

Regular Meeting

The Town of Chester Council held the Regular Scheduled Council meeting on November 13, 2024, at 6:00 pm.

Members Present: Council Persons, Sonja Dahlen, Scott Decker, Rachel Ghekiere, Garrett Graff, Tina Neer, and Jim Sivils

Members Absent: Mayor James Dahlen

Staff Present:

Ashley Wickum (Clerk/Treasurer)

Guests: Jerry Ghekiere

1. Council President Rachel Ghekiere called the regular meeting to order at 6:00 pm
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Correction of spelling on Line #12. Sonja Dahlen made a motion to accept the minutes of the Regular Council Meeting on October 9, 2024, with the correction to line #12. Tina Neer seconded the motion. Motion to approve the minutes passed with all voting ayes.
4. Claims were presented to the council for approval. Ashley Wickum informed the council that the checks for Lakeside and the MT Dept of Revenue will be held until the ARPA funds are received. A claim for Craig Shepherd for completion of the AFR was added to the approval list. Dave Ghekiere's license renewal fee and CEC's were paid. Sonja Dahlen made the motion to approve the claims submitted for payment. Ck # 20545-20577, electronic payment -99968-99967 & Payroll Advances Ck #20543-20544. Scott Decker seconded the motion. Motion to approve claims passed with all voting ayes.
5. The council reviewed the adjustments and journal entries made in October. Sonja Dahlen made the motion to approve the JV & Adjustments. Garrett Graff seconded the motion. Motion passed with all voting ayes.
6. Public Comments: Jerry Ghekiere addressed the council concerning the alley south of the Catholic Church. The Garbage container is located in the alley and there is a major sinking area that needs to be fixed. He is not sure who is responsible. Ashley Wickum informed the council it is not currently mapped as part of the Town's fuel tax roads and alleys. Ashley Wickum will look to see if paperwork can be located to show who owns this alley. Jerry Ghekiere left the meeting at 6:11 pm.
7. Sheriff's Office Report: was provided to the council.
8. New Business:
 1. Approval- Building Permit
 - Bill Hicks – 211 2nd Street East -Fence: this property has a LOMA and has been removed from the floodplain. Tina Neer made the motion to approve the building permit as presented. Sonja Dahlen seconded the motion. Motion passed with all voting ayes.

2. Ordinance No. 2024-1 First Reading: Prohibiting Unpermitted Concealed Weapons and Unconcealed Weapons In Town Building- Discussion about the necessity of the ordinance. Discussed Fines and penalties in 1-4-1 for violations of town ordinances. Scott Decker made the motion to approve the first reading for Ordinance No. 2024-1 Prohibiting Unpermitted Concealed Weapons and Unconcealed Weapons In Town Building and to ask Bill Hunt to start the process to change the fines and penalties in 1-4-1 to read \$500 fine for 1st offense and up to six months in jail for 2nd offense. Sonja Dahlen seconded the motion. Motion passed with all voting ayes.
3. General Labor Position: The council discussed the possibility of advertising for a general labor and hiring someone without requiring them to be licensed.. Employees are required to have a CDL to operate the garbage truck. Scott Deck suggested working on advertisements to list the benefits, wages, etc. to make it more enticing. The administrative committee will look at the advertisements and job descriptions and bring suggestions to the next meeting.
9. Old Business: The American Legion has finished installing the flagpole on the east end of town. The cost estimated was about \$100/flag and that flag would need to be replaced ever 3-4 months. Rachel Ghekiere stated that there was another group in town that might be interested in helping purchase flags. She will talk to them and let the council know next month.
10. Mayor Report/ Additional Agenda Items: The December meeting falls on the same night as the Christmas Stroll. Ashley Wickum asked if the council would like to move the meeting to Tuesday December 10, 2024. The council has agreed to move the meeting. Ashley Wickum asked the council for permission to purchase chamber bucks for the four current employees as it has been done in the past. The council gave her permission. The chamber bucks will be on December claims.
11. PWD update: Council President Rachel Ghekiere updated the council that the fire hydrant on the northside was fixed as well as the fire hydrant by the skating rink. The crew has swept streets and are going to be digging a new garbage pit at the landfill.
12. Clerk update: Ashley Wickum updated the council that the Museum is planning to landscape the boulevards around the Museum and the lot to the south. They just wanted the Town to be aware of their plan.
13. Council: Jim Sivils inquire about the status of the fish in the north water pond. Scott Decker spoke with Fish & Game and they will work on taking care of them closer to spring.
14. Tina Neer made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Jim Sivils seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 7:10 pm.

Submitted by _____ Approved by _____
Clerk Mayor