2023, budget billing at 4:00 pm and preliminary budget approval meeting at 6:00 pm.

9. Old Business: Mayor Dahlen updated the council that the new Nutrien Ag Building, owned by Jeremiah Johnson was connected to water. Jeremiah has been paying a base rate on the adjacent property, previously owned by Dave Pennock. When the waterline was put in on Taylor Street, Jeremiah Johnson was the contractor who did the work, and an agreement was made that he would be able to connect to the waterline with no fee. Jeremiah would like to transfer the connection from the property that he's been paying the base rate on at 620 Marias Street NE to the new connection at the Nutrien Ag Building at 722 Taylor Street. He will abandon the water at 620 Marias Street NE and if water is ever connected to this property a new water connection fee and all costs will need to be paid.
10. Mayor Report/ Additional Agenda Items: Mayor Dahlen stated that there is more than one applicant interested in the vacant council member position in Ward 2 vacated by Wendy Dauwalder. Mayor Dahlen has spoken to Attorney Bill Hunt. He recommends that each applicant submit a letter of interest for the council to review before appointing someone to the position. The deadline for the letter of interest will be July 21st.
11. PWD update: Terry Tyler updated the council that the supplies for the tower painting are being delivered and they should be starting soon. MET was recently in town gathering additional information on the SCADA system and are working on it. The crew continues to work on summer maintenance and routine work.
12. Clerk update: Ashley Wickum presented the council with information from Family Connections and the property tax rebate program. The Chester Crazy Days is going to take place during the Divisional swim meet July 21-23. Terry has been working with Shelia Roberts, Chamber of Commerce, to make sure the one way is cleaned, and cones and garbage's are available. The lead and copper inventory is progressing. Rachel Ghekiere asked if the flyer helped. Ashley stated that the return on the flyer was as expected, a small percentage, however, it did serve to inform the homeowners and businesses that the Town was going to be gathering this information and Nikki is not running into any problems when calling and setting up in person visits.
13. Council: Scott Ross inquired if there was any information on the progress with the splash park. Terry explained that the splash park is at a standstill as there must be a recirculating system and that is a large cost. Currently they are working with Chad Hedges to complete the relocating of the skating ring and reconfiguration of the parking lot. The gas line is in and all that is left is to install the heater. Terry is working on getting lights as well.

14. Rachel Ghekierre made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Scott Ross seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 6:36 pm.

Submitted by _____ Approved by _____
Clerk Mayor