

City of Grass Valley  
Regular City Council Meeting Minutes  
January 8, 2023, 2023 7:00 PM  
Grass Valley Market Annex  
Minutes

**Present:** Rita Wilson – Council President; Samantha Allen – City Administrator; Bonne Whitley – Councilmember; ReeElla von Borstel – Councilmember; Joanne Duarte -Councilmember; Walter Grzeszczyk – Maintenance

**Late arrival (5 Min):** Tom Rolfe, Councilmember

**Absent:** Meinrad Kuettel, Mayor; Rick Whitaker, Councilmember

**Guest(s) Present:** Leta Ann Reckmann, Candace Austin

Rita Wilson called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM and led everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Consent Agenda:**

The agenda was reviewed by the City Council. Ree Ella motioned to approve the agenda as presented. Rita seconded. Passed unanimously.

Minutes from the December 4, Regular City Council Meeting were reviewed by the City Council. Ree Ella motioned to adopt the Minutes as written. Bonne seconded. Passed unanimously. Special Meeting Minutes from December 11 were reviewed by the City Council. Bonne motioned to adopt the Minutes as written. Ree Ella seconded. Passed unanimously.

The monthly financial reports were reviewed for December. ReeElla moved that we submit what we have for reimbursement to the SCA grant, and to accept the November financial reports. Bonne seconded. All agreed unanimously.

Rita asked if any guests present wanted to speak. All guests said no.

Council President Rita Wilson called on Walter Grzeszczyk for his Monthly Maintenance Report. He would like to buy a new weed sprayer. He said he wanted a tow behind sprayer as opposed to a backpack sprayer. Ree Ella brought up that the county should be doing this, but it was argued by many that it is hard to get the county to come out on a regular basis. An example on the need for our own sprayer is the thistle in the park that needs to be sprayed many times to kill off. Ree Ella moved to allow Walter to buy a sprayer with a trailer, maximum price of \$600. Bonne seconded. All agreed unanimously.

Walter's next topic was about the gravel that was delivered for the paving project due to be completed next spring. He asked if he could use some of the larger gravel to fill holes in the various roads as needed. He was concerned about how much to use without there being a shortage. ReeElla said to use common sense and go ahead and use some of it. Next, he mentioned that he rebuilt the light fixtures in the city office putting in new fixture ends and new halogen bulbs. He then brought up an email from OPRD and said that they doubled the amount of the grant that they offer to cities for parks. He wanted to purchase a back flow preventer and a meter for the water line going to the park which would cost about \$4000. The grant could also cover a new playground and new irrigation system which needs replacing very soon. He also added that the CXTs (bathrooms) could be replaced with new ones. And

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perhaps Walter then added two hundred yards of topsoil to even out the grass area and take out the last of the very large trees and replace them with new ones. ReeElla said we should ask for \$100,000 for all these items discussed. Many people enjoy the park as they pass through. Walter said he needed to put some hours into applying for this grant. ReeElla stated that the time should not go over 10 hours without council consent.

**Old Business:**

Update about Ordinance Committee: Only a couple of council members had time to go over the 4-city ordinance worksheet in the last month. They talked about many changes that they felt should be addressed. For example, the ordinances about cargo containers, trees, bushes and dumpsters that block the view when turning out onto highway 97. Residential area measurements were also questioned and not fully understood. Junk, abandoned vehicles, old vehicles, cruelty to animals. Mobile homes. The ordinance about noise in section 27 was read out loud by Rita. There were questions about clarity on this. A letter was sent recently to a resident about noise. There is nothing in our ordinances about trucks that park and idle all night. Rita then asked about the dog barking issue recently. Has it settled down? Last month the issue was put in the newsletter. What is the recourse for the ordinance violations. We need to have fines as well as warning letters. Rita informed the council that there are steps already written in the ordinances about this, which does include warning letters and fines. Bonne stated there is a lot to discuss here and perhaps we need a special meeting to do so, and to talk about all this when Meinrad is present. Dinner and Pizzas could be served, offered Bonne. The council wanted to table this ordinance subject for now. Subject was then ended.

Update on Defibrillators, CPR classes and Fire Extinguishers: Dana says EMS just received the grant for the defibrillators, and they can be installed soon. She will be sending out a schedule for CPR classes too. Purchasing fire extinguishers are about ½ the price of getting the inspectors to come out and certify and/ or replace them. Walter will go ahead and buy them.

Bulk Fill Water Project update: Walter talked to Charlie Miller. He didn't feel that Charlie knew how to do this kind of work keeping the lines clean. He just doesn't know about the process like Walter says he knows. Walter agreed to head up the project. Ree Ella reported that she talked to Keegan Kock and he says that both he and Charlie can help Walter whenever he is ready to start. This will be in the spring.

Implementing oversight of accounting practices update. This is already being done but Sam needs to put it in writing for the auditors. Sam will get this done.

Update on findings for the 2024 water line upgrade (Copper and Lead Project). Walter says he has been thinking about it and realizes we will not get this done by the deadline of Oct 2024. But if we have a plan by then that will be better than doing nothing.

Sharp easement update. Meinrad not here to tell of anything new.

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**New business:**

Dan Meader at Tennison Engineering. Email and maps enclosed documents handed out this evening. He is concerned about a homeowner in town using 3 lots for building one home. Ree Ella and others think that the homeowner can do what they want with their property because we are a small town, and we like it this way. Sam will let Dan know that we are not concerned about this issue at this time, so there will be no change to our ordinances.

SCA Paving grant reimbursement. The last invoice has been paid. all the work completed so far on this project. Sam will investigate how to get reimbursement on the \$84,600 already paid by the city. The project is only partially done and will continue in the spring.

How to allocate Sherman County SIP check of \$100k. Discussion revolved around allocating the funds for the (Lead and Copper) pipe water project. Perhaps \$80,000 for the lead and copper water project and \$20,000 for finishing the paving project. Notes: Sam will look at allocation from last year. She can also collect the data on funds needed to finish the paving project beyond the \$100,000 that we got from the SCA grant.

Dog nuisance problem: Sam asked if we could go ahead and send a letter to each dog owner with the problem dogs. Everyone agreed that it should be done right away, the first letter is just a warning. Sam will get this done right away.

New resident not paying for water service. First statement was sent to the customer 1 ½ months ago which included the deposit required. How is this situation handled? Customer has been called and said they are willing to pay but never has. The council agreed that they would have 30 days and then their water service would be turned off. A red tag will be put on the door of the building along with another statement and shut off letter.

ReeElla motioned to adjourn the meeting. Tom seconded. Passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 8:07 PM.

Dated: February 5, 2024

Attest:



Meinrad Kuettel, Mayor



Samantha Allen, City Administrator

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**Present:** Meinrad Kuettel- Mayor; Samantha Allen – City Administrator; Rita Wilson – Council President; Bonne Whitley – Councilmember; Joanne Duarte -Councilmember; Rick Whitaker, Councilmember; Walter Grzeszczyk – Maintenance

**Late arrival (5 Min):** Tom Rolfe, Councilmember

**Absent:** ReeElla von Borstel – Councilmember.

**Guest(s) Present:** Leta Ann Reckmann, Keegan Kock, Charlie Miller

Meinrad Kuettel called the meeting to order at 7:01 PM and led everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Consent Agenda:**

The agenda was reviewed by the City Council. Rita asked the council about mailing the newsletter to those in town who normally do not get the newsletter because they do not receive a monthly water bill, since important information about the community is in the newsletter. Newsletters need to be posted at the post office and on the website. Sam had a question about the budget committee. Those who were on the committee last year should be called. Motion to approve the agenda Rick, Rita seconded. Passed unanimously.

Meinrad asked if any of the guests wanted to speak. Charlie and Keegan agreed to talk when Walter did his maintenance report about the bulk water fill project.

Minutes from the January 8, Regular City Council Meeting were reviewed by the City Council. Rita motioned to approve the minutes. Bonne seconded. Passed unanimously.

The monthly financial reports were reviewed for January, as well as the new visa credit card report for December and January. Rita moved to accept all financial reports. Bonne seconded. All agreed unanimously.

Mayor Meinrad Kuettel called on Walter Grzeszczyk for his Monthly Maintenance Report. He focused on Charlie and Keegan to see what they wanted to say about work on the upcoming project. They stated that Ree Ella had asked them to come to the meeting. Walter continued with his report and stated that he still needs to buy the cement for the project. The water table was discussed. The early spring start date may be too soon since the water table is still quite high. Walter checked the table before the storms. The council said that water level should be checked every month at both ends. When Walter is ready to start work on the project, he will call Charlie and Keegan. He told them that it was very important that DEQ inspection passes on the first time. Very hard to pass a second time. Walter went on to explain the process that he would like to do regarding this project and stated that there were plans in place. A back flow preventer will also be installed. Most difficult thing about the job is moving the hydrant. The bulk fill will be the same as before but will be metered.

Next issue for Walter was he talked to Bert Perisho about finishing the chipseal project. Walter discussed in detail and said that we are in the loop with Scott Peters and Joe Justesen at ODOT and we

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are the first job this spring. Next, he reported the #2 well water level dropped 20 inches and has remained there for 6 days. Possible that the transducer might be going out, but there is no way to tell at this point. We need to keep an eye on this. Tom asked if anyone within 4-5 miles had put in a new well? There has been a new well put in recently so that could be a possibility could have caused the drop. Lastly, Walter reported purchasing a spray trailer for spraying weeds per last meeting's decision.

**Old Business:**

**SCA Paving grant reimbursement.** Meinrad asked if we could get our reimbursement now for work completed so far. Sam explained that since the project is not complete, we can only ask for 50% which they call an advance. Sam is in the process of doing this. She had questions about how we determine if the project is finished. It was explained in the writing of the grant papers, it talks about first priority and second priority, etc... Meinrad says that we did what we had available to do with the materials on hand and just finished what made sense last fall. Meinrad then said that to finish to project we will do a single lift to the rest of the streets. Grant is approved for 3 lifts for all streets listed. Bert is going to come and walk the streets and prioritize that with us. He said that he will try to give the figures for each of the separate lifts and the length of time to finish. We have the \$44,000 in rock just sitting and waiting to be used. Meinrad pointed out that we can apply for more money next year to do even more streets on our list. If we want to do more this year it will have to be out of the city's pocket. This amount could be as much as \$20,000, he didn't know. We will go as far as we can with the funding, we have available. It sounds like we will drop Sharp Street this time around. Our priority is to finish what we have in town and then do Fourth Street. Walter asked how much we have spent on oil for the paving so far. Sam says that figure was in the ODOT bill, but she couldn't remember the amount. Broken out into labor, oil, and equipment.

**Update on Defibrillators, CPR classes:** Sam says defibrillators are going in of Friday the 9<sup>th</sup> of February. Meinrad will be there to open. Rita wanted to know where they were going to be placed. CPR Classes will be in Moro, Grass Valley, and Wasco on different dates. Grass Valley's class will be April 5<sup>th</sup> Friday at 1pm. There is a sign-up sheet that will be in the post office. Sam will make a note on it to contact city hall to sign up.

**Bulk Fill Water Project update:** This was talked about earlier with Keegan and Charlie in Walter's maintenance report.

**Update about Ordinance Committee:** Meinrad asked about possible times for special meeting. Meinrad feels that wording needs to be refined to implement some of the ordinances because now they are not clear. For example, the building ordinance. We don't seem to have an application process or guidelines set up for a building permit when somebody wants to do a new construction. We need an outline of the process and an application put together that people will use to get them through the whole process. Another goal is to pare down the ordinances. The nuisance ordinances are very wordy and not specific. Meinrad asked who wants to be on the committee to clear up the ordinances? Bonne volunteered and so did Rick and Thomas. The council knows ReeElla wants to volunteer even though she will be out of town until end of March. Keeping the committee small will help with the process. Only a couple of council members had time to go over the 4-city ordinance worksheet in the last month.

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Saturday the 24<sup>th</sup> of February at 9am at the market was the agreed upon time to meet. ReeElla can be there via Zoom.

**Sewer project update:** Representatives from DEQ, Business Oregon, Regional Solutions were at a meeting with Carrie P from MCEDD via Zoom on Tuesday January 27. They shared possible other sources for us in seeing this project through. Their input was very helpful. All the council agreed that we want to push the sewer project through. Waiting for congress to approve the 2 million to start moving forward. Meinrad contacted Merkley's office today and they said that everyone that had funding in that bill needed to wait, but Merkley was confident that the money would be there. Ed hedges from Tenneson was also at the meeting and agreed that we need to not give up on this project. He said he would be willing to help us write other grants for this project. Everything looks positive.

**Sharp easement update.** Meinrad says no updates yet. Meinrad did contact Kristen and she put out another communication to Sharp's lawyer. They continue to get free water during this process per the agreement.

**New business:**

**City Park Upgrades - with possible new grant from OPRD.** Walter says this grant is based on a point structure system with 42 categories. We can do simple things to qualify for more funding. For example, if we tore down the park playground and reused the material (the old redwood that is at the bottom) to make a path going through the park, we would get more points to qualify than if we just tore out the playground. If we added exercise equipment for park goers, and benches for older folks, that would add even more points to qualify. But there is a question about if this is worthwhile pursuing. What about maintenance on these new things? Another way to earn points for funding would be to create community involvement and get community feedback with a questionnaire about the park upgrades. This questionnaire would ask the community if they would be interested in a gazebo or a sheltered picnic area, a walking trail, upgraded restrooms to make it ADA accessible to include the much-needed new doors and locks, etc... This questionnaire can go out in the water statements at the end of the month.

**City Water system upgrades (Lead and Copper project) Grant money available for planning.** Walter inquired about the city's Master Plan that was created back in 2003. The plan seems to be missing. Walter will call Anderson Perry to see if there is a copy.

**Mayor membership in the state mayor association.** The League of Oregon Cities sent letter to our mayor to be a part of the State Mayor Association. Cost is \$100. Rita made a motion to register to be a member. Joann seconded. All agreed.

**Park maintenance-tree trimming and weed growth in the ditch behind the park.** Meinrad wanted to know if we wanted to tackle this project now and do we want to use grant money? Walter pointed out tying in the safety factor for the tree removal with the OPRD grant. The ditch, on the other hand, is full of weeds and plant life and really should be dealt with before winter is over. Rick thought we could just burn the ditch out. Amanda Whitman from the Soil and Water District was opposed to burning out the

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ditches when she inspected last time because of the natural grasses that grow there. But it was pointed out as being a fire hazard with the invasive cat tails which are very combustible and put the city at risk of spreading fire. The CiS Wildfire grant might provide maintenance funds for the ditch clearing. Meinrad explained that he burned the ditch on his property and then maintained the growth and only native grasses had come back. This could be done here at the park as well. If we get Amanda back to talk about this, we could then possibly go forward.

**Insurance Bond** for administrator's office. Do we want to insure the position of administrator or the individual who is working in the office? The cost either way is \$175/ year for \$50,000 coverage. Rick motioned to get insurance bond for the position rather than a specific individual, Rita seconded. All in favor.

**Late paying residents.** Firstly, Sam says last month's customer issue with late payment was resolved and paid in full. This month Sam sent out four letters in the statement asking for late payment to be paid in full. Joann stated that red tags should be placed at the resident's homes 48 hours before water turn off. The council agreed that the red tags will be placed 2 days before the end of the month.

**Burning Ordinance-** Resident complaining of health issues with regards to someone burning plastics or tires in their trash. The burn ordinance says that you cannot burn certain things. The council said to use a 2-step process to deal with the complaint. Letter informing resident, and if that doesn't work a second letter with a warning. Rick who works for So Sherman Fire says that a complaining resident can call them to check out any fire that might be illegal. They have the authority to fine someone and or to call the sheriff's dept. Residents can also call 911 directly if they want to, with this type of issue.

Rita motioned to adjourn the meeting. Tom seconded. Passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 8:23 PM.

Dated: March 4, 2024

Attest:



Meinrad Kuettel, Mayor



Samantha Allen, City Administrator

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**Present:** Meinrad Kuettel – Mayor; Samantha Allen – City Administrator; Rita Wilson – Council President; Bonne Whitley – Councilmember; ReeElla von Borstel – Councilmember; Tom Rolfe – Councilmember; Walter Grzeszczyk – Maintenance

**Absent:** Rick Whitacker- Councilmember; Joanne Duarte -Councilmember

**Guest(s) Present:** Leta Ann Reckmann, Candace Austin

Mayor Meinrad Kuettel called the meeting to order at 7:02 PM and led everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Consent Agenda**

Meinrad asks if there are any issues on the agenda. Rita motioned to approve the agenda as written. Tom seconded. Passed unanimously.

Meinrad asked if any guests had anything to speak about at the meeting. None replied.

Regular City Council Meeting minutes for February 5 were reviewed by the City Council. Rita noticed Bert Perisho name miss spelled. ReeElla struggling to hear everyone at the meeting since she is joining the meeting online. Bonne motioned to approve the minutes with the change in spelling that Rita identified. Tom and ReeElla seconded at the same time. Passed unanimously.

The monthly financial reports were reviewed for February. Meinrad brought up at this time that he wanted to know if there was a report that Sam could run that has our approved budget on it and the amounts that have been spent so far in each account? Sam agreed that this would be great but was uncertain how to get this report to be accurate. Sam will look further into this. The council is happy about this development. Rita moved to accept the financials as written. Bonne seconded the motion. All in favor. No one opposed.

**Old business:**

**Update on reimbursement for the SCA Grant for the road paving project.** Sam told the council that letter went out for the advance, which would be 50% of the total grant. She then asked about the wording to submit for remaining funds at the end of the project. Many of the streets will not be completed. Meinrad pointed out that we will be able to resubmit a grant request again to finish more streets later on this year.

Mayor Kuettel called on Walter for his Monthly Maintenance Report. He wanted to start with the park upgrades but will speak about that when it comes up on the agenda. He stated that he got a couple of bids from Tarzan Tree Service for removing 2 trees in the park. The tree service was concerned about two other trees not mentioned. One of those trees would hit the pavilion if it fell. The tree service said that the cost would be \$1200 to \$1300 each to take down. The council agreed that prices were reasonable. As far as the bulk water fill project is concerned, Walt is trying to locate the marker boundary lines to make sure that the new pipes will be on the city's property and not private property.



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Tennessee wanted to charge \$4000 to come out and mark the boundary lines. Another company, Pioneer out of Goldendale, wanted to charge only \$1500. If Walter is unable to find the markers himself, he suggested we go with Pioneer. Tom motioned to get Pioneer to do the job. Rita seconded. All agreed.

Next, Walter stated that the price of weed killer has gone up quite a bit. Then he talked about Ordinance 2021 backflow testers, being something that we don't have the means to implement as it is written in the ordinance. The ordinance wording is correct, but people are not following what it says. The problem seems to be in the lack of a procedure to enforce ordinance violations in these cases. Meinrad asked him to please check with the other cities to see what they have in writing so we can possibly copy their verbiage. We need a process for a notification letter to let residents know that they are in fact out of compliance.

**Old Business continued:**

Paving project continued: Meinrad asked Walter if he had any word from ODOT on the completion date. Justesen or Peters had not gotten back to him yet. The oil prices are variable so we will not know them until the day of the project, but the labor prices will be close to the same according to Scott Peters. Bert Pershio wants to come out soon to walk the streets and discuss details.

City Park upgrade: Walter continued his concern about replacement of the CXTs (bathrooms) being \$20,000 just for the doors and parts not including labor. He wanted to know what the council wanted to do about the playground equipment. The prices vary a lot. Playground equipment might be as much as \$40,000. Walter wants help in choosing from the council. He would like to narrow down what we want to get done this year in the park. Meinrad agreed and said that we need to prioritize. Walter stated also very important was that the back flow preventer at the park. It needs to be rebuilt this spring to follow state requirements. Rita suggested that we wait and see what the public survey results reveal. Meinrad wants to see a list, and then prioritize it when money becomes available.

Bulk water project update: Walter asked what kind of building to build at the site. The council agreed to a small 2x4 shed with a concrete slab 6 to 8 feet deep on a 10-foot area with possible solar light. Walter believes he can build this since it is so simple. Bonne suggested drawing something up for the council and possibly asking farmers who use the bulk fill what their opinion was.

Ordinance revision meeting on February 24. The committee worked on Ordinance 400 - nuisance ordinance. Meinrad put the changes in writing so all can read them. Changes are in red font. Everyone on the council needs to review the revisions before the next ordinance meeting. Next meeting the committee will go over the zoning ordinances. ReeElla via online wanted to go over questions from Ordinance 400. In Section 12 noxious vegetation, ReeElla asked if there is a way to conform to the county list that is updated each year. Meinrad agreed to change that before the next meeting. In Section 53 F about abatement by the city, this needs to be reworded to match Section 53 C, which has the correct verbiage stating that property owner must give permission to enter their property. Next, Tom pointed out the lack of signage going in and out of town regarding Jake brakes.

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Sam stated that the request for signs needs to be with the state (ODOT). Our contact person is Scott Peters. Sam will reach out to him. Tom brought up Section 38 -Livestock. Some of his family's pasture ground is within city limits, and he was worried that this ordinance said land could not be used in this way. No one on the council was concerned about this, but it could be rewritten to sound more inclusive. Meinrad asked about next meeting date. Later in April would be ideal. Email will be sent out for possible dates of the 25<sup>th</sup> or 26<sup>th</sup> of April.

Late paying residents list. Everyone has paid. The red notices worked.

**New Business:**

SIPP Grant (Master Plan Update) for the water system-- deadline March 15 Email from Ed Hodges at Curran-McLeod stated that he had completed a draft of the SIPP grant application. Another grant application is being submitted by Carrie at MCEDD. This is a loan (forgivable) through DEQ State planning which is due on April 15. This would fund the planning for the proposed city wastewater project. Regarding the SIPP grant application, Ed needs the resolution signed showing the change in fees on new hook-up and bulk water. This resolution was agreed back in May 2023 but never written up and signed. This will be revised and signed and sent over to Ed tomorrow. On a side note, we still don't know how much it is costing the city to pump water every day to include all expenses, but this planning loan will help, which in turn will help future water needs.

Meinrad said the agenda was complete and now he wanted to call an executive session after the meeting to discuss the Sharp Water Agreement.

Rita lastly brought up a resident's dumpster that is blocking the view to pull out onto Hwy 97. Since this is a safety issue, Rita was advised to call The Dalles Disposal, as a council member, and get the dumpster moved as soon as possible.

Rita motioned to adjourn the meeting. Tom seconded. Passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 8:09 PM.

Dated: April 1, 2024

Attest:



Meinrad Kuettel, Mayor



Samantha Allen, City Administrator