

**FRUITA CITY COUNCIL MEETING  
APRIL 16, 2024  
7:00 P.M.**

**1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL**

Mayor Kincaid called the regular meeting of the Fruita City Council to order at 7:01 p.m. The meeting was held both in person and with virtual access provided through Zoom.

**Present:** Mayor Joel Kincaid (outgoing Mayor)  
Mayor Pro Tem Matthew Breman  
City Councilor Jeannine Purser  
City Councilor James Williams  
City Councilor Ken Kreie (outgoing Council member)  
City Councilor Amy Miller  
City Councilor Aaron Hancey  
City Councilor Rich Parrish (newly elected)  
City Councilor Andrea Stolarczyk (newly elected)

**Excused Absent:** (None)

**City staff present:** City Manager Mike Bennett  
Assistant City Manager Shannon Vassen  
Deputy City Clerk Deb Woods  
Communications and Engagement Specialist Ciara DePinto  
Parks and Recreation Director Marc Mancuso  
Parks Supervisor Sean Lopez  
Programs Coordinator Kimberly Preisser  
Recreation Coordinator Ben Booth

**Also present:** Members of the public (in-person and virtually)

**2. MOMENT OF SILENCE AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Mayor Kincaid called for a moment of silence for all faiths and beliefs to have the opportunity for a silent prayer. He then led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**3. AGENDA – ADOPT/AMEND**

- **COUNCILOR KREIE MOVED TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AS PRESENTED. COUNCILOR MILLER SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION PASSED WITH SIX YES VOTES.**

**4. OLD BUSINESS - PROCLAMATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS**

- A. PROCLAMATION – PROCLAIMING SATURDAY, APRIL 27, 2024 AS “MILITARY BOUND GRADUATE RECOGNITION DAY” IN THE CITY OF FRUITA TO BE**

**ACCEPTED BY KRISTY HALE OF THE WESTERN SLOPE BLUE STAR MOTHERS”**

Councilor Hancey read the Proclamation, which was accepted by Kristy Hale of the Western Slope Blue Star Mothers. Mrs. Hale explained that the group consists of mothers of young men and women who have chosen to serve in the military after high school. She announced a picnic scheduled for the following Saturday when they will honor local high school graduates from schools all across the Western Slope and the graduates will be sworn into service at the Vietnam Memorial in South Fruita.

Mayor Kincaid asked the many Blue Star Mothers in attendance to stand and receive a big round of applause. Photos were taken of the group with the Mayor and City Council.

**B. PROCLAMATION – PROCLAIMING APRIL 2024 AS “NATIONAL DONATE LIFE MONTH” IN THE CITY OF FRUITA TO BE ACCEPTED BY JESSI ROCHEL WITH THE CHRIS KLUG FOUNDATION**

Councilor Miller read the Proclamation, which was accepted by Jessi Rochel with the Chris Klug Foundation. Ms. Rochel explained that the foundation is a national nonprofit organization located in Aspen, Colorado that promotes awareness, education and advocacy for organ, eye and tissue donation. Photos were taken of Ms. Rochel with the Mayor and City Council.

**C. PROCLAMATION – PROCLAIMING FRIDAY, APRIL 26, 2024 AS “ARBOR DAY” IN THE CITY OF FRUITA TO BE ACCEPTED BY PARKS AND RECREATION DIRECTOR MARC MANCUSO**

Councilor Purser read the Proclamation, which was accepted by Parks and Recreation Director Marc Mancuso. Mr. Mancuso introduced the City of Fruita’s Parks Supervisor Sean Lopez and Programs Coordinator Kimberly Preisser.

Mr. Lopez spoke about the Spring Snow Crab Apple tree that will be planted at Shelledy Elementary in celebration of Arbor Day. He added this is the City of Fruita’s 31<sup>st</sup> year as a member of the Tree City USA program.

Ms. Preisser spoke about Fruita and Loma schools’ involvement in the Colorado Tree Coalition’s poster contest, which is a statewide contest among 5<sup>th</sup> Graders for which only one student per school can submit an entry. The preliminary votes are cast at the Fruita Community Center and Ms. Preisser displayed a photo of the winner that was chosen by the public and was created by Charlotte G. from Shelledy Elementary. The tree being planted at Shelledy will be named after her and will be known as the “Charlie Tree.”

Photos were taken of Mr. Mancuso, Mr. Lopez and Ms. Preisser with the Mayor and City Council.

**D. PROCLAMATION – PROCLAIMING THE MONTH OF MAY 2024 AS “GRAND VALLEY BIKE MONTH” AND WEDNESDAY, MAY 1, 2024 AS “BIKE TO WORK DAY” IN THE CITY OF FRUITA TO BE ACCEPTED BY PARKS AND RECREATION DIRECTOR MARC MANCUSO**

The Proclamation was read by Councilor Kreie and accepted by Parks and Recreation Director Marc Mancuso, who introduced Ben Booth, Recreation Coordinator. Mr. Booth spoke about the activities and events planned for the community.

Photos were taken of Mr. Mancuso and Mr. Booth with the Mayor and City Council.

## **5. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There were no comments from the public.

## **6. OLD BUSINESS - CONSENT AGENDA**

- A. MINUTES – A REQUEST TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MARCH 5, 2024 REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING**
- B. BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS REAPPOINTMENT – A REQUEST TO APPROVE THE REAPPOINTMENT OF KELLEY GRIFFIN TO THE FRUITA TOURISM ADVISORY COUNCIL (FTAC) FOR ANOTHER (FINAL) THREE-YEAR TERM TO EXPIRE IN APRIL OF 2027**
- D. LETTER TO LOCALISM COMMITTEE – AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO SIGN A LETTER TO THE FRUITA LOCALISM COMMITTEE**
- E. BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS APPOINTMENT – A REQUEST TO APPROVE**

Mayor Kincaid opened the public hearing on the (Old Business) Consent Agenda. Hearing no comments from the public, he directed it to the City Council.

- COUNCILOR KREIE MOVED TO APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA AS PRESENTED. COUNCILOR MILLER SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION PASSED WITH SIX YES VOTES.**

## **7. ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF NEWLY APPOINTED AND REAPPOINTED BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS MEMBERS**

Mayor Kincaid acknowledged the reappointment of Kelley Griffin, who was not in attendance.

## **8. OLD BUSINESS – COUNCIL REPORTS AND ACTIONS**

### COUNCILOR AMY MILLER

Amy reported that she attended the Grand Junction Economic Partnership's (GJEP's) Economic Summit earlier in the day, where she said Mayor Elect Matthew Breman did a fantastic job of representing the City of Fruita on the panel.

### COUNCILOR JEANNINE PURSER

Jeannine reported that she attended the Arts & Culture Board meeting the previous week and encouraged the Council members to read the minutes of the meeting because there are a lot of good

things going on, although she wasn't going to go into detail about it now. Mayor Kincaid noted that there are still a few vacancies on the board and urged people in the audience to apply.

#### MAYOR PRO TEM MATTHEW BREMAN

Matthew reported that a couple of exciting things happened at the Fruita Area Chamber of Commerce's Annual Banquet including the City of Fruita receiving the "Platinum Community Connection Partner" award in appreciation of the City's dedication and support of the Chamber. He added that there was also a fundraiser to "Pie the Old Mayor" or "Pie the New Mayor," from which the proceeds of over \$700 will go towards scholarships. There were reportedly some shenanigans.

### **9. PRESENTATIONS TO OUTGOING COUNCIL MEMBERS**

Mayor Joel Kincaid noted that he has been on City Council for twelve years and was previously allowed to pray before one meeting per month, but the practice was stopped about three years ago. He previously asked the current Council if they would allow him to pray at his final meeting, to which they agreed.

Joel offered a prayer of thanks for the Council, the experience of volunteering for the City, the commitment of the other Council members, the great community of Fruita and City staff. He also prayed for wisdom and guidance for the new Council and all the decisions that they will make

Joel presented gifts to the existing members of Council, the new members of Council and City Manager Mike Bennett as a reminder that they work as a team and what is best for the Fruita community. He expressed gratitude for having the opportunity to work with everyone.

Councilors Kreie, Purser, Miller, Hancey, Williams and Mayor Elect Breman each expressed gratitude and other parting words about the work the Council has accomplished and the comradery they shared. Joel was gifted with his old chair and the gavel on the dais.

City Manager Mike Bennett presented Mayor Joel Kincaid and Councilor Ken Kreie with traditional handcrafted art pieces created by Jonathon Cooley that feature a metal "F" in a gear built on a rock and has engraved words of appreciation and their years of service on the Fruita City Council. He articulated how it had been an absolute privilege to work with and learn from both Joel and Ken and be part of a team that has accomplished so much in the time they both served. Mike added that one of the things that makes Fruita special is the type of people that choose to stand up and give of their time in service to the community.

### **10. 15-MINUTE RECESS (*REFRESHMENTS SERVED*)**

At 7:46 p.m., Mayor Kincaid called for a recess.

### **11. NEW BUSINESS**

#### **A. SWEARING IN – SWEARING IN OF NEWLY ELECTED CITY COUNCIL MEMBERS AND THE MAYOR**

The meeting was reconvened by Councilor Williams. Deputy City Clerk Deb Woods administered the Oath of Office to Matthew Breman as Mayor of the City of Fruita. He took his seat on the dais.

She then swore in Aaron Hancey, Rich Parrish and Andrea Stolarczyk as City Council members who also took their seats following the Oath of Office.

Mayor Breman shared some pastries he received as a gift with all the other Council members.

At 8:16 p.m., Mayor Breman opened the meeting for New Business.

## **12. NEW BUSINESS – CONSENT AGENDA**

- A. LIQUOR LICENSE RENEWAL – A REQUEST TO APPROVE THE RENEWAL OF A FERMENTED MALT BEVERAGE AND WINE (OFF PREMISES) LIQUOR LICENSE FOR THE FRUITA CONSUMERS COOPERATIVE ASSOCIATION LOCATED AT 1650 HIGHWAY 6 & 50**
- B. LIQUOR LICENSE RENEWAL – A REQUEST TO APPROVE THE RENEWAL OF A HOTEL AND RESTAURANT LIQUOR LICENSE – MALT, VINOUS AND SPIRITUOUS FOR FIESTA GUADALAJARA LOCATED AT 103 HIGHWAY 6 & 50**
- C. LIQUOR LICENSE RENEWAL – A REQUEST TO APPROVE THE RENEWAL OF A RETAIL LIQUOR STORE LIQUOR LICENSE – MALT, VINOUS AND SPIRITUOUS FOR FRUITA LIQUOR MART LOCATED AT 423 E. HIGHWAY 6 & 50**
- D. LIQUOR LICENSE RENEWAL – A REQUEST TO APPROVE THE RENEWAL OF A RETAIL LIQUOR STORE LIQUOR LICENSE – MALT, VINOUS AND SPIRITUOUS FOR SOENG, LLC DBA JACKALOPE LIQUORS LOCATED AT 404 JURASSIC AVE., UNIT B**

Mayor Breman opened the New Business Consent Agenda for public comment. Hearing none, he closed public participation and referred the Consent Agenda to the City Council.

- COUNCILOR PURSER MOVED TO APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA AS PRESENTED. COUNCILOR MILLER SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION PASSED WITH SIX YES VOTES.**

## **13. NEW BUSINESS - PUBLIC HEARINGS**

- A. QUASI-JUDICIAL HEARINGS**
  - 1) SPECIAL EVENT LIQUOR PERMIT APPLICATION – A REQUEST TO APPROVE AN APPLICATION FROM THE FRUITA ROTARY CLUB TO PROVIDE A BEER GARDEN AT THE LOWER VALLEY FIREFIGHTERS' CORNHOLE TOURNAMENT ON SATURDAY, APRIL 20, 2024 FROM 1:00 TO 7:00 PM AT CIVIC CENTER MEMORIAL PARK LOCATED AT 325 E. ASPEN AVE – DEPUTY CITY CLERK DEB WOODS**

Deputy City Clerk Deb Woods gave staff's presentation. She reviewed the details of the application submitted by the Fruita Rotary Club and noted that Fruita Chief of Police Dave Krouse had also

reviewed the application and issued a statement that there is nothing that would prohibit the issuance of the license being requested. Ms. Woods stated that it was staff's recommendation that the City Council approve the application for a Special Event Liquor Permit subject to the following conditions:

- 1) Applicant will discontinue serving alcohol at 6:30 pm to allow patrons 30 minutes to finish their beverages and leave the licensed area.
- 2) The entrance and exit shall be monitored closely and continuously by event staff in order to prevent alcoholic beverages from going into or out of the area.
- 3) The licensee needs to be aware that they are solely responsible for control of the licensed premises in regard to alcohol possession, consumption and adherence to state and municipal laws.
- 4) All other procedures presented by the Fruita Rotary Club will be followed.

Ms. Woods noted that Rotarian Lou Mudd was not present in the audience as the applicant's representative as expected, but that the majority of the City Council members were familiar with the Rotary Club's extensive experience over many years with running beer gardens at Special Events without incident as Lou has explained in his previous addresses to the City Council.

Mayor Breman opened the public hearing. Hearing no comments from the public, he closed public comment and brought the matter before the Council.

- **COUNCILOR PURSER MOVED TO APPROVE THE APPLICATION FOR THE SPECIAL EVENTS LIQUOR PERMIT FROM THE FRUITA ROTARY CLUB TO PROVIDE A BEER GARDEN DURING THE LOWER VALLEY FIREFIGHTERS CORNHOLE TOURNAMENT AT CIVIC CENTER MEMORIAL PARK LOCATED AT 325 E. ASPEN AVENUE ON SATURDAY, APRIL 20, 2024 FROM 1:00 TO 7:00 PM SUBJECT TO THE CONDITIONS STATED BY STAFF. COUNCILOR PARRISH SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION PASSED WITH SIX YES VOTES.**
- 2) **SPECIAL EVENT LIQUOR PERMITS APPLICATION – A REQUEST TO APPROVE AN APPLICATION FROM THE COLORADO PLATEAU MOUNTAIN BIKE TRAIL ASSOCIATION (COPMOBA) TO PROVIDE A BEER GARDEN AT THE COMBINED 2024 EVENTS OF FRUITA FAT TIRE FESTIVAL AND CO2UT GRAVEL BIKE RACE AT CIVIC CENTER MEMORIAL PARK LOCATED AT 325 E. ASPEN AVE – DEPUTY CITY CLERK DEB WOODS**

Deputy City Clerk Deb Woods gave staff's presentation, which consisted of reviewing the application from COPMOBA to be granted Special Event Liquor Permits on the following dates and times:

- Friday, May 3, 2024 4:00 – 10:00 pm
- Saturday, May 4, 2024 11:00 am – 10:00 pm

She noted that the Colorado Department of Revenue has updated their application form and that was the reason this application looked different than the previous one from the Rotary Club.

Ms. Woods stated that Chief Dave Krouse had issued his statement that there was nothing that would prohibit the issuance of the license being requested, so it was staff's recommendation that the Council approve the application for the Special Event Liquor Permits subject to the following conditions:

- 1) Applicant will discontinue serving alcohol at 9:30 pm on both Friday and Saturday nights to allow patrons 30 minutes to finish their beverages and leave the licensed area.
- 2) The entrance and exit shall be monitored closely and continuously by event staff in order to prevent alcoholic beverages from going into or out of the area.
- 3) The licensee needs to be aware that they are solely responsible for control of the licensed premises in regard to alcohol possession, consumption and adherence to state and municipal laws.
- 4) All other procedures presented by COPMOBA will be followed.

Ms. Woods noted that John Howe was present at the meeting as the applicant's representative and invited him to address the City Council.

Mr. Howe stated that Civic Center is a good venue and COPMOBA looks forward to the event.

Mayor Breman opened the public hearing. Hearing no comments from the public, he closed public comment and referred the matter to the City Council.

- **COUNCILOR MILLER MOVED TO APPROVE THE APPLICATION FOR THE SPECIAL EVENTS LIQUOR PERMITS FROM THE COLORADO PLATEAU MOUNTAIN BIKE TRAIL ASSOCIATION (COPMOBA) TO PROVIDE A BEER GARDEN DURING THE COMBINED 2024 EVENTS OF FRUITA FAT TIRE FESTIVAL AND CO2UT AT CIVIC CENTER MEMORIAL PARK ON THE DATES AND TIMES REQUESTED SUBJECT TO THE CONDITIONS STATED BY STAFF. COUNCILOR PURSER SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION PASSED WITH SIX YES VOTES.**

## **B. LEGISLATIVE HEARINGS**

There were no Legislative hearings on the agenda.

## **14. ADMINISTRATIVE AGENDA**

## **15. CITY MANAGER'S REPORT**

City Manager Mike Bennett provided the following updates:

- On Thursday, April 18<sup>th</sup> and Friday, April 19<sup>th</sup>, there will be some partial closures to the Fruita Bark Park in order to add features such as benches. The plan is for the large dog area to be closed on Thursday and the small dog area to be closed on Friday for the installations. He said if anything were to change, staff would put out notice to the public.

- There was a letter to the Localism Committee that was approved under the Old Business Consent Agenda and Mike asked if the Council wanted the letter to come from the Council and/or staff Liaison. He said he wanted to get the letter out tomorrow. Mayor Breman requested that it come from Council Liaison Jeannine Purser and Mike said he would get it Jeannine so she could send it to the Localism Committee.
- All the banners for the City's Boards and Commissions arrived. These will be used when they are out doing public events to increase their visibility and recognition of who they are.
- Joel brought in one of the honorary shovels from the groundbreaking of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints that will be donated to the Historic Preservation Board.
- Mike congratulated Matthew as the City's new Mayor and Aaron, Andrea and Rich as new Council members. He said he looks forward to working with them moving forward and thanked them for their willingness to serve.

Matthew asked when the water will be turned on at the Bark Park and James said it already is.

## **16. NEW BUSINESS - COUNCIL REPORTS AND ACTIONS**

### **A. ELECTION OF A MAYOR PRO TEM**

As the previous Mayor Pro Tem, Mayor Breman spoke about what the position entails and what his experience was. He explained that occasionally, the Mayor Pro Tem will have to run meetings in the absence of the Mayor or attend events as a speaker representing the City of Fruita. The Mayor Pro Tem may receive various phone calls from the public as well and will work with staff to resolve any issues.

Mayor Breman pointed out that the decision to appoint someone as Mayor Pro Tem is not a decision for the Mayor to make and asked the Council members to first have a discussion concerning who may be interested and why they would like to be Mayor Pro Tem before he asks for nominations.

Councilor Williams stated that he would serve as Mayor Pro Tem if he were asked to, but he didn't really have his heart set on doing it.

Councilor Hancey stated that he wanted to be considered for the position of Mayor Pro Tem.

Councilor Purser stated that she was also interested in serving the community as Mayor Pro Tem.

Councilors Parrish and Stolarczyk said they were too new to even think about serving in the position.

Councilor Miller stated that she would also like to be considered for the position of Mayor Pro Tem.

Mayor Breman noted that there were three (3) Councilors interested in serving as Mayor Pro Tem and asked for nominations, after which there would need to be a second and then continued discussion.

Councilor Purser spoke about her interest in the position. She stated that she saw the opportunity as another version of serving the City Council and the community and that she thinks she has some unique experience that would lend itself to the position including leadings meetings for many years not only the Downtown Advisory Board (DAB), but prior to that, as President of Shelledy PTO. Councilor Purser said that although she would listen to everyone, she would also reign in the conversation when needed to make sure the meetings are run in an efficient manner. She stated that she didn't want to remotely compare herself to Mayor Kincaid or Councilor Kreie, but ever since her husband, Cullen, was on City Council back in late 2011/early 2012, she has had a high level of interest in what goes on and has been paying attention to that ever since then. She said working on the DAB allowed her to work very closely with the City and the Council, so she has a piece of historic knowledge and a sense of reasoning behind the decisions that were made. Councilor Purser pointed out that she has not missed any meetings in the last two years since she was elected, so she has shown that she would be present when needed.

Councilor Hancey said he has had quite a bit of experience throughout his life as a leader including 20 plus years within the Boy Scouts of America as Scout Master and also as Committee Chairman where you have to make sure that the Scout Troop runs effectively and that the Scout Master has the tools that he needs. He stated that in his position as a Financial Business Consultant, he often finds himself in meetings where he needs to present financial matters and assessments on businesses in challenging and difficult situations. Councilor Hancey added that with his experience and business relationships, he can continue to go out into the community to speak and engage to make sure that the City has a strong voice.

Councilor Miller conceded that she does not have the historic experience that Councilor Purser has but stated that she does, however, have a lot of relationships that are important and that her accessibility to the community has proven to be very important as well. She said her schedule is extremely flexible, which has allowed her to attend multiple events outside of City Council meetings. Councilor Miller continued that she does have experience running meetings through her work and she feels like the City Manager does a pretty good job of preparing elected officials to run meetings. She concluded by saying she would also support others in their bid for the Mayor Pro Tem position.

- **COUNCILOR WILLIAMS MOVED TO NOMINATE AMY MILLER FOR MAYOR PRO TEM. THE MOTION DIED FOR LACK OF A SECOND.**
- **COUNCILOR PARRISH MOVED TO NOMINATE AARON HANCEY FOR MAYOR PRO TEM. COUNCILOR WILLIAMS SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION PASSED WITH FIVE YES VOTES. COUNCILOR STOLARCZYK VOTED NO.**

Councilor Aaron Hancey was appointed to the position of Mayor Pro Tem.

## **B. DISCUSSION CONCERNING BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS LIAISON ASSIGNMENTS**

Mayor Breman pointed out that historically, the Council Boards and Commission Liaison positions have been discussed at a City Council Workshop meeting. He tabled the discussion until the April 23, 2024 Council Workshop meeting when he said there would be the appropriate time and conversation needed to make sure that the passions of the right people are matched to the City's boards and the Liaisons will represent the City in the best way.

City Manager Mike Bennett added a strong recommendation that the Council members look at their schedules in addition to what their interests are. He also requested that current Liaisons review the information in the packet to make meeting dates and times are correct. He explained that the blanks in the table were the Liaison positions held by Mayor Kincaid and Councilor Kreie and that where names were appearing doesn't necessarily mean that they have to stay that way; if existing Liaisons wanted to make a change, they certainly could.

Mayor Breman encouraged the Council members to do some research if there were boards they were interested in prior to the April Workshop meeting.

### **C. COUNCIL REPORTS AND ACTIONS**

#### COUNCILOR AMY MILLER

Amy said she realized she had a scheduling conflict with presenting the "Military Bound Graduate Recognition Day" Proclamation on Saturday, April 27<sup>th</sup> at 11:00 a.m. at the Vietnam War Memorial and asked if any of the other Council members could do it. Aaron said he could fill in and James said if Aaron found that he was unable to make it, he could close up his shop to be there.

#### COUNCILOR JEANNINE PURSER

Jeannine stated that at the FARM one-year Birthday party, she and Councilor Stolarczyk had the opportunity to talk to the Executive Director of Colorado Creative Industries and asked if Andrea wanted to report on it.

Andrea said they got to sit down with the Executive Director at FARM along with some of the "movers and shakers" of the art community in the Grand Valley and in particular, Fruita. Part of the reason the Director came to Fruita was because word on the street is that Fruita has a very vibrant art scene that is happening organically, so he thought it was worth a look. Andrea said it was a fantastic meeting; the Executive Director wants to get the City interested in reigniting the conversation about becoming a Creative District, a designation for which the City of Fruita is becoming more and more eligible due to the things Fruita has done in the past decade. She added that although there wouldn't be a large monetary inflow, it is something that would put Fruita on the map as a destination for people who love the creative arts.

Matthew asked if any other jurisdictions in the valley have the designation and Andrea explained that the City of Grand Junction does and there's talk about Palisade also being interested, so it would be very cool to bookend the valley as Creative Districts. She said if the City of Fruita is unable to accomplish all the items on the Colorado Creative Industries' guide sheet now, there is another program that Fruita could participate in as a City to bolster creative happenings. Andrea said it is so exciting because a lot of the things that creative industries bring, the City of Fruita is already doing. The Executive Director was also excited and impressed and Andrea stated that she feels it could be a really good relationship. Amy said she had met the Executive Director earlier in the day and he is coming back in June. Matthew wondered if this was something the Director might want to present to the City in a Workshop meeting and all the Council members agreed it would be a good idea. Jeannine noted that former Councilor Kyle Harvey had dug into it quite a bit, but ultimately, it was decided that the City wouldn't participate. She added that the Executive Director is brand new, so there is new energy and new qualifications. Jeannine agreed to help coordinate a presentation from him.

MAYOR PRO TEM AARON HANCEY

Aaron said he thought he saw something in Mike's Weekly Information Update about the City putting a "sharps" (needles) container at Heritage Park and he was alarmed that Fruita would need one. Mike responded that unfortunately, the Parks Department has been finding too many needles in the City's public restrooms. He added that many communities have installed the containers and that the research has shown that it doesn't attract drug use but it does help with getting them off the ground so children don't get hurt by them. Parks and Recreation Director Marc Mancuso added that the Parks and Public Works Departments were having issues with plumbing and when they went down to check why the pipe was clogged, they found numerous syringes in the plumbing that were not going through the pump system. In order to help curb having those syringes flushed down the toilet, staff installed the containers. Staff has also found the needles in other locations around the parks, so additional containers are likely to be ordered and put in more locations. He said syringes were found at Little Salt Wash Park and staff will probably look at Reed Park as well.

Aaron said he thought that there was likely a more efficient use of the Council's time than hearing staff's presentations on liquor licensing when they are mainly a matter of just checking boxes. He asked the Council if they would consider switching to administrative approvals. Mike noted that there are communities who have designated a staff member as an authority and if an applicant meets the requirements, they receive their license. Otherwise, it may need to go to a public hearing before the City Council. Mike agreed that the Council could designate someone like the prosecutor who can approve liquor license applications and that would get them off the Council's agenda. He added that staff has been looking into it, actually, and would be happy to bring further information to the Council at a future meeting. The Council members were in agreement that they would like to explore the idea.

Aaron also said he came up with an idea that he ran by Mike about replacing the old skate park pad with more pickleball courts. He said he also has had some discussions with a gentleman who builds them and right now, it could be done for roughly between \$30,000 and \$50,000. Aaron noted that the proceeds of the sale of Enoch's Lake could be used for this purpose since it would be a recreational use. Mike stated that if the Council was interested in the idea, staff feels like it could be accomplished this year. The Council gave direction to move forward with the pickleball courts project and Mike said staff would bring back more information about it to the Council.

James said he talked to someone from Norwood who said that at dog park they have, they do a community limb cleanup day where they put the wood into a woodchipper and then the chips are used in the dog park, so it was a really good way to get rid of the excess wood but also made for a better ground surface for the dog park. James said he would like to look at getting a woodchipper. Mike explained that in the past, the City has budgeted a line item to rent a woodchipper, but staff hasn't had the need to rent one in the last three to four years. He added that staff could still recommend a woodchipper in the budget process for next year after staff evaluates the cost benefit of it and the equipment's availability. Marc Mancuso said that some woodchippers will have limitations. He pointed out that tamarisk is a lot harder on the chippers because it's hard wood with all the dirt in it and in order to make those fresh, clean chips, you've got to have fresh blades at all times. He also noted that some species of trees do not make very good chips, so there's a lot of things to consider.

MAYOR MATTHEW BREMAN

Matthew asked if the other Council members received the email from Mind Springs, which he found a little disarming. He said there's a chance that because of legislation, they may have to shut down.

Aaron explained that they are getting to the point where they need to make some financial decisions; the hospital has been a financial challenge its entire existence, which has been five plus years. He added that outpatient services have been funding the hospital, but that's just not economically feasible anymore and due to the challenges over the last couple of years with regulatory oversight and change in leadership, they either need to get help or they will have to make some hard decisions. That is why they are reaching out to the community for support.

Matthew said it is such an important asset to the community and he remembers that not too long ago, if a high school student was having a mental health crisis, they had to wait 28 to 30 days to see somebody whereas now it is down to one day. He wondered if there was something that the City of Fruita and City Council could do to help support Mind Springs. Aaron said he thought a public letter of support to the Governor and state legislators would be a good start because right now, it's about putting pressure on the state to make sure West Springs hospital continues to live on. He pointed out that they are the only mental health hospital between Denver and Salt Lake City and the only non-profit hospital in the state of Colorado.

James wondered if it would be best for the Fruita City Council to work in conjunction with the City of Grand Junction, Town of Palisade and Mesa County on a letter of support. Matthew said he had talked to Grand Junction City Councilor Cody Kennedy earlier in the day and he was not even aware of the situation. Aaron said the word is just now getting out and that there was an article in the Denver Post just today. Cody said he was going to bring it up to his Council tomorrow night to see what they think.

Mike noted that in terms of support from the state, what is usually considered is how many letters they get, so it would probably be best for the City of Fruita to send its own letter instead of coordinating with Mesa County, the Grand Junction and Town of Palisade. He added that it would be very helpful if someone at Mind Springs could assist with some of the language to include in the letter. Aaron provided Mike with the name of the person to contact at Mind Springs for that. Matthew said he would continue to reach out to the Mesa County Commissioners and Grand Junction City Council members to have them send a letter also. It was recognized by all that the letter(s) of support need to happen quickly.

## **12. ADJOURN**

With no further business before the Council, Mayor Kincaid adjourned the meeting at 9:07 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Deb Woods  
Deputy City Clerk  
City of Fruita