

**MINUTES OF WELLS CITY COUNCIL  
MEETING OF MARCH 26, 2024**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Date: Tuesday, March 26, 2024  
Time: 7:00 P.M.  
Place: Council Chambers, Wells City Hall  
525 Sixth Street Wells, Nevada  
Type of Meeting: Regular Meeting of City of Wells Board of Councilmen  
Presiding Officer: Gary Pollock, Mayor

**ROLL CALL**

Present: Gary Pollock, Mayor  
Jonathan Goolsby, Vice-Mayor  
Laura Moore-DelRio, Councilwoman  
Chris Micheli, Councilman  
CR Beth Savedra, Councilwoman

Absent: None

Quorum: Yes

Staff Present: Samantha Nance, City Clerk  
Jason Pengelly, City Manager  
Patti Zander, Deputy Clerk

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Mayor Pollock led everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

Micheli made a motion to approve the meeting minutes dated March 12, 2024. Savedra provided the second and the motion passed unanimously.

**CITIZENS TO ADDRESS THE COUNCIL**

Resident Quida Madison who lives at 378 Ninth Street wanted to address the council. Madison continued that complaints have been made to the city before about the two houses on Lake Street. Madison brought pictures of what the neighbors have been dealing with. Last Thursday at midnight, someone started a vehicle fire in the back yard. The picture was taken from the bedroom window because there were explosions. One resident was notified by the police to evacuate but Madisons were not told to evacuate.

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The fire truck parked behind their home to put the fire out and were there until 3 a.m. In years past, Madison's tried to buy the property and were turned down and don't know what else to do. There are drugs going in and out of the houses all the time. The people next door thinks the alley is their personal driveway.

Sheriff Aitor Narvaiza was at the meeting and asked to look at the pictures. Narvaiza stated that there is a statute that you cannot block alleyways that are meant for emergency vehicles. Terry Madison stated they have called the officers several times. The deputy asks for it to be moved. It is moved and the next day it is back in the alley. Quidia Madison added that their garbage pickup has been skipped because of that vehicle being parked in the alley and the garbage truck not being able to go down the alley. Narvaiza stated those vehicles will be towed because he has been given a couple of chances. Narvaiza does not know what caused the fire. Madison said the fire was in the middle of the yard and was set on purpose because accelerant was smelled by one of the firemen. Narvaiza stated he would get with Lt. Fisher first thing in the morning on these issues.

Narvaiza reported that Wells has been busy with various things. The stabbing that happened a few weeks ago has been turned over to the DA's office for prosecution. A male subject parked his car on the train tracks at the mile marker 292 exit westbound and was hit by a train. There have been five suicides this year and 46 deaths. Three new deputies just got out of the academy and are all working in the jail. Two new sergeants have been promoted. Savedra asked what the steps were for a domestic violence call. Narvaiza explained the procedure which has changed recently. All domestic violence cases now must have a jury trial.

Pengelly stated that there have been several calls for domestic violence across the tracks. A citizen called wondering what is continually going on across the tracks. Pengelly asked if there could be more patrolling across the tracks. The city oversees code enforcement and clean up but law enforcement needs to handle domestic violence calls. Pengelly has written letters and will now start issuing citations for code enforcement issues. Narvaiza stated he cannot fix the problem if he doesn't know what is going on. Narvaiza stated anyone can call or email him.

Bruce and Judy Widmer who live at 1974 Lake Avenue also wanted to address the council regarding issues at 1975 Lake Avenue. Ever since 2006, nothing has been done about things going on at that address. This last Saturday, there were two sheriff deputies and one Nevada State Police dealing with yelling and screaming that lasted for several hours. Curtis & Mandy are always fighting and there are people in and out of the house all the time. Nothing has been done. There are two children under the age of five in that house. Citizens shouldn't have to deal with that and are the ones being held hostage in their own home. Judy stated this has been going on for ten years. Pollock is ashamed this is going on in our town. A wellness check can also be requested or a call to DCFS. Widmer called dispatch about the children Saturday and was told the officer was handling it. Widmer asked how she could stay on top of it. Pengelly told her the best thing she can do is call dispatch. Pengelly also told her to talk to the sheriff tonight. Pengelly said he can be called anytime, and he can make the call to dispatch.

Pollock added that no one should feel like a prisoner in their own home. Goolsby added that physical evidence is great and goes a long way like the pictures presented tonight and is tangible evidence. Pollock thanked everyone for coming out to discuss these issues. Cathy Quinn stated she lives in the same neighborhood. Quinn stated this neighborhood was a sweet quiet neighborhood with retired people, beautiful yards and a wonderful area to buy a place which she did. That neighborhood is so blighted now, and property values have decreased. One of the things that could happen without any cost is to get started cleaning up the neighborhood. There are cars that have been parked so long they have weeds growing through them and are not licensed. There are at least four or five that aren't operable or up on jacks. A truck and trailer with flat tires has been parked right before the stop sign for months.

Denny Stanhope asked what was the latest on code enforcement. Pengelly stated the city is trying to get a code enforcement officer but that is his job until someone is hired and to contact him.

Terry Madison mentioned that there are people that wander around the streets in his neighborhood or ride bikes at all hours that don't live down there. Things have been stolen out of their motorhome that is parked in the driveway. This is a constant problem and would like these people stopped to see why they are there. A lot of these residents are seniors. Narvaiza stated that if there are people wandering around in the early morning hours, they should call the non-emergency number to have them checked out and be moved on. People must call dispatch.

### **DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION TO AUTHORIZE CITY STAFF TO GO OUT FOR BIDS FOR CDBG/OSG SHOSHONE SIDEWALK, CURB AND GUTTER PROJECT**

Pengelly began that everything is together for this grant. Once the council approves this, it can be advertised on April 2<sup>nd</sup> and then go out for bid. After the bid is awarded, construction could start in June and will be a 180-day project. This is a 1.2-million-dollar project. The CDBG grant is \$500,000 and the OSG grant is \$600,000. The city might have to contribute \$50,000 to finish up the paving. Savedra made a motion to authorize city staff to go out for bid for the CDBG/OSG Shoshone sidewalk, curb and gutter project. DelRio provided the second and the motion passed unanimously.

### **PUBLIC HEARING ON BUSINESS IMPACT STATEMENT FOR ADOPTION OF RESOLUTION 24-02, SOLID WASTE USER RATE FEES, AMENDING THE PICKUP FEE. THIS IS AN OPPORTUNITY TO HEAR COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC**

Elko Sanitation representatives Chris Welker and Charles Lloyd were at the meeting. Welker stated that a 4.5% increase is being requested to service the City of Wells. ESC can request a rate increase every other year. The last one was in 2022 and was for 7.5%. This increase will be a .66 cent increase for 90 gallon residential customers tipper cart. No comments have been received from anyone on the business impact statement.

Savedra made a motion to adopt the Business Impact Statement Resolution 24-02. Goolsby provided the second and the motion passed unanimously.

**DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION TO APPROVE RESOLUTION 24-03, RESOLUTION ESTABLISHING VENDOR SPACE RENT IN THE REDEVELOPMENT DISTRICT AND MATTERS PROPERLY RELATING THERETO**

Pengelly began that this is for the taco trucks that are plugged in to the meters the city had installed. The power bill runs around \$240 so each space would be charged \$125.00 to cover the power bill. Savedra asked if the vendors had been notified of this fee to which Pengelly replied yes. The vendors were happy because they were using generators which are expensive. Micheli made a motion to approve Resolution 24-03, a resolution establishing vendor space rent in the Redevelopment District and matters properly relating thereto. DelRio provided the second and the motion passed unanimously.

**DISCUSSION AND REVIEW OF FISCAL YEAR 2024-2025 TENTATIVE BUDGET**

Nance stated this is the same budget reviewed at the last meeting. The audit fee will be increasing \$15,000 which was not included last time. The final property tax numbers were received. Nance had those numbers at \$500,000 and the actual number from the county was \$477,000. Our attorney fees are one of the lowest and have not been increased for many years. The fee will potentially go up to match the Pool n Pact general attorney fee and could fluctuate. Our attorney fees are around \$130 an hour and the Pool is at \$220. Landa may raise it to \$200 and in December increase it to the Pool amount. On April 9<sup>th</sup> the state form budget will be presented, and the tentative budget will be submitted. There is still time to adjust numbers as needed. The final budget will be due the end of May. Nance stated that this year's budget for legal fees is under budget on every line item.

**DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION TO END MONTHLY SERVICE PAYMENT TO BETTER CITY AND BEGIN PAYING FOR SERVICES AS NEEDED**

DelRio stated she was not in favor of Better City when the city first started using them and thinks this is a great idea. DelRio thinks management can do that job and has proved beyond a shadow of a doubt that the two of them can do a better job than what is being paid for. Pengelly added there were two representatives from Better City at the meeting. Pollock stated the issue is that the contract ended in 2018 and the city has been without a contract all these years. Pollock did some research and looked at the Better City website and the projects completed. Better City does some good things for communities that are larger like Bangor, Maine. The \$3,500 a month fee to a place like Bangor, Maine is probably nothing, but to Wells, it is something and adds up. There has been an attempt to help our town, but Pollock thinks it has fallen by the wayside.

Pollock stated the total amount paid to Better City in the last ten years is \$469,634. The city manager recruitment in 2020 is when the relationship should have ended the way that turned out. There are a lot of things on the list of projects that never came to fruition other than the web page which required city staff to help implement. Pollock thought it was supposed to be a turnkey project. Pollock feels a continual payment of \$3,500 without a contract is too much. If Better City is willing to work with the city on a case-by-case basis, Pollock would be in favor of that. Without a monthly payment, if the decision is made to part ways, then will part ways. Pollock stated the last time Better City came out to talk to the council, a bill for \$1,000 was received, that is where he drew the line. The city appreciates what has been done but would be much better off working on a case-by-case basis. If that is something Better City is not interested in, then the city understands and thanks Better City for what has been done. Savedra stated this is no reflection on Rachel and knows she has tried very hard. The last time Better City was here, Savedra gave them a month to see something in a month and hasn't and now it has been two months. When the bill was received for Better City to come out and talk to us about what Better City hasn't done was it for Savedra.

Rachel Boyett from Better City stated they 100% agree with this. When Better City was first hired, it was under different city leadership and specific things were asked of Better City that city staff couldn't do and believe Better City was an asset to the community. As the city leadership has changed and new council members have come in, it has been proven staff is more than capable of doing what Better City has been doing and have been very impressive. Better City feels it would be better to be used on a project needs basis. Better City would be happy to do that and discuss numbers. It has been a wonderful ten years, but it has been incredibly hard and challenging. Boyett felt Better city could part on good terms with no animosity. Savedra made a motion to end the monthly service payment to Better City and begin paying for services as needed. DelRio provided the second and the motion passed unanimously.

## **CLAIMS COMMITTEE REPORT: ACTION TO APPROVE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

Goolsby made a motion to approve the Warrant Register dated March 14, 2024 through March 26, 2024 in the amount of \$80,970.93. Savedra provided the second and the motion passed unanimously.

## **COUNCILMEN'S REPORTS**

Savedra attended the school board meeting on March 19<sup>th</sup>. Almost all of the board members are new except for one. Savedra is still on the capital improvement advisory committee and will be meeting the first week of April. Savedra will let them know some of the real needs in Wells. March 20<sup>th</sup> was the County Commissioners Meeting where the commissioners voted for .20 of every \$100 of assessed property value to go towards the schools. Amanda Osbourne will be in Wells in the future to explain this a little bit better. The County Commissioners asked if the individual cities may be interested in kicking in a few cents more. Savedra wants to make sure this will not affect the citizens

of Wells as there are a lot of seniors in Wells. Yesterday, Nance, Savedra and Pengelly met with Dr. Stein. It was made very clear to him that Wells will not pay for a new geothermal study. After that meeting, the three of them had a meeting with Greg with the EECBG which is an Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant program. There is a small grant that Greg thinks Wells could be eligible for to help with upgrading lights at the baseball field. Energy efficient cars were discussed as this grant could possibly cover that. Pollock thanked Savedra for all that she does in attending all these meetings.

Micheli stated that permits have been signed for the car show for NDOT. The Forest Service still needs to sign the permit for the cruise to Angel Lake which will be a five-year permit. Micheli is excited for the golf course to open. Micheli also started a new job on Monday.

DelRio stated the school board meeting was in Wells last week and was sad that the voice for Wells was not present at the meeting. There were three teachers at the meeting. Wells needs to be present when those meetings are in Wells because Wells gets overlooked a lot. The school board made important decisions for Elko at this meeting. Sports are up and running. DelRio announced she filed for County Commissioner and did not file to run for city council in Wells again. This will be her final term. DelRio was surprised that it has been ten years having Better City work for Wells. DelRio also wanted to thank Savedra because she is involved in everything and loves listening to all the updates she gives.

Pollock is busy with little league. April 13<sup>th</sup> will be the opening ceremony.

## **STAFF REPORTS**

Pengelly began that spring break is next week so the pool will be having \$1 swim Monday, April 1, 2024 through April 5, 2024 from noon to 4 p.m.

The Easter Egg Hunt will be at the city park on March 31<sup>st</sup> at 1 p.m. Thanks goes to the Alamo Casino, Iron Skillet and the Petro Stopping Center for donating the eggs.

The second donation of \$150,000 from Nevada Gold Mine was received for the new senior center. The vent hood is being installed. May 1<sup>st</sup>, Pengelly will do a presentation to CDBG to try to get another \$300,000 to finish the senior center.

The lights are being upgraded to LED's at the fire house, library and medical center with a grant.

DelRio inquired about the grant for the equipment for the firemen. Pengelly stated the grant was submitted. It could take a few months before the decision is made.

## **CITIZENS TO ADDRESS THE COUNCIL**

There were none.

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**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

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**GARY POLLOCK, Mayor**

ATTEST:

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**SAMANTHA NANCE, City Clerk**