



## **Baxter City Council – Meeting Minutes**

May 13, 2024 – 6:00 p.m.

The regular meeting of the Baxter City Council was called to order by Mayor Doug Bishop. Members present: Jamie Milligan, Dan Kunkel, Dalton Kinzel and Steve Smith.

Mayor Bishop opened the meeting by reading a prepared statement regarding comments made on social media and behavior at a recent public meeting which he believes casts a negative perception on the City of Baxter. He acknowledged the recent challenges faced by the City and encouraged all to work together to resolve differences in a respectful manner. He further stated though public comment is always included at the end of the agenda, there is no requirement to allow public comment on any item, except during a formal public hearing.

Motion by Smith, second by Kinzel to approve the agenda. All voting aye. Motion carried.

Motion by Milligan, second by Kinzel to approve the consent agenda. All voting aye. Motion carried.

The following reports were received:

Bedco – Katie Petermeier, Board President, announced her resignation as President and reviewed other recent resignations from the board. She will remain a non-ranking member. She announced the following new slate of officers:

President – Jon Northrup

Vice President – Ryan Fredregill

Treasurer – Travis Henderson

Fire and Ambulance – report is on file at City Hall

Sheriff – No report as they attended a bridge dedication in Reasnor

Bryce Halter, Public Works Director, reported repair work continues regarding recent hail damage.

Clark's Addition Update – Milligan reported 10 out of the 13 households have completed paperwork and paid for new water service with IRUA. A second letter, explaining the transition, have been sent to the remaining three households with no response.

Bermad's Valves Project - This project includes installation of a pressure reducing valve to better protect aging water lines during times of low usage and assist in controlling leaks. It will allow the city to control the water pressure as needed and provide valuable data for staff. This project, spearheaded by Councilperson Kinzel, is being provided at no cost to the city by Bermad. Equipment, software and installation are done free of charge as Baxter is a test city. Any ongoing maintenance will be paid for by the city. Est. cost of system is ~\$31,000.

Motion by Kinzel, second by Smith to approve limiting 3 parking spaces directly in front of Baxter Family Market to 30 minutes from 8 am to 8 p.m. All voting aye. Motion carried.

Motion by Smith, second by Kinzel to approve street closure West State Street between Main and Railroad and East State Street between High and Harrison for Baxter Fun Days. All voting aye. Motion carried.

209 W. Rippey project was opened for discussion. Milligan stated she had watched the meeting and reviewed all minutes associated with this project. She believes good intentions were had by all involved. She believes the city needs to move forward and is not in favor of a stop work order.

City needs to tighten up regulations and ensure all Board of Adjustment members have the same information.

Councilperson Smith stated codes need to be updated and SUDAS codes followed. Contractors doing business need to step back and let Bedco do their job. He is willing to let this go.

Mayor Bishop stated his belief a stop order would do more harm than good.

Douglas Herman, the attorney for Dan Kunkel, stated no one intentionally made mistakes. He encouraged the city to have the full code available on-line and Board of Adjustment requirements/regulations should be in the code.

Motion by Smith, second by Kinzel to not issue a stop order. Voting aye: Smith, Kinzel, Milligan. Abstain: Kunkel. Motion carried.

Motion by Kinzel, second by Smith, to set Monday, May 20, 2024, for a community feedback meeting to discuss proposed law enforcement contract with the Jasper County Sheriff's Department. All voting aye. Motion carried.

Nancy Foreman read from a prepared statement saying she is proud of her town and upset with recent events.

Elizabeth Kunkel read from a prepared statement saying there were posts she did not agree with and had issue with the Mayor's response to a question.

Cole Wilson stated his wife Katie, former City Clerk, has had a difficult time. He does not stand for the slander happening and doesn't like the negativity either but believes both sides need to be heard. We have to get to the truth.

Steve Wright requested 1 designated parking space for loading and unloading in front of his business to be placed on the next agenda for consideration.

Mayor Bishop made the following reminders:

Bids will be taken on the nursing home project May 28.  
Council vacancy will be filled May 28. Letters of interest may be sent to City Hall.  
Residents may petition for a special election – approximate cost: \$5,000 - \$6,000.

Councilperson Milligan, Mayor Bishop and Kunkel will be on an ad hoc committee to review City Clerk applications with the first round of interviews held June 1, final interviews June 11 with tentative state date July 1.

Motion by Milligan, second by Kinzel to adjourn. All voting aye. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

*Wanda Hemesath*

Wanda Hemesath,  
Temporary Baxter Office Staff