A special meeting of the Baxter City Council was called to order on Thursday, January 11, 2024 at 5:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers of City Hall by Mayor Doug Bishop. Council members present were Dan Kunkel, Stephen Smith, Jamie Milligan, Josh Meckley, and Dalton Kinzel.

Milligan moved to approve the agenda. Kinzel seconded. Motion carried, all ayes.

Water/Wastewater Certification – Bryce Halter, Public Works Director, was in attendance. Council and mayor asked for information involving snow operations in preparation for the snow storm. Halter has individuals on backup to assist with plowing the roads.

Mayor Bishop noted Halter could request the performance review to go into closed session. Halter requested open session.

Bishop confirmed the city does not have a water/wastewater operator in compliance. Bishop mentioned the city has been operating for several months without a certified operator. Halter noted he was under the impression that MK Services was certified. Halter mentioned he followed up with the DNR in regards to the compliance notices and did not receive a response back.

Halter stated the lack of resources and training available when starting the position has been challenging. Bishop questioned whether Halter is overwhelmed and entertained the thought of omitting the water / wastewater responsibilities from his title. Council members asked Halter if he wanted to be responsible for the water / wastewater duties of the position. Halter communicated he would like to remain in charge of those duties and is interested in learning more. Milligan questioned if he reached out for help from the employer to get training and experience. Milligan stressed the importance of employees asking to get the resources needed to perform their jobs.

Halter requested leaving the testing requirements. Council clarified they need consistent updates of the status of his testing due to FY 24-25 budget work currently taking place.

Council set a deadline of March 1st for Halter to obtain certifications, as the FY 24-25 budget levy is due to the auditor’s office by March 5th.

Discussion held over new affidavit operator contract proposal from Shawn Fuller. Council and Halter discussed the benefits of having Fuller available to help mentor and provide knowledgeable information about Baxter’s water system.

Water / Wastewater Affidavit Operator Contract – Smith moved to approve. Kinzel seconded. Kunkel abstained. Motion carried, all ayes.

Police radio update - The school would be identifying dead spots to address the police radio connection issues at the next school board meeting on Wed. Jan. 17th.

Smith moved to adjourn. Kinzel seconded. Motion carried, all ayes. Meeting adjourned at 6:15 p.m.

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Mayor Doug Bishop

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Katie Wilson, City Clerk