

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
SISTERS CITY COUNCIL  
520 E. CASCADE AVENUE.  
MARCH 13, 2008

**MEMBER PRESENT:**

Brad Boyd            Mayor  
Bill Merrill        Council President  
Lon Kellstrom      Councilor  
Sharlene Weed     Councilor  
Shawna Bell        Councilor

**STAFF PRESENT:**

Eileen Stein      City Manager  
Steve Bryant     City Attorney  
Eric Porter       Comm. Dev. Director  
Brad Grimm       Public Works Director  
Kathy Nelson     City Recorder

**ABSENT:**

Lisa Young        Finance Director

**I. CALL TO ORDER/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Boyd at 7:03 p.m.

**II. VISITOR COMMUNICATIONS**

**Scott Aycock, Program Administrator for Central Oregon Intergovernmental Council (COIC) 1440 NE 6<sup>th</sup> Street, Bend**

**Mr. Aycock** directed the Council to the draft support statement for the Deschutes County Transportation Project and stated he hoped the Council would authorize the Mayor or City Manager to sign the statement of support and attend the signing ceremony that will take place on Thursday March 20, 2008 at the Deschutes County Services Building. He provided an overview of the project that will serve to address the need for a regional transportation system along the Highway 97 corridor.

**Councilor Weed** stated she would like to see copies of the Vision Statement, Guiding Principles, Planning Goals and Selected Priority Projects of the Deschutes County Transportation Coordination Project that are mentioned in the draft support statement.

**Manager Stein** stated copies of the documents would be forwarded to the Council.

**Councilor Bell**, representative to the COIC Board for the Council, stated she had heard the presentation regarding the project at the previous board meeting and recommended the Council provide support to the project.

***Councilor Merrill moved to authorize the Mayor to sign the support statement. Councilor Kellstrom seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.***

**Phil Gale, Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) Post Commander, Post 8138 and Post Commander for American Legion Post 86, 512 S. Ash, Sisters, OR 97759**

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**Post Commander Gale** stated that the Council has let area veterans down with regard to the Veterans Memorial project. He stated his organization had looked forward to partnering with the City to create a fitting memorial for area veterans. He stated he had never considered that the Council would not support the effort and felt that the Council has instead fixated on the two points that this will be another Veterans Park and that the VFW only hosts one event in the Village Green each year. He stated this will not be another Veterans Park but a Veterans Memorial and the flagpole is an integral part of that memorial. He stated the Rotary, Kiwanis and many private citizens have already partnered with the VFW in support of the memorial. He stated the Sisters Christian School will continue to provide care to Veterans Park grounds. He stated Village Green Park is home to many events and this year will mark the beginning of a new event; the military parents of Sisters will hold the first annual send off to graduating seniors who will be heading to any of the five branches of military service. He stated completion of the Memorial Rock is moving forward as previously approved but it is most confusing to him that the Council will not allow a flag to be placed also. He stated that a flag flying at the memorial will not diminish any other flag flying elsewhere. He stated the flag shows pride for our country. He stated the memorial project has brought area veterans together and that the Council's decision and reasons to not allow a flag have not made sense to him. He stated he feels the excuses from the Council in the newspaper article are shallow. He asked that the Council reverse its decision and join the VFW in creating this memorial. He stated that if the Council's decision is not to join with the VFW in the placement of the flagpole, that they allow the VFW to obtain a permit and use its own funds to install a flagpole.

**Leonard Knott** 68308 Cloverdale Road

**Mr. Knott** stated he was retired from 27 years of active and reserve duty in the Coast Guard. He stated he is a past president and member of a Military Officers Association of America (MOAA) and volunteers by driving Central Oregon veterans to Portland for appointments at the Veterans Administration Hospital. He stated he also participates at Sisters Elementary School as part of the Memorial Day program educating students about American flag. He stated he has a love of our country, the flag and veterans. He stated he has read with interest in the newspaper the flap over the flag and has strong sympathies for both sides of the issue. He stated it is important that everyone take a deep breath and not let the symbolism of the flag get the better of people who have different thoughts on how to demonstrate patriotism. He stated he feels the Council has a compelling case to not dilute the existing Veterans Park at the west end of Sisters and it saddens him to read the pot shots that have been taken at the people who volunteer in the best interest of the City. He stated it is important for people that disagree with each other do so with respect and remember what it is like to walk a mile in their shoes. He stated he wanted to disclose he is a personal friend of Councilor Merrill, who is also a past president of the MOAA. He asked why we can't devise a suitable memorial

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that combines both proposals and have everyone look each other in the eye and say “I don’t doubt your patriotism and love of flag and country one bit and let’s work this out together.”

**Peter Scott** 15715 Patty Cream, Sisters, OR 97759

**Mr. Scott** stated he was speaking to show his support of the VFW. He stated the VFW is not trying to create another Veterans Park but a memorial to the men and women who have served and died for our country. He stated the flag is a symbol that should fly in the central part of the town to show to the rest of the world respect for those who have fallen.

**Elizabeth Leighty-Johnson** 16430 Suntree Lane, Sisters, OR 97759

**Ms. Leighty-Johnson** stated she had sent an email to the Mayor and Council regarding the placement of a flagpole at the Village Green Park. She spread three decks of cards across the dais and stating she wanted to provide a visual of the 150 names of military personnel whose names will be on the Memorial Rock plaque. She stated each name represents someone that has served the country. She stated that each of the 150 names represents a person who took an oath for duty, honor and country and upon their death each was eligible for a United States flag to be draped over their coffin with a card that reads “From a Grateful Nation.” She stated placement of a flag at the memorial will show honor. She spread out another deck of cards to represent the audience members in attendance that will also have their names added to the memorial when they pass away. She stated the VFW is not asking for a controversial piece of art but a United States flag. She stated she also wants to know when and under what forum the Council made their decision and which way Council members voted.

**Miriam Burke** 69226 Panoramic Drive, Sisters, OR 97759

**Ms. Burke** stated that the first time she heard about this controversy was at a meeting for military parents last evening. She stated she was riding with her high school age daughter who was reading “Flags of Our Fathers” as an assignment and her daughter told her she found the book compelling and hard to put down. **Ms. Burke** asked her daughter if it was because she has two brothers serving in the military at this time and her daughter replied that it was because it is a tremendous story. She stated she and her daughter had a conversation about members of their family who have served in the military and her daughter stated that the flag was not about war and that it reminded her of her grandfather. **Ms. Burke** stated she feels it is unfortunate that people in this community are riled up, especially about the flag. She stated she was not here to criticize anything the Council does. She stated she remembers the first time she really thought about our flag, when as a freshman in college, a professor gave an assignment to write about something students felt passionate about. She stated it was during the time of the Viet Nam war and since she was against the war she wrote about

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disabled veterans, a subject she is still passionate about. She stated the problem is easy to solve. She stated the Council needs to do what they think is right and she respects that but asked that the Council give people who have served or who are serving a flag.

**Mike Krimveida** 16470 Suntree Lane, Sisters, OR 97759

**Mr. Krimveida** stated that he was the author of a strong letter to the Nugget but that he didn't care. He stated that regardless of whether a person has served in the military or not, if the Council does not have enough respect to fly a flag 24 hours a day, seven days a week over God's free country that people fought for the Council members cannot call themselves true blue American citizens.

**Joe Hall** 241 N. Locust, Sisters, OR 97759

**Mr. Hall** stated that many people would recognize his home as he always flies a large flag for his Grandpa. He stated the VFW just wants a flagpole and asked the Council to please reconsider its decision.

**Stan Pintarich** 15717 Tumble Weed Turn, Sisters, OR 97759

**Mr. Pintarich** stated he supports what the VFW wants to do and is concerned with changes he is seeing in our country. He stated that some people and cities want to do away with traditions, citing San Francisco as an example and its ban on Marine recruiters. He stated there are progressive people that want to see a different type of country than we have now and that is one of the reasons he escaped from Portland to Central Oregon. He stated that many places no longer have flag salutes. He asked that the Council allow the park to have a flag.

**Joe Marquez** 273 E. Adams, Sisters, OR 97759

**Mr. Marquez** stated that a lot of people in our small town are upset but asked why the City should do something for one special interest group over another. He read excerpts from a letter from a friend currently serving in Iraq regarding the matter. It stated one memorial in a town the size of Sisters was enough and suggested that if the group feels so passionate about a second memorial they should build the memorial on private land and make it more personal. **Mr. Marquez** stated the City only has a limited number of parks and suggested a memorial someone else such as Martin Luther King as an appropriate option instead. He asked the City to not focus on one group of citizens but show some variety.

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**Greg Cole** 69282 Luck Lady, Sisters, OR 97759

**Mr. Cole** stated it was very difficult for him to speak because of the experiences he has gone through. He stated he is a retired Navy Commander and also a Rotarian. He stated he was involved with the development of the Portal Park that was designed as a welcoming sign into the City. He stated the park was dressed up with a flag and a plaque to honor veterans. He stated that he was asked to craft the plaque to honor veterans at the park and twice he refused. He stated the third time he was asked he acquiesced. He stated it was the toughest job he has ever had to do but it gave him great honor. He stated that when Bob Maxwell read the plaque and noted the veterans were identified as “peacemakers” he complimented him on his choice of words. He stated the plaque is dedicated to all veterans. He stated he sees no reason to not establish a full blown memorial in Village Green Park for the Sisters area veterans. He stated that people passing through won’t see the memorial in the Village Green and it will be for the benefit of Sisters citizens. He stated he will not be offended to have another flag or the development of a memorial for all veterans at Village Green Park. He stated that the Rotary is also in support of a second memorial.

**David Culver** 370 N. Tamarack Street, Sisters, OR 97759

**Mr. Culver** stated he was a 30 year resident of Sisters and had served in the infantry. He stated that veterans are special, especially those that have “swapped the lead.” He stated he can’t see any reason why the VFW can’t have a flag. He stated the current Veterans Park has no parking available and is difficult to get to. He stated the Village Green Park is special and the City has a good group of veterans. He asked the Council to open up Village Green Park to the memorial so people can get to it.

**Wayne Kimball** 205 N. Rope Place, Sisters, OR 97759

**Mr. Kimball** stated he wanted to express that he was pleased that so many people came to the meeting and spoke from the heart. He stated when he moved here and saw the Village Green Park the first time he was surprised there was no flag there since the park serves as the center of the city. He stated the current Veterans Park is not a park you can visit. He stated the Council is not a bunch of “cheap Charlies” as evidenced by the City Hall building and to vote against placing a flag in Village Green shows what the Council is made of. He stated a flag in Village Green Park will be a flag for all the people and it wouldn’t hurt to have one more flag.

**Gary Frazee** PO Box 355, Sisters, OR 97759

**Mr. Frazee** stated he has been an integral part of the whole memorial project since its inception. He stated that many people on the dais have attended the Memorial Day services

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and he is excited to be a part of those working towards placing the memorial and flag at the Village Green site. He stated he researched his records and stated he received permission from the City in October to install the Memorial Rock which he placed with pride. He stated the issue of whether a temporary flagpole or a permanent flagpole will be placed at the site and whether the City will fund the project has escalated and hopefully this matter can be solved to find a happy resolution.

**Juan Sanchez** 70140 N. Squaw Creek Drive, Sisters, OR 97759

**Mr. Sanchez** stated that the flag may just be symbolism but sometimes that is all we've got. He stated he and his brother have both served overseas and he would have gone back if he would have been allowed. He stated that some people wipe their ass with the flag and some would live and die for that symbol. He stated he loves his country and served for a reason as there is no better place. He stated he is glad to be able to speak freely.

**Lois Gale** 512 S. Ash Street, Sisters, OR 97759

**Ms. Gale** stated she hadn't planned on speaking but after listening to everyone the question that keeps coming to her is, "How does a City Council turn down a request for an American flag?" She stated she was a proud wife of a military man for 20 years and loves the flag. The flag is a symbol of honor and a flag always flies over a memorial. She stated she always cries when she hears the national anthem because our flag flies during hard times. She stated flags are draped over the coffins of deceased military personnel as a symbol of honor. She stated she always wears a flag pin over her heart to honor her husband, family members that have served and all veterans. She stated the flag means something to the people in this country and for a Council to turn down a request for a flag is very sad to her.

**Mayor Boyd** spoke on behalf of the entire Council and thanked everyone for attending and their heartfelt testimony. He stated it may be a matter of semantics and the audience may not agree with everything he has to say but requested that the audience listen politely. He stated from the Council's perspective this has never been an anti-flag issue. He stated the City already has a memorial for veterans and the request from the VFW looks like a second memorial. He stated the Council would like to see one memorial but is unwilling to move the existing one without the permission of the Rotary and the people that worked so hard to create it. He stated that what might serve the veterans and the community best is to move the memorial to some other place. He stated the issue is not about the number of flags the City has but about coordinating with the people that put in the original Veterans Park. He stated the Council asked Mr. Gale to coordinate with the Rotary and Sisters Christian School and until tonight the Council had not heard from any representative from the Rotary and has still not heard from the school regarding the matter. He stated that Councilor Merrill has volunteered to meet with all the parties involved to find the best solution.

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**Mayor Boyd** stated one of the jobs of being an American is to protect and defend the right to fly the flag and to also allow someone the right to burn the flag. He stated that doesn't mean he agrees with burning the flag but that is part of what being an American means. He stated that in many countries a person couldn't get up and say the things that many of the speakers said this evening without fear of retribution. He stated it really saddened him to read the letters in the newspaper this week that called Lt. Colonel Merrill and other members of the Council unpatriotic. He stated he had a parade of people come into his business yesterday in support of the Nugget Newspaper editorial and the Council's decision. He stated that two concerns he heard from citizens were that people were in support of the veterans and the Veterans Memorial but did not think the memorial belongs in a park where there is a playground and many noisy celebrations and events. He stated there are citizens that believe a memorial belongs in a more solemn location. He stated he also heard from a veteran that was upset by the energy being spent on this issue when there are so many substantive problems for veterans that are not being addressed today.

**Mayor Boyd** stated that to answer Ms. Leighty-Johnson's question, there was no formal vote, only discussion among the Council at a workshop regarding the matter; but it was unanimous to have only one veterans memorial in the City. He stated the City approved the Memorial Rock and has offered to buy five flag stands for the display of colors when the VFW has its yearly Memorial Day event. He stated the City would entertain moving the Memorial Rock to a different location that might be better suited for a combined memorial and have plenty of room for VFW events. He asked the veterans to work toward one solution that works for the entire community. He stated that to some people it appeared the first Veterans Memorial was put in and now we have a new group of people that want to put in another memorial and thus minimize the efforts of the first group. **Mayor Boyd** stated that anytime anyone starts saying someone is more patriotic than someone else because they have a larger flag or more flags he will take exception to that comment. He stated that patriotism is not dependent on the number of flags a person flies or the number of years they served in the military and it is unfair to use that as a standard. He asked how we can move forward to give the veterans what they want that does not disrespect or denigrate the work that has come before this and provide what the veterans want, need and deserve. He reiterated that Councilor Merrill is willing to work with the interested parties to bring resolution to the matter and asked if Post Commander Gale is willing to participate.

**Ms. Leighty-Johnson** asked where the vote took place with regard to the Council's decision and how each Council member voted. **Mayor Boyd** stated that as he had mentioned previously there was not a formal vote as this issue does not require a resolution or ordinance. He stated the matter was discussed informally at a workshop as many matters are. **Ms. Leighty-Johnson** asked if the Council was disapproving the flag. **Mayor Boyd** stated the Council was not disapproving the flag and **Ms. Leighty-Johnson** stated that then the

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veterans could put a flag up. **Mayor Boyd** stated that the veterans could not put up a flag as the City was trying to create a Veterans Memorial that works for everybody and does not disrespect the work of Veterans Memorial Park.

**Councilor Merrill** asked to respond to Ms. Leighty-Johnson and read from the minutes of January 10, 2008. He read:

*“Councilor Merrill asked about Veteran’s Park and who cares for that memorial. Manager Stein stated that Sonrise Christian School maintains the site. Manager Stein asked Mr. Gale how the two memorials relate to each other. Mr. Gale stated he is unfamiliar with the Veteran’s Park memorial. Mayor Boyd requested Mr. Gale to check with the other organization maintaining Veteran’s Park to see about the possible coordination of the two sites into one memorial site and report back to the Council on his findings.”*

**Councilor Merrill** stated that to the best of the Council’s knowledge the requested coordination never took place and instead pictures of the Veterans Memorial Park were taken and presented to the Council. He read from the minutes of February 14<sup>th</sup>:

*“Mayor Boyd asked how many ceremonies the VFW hosts at the Village Green each year. Post Commander Gayle stated that the VFW will host its 16<sup>th</sup> annual Memorial Day event this year. He stated the Village Green provides a good central location for the memorial with easy access for the elderly. He added it is the desire of the VFW to have the American flag always standing watch over the memorial. Mayor Boyd asked if the VFW hosts a Veterans Day event at the Village Green and Post Commander Gayle stated that instead of a ceremony at the Village Green, his organization is very involved with the middle and high schools on Veterans Day with presentations.*

*Mayor Boyd informed Post Commander Gayle that the Council will take all the information under consideration, discuss the options and get back in touch with him soon via a phone call from the City Manager. Post Commander Gayle provided his phone number and thanked the Council for its time.”*

**Councilor Merrill** stated that in a discussion afterwards the Council determined it would be preferable to have Councilor Merrill meet with Post Commander Gale. He stated that when he met and explained to Post Commander Gale why the Council was turning down the VFW’s request for a flagpole, Post Commander Gale stated he was unhappy, but he understood. **Councilor Merrill** stated he reported back to the Council on their conversation. **Councilor Merrill** stated he has taken a great deal of effort to not point fingers at anyone yet he has personally been attacked. He stated that he could also get very emotional about war as he spent 13 months with the Special Services in Viet Nam. He stated he has participated in

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the destruction, killing and agony of war and he does not need lessons on patriotism. He stated he grew up in an Air Force family. He saw his friends move off the base when their fathers did not return home. He knows that even in peace time soldiers are killed. He stated he agrees with honoring veterans and he feels the best way to do that is to honor the living. He suggested visiting the Veterans Home in the Dalles, a facility that only receives \$1 a year from the State. He stated another way to honor a Veteran is to help transport them to appointments in Portland. He spoke of driving a van for that purpose five days a week for a period of time when he would leave at 7:30 a.m. and return at 7:30 p.m. He stated the other driver with him was a gentleman that lives in Gilcrest. He stated this issue is not about the flag but properly honoring the veterans. He stated he has visited many memorials and one thing they all have in common is a sense of tranquility.

**Mayor Boyd** asked if Post Commander Gale will work with Councilor Merrill and **Post Commander Gale** stated he will. **Mayor Boyd** also requested that there be no more mud slinging by members of the VFW as it only hurts their cause.

**Post Commander Gale** stated it's been an honor to see the Sisters VFW and American Legion Post revitalized and see the support of the area veterans. He stated he hopes to find a peaceful resolution to something that has gotten out of control. He stated he would not apologize for the letters written to the Nugget Newspaper as those are the opinions of others. He asked his fellow veterans and the Council to work together to get the memorial done for the Memorial Day Celebration that will take place on May 26, 2008. He stated his vision is to honor the Sisters area veterans and he is passionate about educating students on the role veteran's play for our Country. He asked his fellow members of the VFW to please be polite.

**Mayor Boyd** called for a recess at 8:25 p.m. The meeting reconvened at 8:35 p.m.

### III. CONSENT AGENDA

#### A. Minutes

1. February 7, 2008 – Workshop
2. February 14, 2008 – Workshop
3. February 28, 2008 – Regular Meeting

#### B. Bills to Approve

1. March Accounts Payable

**Councilor Kellstrom** moved to approve the consent agenda. **Councilor Weed** seconded the motion.

**Councilor Bell** asked if the Visa bills being paid are City or personal Visa cards of employees. **City Manager Stein** stated they are City issued Visa cards.  
*The motion carried unanimously.*

#### IV. STAFF REPORTS

##### A. Eileen Stein, City Manager – *(Report Attached)*

**City Manager Stein** reported that on the date set for the workshop to discuss the Sheriff's contract, Councilor Bell is unavailable and asked if the Council wanted to reschedule the date. The **Council** decided to stay with the original workshop date as Councilor Bell did not object to missing the discussion.

**Manager Stein** informed the Council that both she and Commissioner Dennis Luke will be in Washington D.C. during the scheduled joint meeting with the County Commissioners. She stated there was no business slated for discussion with the Commissioners and the Council decided to cancel the joint meeting and have a workshop meeting instead. **Councilor Bell** stated that she would like to hear the opinion of the Commissioners on the Aspen Lake proposed resort at the next joint meeting.

##### B. Lisa Young, Finance Director– *(Report Attached)*

**Manager Stein** stated that in Finance Director Young's absence she wanted to highlight the CCIS Risk Management Conference that Lynne Fujita-Conrads had attended. She stated that information was given at the conference to let the City know it can expect a 10% increase for the cost of health insurance in the next fiscal year.

##### C. Captain Tim Edwards – *(Report Attached)*

**Captain Edwards** gave an overview of the hours officers spent in the City and the number of incidents, citations issued, warnings and business checks provided. He reported that an attempted arson earlier in the week was under investigation.

**Councilor Bell** asked for information regarding the reported rape at Sisters Organization of Activities and Recreation (SOAR). **Captain Edwards** explained that he could not disclose any details regarding the case of the alleged rape as it was currently still under investigation by the Oregon State Police. **Councilor Weed** asked if there was any ongoing danger to the community with regard to the rape and **Captain Edwards** reported it was an isolated incident.

**Councilor Merrill** asked Captain Edwards if it was possible for the Sheriff's Department to provide the monthly total number of incidents in the City for a one year timeframe. **Captain Edwards** stated he felt that would be easy to provide. **City Attorney Bryant** reminded the Council to keep in mind that an incident could include more than one case. **Captain Edwards** stated the report reflected only those criminal cases that require a written police report. **Mayor Boyd** stated he would like to see a year to year comparison of the number of incidents to see if as the City's population has increased the crime rate has also. **Captain Edwards** stated he would provide that information also.

## V. COUNCIL BUSINESS

### A. Discussion and Consideration of a Resolution No. 2008-04: A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF SISTERS AMENDING THE CITY OF SISTERS FEE SCHEDULE BY MODIFYING CERTAIN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT FEES

**Community Development Director Eric Porter** stated the resolution was in deference to Oregon Revised Statutes 227.175 that allows governing bodies to establish fees that recapture a majority of the costs it incurs. He stated that currently there is a discrepancy on the amount the City collects for large and complicated applications versus the time spent on Type III Site Design reviews. He added he had discussed the proposed change with Central Oregon Builders Association (COBA) representatives and they were not concerned.

**Mayor Boyd** opened the floor to public comment regarding Resolution No. 2008-04. There was no one wishing to speak and the floor was closed to comment.

*Councilor Merrill moved to approve the resolution amending the City of Sisters fee schedule by modifying certain community development fees. Councilor Bell seconded the motion.*

**Councilor Kellstrom** asked if with the \$5,000 deposit an applicant makes, the City will be able to give the applicant an idea of what the total cost might be. **Director Porter** stated he felt that he would be able to provide a rough estimate of the total cost associated with the review. **Councilor Bell** asked if a cost analysis was done to compare the proposed charges to other cities. **Director Porter** stated that an extensive comparative study of other jurisdictions was performed in 2005 and that the City of Redmond is the closest in price with an hourly charge of \$130 an hour.

*The motion carried unanimously.*

**VI. OTHER BUSINESS**

**Manager Stein** reminded the Council that the City is still looking for three Budget Committee members. She stated the Budget Committee orientation will take place in April with the first meeting to take place in May.

**VII. MAYOR/COUNCILOR COMMENT**

**Mayor Boyd** stated that there is an opening on the Planning Commission due to one of the in-town commissioners moving outside city limits. He asked **Director Porter** to contact the previous applicants from the February application process to see if they were still interested and to run an advertisement in the Nugget Newspaper for additional applicants.

**Councilor Bell** reported that the COIC Board voted to provide \$4,000 in staff support to the Habitat Conservation Plan effort being undertaken. She also reported that a weekly Dial-a-Ride route that includes Sisters was beginning with hopes to eventually move towards daily service.

**VIII. ADJOURN – 8:57 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,

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Kathy Nelson, City Recorder

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Brad Boyd, Mayor