City of Benton City
Regular Council Meeting Minutes
July 5th, 2016

CALL TO ORDER – Mayor Lehman called the July 5th, 2016 Regular Council meeting at the Community Center to order at 7:00 p.m. (00:11:26*Audio recording begins)

PRESENTATION OF THE COLORS – Mayor Lehman led the Council and audience in the Pledge of Allegiance. (00:11:37 *)

ROLL CALL (00:12:15*) Council Members Present –

Mary Lettau
Dave Sandretto
Jake Mokler
Lisa Stade
Vanessa Coates (In @ 7:01)

City Staff Present –

Stephanie Haug, City Clerk/Treasurer
Paula Kurth, General Clerk
Diana Washburn, General Clerk
Kyle Kurth, Maintenance Foreman

Other Professionals Present –

Keith Warner, Kerr Law Group
Larry Howell, President, Benton City E.D.C.
Randy Rutledge, Consultant, Benton City E.D.C.

Other Professionals Absent –

Alan Rainey, City Engineer, Spink Engineering LLC

READING AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES (00:12:46*)

- **REGULAR MEETING JUNE 21ST, 2016**
- **WORKSHOP – JUNE 14TH, 2016**

Councilmember Lettau: Madam Mayor, I move to approve the Minutes of the Regular Meeting, June 21st, 2016 and the Workshop June 14th, 2016.

Councilmember Stade: Second.

MOTION #1 -Councilmember M. Lettau moved and C. L. Stade seconded to approve the Minutes and the June 21st, 2016 Regular Council Meeting and the June 14th, 2015 Special Council Workshop Meeting as presented.

VOICE VOTE #1- C. M. Lettau, C. V. Coates, C. D. Sandretto, C. L. Stade, C. J. Mokler ALL YEAS. Motion carried.

OPENING REMARKS, "HOUSEKEEPING" ITEMS, EXECUTIVE SESSION REQUESTS, ETC. (00:13:19*)

APPROVAL OF AGENDA (00:13:35*)

Ms. Haug: So, we did not hear back from the contractor for Item H6, so it should be removed from the Agenda.

Mayor Lehman: Well #5? Gravel? Is that what you're talking about?

Ms. Haug: Correct.

Mayor Lehman: Okay, and I do want to add a discussion item at the end, and that's, we've already (inaudible) you of the contracts for Tri City Realty; found some things you may want to ask him to revise.

Councilmember Stade: Is Claude Oliver coming; been asked to come here tonight?

Mayor Lehman: No. I think it's just that I want you to be aware of what you've asked me to sign is not what we thought it was, so I just want to be clear that you all know that I think it needs some revisions, (inaudible) it's not what we're asking for.

Councilmember Stade: But we don't have a, we have a council present but not an attorney present that can give us legal advice.

Councilmember Lettau: Right. Yes, and I'm just going to go (inaudible) and what I think that we ought to do is request Mr. Oliver to make the changes.

Councilmember Stade: I would prefer to discuss it with Mr. Oliver and Lee Kerr here, so that way we have the attorney here and at the same time, you're discussing it so they can give us legal direction.

Mayor Lehman: Okay, but you realize that will delay the contract, because I'm not going to sign it until these changes are made.

Councilmember Stade: We started discussing it in May so that this wouldn't take place.

Mayor Lehman: Well, it's not my fault he didn't write up a, what I'd call a legitimate contract. We can discuss it later, if you want, and I'll point out my issues with it and then you can decide if you want to call him and debate it, but to me, it's quite simple – black and white.

Councilmember Lettau: I have a quick question; when you're, when you had that contract to sign, does Lee look that over before you sign it?

Mayor Lehman: I don't think he did.

Mr. Warner: In this instance, I don't believe; he looked it over, but I don't believe he, I don't believe he had it to look it over. We're just still trying to figure out what happened with that. Eric is on vacation right now. Lee was unaware of the contract and some of the issues that the Mayor had, so, I think he discussed that today and he's going to get ahold of it, a copy of it and go over it and make sure it's, you know, reviewed real, real thoroughly.

Councilmember Stade: So is Lee planning to be at our next council meeting?

Mr. Warner: I believe he is, yeah...

Councilmember Stade: Okay, so I think that would be a good time to discuss it, after he's had a chance to review it. I haven't seen the contract; I read the, I read the packet on Friday thoroughly and investigated some things today and I haven't read anything about the contract; is it on my desk just now? Is it on the table now?

Mayor Lehman: It was in your, it was in the, or was it in our packets or no? No. No.

Councilmember Stade: I don't feel comfortable discussing it without the attorney present and the attorney can review it, then Lee can come up next meeting and say, "This is, you know, this is what I reviewed that's illegal or legal and those kinds of things.

Mayor Lehman: I'm not saying those things are illegal, I'm just saying he, he hasn't not filled it out properly. For instance, he doesn't have the parcel number on the land; he doesn't specify what land we are talking about, so it's things like that. I just wanted to make Council aware of them, I have sent this on to Mr. Kerr.

Councilmember Stade: And we just received this on our desk today?

Mayor Lehman: Yes! I just sent it out on Sunday. Well, I sent it to him on Sunday.

Councilmember Stade: Okay, so I, it...

Mayor Lehman: This was the earliest you could have received it.

Councilmember Coates: Sent it to Claude Oliver or sent it to Lee.

Mayor Lehman: Claude Oliver (inaudible). I sent it to Lee Kerr for my questions.

Councilmember Stade: So I would, I would recommend tabling that until the following meeting. Last meeting, Mr. Kerr had said Council had decided and then they were to sign it and now (inaudible) some things; I think that's worth discussion and we can do that with the attorney present.

Mayor Lehman: That's fine. Maybe you'll have them corrected by then, otherwise (inaudible).

Councilmember Stade: That would be great, then it's a non-issue. Good, good, yeah. I'd also like to discuss a motion for a, kind of brings up the topic as far, if we don't receive it in our packets on Friday, by noon, then we don't, then we don't act upon it, unless it's a matter of, like, drastic need for the needs of the City or it would be an undue financial burden on the City or the party or it's a federal deadline, so that that way, we have a, the reason why we have the packets is that that we can get the information in a timely manner, research it and ask the questions before hand, and I'm a fast reader but this is a large stack of items to get the day of the meeting and I, I think that we need to have a motion that we have an ordinance drafted in the past; we just had a policy. If it wasn't there before noon or Thursday night, that we didn't receive it in the packet. It just went to the following week, unless it was a change order or like a sewer, water or flood, or something that we needed to authorize after the fact that, Mayor, that you have take care of because the City needed it. But I would, I would also like to discuss that.

Mayor Lehman: This packet, which I had asked only to print the front page of, to give to you all (inaudible), Mr. Rainey and so it's relevant to our discussion item.

Councilmember Stade: And who, who did, who sent it to us?

Mayor Lehman: The engineer, Mr. Rainey. Said he couldn't be here and he wanted to have, wanted you to have this information, so that's why (inaudible) tonight. I don't expect you to read it all. And Stephanie, I see that you had copied a letter from Mr. Mehaffy, was that (inaudible) copy or not?

Ms. Haug: Yeah, everything that was at your place is what all the rest of the Council people had their place as well.

Mayor Lehman: Okay, so I went ahead and made some copies of that and highlighted the parts that I think is (inaudible) in that letter, but we can go through it when we get to it. Okay, so approval of the Agenda.

Councilmember Stade: As amended, I move to approve the Agenda as amended.

Councilmember Lettau: I second.

Mayor Lehman: Okay, did we agree to discuss this, or what else did you add to the Agenda?

Councilmember Stade: Just, I think we're omitting the, the one dealing with the well?

Councilmember Sandretto: H6 is out, and then you added your discussion items…

Mayor Lehman: Which I don't think that Lisa did not want, but I did add, I did ask for it to be added. I don't know, we've pretty much discussed it.

Councilmember Sandretto: Are we through with that or…?

Councilmember Stade: Yeah, I prefer to (inaudible) didn't even have to use council attorney time if Claude makes the changes and if he's able to look it over; it may be a non-discussion item next meeting, so I prefer to table it until the next meeting.

Councilmember Lettau: But you wanted to add in the packet, I mean the deadline for the packet information, correct?

Councilmember Stade: Yeah, yes…

Mayor Lehman: And that probably is not the right place to do it with the approval of the Agenda. We probably should have a Discussion Item for that?

Councilmember Stade: Sure! Discussion Item I2.

MOTION #2- C. L. Stade moved and C. M. Lettau seconded to approve the Agenda of the July 5th, 2016 Regular Council Meeting as amended.

VOICE VOTE #2- C. J. Mokler, C. V. Coates, C. D. Sandretto, C. L. Stade, C. M. Lettau ALL YEAS. Motion carried.

VISITOR COMMENTS (00:23:04*)

Heather Duncan, Benton City Chamber of Commerce – Primary Election Voter's Forum – July 14th – 7 p.m. – Kiona Benton High School P.A.C. Room – **Chamber Monthly Luncheon** – Wild Boar Grill – July 28th, 2016 – Sustainability – RSVP at Chamber *** Council Discussion ***

Cheryl Bowles, 705 Ellen Avenue: I think we need to do something about people getting special; we need to do something about special favors. How people can break the rules and get a special favor like what happened next door to me with the swimming pool. They were allowed to put a pool, which is fine, but they were allowed to put up a fence that was not, and they were given a "special okay, it's cool". I think when people pass that and say it's okay, like our City Code guy, and who else approved it. I think there should be done about the ones who approved it when it was totally against the law.

Mayor Lehman: Yes, and as I mentioned to you earlier, I will be discussing it with Code Enforcement when he comes back from vacation.

Ms. Bowles: Yeah, I know, if it wasn't for you, nothing would have got done, and we appreciate you so much, it's unreal, because we got so many kids around there, it only takes once.

Councilmember Stade: How tall is the fence?

Mayor Lehman: It wasn't to code; it was not a six foot fence all the way around and, and they had a at least about a foot under the gate, small gate, and (inaudible).

Ms. Bowles: I mean, it was a tarp. Gate…dog could walk up and scratch (inaudible)

Ms. Haug: Could I get your name for the record?

Councilmember Stade: And what's your name, just for the record?

Ms. Bowles: Cheryl Bowles. I live at 705 Ellen Street. Been here since 1974. Linda came right down and took care of it for us. She's great.

Councilmember Stade: Yeah, we, our code is six foot…

Ms. Bowles: Yeah, but it also has to be where a child can't get through it.

Mayor Lehman: So anyway, he admitted that he knew it was not up to code and he said he would fix it on Friday and he did.

REGULAR REPORTS

1. **EDC REPORT** (00:27:37*) **Larry Howell, President, Benton City E.D.C./Randy Rutledge, Consultant, Benton City E.D.C.** <Written report provided> *** Council Discussion ***
2. **STAFF REPORTS** (00:34:26*) **Stephanie Haug, City Clerk/Treasurer – Maintenance Report – Treasurer Report** – In packets *** Council Discussion ***
3. **ENGINEER REPORT** (00:36:26*) None
4. **COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORTS** (00:36:35*)

   Councilmember Mokler – Emergency Medical Services – Hired firm to mitigate joining dispatches

   Councilmember Stade – Ben Franklin Transit meeting – Marketing – Federal Building – Tulip Lane for Fair – Enter Oak Street every thirty minutes – Comp Plan for stops – Still educating public

ITEMS FOR APPROVAL:

1. **SECOND READING – ORDINANCE 957 – IMPACT FEES** (00:38:28*)

Councilmember Lettau: Madam Mayor, I move to approve on its Second Reading, Ordinance 957, creating a new Section 17.12.140 "Impact Fee Deferral Program".

Councilmember Stade: I second.

MOTION #3- C. M. Lettau moved and C. L. Stade seconded to approve on its Second Reading, Ordinance 957, creating a new Section 17.12.140 "Impact Fee Deferral Program".

VOICE VOTE #3- C. J. Mokler, C. V. Coates, C. D. Sandretto, C. L. Stade, C. M. Lettau ALL YEAS. Motion carried.

2. **SECOND READING – ORDINANCE 958 – SEWER LINES** (00:38:57*)

Councilmember Stade: Madam Mayor, I'd like to make a motion to approve Ordinance No. 958, an ordinance of the City of Benton City, Washington, amending Benton City Municipal Code Section 13A.12.150 "Building Sewers – Required".

Councilmember Coates: I second.

MOTION #4- C. L. Stade moved and C. V. Coates seconded to approve, on its Second Reading, Ordinance 958, of the City of Benton City, Washington, amending Benton City Municipal Code Section 13A.12.150 "Building Sewers – Required".

VOICE VOTE #4- C. L. Stade, C. M. Lettau, C. D. Sandretto, C. J. Mokler, C. V. Coates ALL YEAS. Motion carried.

3. **ROUNDABOUT UTILITIES PROJECT ACCEPTANCE – Spink Engineering** (00:39:31*)

Ms. Haug – Explanation of Roundabout Utilities Project Acceptance

Councilmember Coates: I move to approve the acceptance of the I-82 Roundabout Utility Relocation Project with the date of warranty to coincide with the Washington State Department of Transportation date of acceptance.

Councilmember Lettau: I second.

MOTION #5- C. V. Coates moved and C. M. Lettau seconded the acceptance of the I-82 Roundabout Utility Relocation Project with the date of warranty to coincide with the Washington State Department of Transportation date of acceptance.

VOICE VOTE #5- C. L. Stade, C. M. Lettau, C. D. Sandretto, C. J. Mokler, C. V. Coates ALL YEAS. Motion carried.

4. **CITY HALL CLOSURE – STAFF TRAINING – WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 31 – 7:30a.m.-1p.m.** (00:40:47*)

Councilmember Coates: I move to approve the closure of City Hall, Wednesday, August 31st, from 7:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. for office staff to attend Customer Service training in Kennewick.

Councilmember Stade: Second.

MOTION #6- C. V. Coates moved and C. L. Stade seconded to approve the closure of City Hall on Wednesday, August 31st, from 7:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. for office staff to attend Customer Service training in Kennewick.

VOICE VOTE #6- C. L. Stade, C. M. Lettau, C. D. Sandretto, C. J. Mokler, C. V. Coates ALL YEAS. Motion carried.

5. **WELL #5 – CHANGE ORDER #4 – PAINTING DOORS** (00:41:15*)

Councilmember Stade: Madam Mayor, I move to approve the Change Order #4 for the Well #5 Project in the amount of $1,053.00.

Councilmember Coates: I second.

MOTION #7- C. L. Stade moved and C. V. Coates seconded to approve the Change Order #4 for the Well #5 Project in the amount of $1,053.00.

ROLL CALL VOTE #7- C. V. Coates, C. D. Sandretto, C. J. Mokler, C. M. Lettau, C. L. Stade ALL YEAS. Motion carried.

6. WELL #5 – ADDITIONAL GRAVEL (00:41:55*) **<<< Removed >>>**

7. VOUCHERS (00:41:56*)

Councilmember Coates: I move to approve payment of Claim checks numbers 27767 thru 27782 with EFTs as listed in the amount of $60,601.35 this 5th day of July, 2016.

Councilmember Lettau: I second.

MOTION #8– C. V. Coates moved and C. M. Lettau seconded to approve payment of Claim Check numbers 27767 thru 27782 with EFTs as listed in the amount of $60,601.35, this 5th day of July 2016.

ROLL CALL VOTE #8–C. L. Stade, C. M. Lettau, C. D. Sandretto, C. V. Coates, C. J. Mokler ALL YEAS. Motion carries.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION (00:42:44*)

1. CITY HALL CONSTRUCTION – UPDATE

Mayor Lehman: Okay, we're ready for Items for Discussion and the first discussion item is City Hall Construction. The update was to be done by Spink Engineering, but in his absence, I'm going to read the discussion.

Councilmember Stade: Would you use the microphone, please, will turn the microphone?

Mayor Lehman: The topic on City Hall was to be led by Spink Engineering but he had a vacation that was more urgent, so I'm going to lead the discussion tonight. We're we left this off, I believe, is that there's a decision that needs to be made about whether or not to go forward with a new City Hall or improve the one that we have, and in your packet, you'll find that there is a letter dated June 28th, to the City Council from Richard Mumma and he is our building code official from The Building Department and what happened was, it was reported the last time was that we did not have to replace those beams. We had an inspection of the beams and the City Inspector felt that they were perfectly adequate and that there was no warping or no cracking, however, he reversed his position when he saw the original engineering report, so he has written us a letter that says he's in agreement with the first engineering report and we will have to replace both those beams. We had estimated them in the first cost estimate that we received and from the last cost estimate was $147,000 plus, don't have those numbers in front of me, but there was like $20,000 charge for the engineering. That was with the (inaudible) room so it'll be an additional $35,000 on top of that, so that brings it up to around $200,000 for the upper level floor, but with the addition of the beams, you may want to consider doing some of the work to, if you want to, bring the Council Chambers back in there, because with the steel beam, we could relocate and widen those beams so we could use the downstairs for a Council Chamber, but to do that, you have to, in my understanding is they have to build walls above and below and it will take, you know, some work to, to move those beams, jack it up and make sure that the walls hold, hold up the structure and then they can move the beams at the time that they put in the steel beam, and I don't know how much more that will cost, you know, but it certainly something we can look into to. The other information is about mold, and I don't expect you to look through all of it, but the point that he makes here is, I had a question with regard to the mold situation, whether or not the, the HVAC would need to be improved and he does consider that to be part of the mold abatement and he researched it and provided some information that he says "Two common, two items are common throughout the information I've read; One, take care of the leaks and two, provide adequate ventilation", and he has the references from our state which basically say all mold is, needs to be removed especially when its above the levels that it is. The other piece of information I wanted to share with you, which I believe was in the packets, about a year or so ago, I contacted Jim Beeler with a desire to get a marketing

brochure made for Benton City and Jim Beaver suggested that I contact the people that did the design on Vista Field, and so I thought "Wow! That's a big firm, but sure, I'll go ahead and ask, they can only say no" so I contacted this Michael Mehaffy, who is the designer of that, really designed the Vista Field project. He works for the company that's, initials, I don't know exactly what they initials are, he's a sub to them, and they're one of the largest companies in the world. Certainly, according Port of Kennewick, one of the top five companies in the world that does planning and design for cities. He spent about twelve hours out in Benton City and although I didn't get a drawing out of him, which my goal was, instead he prepared this initial evaluation and recommendations for Benton City Revitalization. I don't need to go through all of these, but some of them we have already done. We have taken steps to harmonize the color and with our design plans, but the part I want to get to is Item 8 and it says, basically, he likes the uniqueness of Benton City and it doesn't have the "big-box pall" as he calls it, and he says for that reason and because you thoroughly want to energize the core asset, the main street as much as possible, we would recommend that all the available sources of activity and draws of people be concentrated as much as possible on Ninth Street. One of the reasons that many small towns die is that their core losses, is that their core loses it's critical mass as new sites are found for core civic functions further away from the core. While each decision may logical and necessary at the time, the result is that the town core would lose, therefore we would recommend a strong focus of resources on the main street as much as possible, and that came from a year ago when I was telling him about City Hall being proposed over by the library. He just absolutely did not like that at all, so he did put it in the recommendations for town, so I meant to lead the discussion off with that and also to say that I hope something can be worked out soon because people are being exposed to mold and we've delayed the decision now, I think I brought it up the first time back in January and I personally don't enjoy having to breath in mold. I think people are entitled to a safe work space, one that's free from hazards, healthful or structural, and so I'd like to see something done towards that goal, so with that I'll open the discussion on whether or not we want to get a new one or prepare to spend $200,000 to fix the one we have.

Councilmember Coates: Well, one of the things I've been thinking of is that we do already have the money set aside to do what we need to do with the City Hall as it is, and it would be more economic to go ahead and make the changes that we need to make on City Hall and during this past couple weeks, so many told me something that, well, I've had a lot of feedback on it, actually. Probably ninety percent of the people I've talked to, ninety five percent of the people I've talked said they would rather have it remodeled opposed to building a new City Hall, making the building a new City Hall just a big waste of money and but when one person told me we should look as our downtown as a historic district, not necessarily just main street or Ninth Street. Look at it as our historic district and think about that when we make the changes and that, that one really hit me hard. I thought, I thought that was kind of a, you know, some, something to really think about being a historic district of downtown, because that building's been there for a long time and the people that have grown up here, you know, like my mom says, "I remember when, you know, so-and-so was there and it was a hardware store and da-da-da-da-da" so it's just something we just shouldn't just lock the doors and walk away from and build a new building. I, I think it needs to be remodeled.

Mayor Lehman: Anyone else?

Councilmember Mokler: You mentioned your concern for health/safety; has there been work done to find an alternative location as I proposed the last time we discussed this?

Councilmember Coates: Until the mold was (inaudible)?

Mayor Lehman: (Inaudible) the Mumboo Plaza said they would rent us, Unit, I think it was, call it Unit A, on a monthly basis for a few months. The other newer units, it, he was thinking, well, if you're going to be there a year or two, and we have to, you know, design it, and that would cost more, course you'd pay for that, but he said with just going in and (inaudible) cost about $1,000 a month.

Councilmember Stade: I requested last meeting that the, the City employees have the option to write down a report of their findings, because they're the people that work in City Hall and they're, they would

be the ones that need to deal with the remodel etc., and also give us ideas for what remodeling could be done and also if they wanted to be relocated or just, you know, you work around it, like work upstairs. We found out, that if you're not aware, that the mold is concentrated in downstairs in the Sheriff's Office and then the archive area which can be blocked off, so would, and it can be worked around in all the plans they told us what the cost would be but they can kind of keep that out of the way of the health and safety of the employees. I know it's a lot of work to move and to reset up networking and I wanted to hear from the employees so I asked last time if they would come up with some bulleted items because they're the ones that are working in the conditions. They know kind of the comprehensive evaluations of engineers about beams and things like that and upstairs seems to, you know, still check out that it's stable and okay as a workplace. Did, did the employees prepare any written statements, Stephanie?

Ms. Haug: No

Councilmember Stade: Paula, is there a reason?

Mayor Lehman: You asked them to come here so you could ask them questions.

Councilmember Stade: I read, I read, I did not, I read the notes and I said my concern was I wanted to have employees be able to share what their needs were without reflection on what the mayor, what your requests or your needs were and so that you could share what wanted and they could share what they wanted and needed...

Mayor Lehman: We clearly talked about the double time (inaudible)...

Councilmember Stade: And in the notes that we just approved, it said in the points, it said employees may come in person or employees may give in writing their information and put as far as the work environment and what needs they had and then you'd mentioned without reprisal from community, staff, employer, etc. Paula?

Ms. Kauer: We had a meeting scheduled to meet with Alan just to have staff kind of, that way that rather than have eight different people come in and tell you the same thing, we were just going to have one list; we were asked to not have that meeting.

Mayor Lehman: I did ask them not to because I was told at eleven o'clock that the engineer was going to meet with the staff and they weren't coming to the Council, that he would take the message forward and I, the way I remembered it, was you insisted that you question the staff, and I thought they were coming here and I did not want to subvert that and that is what I told them at the time, and so I said no, I don't want you to do that because that defeats the purpose, I believe that Mr. Kerr said that we had to have it in an open meeting, to me that was not an open meeting.

Councilmember Stade: He...he didn't, he said, he said the comments could be in person or they could be in writing, and the reason why I offered writing, the spirit of that was so that employees without, without filtered or passed on from admin, could say what their opinion is of the work environment without retribution; they could say what it was like irregardless of our personal opinion or their boss' opinion and it's in the Minutes, that said written or in person, so you thwarted our...

Mayor Lehman: Fine, fine, I misunderstood, I tried to do what you said, so I am not going to do anything to these people for speaking out. I don't know what you think I'm going to do to them?

Councilmember Stade: The conflict is you want an office for yourself...

Mayor Lehman: Yes I do.

Councilmember Stade: Employees may not, employees may have or I have ideas about you using the Council Chambers, you don't think that's proper or you've said it's not proper to the Office of the Mayor.

Mayor Lehman: I didn't say...the office would be in the Council Chambers...

Councilmember Stade: I wanted to have...

Mayor Lehman: We're thinking about putting up walls in the Council Chambers...

Councilmember Stade: Let me just say my experience. In the past, I was a department secretary and we were remodeling and it was asked of me, you know, what needs do you have as the secretary and I was, like, grateful for that opportunity because I didn't think I would be asked, but it made a lot of sense because I was the one that met the customer, I was the one that, you know, did the paperwork and so my idea was that they could either do a general, bulleted item so that it wouldn't be necessarily from Paula or from Code Enforcement or, you know, of things that they would like in it, in an office if it was to be remodeled that would better help them do their job and I didn't, I didn't, I felt like it would be faster, it would be anonymous, more, more open, more open and I didn't know that they weren't able to meet to come up with that written item.

Mayor Lehman: Do you realize that when I first went about this, that I asked them to prepare a plan, they prepared a plan for me which I (inaudible)...

Councilmember Coates: There is a writ, there is a design already written up.

Mayor Lehman: And I modified, they sent it directly to the architect, without me seeing it, so I stopped that until I had a chance to review it and I modified it slightly, they still have the same amount of space.

Councilmember Stade: The concern is, as a board members, we're, we're supposed to vote on, you know, how to, how to best use the community's money and where it should go and based on needs and wants, etc. and with us hearing from the employees, we're missing a big opportunity to make it geared towards employees and the citizens.

Councilmember Coates: How many people actually work in the City Hall office every day?

Mayor Lehman: About four or five (inaudible)...

Councilmember Coates: So four or five people work in City Hall office every day?

Mayor Lehman: The three clerks and sometimes JB and sometimes Kyle, and sometimes Krista.

Councilmember Coates: Okay, two of them are here tonight. Do we want to say anything on behalf of their co-workers?

Larry Livernois, Audience: Let's go! Let's hear what you have to say!

Councilmember Lettau: But again, I think you're, I think you're missing the point that Lisa was making, and that is, they, they answer directly to you, the Mayor, you can fire them, you hired them, so we want, Lisa, I believe, this is what you're asking for, we want their opinion without them putting themselves in a bad place. * **Audience interruption** *

Councilmember Coates: Why should they feel that way? ***Audience interruption** *

Councilmember Lettau: Okay, well it doesn't, okay, you know what?

Councilmember Stade: I'll tell you why.

Councilmember Lettau: It shouldn't be that way in a place where you're employed however, I've worked enough that I know that it happens, whether or not it's happened now, we've had a new mayor take over, there's a whole new feel when another mayor, when a new mayor comes in, the staff and the mayor, you know, they all have to get used to each other, but what I'm saying is she is the one who can fire and hire, so we...

Councilmember Coates: Not necessarily because they're union.

Councilmember Lettau: She has that position. We have nothing to say about who she hires or fires, that's what I'm trying to say. It all comes from her; it does not come from us. We have nothing to do with it, so that's what...

Councilmember Coates: Okay, so with that, whether or not we get a remodel of City Hall is, lies on the fact that everybody's worried about getting hired or fired?

Councilmember Lettau: No, you're not, you're not hearing what I'm saying.

Councilmember Stade: Can I, can I restate it…

Councilmember Coates: (Inaudible) point.

Councilmember Lettau: All we want to do is, all we want to do is hear from the people who work there, what … *** Audience interruption ***

Councilmember Coates: They've already made a plan, (inaudible) ***Audience interruption***

Councilmember Lettau: Can I, can I finish, please?

Larry Livernois: They're right there, sitting right there. Ask them.

Councilmember Lettau: Thank you! We want to hear, we want to hear what they have to say.

Councilmember Stade: There's about four more, just four more employees, is what, that's right.

Mayor Lehman: You're welcome to speak. I'm not holding their tongues…

Larry Livernois: Start with them…start somewhere…

Councilmember Sandretto: They don't want to speak, because they are scared. Enough of the bickering. They are scared to talk in front of you, Mayor. Sorry. Whether you give them that reason or not, that is the facts. Period. So they don't want to.

Larry Livernois: So talk to them. (inaudible) at least two things (inaudible)

Unidentified female: I don't buy that. I don't buy that.

*** Audience interruption *** (Inaudible)

Councilmember Lettau: Hold on! You guys are…they are out of order as far as discussion goes.

Mayor Lehman: No, it's not time yet.

Councilmember Stade: If, if employees wanted to meet and come up with bulleted items, and that meeting was cancelled, that is small evidence, and only one thing, and this is your first meeting that you're here, some of you,

Larry Livernois: Not mine…

Councilmember Stade: You don't interact on a weekly basis. So…

Larry Livernois: You guys are trying to pull the wool over of the peoples' eyes in this town, and I'm tired of it

Mayor Lehman: Please. Wait. You'll have your chance; you'll have your chance later.

Larry Livernois: (Inaudible) this crap! Don't you give me a dirty look, pal. You think it's funny? You think it's funny? (Slams door)

Councilmember Stade: I think we need a sheriff here next time.

Connie Meredith: Yeah, I think that was a threat…

Councilmember Stade: We need a sheriff here next meeting.

Mayor Lehman: That wouldn't have helped.

Councilmember Lettau: We want to hear what he has to say but it has to be in an orderly fashion, that's all we're trying to say. We need to discuss it. We want to hear what you have to say, but it has to be in an orderly way. We need you up at the mic, we need your name, so we know what you're saying and who you are, so that's, that's all we're asking from you who are sitting out there. We want to hear what you have to say. We are not trying to pull the wool over anybody's eyes. We've been discussing this for months, trying to figure out what is the best thing for Benton City? What do we want

to do? We don't want to spend a ton of money on a remodel is it's not going to do what we want it to do, so we're, we're kind of stuck. We're, we're trying to figure out what to do...

Cheryl Bowles, Audience: You ain't got but five people inside the office...

Councilmember Stade: We, we haven't made a decision...

Councilmember Lettau: We have someone who's been waiting patiently (inaudible), can she, can we have her...

Val Nessen: I have been waiting patiently, thank you. *** Audience interruption ***

Councilmember Lettau: Can you come to the mic, please?

Val Nessen: Okay, yes I can. There's been a lot of discussion on Facebook, the Benton City websites, a lot of people weighing in on this. Most people are weighing in that they think we should renovate the building. I think renovation makes sense because of the cost itself but I also think that if we build a new City Hall, will we not still need to renovate, so that we can sell or rent or will we just leave another empty, unusable building sitting on main street?

Councilmember Lettau: That's been part of our discussion, we have to, we have to do something to it before we can sell it, if we choose to sell it, so yes, that's been part of our discussion.

Councilmember Stade: And each week, we've found out more things that the City Hall needs. At first, it was a $25,000, there was Plan 1, 2 or 3; $25,000, $45,000, $125,000. Then dig a little deeper. One guys does a walk thru and says the beams aren't okay, the other person says the beams are grandfathered in unless we had over a hundred people upstairs which we never have, so then there's that practibility but, because one engineer said, in a walk thru, it's problematic, then the other engineer says I need to go by that, liability purposes, you know, so each week we've found out that it's a higher and higher cost to remodel. First, we're initially just saying make it safe, rent it, possibly build a new City Hall. I don't think anybody's ever decided new City Hall. That hasn't been a, that has never been voted on. That has never been majority. It's been simply, discussion items, ADA requirements, beam requirements, mold abatement, new information, and so, and then we also looked into grants. If we make part of our City Hall a community center, where kids and youth could use it, then part of that facility could be paid in grants. We also looked at interest rates on low interest loans, and so we are really are in the discussion stage, I don't, I don't, have read any of the Facebook thing, maybe it's been implied that it that it was decided, but it hasn't been.

Councilmember Sandretto: We're still talking, the problem is, is that there's such a differential viewpoint here. The mayor wants to be downtown and I understand that. That's a good idea. The drawback to that is that building is basically, keeps having reoccurring problems. Mold abatement's happened twice now, and we've started a third round. Where it's gotten into the walls and the paint. We got water coming in the front. We have now roof beams, floor beams, when does the building become a point that the City quits throwing lipstick on a pig? When do we quit putting stuff into that building and look at putting in a new one?

Mayor Lehman: May I say something? I would like to say something about that. So far in the past, we have never taken an approach that cures everything; we've put bandaids on it, and let's just stop the water from all the sources. Unless you have the ventilation, then you can't get rid of it. It will come right back and that's throwing bad money after good. It's, it's, you have to take a wholistic approach with it and do it correct the first time and we have not. We did a piecemeal thing at the insistence of the engineer last time by scraping it off the wall. I argued with him then, that it was not permanent and we should fix it but the mold abatement people just wanted it out. So that cost us several thousand dollars and without fixing the outside, it's going to come back, so I don't want to do a piecemeal job. If we've a leak, we need to fix it. If you've got six leaks, you need to fix it.

Councilmember Sandretto: Yeah, but even at $200,000, you're still doing a piecemeal job and you're not taking care of the basement completely.

Mayor Lehman: Who owns the building? (Inaudible) storage. (Inaudible) storage.

Councilmember Sandretto: Yeah, but you're still going to have the stairs office, right?

Mayor Lehman: Well, we don't have to, I mean, they, they're not using it now. I would like to offer it to them, but we don't have the money to do it. But right now, I also want to say that the girls have a fan in the basement and that fan is in front of the sheriff's office and it's pointing towards the bathroom, and to me it should be turned the other way, at least, because all that mold is being blown out and into the (inaudible) so we have to look at this from all the (inaudible)...

Councilmember Stade: The letter we just received today, said, from Spinks, is that they said, he said he wasn't an HVAC person but he would recommend some sort of ventilation so we've already asked different sources for information so why not ask for an HVAC person to give the information.

Mayor Lehman: (Inaudible) to come, but (inaudible)...

Councilmember Stade: No, if they already have one, I just didn't see HVAC listed on this latest.

Mayor Lehman: It's in there for $20,000 (inaudible) $22,000.

Councilmember Stade: Is that on last week's or this week's?

Mayor Lehman: (Yes) it's been on all of; it's been on all the (inaudible)...

Councilmember Stade: It keeps getting worse, the more that, and once you start to remodel, you are no longer grandfather clause, so ADA, parking, bathrooms upstairs, handicap

Mayor Lehman: It, ADA comes in anyway, (inaudible)...

Ms. Nessen: I approve, I fully approve of having an ADA facility in our city, in our town hall.

Councilmember Lettau: Well, actually the letter we got said we aren't grandfathered in. We have to make those changes, so...

Mayor Lehman: We have to.

Councilmember Stade: Unless we can prove financial whatever, we have to have a bathroom upstairs that's ADA and we have to have one down, well just accessible, wherever they would enter, yeah, so not opposed to that, it just another, another cost look at, to remodel.* **Audience Interruption** *

Ms. Haug: Can I get your name for the record, please? Thank you.

Ms. Nessen: I'm Val Nessen.

Councilmember Lettau: Thank you for coming. Appreciate your (inaudible).

Mayor Lehman: Yes, Mr. Rouse?

Steve Rouse: Steve Rouse, Demoss Road, Benton City. You talk about piecemeal repair of City Hall and yet somehow we contacted Mike Mehaffy and are we paying for his opinion?

Mayor Lehman: No, he's done all of this (inaudible) absolutely for free!

Mr. Rouse: Okay, terrific, okay, no I, I really like his idea of strengthening the Benton City core, you know, even though I kind of like the location of the library but I think the man's right, you know, got to stay on main street and whatever that takes, I think, you know, if we're asking for opinions, and we want help, we have to listen to the opinion and take the help and do something with it other than just throw it out the window, so I'm going with Mr. Mehaffy, I think, I think we ought to stay on main street with City Hall.

Cindy, DeLeur, Kiona-Benton Sentinel: Cindy, Kiona Sentinel. So if I'm understanding correctly, your options are to remodel the building or build a new building, and if you are to build a new building, you don't know whether you would sell the old building or what you would do with it. It would sit there vacant, apparently, for at least a little while. In order for somebody to buy that building, all those remodels would have to be done in the first place or you wouldn't be able to sell that building because

they wouldn't approve the inspection, so regardless of if you remodel it or build a new one, those remodels have to be done, so why are we paying or possibly looking at paying for a new City Hall on top of that?

Councilmember Lettau: Can I answer your question? In the past, up until, I think, tonight, we had several options that we were going to do, or options that we, choices we could have and at that particular time, the mold abatement, we all pretty much agreed, we would need to take care of that. That's a definite, so the guys gave a list of things that really needed to happen. He also gave us a list of things that should happen, and then there was a list of things that are, you know, maybe, if you want them, can happen, and all of those had a price tag, so that's kind of what we were looking at, is what really needs to happen? If we chose to go and build a new City Hall, would we just do the minimum to be able to sell it? And because, obviously, we do have to do some things to be able to sell it, so that was part, that was part of that discussion. How much do we do if we build a new City Hall or do we not build a new City Hall and then what do we want to do? How much money are we willing to pour into it and what really needs to happen?

Ms. DeLeur: But price comparison sounds like $200,000 and I do realize that there's stuff that comes after any construction and it would be the same situation if you were to build a new building, there would be extra prices unaccounted for. Construction is, that's just the way that it is. So $200,000 vs. a new building is covering all of the needs for the City Hall or just some of them?

Councilmember Sandretto: Some of them.

Mayor Lehman: (Inaudible) upper level, we wouldn't be, we wouldn't have the chamber meetings there.

Councilmember Sandretto: Council would still meet down here.

Councilmember Lettau: I think the price, wasn't the price tag about $400,000 to do everything, the building complete, and that's just, that was before we knew, I mean, some of these other things have come up just in the last few weeks, (inaudible)...

Ms. DeLeur: What's the price tag on the new building?

Councilmember Sandretto: Last estimate Alan Rainey advised, when they looked at it several years ago, it was $1.8 million. I'm going to guess you're going to have some increase on that, it's probably going to be closer to $2.2 at this point.

Ms. DeLeur: So you're talking about $400,000 to redo everything versus $2.2 million possibly?

Councilmember Sandretto: Possibly.

Ms. DeLeur: And in order to just bring the building up to code, to be able to sell it so we don't have another vacant building on the strip, its $200,000?

Councilmember Sandretto: $900,000, or $90,000. The only thing that they recommended as far as that, was mold abatement and replacement of roof and floor beams.

Ms. DeLeur: So really, you'd be looking at probably $2.5 thousand (inaudible) including updating the old existing building plus building a new building?

Councilmember Sandretto: How much?

Ms. DeLeur: Around $2.5.

Mayor Lehman: $2.5 million?

Councilmember Sandretto: Yeah, possibly.

Councilmember Stade: And that's not, that's not including any grant money, like, whatever portion of that can be also used for another facility (inaudible).

Ms. DeLeur: My point is you have gentleman coming here like the one that left, you have the community feeling like they're not being heard or listen to and you're, you're trying to justify possibly $2.5 million investment for taxpayers' money when you could get away with $400,000. That's why you have people that come to these meetings and get mad. You don't need a sheriff; you need to listen to your community.

Councilmember Stade: I didn't ever...I never said yes to a new facility. Not once. Not one meeting.

Ms. DeLeur: I didn't say you did. I said you're comparing $2.5 million of the taxpayers' money versus $400,000. That's where the community feels they're not being heard.

Councilmember Lettau: But that's our job. It's our, it's our job to look at the whole picture and come up with the best thing for the community and the solution is (inaudible)

Ms. DeLeur: You can look at the whole picture, but I think we see two point, possibly $2.5 million versus $400,000, that picture's pretty clear.

Councilmember Sandretto: We've got...solution...

Councilmember Lettau: I understand that, but you know what?

Ms. DeLeur: Especially when we don't have anything in the community for our kids to do.

Councilmember Lettau: But you haven't been here to all the meetings and all the discussion that we've had.

Ms. DeLeur: I've watched them on TV, I've read the Minutes and I've been to a majority of them, at least ninety percent.

Councilmember Lettau: Okay, did you understand, too, that the questions out there that we did not want to build a new City Hall if it was going to tax our community? We wanted to make sure that we were, could get a low interest loan, so we've covered some of those things, too, and I understand that, I'm right there with you. $400,000 versus $2 million, I get that.

Ms. DeLeur: But you're up here talking about how the employees and I love the City employees regardless of what others may or may not think. They've helped me tremendously in several times and talked to me about several topics, but you're basing some of these decisions on what it is that they think when they're worried about getting fired or not fired. That's what unemployment is for. If there's a battle between them and they feel like they got fired for unjustified reasons, that's why we have unemployment so those battles can be fought.

Councilmember Lettau: I understand that, but what I want to know is if we did renovate our building, I want to know some of the things that would make their jobs easier, that's why I (inaudible)...

Ms. DeLeur: Then why don't you care about the Mayor having an office to make her job easier?

Councilmember Lettau: We've never said she couldn't have an office!

Ms. DeLeur: Every meeting, you conflict with her about that.

Councilmember Lettau: No, no, no, I do not! No, I do not. I did say that she could have the Chamber and we could make that an office, I've always said that, and I've always, I'm not going to say she can't have an office. I haven't said that so I'm not sure where you're getting your information for that comment.

Councilmember Stade: The Council Chambers. Yes.

Ms. DeLeur: Because you're, every time you fight tooth and nail for there not to be an office or there doesn't need to be an office, or it's too expensive or we should just build a new building. What you're, the (inaudible) that you guys try to connect is what I'm trying to point out to you that the community is frustrated over and you said you're trying to do best, use the community's money the best but you're not listening to them and what they want.

Councilmember Lettau: Well, this is the first meeting we've had people here who actually got up or had something to say on this topic. They have not been here any night until tonight, so, and I'm not on Facebook with our community, so if they want to come and talk to me or send me an email, I read my emails weekly. I don't have any emails from anybody with input. Otherwise, I would read it. I would gladly read it, but I don't know until tonight when (inaudible) we got this.

Ms. DeLeur: Why is it our city does not have a Facebook where people could do that that can't come to meetings because of jobs or kids or work?

Councilmember Lettau: Why can't they send an email? I'm sorry, I'm not someone who wants to have all that stuff thrown out on Facebook, I don't think it's necessary.

Ms. DeLeur: There are private messages, just like email (inaudible).

Councilmember Lettau: I understand that.

Ms. DeLeur: And most cities do have a Facebook and it's not necessarily where you air dirty laundry but it's where you draw attention to your community and your town.

Councilmember Lettau: Why can't they just email that?

Councilmember Stade: Excuse me; can I say something regarding the Facebook? We can run into problems with open public meeting act if we do it on Facebook, so what I do have Facebook personally...

Ms. DeLeur: I said it's not a place to air your dirty laundry, there's private messaging, but it is a place where the community can say something if they have jobs or kids or a reason why they can't come to meetings, and most cities do have a Facebook that represents their town.

Councilmember Stade: Oh, it could be a general Facebook, but it wouldn't be individual to certain council people? But we have a council email and in fact, this is a great new addition that we've been doing since this mayor and it, we can only, we send and receive everything so that public records if its asked.

Ms. DeLeur: But as long as you continue to hide, the community's not going to hear it.

Councilmember Stade: Hiding? Explain that to me.

Ms. DeLeur: Yes, hide behind your council seat; hide behind what it is you think is right. You don't listen to the community. A lot of the community is upset, a lot of the community is feeling like they're not heard and that's the point that I'm trying to make. Whether it's Facebook, whether its email, whatever the case is, you have more people coming to meetings that affect them, whether it be marijuana, whether it be a new city building and they get, that's not what it's about. That's one of the points where we had meetings where people were frustrated because they feel they're not being heard. It is not about marijuana, it's about the meetings held that we had angry people at and they're angry because they're feeling like they're not being heard.

Councilmember Stade: Okay, I'm hearing you that you're saying that the community's not feeling heard. I'm saying that I can't offer Facebook as a choice, but I...

Ms. DeLeur: I said Facebook email, I said everything.

Councilmember Stade: So, email completely. I answered two hundred emails three weeks ago, to community members. This is the first night that people have came up as far as the thing. I really do want to hear and I have heard, but I hear that you're saying that you don't feel that you're being heard, and I really...

Ms. DeLeur: I saying the community feels like they're not being heard.

Councilmember Lettau: So you speak for the community?

Ms. DeLeur: I speak for people that I have said they don't feel like they're being heard, that aren't here.

Councilmember Lettau: Well, we had, okay, if you bring up the marijuana thing, we had several meetings where we allowed people to be heard for that reason.

Ms. DeLeur: I'm saying you had angry people at meetings no matter what the meeting topic was about, you had angry people because they don't feel like they're being heard, so it's not about marijuana, it's not about the building, it's because they feel like they're not being heard.

Councilmember Lettau: What do you suggest that we do so (inaudible)?

Ms. DeLeur: Get out in the community. Get out in the community and talk to people.
Councilmember Lettau: I have been doing that.

Ms. DeLeur: Then why aren't they here?

Councilmember Lettau: I don't know, I'm just telling you, you know, we do have full time jobs also, so it's not like we can just go out and do things, that's why we have the email for them to be able to email us and say we've got this concern and we're more that (inaudible)...

Ms. DeLeur: And if you take your job seriously, I think you should get out in the community more often.

Councilmember Lettau: Well, that, you know, I will agree with you. I would love to be able to do that more often.

Randy Rutledge: Randy Rutledge. Speaking (inaudible). I've been coming to these meetings about twelve years and there's never been a big crowd (inaudible) in these offices. I said I've been coming to these meetings about twelve years and there's never been a big crowd as (inaudible) at the chamber meetings or at the City Council meetings so I don't think you, I think you got legislate somewhat to the Benton City elect you folks to legislate not two or three people who have an opinion sitting in this room trying to sway you. If that's the case, (inaudible) the whole town saying we can sway you so whatever your interest is, get on down here, because you can hear all kinds of sides to this argument. Probably not so much to spend $2 million to explain that, but I don't think you people are not listening to the citizens of this town, and in just because you don't read Facebook, (inaudible) that's absolutely absurd.

Allison Alvarez: On the building, the renovation versus the new facility, I guess my main question would be renovations for this facilities around City Hall, if you renovate City Hall, make all the renovations that need to be done, how would renovations be done facilities connected to it impact those renovations so I understand that the $200,000 is for the upstairs. Say you, got the basement, do the bottom floor and everything that needs to be done and its brought up to City Code, State Code, all the ADA compliance and everything that needs to be done to get it so that people can work in there safely, the facilities are connected. If they need renovations, will that, I guess, degrade the renovations that the taxpayers are paying for the City Hall.

Mayor Lehman: Let me address that. The building are not physically connected, first of all, but no, the Revitalization Committee has an initiative and we're trying to help the town develop a more harmonious feel and look so we offer incentives for any of those buildings that want to repaint, we will pay the first $100 of that, if they paint it in one of our harmonious colors. We also have done quite a bit of fundraising for various things, so we had a big dance event and we picked certain projects that (inaudible) and we fund them ourselves, not the City but the Revitalization Committee.

Ms. Alvarez: So the facilities next to City Hall will not impact the renovations being to City Hall itself then?

Mayor Lehman: Not that I know of.

Councilmember Sandretto: So the renovations proposed, if we do the $200,000 remodel would address water concerns along the south of the building as it sits currently which is between the Rustic Barrel and City Hall as well as the front and back of structure. I don't know that there's any water issues coming from the Minute Mart, but that has not been addressed at all, it's only been the other three sides.

Mayor Lehman: (Inaudible) The corner of our building that butts up against, what comes up closest to your building, we will have to dig up about three or four feet of the sidewalk but it's not really, it may be alittle bit in front of your building, to get the slope...

Ms. Alvarez: I don't own a building down there. I don't own a building down there.

Mayor Lehman: Pardon, oh, okay, I thought it looked like you, it may affect the sidewalk temporarily but it probably won't last more than a few days.

Ms. Alvarez: So then I guess my next question would be the renovations that are done, you've mentioned there's been mold abatement and there's been renovation fixes over the years, the renovations that would be done, how long would these be, for lack of a better word, good for, because will we be in the same predicament ten years down the road and have to do another $400,000 renovations or is this just another Band-Aid that will need to be done?

Mayor Lehman: I believe that, this this facility would be good for another ten years if we do proper installation and put in the offices that we've asked for. It should be good for an expansion and if we want to expand into the basement in the next five years, then we have that capability to do it.

Ms. Alvarez: So for only ten years is the renovation good for?

Mayor Lehman: Well, if you remodeled your home, it usually lasts for ten years so that what I'm assuming going to last for ten years.

Ms. Alvarez: One thing on the, on asking the employees a question, I'm not going to get into the political world of here, but I've worked in places and people don't want to talk against their bosses, however, what I will say employees come and go, yeah, you want your employees to be happy, absolutely you do, but the taxpayers are the ones who are paying for the renovations, they're the ones that really need to be happy with it. You want it to be comfortable for the employees to work every day, you don't want them to get sick. We don't want them to get mold in their lungs or any of that stuff for sure, but I don't think the political goings on really should come into play with the decision.

Councilmember Stade: Can I address that? Really, honestly, the spirit was not give us your dream list, tell us all the bells and whistle you want. I really believe that our employees are, like, we're in Benton City, we're going to make the most of it, we're going to make the best of it. So it wasn't tell us all the chandeliered dreams and caviar, all those things you want, it was literally just give us the practical input, so I think there was a misunderstanding because the previous, when you spoke, you kind of made a connection about unemployment and that kind of stuff, it's not really about that, it's not the community versus the City at all, it literally was what's your input. It wasn't what is the citizens think...

Ms. DeLeur: (Inaudible) about that. What I saying is if they were, if they are in fear of their jobs for whatever reason, whether they should or should not be, and they felt like they got fired for unjust reasons, unemployment fights that battle for them, so it shouldn't be a factor in whether we build or not.

Councilmember Stade: That's why I was just saying a written, general bullet points would just take it away from that name and face and it would just make it a general comment, not make it, make it just a little less hassle framing why I'm, I prefer less lawyer stuff and less litigation and so the more that we can make it more open dialogue, citizens to board and city council, and also staff, the better, so I agree that they can have input but you're right, ultimately we're responsible for what we decide and how it affects the citizens, and the taxpayer and that's where our responsibility sits. Thank you for coming in, I appreciate you giving it some thought.

Brenda Trammell: Hi, I'm Brenda Trammell and I'm on River Road, Benton City. I just have a couple of things, I do support the renovation idea just because of cost and it sounds like a good idea to keep it on main street, I agree that should be done, and I wanted to mention too, about the employee, asking the employees what they think. I remember working as a nurse, once when they were going to remodel the floor or something, sometimes they would ask the nurses, what do you need? Right? What would make this job easier and we would give some feedback if we had it, but that didn't change what action,

you know what I mean, that didn't then override the plan. They may have made some adjustments to make us more efficient or something like that, but I think in a way, this, the talk to, I think that they should be asked at the time if they want to give some feedback and from what I understand, they were (inaudible) but I think any city you ever asked would say that the mayor needs an office. I don't' know why our previous mayor didn't have an office, maybe he felt he didn't need it but I think every city hall should have a mayor's office for goodness sake, that seems ridiculous to even have to discuss and its rather disrespectful not to support that idea. And as far, I wanted to mention, too, the Facebook thing. I moderate that Facebook thing, it's called Benton City News & Information, all you guys can join if you just search for it. We did ask people just to give us an idea of what they, whether they thought renovation or new. I got twenty seven responses on that page; twenty six said it was a no brainer, renovate; one of them said to move out to a rental property that you guys should forgo the whole building and the new building and just rent something else in town, in the plaza or somewhere like that. So that was the result of me asking, of course a lot of people saw it and didn't have an opinion so I don't know about that but just wanted to let you guys know, if you would like to follow what's going on, because there is a lot of discussion with the public, just follow that Facebook page and you'll see a lot of stuff, even if you don't want to comment, you could still, at least, see what people are saying.

Councilmember Sandretto: I follow it.

Ms. Trammell: Okay, I think, yeah, you do, too.

Councilmember Coates: I follow, closely.

Cheryl Bowles: (Inaudible) me and my big mouth (inaudible). My name is Cheryl Bowles, I live at 705 Ellen Street and I do believe our mayor should have an office, and people should be worried about their jobs. What happened to me, next door, was wrong. Code Enforcement approved it, and he should be terminated or suspended, wrote up or something. You want to see the pictures? I'll show them to you.

Councilmember Sandretto: You (inaudible)? I ain't fighting you!

Ms. Bowles: Okay, 'cuz I got the pictures to prove it. Four foot on one side, plastic, a gate off the fence, off the ground, kids around me had to lose their pool last year, because the parents weren't up to code and this here guy is one of our officials on Benton City who was breaking all the rules and getting away with it. That's wrong, very wrong. Linda came down and took care of it. Thank God she did. I'm very glad. And no, we don't need a $2 million new building. I think, if we're going renovate, fix up downtown, then our office should be the one that shows the example of fixing downtown. It should be. And things need to be shook up. Just the way I feel. You ready? 'Cuz I want more playgrounds…

Councilmember Sandretto: I think we all do. *** Council Concensus ***

Ms. Bowles: And how many times have people donated money to this town for a swimming pool? And its gone elsewhere. We need things for our kids.

Mayor Lehman: Yes we do. (Inaudible)

Councilmember Stade: I agree, I agree.

Ms. Bowles: If we had a recreation center or even talk to our, what do you call it, our orchards and stuff around here and put up some kind of initiative or if they hired our teenagers out of high school and taught them how to pick cherries, they would get some kind of a tax credit or something. We need something like that going on, to get our kids out of a TV, a tablet, teach them how to do construction. I mean, we had apprentices do our, our skate board deal up there, that was awesome. I mean, there's no reason why we can't do more of that stuff. *** Council concensus *** yeah, and I been here since '74, okay, thank you.

Council: Thank you.

Mayor Lehman: Does anyone else want to speak?

Larry Howell: Who owns the building? Does the City own the building?

Mayor Lehman: Yes.

Connie Meredith: Connie Meredith, 913 W. 13th Street. How old is the building?

Mayor Lehman: Seventy years.

Ms. Meredith: Seventy years old? And how often do you, are you in the building for mayor?

Mayor Lehman: I am in there on the weekends and I'm there on Fridays, and (inaudible)...

Ms. Meredith: And I have nothing against you having an office, I just, you're only there Fridays, one day a week?

Mayor Lehman: No, I'm there; I have meetings all the time. I have meetings in the evening

Ms. Meredith: You're a full time mayor or, full time or part time mayor?

Mayor Lehman: I'm a part time mayor.

Ms. Meredith: Part time mayor. So you can't use the Chambers for an office, with maybe...?

Mayor Lehman: That's what I've been I've been doing, I've been sitting at a table in a dirty chamber and I think it's quite embarrassing and it exposes me to mold whenever I'm in there.

Ms. Meredith: How, how...can you explain dirty?

Mayor Lehman: Yeah, the carpets are filthy; they probably haven't been replaced in thirty years.

Ms. Meredith: Okay, so with renovations, I mean, I wouldn't put $200,000 in my house. I would do the bare bone, bare bones renovation to be able to get by, is what I would do. I'm not going to, you know, even $400,000, I'm not going to put $400,000 into my home. I would tear it down and rebuild, is what I would do, but that's, you know, my opinion. But I, you know, I'm not against, you know, getting it up to code, doing all that stuff, yes, that's fine, but...

Mayor Lehman: But not having any offices is...

Ms. Meredith: Well, I could see if you could have a cham...you could use the chambers but can't they build some...?

Mayor Lehman: When we add, if we add an ADA bathroom, that will get rid of everyone's office except for Stephanie's. No one will have an office, we can all share the Chamber, and if that's what you want for the mayor and they can (inaudible)

Ms. Meredith: I can't see spending $200,000 and now we found out the beams need to be...?

Mayor Lehman: No, that's included in it. We (inaudible) the beams all along.

Councilmember Sandretto: Yeah, that's part of it.

Ms. Meredith: In the $200,000? And then we still haven't gotten into the walls and ceiling might even come in, like there might be another change order along the way, too? Is that possible?

Mayor Lehman: Yes. We don't know.

Councilmember Sandretto: I think Alan included $25,000 in overages but I think if anybody knows anything, remodels, you never know, and...

Ms. Meredith: Right.

Mayor Lehman: The good thing about that building, though, it's all concrete block. There's not a whole lot of things like wood rot and stuff like that we're going to encounter.

Ms. Meredith: Right, right, yeah, but with the history, hist, you know, the historical avenue, too, but we also have the strip mall that's over there. Do we need businesses to get over that way also, too, and I know the main street, yes, great, we need it there, but we also need to get something that way, too, and we have other historical around here.

Mayor Lehman: We need a lot of things in this town, (inaudible)

Ms. Meredith: Yes, I know, yeah, but even with, you know, the library at City Hall, and I'm not saying to build a new City Hall, no, I'm not going to spend two million dollars, but the City Hall eventually, somewhere down the road, we have a grant writer, right? * **Council concensus** * And is that feasible to help us out?

Mayor Lehman: (Inaudible) is yes, we still have to borrow the money, but not for the grants. She made it pretty clear to us that the money, that was not available to us at this time. Only low income loans.

Ms. Meredith: Right, but can she help…? Oh, so there's no possibility of grants even down the road?

Mayor Lehman: If we, if we made the council chamber into a dual purpose community center, which would be a smaller than this, then maybe we could get a grant for a portion of that room.

Councilmember Stade: For the room and also the bathroom and have it dual purpose, and it could be larger than this room, it doesn't have to be limited to this size. That's still open.

Mayor Lehman: Well, this plan is drawn, it's not as big as this.

Councilmember Sandretto: Yeah, you're right. That's the way the plan is drawn currently but there's always…

Ms. Meredith: Options, right?

Councilmember Sandretto: Yeah, it's just…

Mayor Lehman: There's not a lot of space over there to expand in.

Ms. Meredith: But there's an option anyway, so there's still that (inaudible) right? I just…

Mayor Lehman: Yes.

Councilmember Stade: And there's other grants for going forward for the community for our students and for our kids and for recreation, and that's, that's good news about the $75,000 grant. I just heard about that, that's awesome, so that's steps in the right direction. (Inaudible) it happening for a long time.

Ms. Meredith: I just think the bare bones should be done in the renovation. It's an older building, I mean really old, and it doesn't really have the historical look like the old theatre, I'm going to refer to it as the old theatre, the automotive shop across the street, those are, you know, the post office was old, it was redone years ago, too.

Mayor Lehman: Thank you.

Councilmember Stade: Thank you, Connie.

Mr. Rouse: Could I get a second shot, (inaudible)?

Mayor Lehman: Yes, sure.

Mr. Rouse: You know, I, I empathize so fully with the employees. The employees are going to training and we're going to close the building, which is fine, I don't care, but you know, if, if you're sending them in to training, you're already unhappy with something I'm doing, so I don't blame the employees for not saying something, or anything or nothing, but anyway, parents don't go to school board meetings. I don't know what you, what you think you got here, but you know, unless you're having a pie social, parents won't go to school board meetings until they get their toes stepped on. Then they go but it is already too late. They don't go to E.D.C. Nobody goes to E.D.C. What is that? Educational Development Council? Nobody knows.

Councilmember Coates: I go every time.

Mr. Rouse: You're probably related. You've been in Benton City almost as long as I have. Don't let that out. You know, nobody goes to City Council meeting until you tell me you're going to bring

marijuana into my town, and you think those people came because they didn't like, nobody listens to me? No. That was a gang that I was part of, that came up to express really strong feelings, so don't tell me it's because this City doesn't listen to them. Employees just aren't open with their bosses. It, is the Mayor open with her boss? She's got a new job. Is she going to tell him what kind of office she wants, what color the walls are going to be? So for, no! She's going to take what comes down the line, and so do these people, unfortunately. You know, you, you, you guys can't, we as a city, you as a city council can't expect utopia, because if you do, you got the wrong job. And I'm not complaining, I think, you know, I've been here since '49 so I think I got longevity on everybody. But you can't, you can't expect, you know, is time up? Dave talks about putting lipstick on a pig, you know, I'm sorry, Benton City's been putting lipstick on a pig a long time, we kind of gotten used to that. Yeah, we want you to buy new lipstick, we want (inaudible) if you put lipstick on, got to take me to the movie, too, so we want it to be done right. We want Benton City to look good, and I really think you ought to stick with main drag. That's another question. Anyway, thank you.

Councilmember Stade: Thank you, thanks for the humor.

Mayor Lehman: Is there anyone else?

Councilmember Lettau: I would like to say just one more thing. I, I do appreciate the input that we get. I am not on the Facebook, and so I'm not hearing some of that. I do hear it from the neighbors and people that I have talked to at events like the 4th of July, you know, I like to get out there and talk to people at those kinds of things. But we really, I mean, when you're going to make a decision for your home, you take in all the facts and you determine what really needs to be done and the best way to make that, you know, which way you're going to go with, how much you can afford. That's where we're at, that's all we're doing, we have not swayed one way or the other. Are we scrutinizing certain things? Absolutely! We want the Mayor to have an office, we want that, too. We want to have a nice City Hall, that's never been, you know, that's never even been the problem, but we really do want to weigh all the facts and determine what is the best way to go, and so anyway, I appreciate your input. We need to hear what you have to say because this is a tough decision, that's why we're still talking about it months down the road. We're not going to jump and make a decision quickly because it is a big deal.

Councilmember Stade: And if I were to say anything about Mary, I would say that she is financially, fiscally responsible. I mean, if she says no or if she says yes, it's because she's scrutinized all sides and I've learned that about her and I appreciate that.

Mayor Lehman: Okay, so is the staff now refusing to say anything tonight?

Councilmember Stade: Refusing? I think the term would be if you'd feel more comfortable in writing and its so beat up...

Mayor Lehman: Okay, well I, I just want to say something that, you know, I, I feel really bad that you don't trust me and I think that you all know that I made a promise to you. Remember my promise? I said I will always be kind to you, did I not?

Ms. Kauer: I was on maternity leave so I didn't hear anything.

Mayor Lehman: Okay, I'm kind to you, am I not? And I always will be and I'm sorry that you're afraid to speak in front of me. It just...I don't understand it. I think it shows that, that you don't trust me and we need to work together somehow we need to find a way and hopefully the team building will accomplish that but you don't need to fear a reprisal.

Councilmember Coates: Maybe it's a possibility that they could anonymously write something down and leave it in my mailbox without leaving their name?

Mayor Lehman: That's, that's fine. I was under the impression...

Councilmember Stade: Or just forward it general statements to all of us, to all of us, to all of us...

Councilmember Coates: General statement on the computers so nobody can identify who it came from (inaudible).

Councilmember Stade: Just a group, just a group email so it's not any one person

Mayor Lehman: That's fine.

Mr. Ramirez – Chicken out – Talk about problems as group – Got to start somewhere – Cannot blame them for not speaking up – Should be easy – Usually ask for a raise

Councilmember Stade: And I, I think that one example that wasn't towards building trust, whether it was a misunderstanding, is if they, just tonight, they said they were having a meeting to write down their ideas together and then the boss, Mayor, cancelled the meeting, said, you know, don't hold this, so it's one thing to say there should be trust, there is trust but it's another thing if they're actually saying okay we're going to meet, we're going to take that first step, and we're going to trust, we're going to write down our ideas and then the boss says "Stop! I don't want you holding this meeting!" That's going to break that very first step where you're building a trust in a new relationship.

Mr. Ramirez – One way or another we're going to pay for it – Raising taxes

Councilmember Coates: I think it's always hard to go from one, one way of thinking to another, changing management. You are so used to being under, you know, the way of a certain manager or job or boss and then to go to a different type of boss, because I've worked jobs where I've changed bosses many times because I would always have a different team leader each time, and you know, you have some that are totally laid back and don't care and you know, like, you know, former mayors, they didn't need an office because they didn't come in, they did everything from home, but this mayor wants to be at City Hall and wants to be involved and I think it's going to take some time for the employees of City Hall to get used to a different manager.

Mr. Ramirez – Did the office for the Mayor – Should be already there?

Councilmember Coates: The office for the Mayor is being used by the Stephanie, which is…

Ms. Washburn: It's not Stephanie, it's the Code Enforcement Officer that has the old Mayor's office.

Mayor Lehman: One of the Mayor's offices (inaudible).

Councilmember Stade: So you know where the Council Chambers are where we used to meet? That's what the Mayor's using for her office. It's a, there's a table, there's chairs, it's a large facility, it's a large area and that's what she's currently using, and it needs carpets cleaned.

Mayor Lehman: It's no desk.

Councilmember Stade: There's a table.

Councilmember Coates: Well, it's a rather informal situation.

Councilmember Stade: You may realize, we're not in Richland. This is the make-do Benton City.

Mr. Ramirez - No changes in City Hall for forty years

Mayor Lehman: Alright, have we finished our discussion?

Mr. Kurth: So, I guess, just to clarification, I mean, is it okay like we were going to do is meet with Alan and compile everything together in drawings or whatever we can come up with or…?

Mayor Lehman: I guess, I guess.

Mr. Kurth: You guess or yes or…?

Mayor Lehman: I guess, yes, you can.

Councilmember Stade: We appreciate you guys taking that step and doing that and appreciate, Mayor, you okaying that, because you're responsible for the City staff and we have that dual roles where we're responsible for what we vote for monies and so that's kind of where we could work together.

Mayor Lehman: Okay, do you have a copy of their original plan that they gave me? Was that

including in the packet?

Ms. Haug: No.

Mayor Lehman: Okay, I had copies in mine (inaudible) but I, what I wanted you to see was the original plan they submitted to me and you can see the differences and what I proposed.

Councilmember Stade: And now do you have a list of what you incorporated from their ideas?

Mayor Lehman: Well, you can see what's been incorporated.

Councilmember Stade: Okay, so next meeting then we can just have that?

Mayor Lehman: I can tell you right now, I incorporated the breakroom and this one doesn't have the ADA, I'm not sure if this last plan is the ADA bathroom but theirs didn't because we didn't know that it had to, it had two bathrooms upstairs instead, had a break room which we did incorporate that and there were offices for the Clerk, and the Code Enforcement so I think, in general, everything is there. It may not be positioned in exactly the same location. I left them on the table at City Hall so they're there.

1. PACKET DEADLINE – (01:54:54*) **– Councilmember Stade * Council Discussion ***

GENERAL COUNCIL COMMENTS (01:59:13*)
Mayor Lehman: Okay, so is the City Hall discussion going to be added to the Agenda for next time as well?

Councilmember Sandretto: Probably, we're going to need to discuss some more on it.

Councilmember Stade: Is the engineer going to be here?

Councilmember Sandretto: Yeah, we really need to talk to him. *** Council/Audience Discussion ***

ADJOURNMENT – Mayor Lehman (02:00:30*)

Councilmember Sandretto: Madam Mayor, I make a motion that we adjourn this meeting.

Councilmember Stade: I second.

MOTION #9– C. D. Sandretto moved and C. L. Stade seconded to adjourn the July 5th, 2016 Regular Council Meeting at 8:49 p.m.

VOICE VOTE #9–C. J. Mokler, C. V. Coates, C. L. Stade, C. D. Sandretto, C. M. Lettau
ALL YEAS. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 8:49 p.m. (02:00:45*Audio recording ends)

L. Lehman

Linda Lehman
Mayor, City of Benton City

Stephanie Haug

Stephanie Haug, CMC
City Clerk-Treasurer

Date: 7/20/16