**MAYOR:**
Matthew Diaz
**COUNCILORS**
Johnny Waggoner Sr.
Jason Spriet
Dean Guyer
Beverly Calder
Raymond Duman
Nathan Hodgdon
**INTERIM CITY MANAGER**
Jon France

# BAKER CITY, OREGON
# CITY COUNCIL
# MEETING MINUTES

**REGULAR MEETING**
JULY 11, 2023 - 6:00 PM
CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS

## Call to Order/Introduction

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| **1. Call to Order** | The meeting was called to order by Mayor Matt Diaz at 6:00pm. |
| **2. Pledge of Allegiance and Invocation** | Mayor Diaz led Council in the Pledge of Allegiance and Invocation. |
| **3. Roll Call** | Roll call was called by the City Recorder, Rheann Weitz. Roll call was answered by Mayor Diaz, and Councilors Guyer, Calder, Spriet, Duman, and Hodgdon. Councilor Waggoner Sr. was absent.<br>Also in attendance were Interim City Manager, Jon France, Human Resource Manager, Stacy Spriet, Admin. Services Manager, Jennifer Spencer, Public Works Director, Joyce Bornstedt, and Planning Director, Holly Kerns. |
| **4. Agenda Additions, Deletions, Modifications** | There were 4 additions to the agenda; Resolution 3946-DEI Policy, Executive Session for Litigation Matters, Approval to hire a Utility Biller/Accounts Receivable Specialist in the Finance Department, and Approval to hire a Fire Chief.<br>There were 5 deletions on the agenda; Resolution 3943- Adopting Public Works Standards and Specifications, Ambulance Disposition, 2025 OMA Conference Presentation Ordinance 3933 - R3 Commitment, and R3 Board Appointment.<br><br>MOTION MADE BY: Councilor Guyer<br>MOTION: Accept Additions, Deletions, and Modifications<br>SECONDED: Councilor Hodgdon<br>IN FAVOR: Unanimous<br>OPPOSED: None<br>Motion Passed. |
| a. Resolution 3946 - DEI Policy - Addition | This item was added as an addition. |
| **b. Executive Session for Litigation Matters - Addition** | This item was added as an addition. |
| **c. Approval to Hire Utility Billing/Accounts Receivable Specialist in the Finance Department - Addition** | This item was added as an addition. |
| **d. Approval to Hire Fire Chief -** | This item was added as an addition. |

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| | **Addition** | |
| **e.** | Resolution No. 3943 Adopting Public Works Standards and Specifications - Deletion - Move to Fall | This item was added as a deletion. |
| **f.** | **Ambulance Disposition - Deletion** | This item was added as a deletion. |
| **g.** | 2025 OMA Conference Presentation - Deletion | This item was added as a deletion. |
| **h.** | **Ordinance 3393 - R3 Commitment - Deletion** | This item was added as a deletion. |
| **i.** | **R3 board appointment - Deletion** | This item was added as a deletion. |
| **5.** | **Public Comment** | There were a number of citizens who engaged in public comment;<br><br>Nancy Clair spoke on her recent job loss due to the fact that she supported the Mayor's Facebook post. She stated that she has love for everyone and that everyone else should do the same. She mentioned that she was very upset that her support for the Mayor was taken out of context so much that it caused her to lose her job.<br><br>Keriann Wisemann spoke about empowering parents to be in control of their rights as parents over their children. She explained that her son had recently had some medical procedures done and she requested that they be expedited to a different doctor, where her child's father lives, and she was told that it was illegal to give the information to her without her child present. She stated that she was very concerned that this could be a law, considering her child is only 8 years old.<br><br>Carmen Ott wanted to give Council an update on Best Friends, Inc's budget. She stated that in 2022 they brought in $87,913 and they spent $84,444. She mentioned that Best Friends Inc. is now rescuing all impounded dogs after 5 days so that they are not euthanized, and then finding foster homes for them. She came to ask that the City Council help and support Best Friends Inc.<br><br>Valerie Morrow spoke on her concern about how some Council members are treated. She stated that when she watches City Council she doesn't see adults, she sees children. She stated that she was filled with hope when Councilor Calder was elected Mayor, but has since lost hope. She stated that she wasn't impressed with the way some councilors presented themselves both in their actions and their attire.<br><br>Joanna Dixon wanted to speak about the controversy surrounding the Mayor's Facebook post. She stated that the good thing about Facebook is that if you don't want to read/see something, you don't have to. She said that words are only words, and they cannot hurt anyone. She asked the council to stop bickering and get onto City business.<br><br>Jeana Phillips requested that Mayor Matthew Diaz resign from City Council. She said that it is time for the Council to get to work and he needs to take accountability for his actions. She stated that she doesn't believe that he supports a community of inclusivity. |

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| | Alice Trindle wanted to applaud the Council for looking into a DEI policy. She stated that on July 6th she sent an email out to all Councilors in regard to the Mayor stating that he would be up to meeting with anyone in the community who wanted to have a conversation, and she stated that she only heard back from one councilor, and it was not the Mayor. She stated that their silence is deafening.<br><br>Councilor Calder asked to make a statement. She stated that there is a major tear in the fabric of the community after the Mayor's Facebook post. She stated that the oath that all of the Councilors took, as well as their Council Rules, are very clear in stating that they are to serve the entire city and act in the publics' best interest. She mentioned that there had been no accountability for the actions that have taken place and made a motion for Mayor Diaz to resign.<br><br>MOTION MADE BY: Councilor Calder<br>MOTION: Compell Mayor Diaz to resign from his position on City Council<br>SECONDED: Councilor Spriet<br>IN FAVOR: Councilor Duman<br>OPPOSED: Mayor Diaz,Councilor Hodgdon and Councilor Guyer<br>Motion fails |

**Old Business**

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| **6. Consent Agenda** | There were 2 sets of meeting minutes on the consent agenda; June 15, 2023, and June 22, 2023.<br><br>MOTION MADE BY: Councilor Hodgdon<br>MOTION: Approve the meeting minutes from June 15 and June 22 as is.<br>SECONDED: Councilor Guyer<br>IN FAVOR: Unanimous<br>OPPOSED: None<br>Motion Passed. |
| **a. June 15, 2023, Special Call Meeting Minutes** | These minutes were approved by Council. |
| **b. June 22, 2023, City Council Meeting Minutes** | These minutes were approved by Council. |
| **7. Ordinance 3391 Amending the Baker City Development Code Ordinance 3296 3rd Reading** | Planning director, Holly Kerns, gave a brief synopsis from the previous meeting, as to what Ordinance 3391 amends from Ordinance 3296 because there were some citizens who were not familiar and confused with what amendments were being made. She stated that it allows watchmen quarters on certain commercial properties.<br><br>MOTION MADE BY: Councilor Duman<br>MOTION: Read Ordinance 3391 by title only.<br>SECONDED: Councilor Spriet<br>IN FAVOR: Unanimous<br>OPPOSED: None |

Motion Passed.

A citizen, Dan Brennan, asked if he was to build a storage unit with 1 unit, would he be able to build this watchmen quarters. Holly explained that there are standards that would need to be followed, and approval from planning would be needed. She stated that there would be no need for a watchmen quarters for 1 storage unit.

The Mayor read the ordinance by title only.

MOTION MADE BY: Councilor Hodgdon
MOTION: Adopt Ordinance 3391
SECONDED: Councilor Spriet
IN FAVOR: Unanimous
OPPOSED: None
Motion Passed.

**8. Revenue Options Discussion**

Interim City manager, Jon France, presented the Council with a powerpoint presentation on the budget issues concerning the City.
He stated that there needed to be a solution to improve the situation and that making more cuts was not feasible. He mentioned that Baker City is now considered a medium-sized City, and with that comes more requirements, which will, in short, cost more money.
He stated that they are looking at a roughly 903k shortfall moving into the 24-25 year budget. He stated that the City is understaffed as it is, so cutting really isn't going to help. He said that he would like to see them look 2-4 years down the road for revenue options, not just for short-term solutions.

He mentioned that the fire department was looking to hire an additional 3 fire fighters, but new staff means more training, which has cost associated. He stated that they need to consider charging a public safety fee. He presented the Councilors 3 options;
Option 1 - $15 a month per residential/ $20 a month per commercial - $804k
Option 2 - $20 a month per residential/ $25 a month per commercial - $1.06 million
Option 3 - $25 a month per residential/ $30 a month per commercial - $1.32 million

He also stated that the City staff had considered coming up with options for low-income citizens. He stated that the revenue would decrease significantly as they would need to add a position in the Finance department to be able to handle this.

Councilor Calder mentioned that the Budget Board and the Council decided against a public safety fee and they have been looking into other options.
She stated that they may find support in businesses for a public safety fee as they get a pretty good deal on water services in the City. She stated that the difference between residential and commercial needed to be more than $5.
She agreed that they can't make anymore cuts, but they need to find ways to fix the issue.
Councilor Calder asked the interim City manager to call the budget committee

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| | together for a meeting with Council, because they all work very well together.<br><br>Councilor's asked Jon France about a gas tax, and he stated that he really hadn't had the time to look into it deeply enough to give an opinion, but he was concerned about it passing. He mentioned that Maverik was building a new gas station outside of City limits and that he feared that with a local gas tax, most citizens would go to the Maverik outside of City limits to not pay the tax.<br>Councilor Hodgdon mentioned that if they were to pass a gas tax it would need to be upwards of \$.05 not \$.01.<br>Councilor Spriet stated that they need to look at more than one source of revenue. He stated that he thinks they should reach out to State legislation and have a conversation with them about the impact that Baker City is having and see if they have any solutions. He mentioned that the City is missing out on grants because they aren't researching.<br>Jon France agreed but also stated that with current staffing levels, he isn't sure how it would be done.<br>Councilor Guyer stated that maybe they should have a conversation about creating a grant writer position for the City. He stated that it could start with a base wage with compensation for any grants that are granted to the City.<br>Jon France mentioned that he thought a public safety fee would allow them the opportunity to put together a proposal for a grant writer position.<br><br>There was some more conversation on grant opportunities and the potential for public safety fee or gas tax.<br><br>MOTION MADE BY: Councilor Calder<br>MOTION: Direct the City Manager to inform the budget board of an emergency budget board meeting.<br>SECONDED: Councilor Spriet<br>IN FAVOR: Councilor Duman, Councilor Hodgdon, Mayor Diaz<br>OPPOSED: Councilor Guyer<br>Motion Passed. |
| **9. 2025 OMA Conference Presentation - Deletion** | This item was deleted from this agenda. |

**New Business**

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| **10.** Resolution No. 3943 Adopting Public Works Standards and Specifications - **Deletion - Move to Fall** | This item was deleted from this agenda. |
| **11. Cat TNR Program Presentation - Richard Haines** | Jon France and Rheann Weitz mentioned to Council that they attempted to find contact information for Richard Haines so that they could get information from him for this presentation and they were unsuccessful. Councilor Calder stated that she would get that contact information for them so that this item could be put on a future agenda. |
| **12. Ordinance 3393 - R3 Commitment - Deletion** | This item was deleted from this agenda. |

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| **13. R3 board appointment- Deletion** | This item was deleted from this agenda. |
| **14. Ambulance Disposition - Deletion** | This item was deleted from this agenda. |
| **15. IT Costs** | City Council had asked the City Staff to create an IT budget report for them to look over. Councilor Calder stated that what they received from the staff was 300 pages of journal entries, and it didn't show them anything that they wanted to know. Councilor Calder and Councilor Hodgdon agreed that a lot of the definitions for items were not clear, either, so it was hard to see what the City was spending.<br>Administrative Services Manager, Jennifer Spencer, stated that she was asked by the former city manager, to give him this information, and there was nothing else done with it. Councilor Calder stated that she wanted to see what IT costs are recurring and upcoming for the City. She stated that she wants an IT budget moving forward.<br>Councilor Hodgdon stated that he didn't see anything of great concern. He stated that he would rather see the City spend a little extra on new equipment versus re-certified equipment because it will last longer and cost less in the long run. |
| **16. City Council Pay Compensation** | Rheann Weitz presented to Council what a timeline and budget would look like if they were to post a measure in the November and May ballots that would ask the citizens to vote to amend the City Charter to take away the compensation that City Councilors receive. She stated that there is no general or primary election for this November, so if the City were to choose to put anything on a ballot for November they would pay for the entire cost of the ballot, and this could be thousands of dollars. She stated that in 2005 the City had to pay for a ballot and it was $6,500, so the cost would only be more significant than that now. She stated that if the Council chose to put this measure on the May ballot, then they would need to file a notice by March 21, 2024.<br>Rheann mentioned that in 2020, City Council chose to put this exact measure on the ballot, and the citizens of Baker City did not approve, and it did not pass, so she mentioned that if the Councilors wanted to "gift" their money back to the City, that they could do that by signing over their check and letting a staff member know what department they wanted the money to go towards.<br><br>There wasn't a lot of discussion on this item, other than the Councilors agreed that it wasn't worth the money for a ballot in November, and they would sign their checks back to the City. |
| **17. Resolution 3946 - DEI Policy - Addition** | Human Resource Manager, Stacy Spriet presented a DEI policy to the City Council. She stated that in addition to the policy, all City staff would participate in annual training as well.<br>Councilor Guyer asked if they were considered staff since they received compensation. Stacy and Jon France both agreed that no, they are still only considered elected officials.<br><br>Citizen, Jeana Phillips stated that this DEI policy does not address the actions of the Council. She said it was hypocrisy to hold City Staff to adhere to this policy, but not the council.<br><br>There was discussion about the actions of councilors and what is appropriate and what is not. |

Councilor Calder stated that the Mayor needs to recognize that damage has been done and he needs to apologize and recognize that he has hurt people.

Citizen Juliette Hughes stated that words are only words, and they cannot assault people. She stated that people are free to say and share the things that they do on their personal pages and that if someone doesn't like it, they shouldn't read/look. She mentioned that she found it hypocritical that certain people were offended that the word "Nazi" was used in a post with regard to the LGBTQ+ community, but when she supported President Trump, she was also called a "Nazi". She asked the City Council to consider moving on and getting into City business.

The Council decided to move on to the next agenda item.

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| **18. Approval to Hire Utility Billing/Accounts Receivable Specialist in the Finance Department - Addition** | Human Resource Manager stated to the Council that the Finance Department has an opening for a Utiling billing/accounts receivable specialist and they had interviewed candidates and had one in mind to hire, but because Jon France is an interim City Manager, they need approval from Council to move forward. Councilor Spriet asked if this was the position that was cut during the budget board meetings earlier in the year and Stacy stated that it was not.<br><br>MOTION MADE BY: Councilor Guyer<br>MOTION: Approve the City to hire a utility billing/accounts receivable specialist in the Finance Department<br>SECONDED: Councilor Hodgdon<br>IN FAVOR: Unanimous<br>OPPOSED: None<br>Motion Passed. |
| **19. Approval to Hire Fire Chief - Addition** | Stacy Spriet also mentioned that they had interviewed and were hoping to extend an offer to a potential new Fire Chief, and they would need approval from City Council for this hire as well.<br><br>MOTION MADE BY: Councilor Guyer<br>MOTION: Approve the City to hire a Fire Chief.<br>SECONDED: Councilor Hodgdon<br>IN FAVOR: Unanimous<br>OPPOSED: None<br>Motion Passed. |

**Updates and Future Items**

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| **20. Council Committee Updates** | There were no Council Committee Updates. |
| **21. City Manager / Director Updates** | Interim City Manager, Jon France, gave a brief synopsis of his first 2 weeks at the City and reiterated to Council how his main goal was to hire a Fire Chief, and now that that was done, he was eager to get into budget issues more |

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| | deeply. |
| **22. City Council Comments** | Mayor Matt Diaz read a statement as follows;<br>"To Baker City Council, City manager, City staff and residents:<br><br>As of July 17th, 2023, I will no longer be a Baker City, Oregon resident and therefore ineligible to serve on City Council.<br><br>Therefore, I am resigning as City Councilor effective July 16, 2023, at 11:59 pm.<br><br>It has been an honor, and privilege to serve as a councilor and Mayor of this beautiful city. I am grateful for my time here and the friendships I have built.<br><br>In his service,<br><br>Matthew Diaz<br>July 11, 2023<br><br>There was no discussion following this statement. |
| **23. Upcoming Agenda Items** | City Recorder, Rheann Weitz, went over upcoming agenda items with the Council and those items are as follows; New Directions Safe Syringe Disposal presentation, Cat TNR, Odor Ordinance, New Councilor applicants, Budget Board and HDDRC vacancies, and starting the discussion for City Manager Search Committee. |
| **24. Executive Session** | The City Council entered into executive session at 9:02 pm. |
| **a. ORS 192.660(2)(e): Real Property** | The City Council was in executive session from 9:02 pm to 9:10 pm. |
| **b. ORS 192.660(2)(h): Litigation Matters** | The City Council was in executive session from 9:16pm to 9:50pm. |
| **25. Possible Action Following Executive Sessions** | The City Council came out of the executive session at 9:51 pm.<br><br>MOTION MADE BY: Councilor Guyer<br>MOTION: Decline the offer for land purchase in the Elkhorn Industrial Park<br>SECONDED: Councilor Spriet<br>IN FAVOR: Unanimous<br>OPPOSED: None<br>Motion Passed. |

## Adjourn

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| **26. Adjourn** | The City Council adjourned the meeting at 9:53pm. |

**Signed:** ______________________
**Mayor**

**Attest:** ______________________
**City Recorder**

A link to this City Council meeting can be found www.bakercity.com or upon request to the City Recorder.