

**MINUTES OF THE PUBLIC HEARING OF THE SALEM CITY COUNCIL HELD IN THE MCCOOK CENTRAL SCHOOL PAC ROOM IN SALEM SOUTH DAKOTA ON WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 4, 2024, AT 5:30 P.M. AND 6:00 P.M.**

Mayor Glenda Blindert called the meeting to order with Council Members Doug Mokros (arrived at 6PM), Ron Mayrose, Mitchell Rayman, Marc Harris, Janet Karel and Dnyee Schierholz present. Foreman Jacob Morris, Trent Bruce, Jesse Elgert and Andrew Wolters of DGR Engineering; were also present.

Motions made were unanimous of Council members present unless roll call identifies otherwise.

At 5:30 p.m. a public meeting for abutting property owners to the Phase II Trail system was held. Property owners signed into the meeting were Bob Hansen, Duane Mutziger, Jordan Scheier, Brian Smith, Matt Alley, Lyle Johnson, and Wayne Kremppes.

Mayor Blindert started the meeting and introduced Jacob Morris, city engineer, who reviewed the project, gave a background of the project, map overview, proposed improvements, funding, and project timeline. The floor was open for questions. (PDF of presentation is posted on the City's website under projects).

Concerns/Questions addressed, tree removal, sprinklers, adding additional driveway work.

At 6:00 P.M. a public hearing was held on the Proposed Resolution of Necessity No. 2024-014. Property owners signed into the meeting were Bob Hansen, Robert Deters, Don Bauerle, Ken Lauck, David Oyen, Steve Oyen, Bill Eichacker, Cameron Howard Marty & Laura Gessner, Steve Gessner, Ron Schnider, Jerome Tschetter, Chuck Mehlbrech, Travis Peterson, and Reese Ecklein.

Mayor Blindert started the public hearing and introduced Jacob Morris and Trent Bruce, City Engineers, who reviewed the project, gave a background of the project, map overview, proposed improvements, project funding, why the Council is proposing assessments, what the proposed assessments are and a timeline of the project.

General Benefit would be the street, water and sewer mains. A Special Benefit would be the street grading, base course and pavement, curb and gutter, driveway pavement, sidewalks, retaining walls, sanitary sewer mains and services, water main and water services, storm sewer trunk lines and laterals, erosion control items, seeding / turf establishment, and all related grading work and pipe appurtenances.

The floor was open for questions.

Cameron Howard, Travis Peterson, Robert Deters, Don Bauerle, Marty Gessner, Ron Schnider, and Jerome Tschetter all addressed the Council with the concerns/questions being:

- 1) Salem's Water/Sewer Rates higher than others?
  - Others are higher or comparable as DANR sets rates to qualify for funding. All cities with projects funded through DANR have surcharges to pay off the loans.
- 2) Special Assessment Ordinance – when was it passed?
  - Ordinance was passed in July 2024 to establish policies and procedures in accordance with SDCL 9-43 regulations.
- 3) Told once paid for the road do not have to pay for it again.
  - Roads are maintained by the city for the life of the street. All assets have a useful life and need to be replaced.
- 4) Can the city pay for the project without assessments?
  - Yes, the city must fund the entire project, assessments are not billed until after the project is complete, so the city pays for the entire project with loans or cash on hand.
- 5) Is the property owner responsible for the repairs of the infrastructure?
  - No city pays for the maintenance of the infrastructure in the annual budget.
- 6) Understand the assessment of the new infrastructure, but do not feel you should pay again.
  - There is a special benefit to the property owners abutting the property, so with the 2018 Street & Utility Project, the assessment process was started. The infrastructure is an asset and after years of maintenance it eventually needs to be replaced and there is a special benefit to the abutting property owners of having this infrastructure adjacent to their property.
- 7) Can't an assessment be made to every property owner in town?
  - As other projects are completed other property owners will be assessed for their special benefit to that specific project.
- 8) Questions regarding "Other Assessments."
  - Other assessments are the assessments for curb & gutter, asphalt & driveways that did not exist prior to the project. Each property is different and the cost per LF is not a way to measure costs between properties.
- 9) Corner Lots how are they assessed?
  - Short side entire length; long side 50% of the length.
- 10) What is the cost per linear foot and comparison to 2018 project assessments?
  - Cost per linear foot proposed is \$41.00; hard to compare to 2018 – as the assessment process is different; but keeping the costs similar was a concern of the Council.
- 11) What is the surcharge cost for paying off loans?
  - The surcharge for the DWSRF is \$9.75 and CWSRF is 10.25 both effective on January 1, 2025, billing.

After the public meeting questions were addressed, Bruce and Morris answered questions of property owners regarding their property on an individual basis. They will also meet

property owners on site to discuss their property and any exceptional circumstances with their property for the Council to consider.

Mayor Blindert adjourned the public hearing at 7:31 p.m.

Dated this 4<sup>th</sup> day of December 2024, at Salem, South Dakota.

(SEAL)

Glenda Blindert  
Mayor

ATTEST:

Lori Heumiller  
Finance Officer

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