

12-15-25 Workshop Meeting Minutes-City of Challis-By: Jessica Ely-Clerk

Meeting Opened at 3:00 pm

Present: Terrill Swain, JaNean Bradshaw, Cade Peterson, Tom Kearns, Sarah Huges, Angela Williams, Jessica Ely.

New Business

Endowment Lands and Water Right Application

A discussion was held regarding state-endowment lands located within City limits and their relationship to the City's current municipal water right application. The application was flagged due to the proposed place of use encroaching on state endowment land and concerns that new water rights on such land must be held by the State of Idaho.

It was clarified that the City has been irrigating the area under existing water rights. Consideration was given to whether documentation exists that authorizes this use and, if so, whether that would allow withdrawal of the protest and facilitate development of an easement. Questions were raised about whether any existing water rights currently apply to the endowment land, with a commitment to review this internally.

Potential resolutions discussed included revising the place of use to exclude the endowment land, withdrawing the protest if revised mapping is provided, or addressing the issue through an easement or related agreement. Concerns were noted regarding placing contingent language directly in the water right versus referencing an external easement agreement, and whether such contingencies would be acceptable to the Department of Water Resources.

Additional discussion, by Cade Peterson, highlighted broader land ownership and maintenance issues, including whether only a portion of the parcel, such as greenspace, could be transferred rather than the entire tract. It was emphasized that the State does not allow third-party water rights on endowment land due to potential impacts on land value, and that any solution must protect the State's interests.

The timing and complexity of resolving easement language were acknowledged, along with the challenge of prioritizing a small-area issue among competing agency demands. It was suggested that a formal letter from the City explaining the urgency could help expedite review.

Council members Terrill Swain and JaNean Bradshaw raised concerns about the practical implications of continuing irrigation, potential legal exposure, and ensuring that any changes in language or documentation do not create unintended consequences, particularly given that irrigation of the area is already occurring.

Adjourned at 3:55 pm

Chris Sugden
Mayor-Chris Sugden

Jessica S' Ely
City Clerk-Jessica Ely

Date of Approval: 1.13.26