

MINUTES

REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING
OF
SEPTEMBER 24, 2012
5:30 P.M.
THE DALLES CITY HALL
313 COURT STREET
THE DALLES, OREGON

PRESIDING: Mayor Jim Wilcox

COUNCIL PRESENT: Bill Dick, Carolyn Wood, Dan Spatz, Brian Ahier, Tim McGlothlin

COUNCIL ABSENT: None

STAFF PRESENT: City Manager Nolan Young, City Attorney Gene Parker, City Clerk Julie Krueger, Police Chief Jay Waterbury, Public Works Director Dave Anderson, Finance Director Kate Mast, Administrative Fellow Garrett Chrostek

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Wilcox called the meeting to order at 5:33 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Roll call was conducted by City Clerk Krueger; all Councilors present.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Wilcox invited the audience to join in the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mayor Wilcox added a "Paint the Town Pink" proclamation. It was moved by Ahier and seconded by McGlothlin to approve the agenda as amended. The motion carried unanimously.

PRESENTATIONS/PROCLAMATIONS

World Habitat Day Proclamation

Mayor Wilcox read a Proclamation declaring October 1, 2012 as World Habitat Day.

Corliss Marsh accepted the Proclamation. She presented a hat to the Mayor and noted the local Habitat for Humanity group was currently working on its 18th home in the area. She introduced the current President, Chad Krause.

Oregon Days of Culture Proclamation

Mayor Wilcox read a Proclamation declaring October 1 through 8, 2012 as Oregon Days of Culture.

Corliss Marsh accepted the Proclamation and provide the City Council with a fact sheet about the Wasco County Cultural Trust Coalition. She talked about grants available from the Coalition and distributed book marks to the Council and audience.

Paint the Town Pink Proclamation

Mayor Wilcox read a Proclamation declaring the month of October as Paint the Town Pink month and asked everyone to wear pink on October 13th to celebrate breast cancer awareness.

School District #21 Report

Superintendent Candy Armstrong provided an update on enrollment, noting it had increased slightly over the previous year.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

Rose Sherrell, 1107 East Ninth Street, The Dalles, expressed concern regarding residents living in the Rose Garden facility on East Ninth Street. She said the residents were unsupervised and there was no on-site manager. Ms. Sherrell said some of the residents were dangerous and it was very disruptive to the neighborhood. Sherrell said she hired homeless people to work on her property on Trevitt Street and hoped to make this property a place for veterans and wounded warriors to congregate.

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Mayor Wilcox complimented Ms. Sherrell for making improvements to the property on Trevitt Street. He said the City was working to develop a mental health court and he hoped that would be a positive change for the community.

Heather Thompson, 4405 Highway 30 West, The Dalles, thanked Councilor Wood and City Attorney Parker for attending the candle light vigil at City Park over the weekend. She said she appreciated their show of support for the positive promotion of our community.

CITY CLERK REPORT

Mayor Wilcox asked the City Clerk to provide an update regarding the commercial dock facility and Lewis and Clark Festival Park activities.

City Clerk Krueger reported on the dock dedication, cruise ships docking and the partnerships being created. She said passengers were able to walk into the downtown area. She noted the Chamber of Commerce would be hosting a Connect to the River Festival on October 6 at the Lewis and Clark Festival Park.

CITY MANAGER REPORT

City Manager Young reported the Memorandum of Understanding with the Granada Block developers had been signed on August 28. He said if there were no objections from the City Council, the City would administratively extend the deadline for the Disposition and Development Agreement to mid-November.

Young reported the City had received a grant from Google for \$130,000 to extend the public Wi Fi system. He said it would be extended to the Discovery Center and Sorosis Park. Young said QLife Agency was also considering adding funding to the project to extend the service to Kramer Field.

Young said the Mid Columbia Economic Development District had just released their comprehensive strategy report and that the City had three of the five top projects, including the Washington Street Connection and two projects at the airport.

CITY ATTORNEY REPORT

City Attorney Parker reported he had been working on the final draft of the dog control ordinance and hoped to bring it to City Council for their consideration at the October 22 meeting.

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Parker said he would be attending the League of Oregon Cities conference and would be on vacation September 28 through October 5.

CITY COUNCIL REPORTS

Councilor Wood said the Historic Landmarks Commission had approved the demolition of the Recreation Building and the Blue Building, with a 120 day delay on the Blue Building. She said they would be discussing the Pioneer Cemetery at their next meeting.

Councilor McGlothlin said there had not been a quorum at the last Traffic Safety Commission meeting, but there had been an informal discussion regarding the Brewery Grade intersection work. He said the project should be completed soon.

McGlothlin reported the shelter over the Lewis and Clark monument at Thompson Park had been removed over the past weekend and thanked Councilor Spatz and Administrative Fellow Garrett Chrostek for their participation on the project.

McGlothlin said he had observed people enjoying the new dock facility and park and it was rewarding to see the community enjoying the facilities.

Councilor Dick said the Urban Renewal Advisory Committee had received a summary of Urban Renewal projects and said it was rewarding to learn how much the urban renewal program had helped to enhance the community.

Councilor Spatz said the Community Outreach Team had recently returned from Washington, D.C. and had opportunities to talk about airport projects, port lands development, and other projects in the community.

Spatz said the Readiness Center project was making good progress. He said a grant had been received by the college from Sherman County to install a welding lab. He said the new Shepard's Flat wind farm had donated \$250,000 toward the renewable training program at the college.

Spatz reported that Google, the City, college, and School District #21 were partnering to conduct the Gorge Gravity Games, a soap box derby, to involve students and to promote science and technology to students.

Spatz reported that a new federal program to advance manufacturing strategies mirrored the Mid Columbia Economic Development District's Strengthening Communities Program and we were well positioned to participate in the new federal program.

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Councilor Ahier said the Council of Governments was in the process of filling the position for Director of the Area Agency on Aging.

Mayor Wilcox reported the airport runway project was nearly completed and under budget, so they would be able to fund some small projects that had been associated with the rehabilitation. He said the airport was also moving forward with the industrial park, a maintenance hangar project, a flex space project, the golf course, and a new water system.

Wilcox said delegates from the Sister City would be in the community October 3 through 10. He said there would be 18 middle school students and five adult chaperones.

Wilcox expressed his support of the Police Department. He said they were going through a difficult time and it was important for the community to support them.

CONSENT AGENDA

It was moved by Spatz and seconded by Wood to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

Items approved by Consent Agenda were: 1) approval of September 10, 2012 regular City Council meeting minutes; and 2) Resolution No. 12-014 concurring with the Mayor's appointment to the Traffic Safety Commission.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Discussion Regarding Opposition of Coal Trains

City Attorney Parker reviewed the staff report. Mayor Wilcox noted letters had been provided by email from Union Pacific Railroad and BNSF Railroad. He said there had been two town hall meetings regarding the subject and said he did not plan to take any further testimony, rather to allow the Council to discuss the issue among themselves.

The Council agreed to hear public comments if there was any new information to be presented.

There was a discussion by the City Council regarding concerns of economic impact to the community, in addition to environmental impacts. There was agreement that economic impacts should be included as a concern in the Resolution.

Councilor Spatz said more information regarding the number of trains proposed to travel through the community should be provided. He said he had followed a coal train in Washington and that dust did blow off the cars.

Councilor Ahier said he had found through his own research that both Oregon and Washington Governors and congressional representatives had concerns but said the permitting process would include environmental concerns. He said the City could not limit the number of trains going through the community nor the cargo they carry. He said it would be important to have more information but that it would become available through the permitting process.

Councilor Wood said wheat train cars were covered. She said covered wheat could be subject to explode like coal, but if it could be covered, that coal cars could also be covered. Wood said she would support Option A of the Resolution, to express that the City had concerns.

Councilor McGlothlin said he had done his own research and said the data was inconclusive. He said he believed it would be best to allow the federal permitting process to be completed and to revisit when the City has full information; then decide if any further action should be taken by the City Council.

Councilor Dick said he was concerned about the impact of the trains within our community, both environmental and economic. He said the City had worked hard to reconnect to the river and additional trains through the community could hinder that. Dick said he would support Option A of the Resolution as a way for the City to express its concerns about the community's quality of life.

It was the consensus of the City Council that if Option A was adopted, it should include the ninth "whereas" clause that was listed in Option B (Whereas, the route which the coal trains would follow is adjacent to the historic downtown area of the City and to the recently completed Lewis and Clark Festival Park, and the City Council is concerned about the potential negative impact of the increased number of coal trains upon customers of local businesses, and visitors to downtown area and the festival park).

Mayor Wilcox said he believed it would be in the best interest of the City Council to take no action until additional information was made available through the permitting process. He said the City had worked very hard to not allow outside agencies dictate what businesses could locate in our community and we had no right to influence what businesses develop in other communities. Wilcox urged the Council to allow the permitting process to be completed and revisit the issue when more information was made available through that process.

It was moved by Ahier to table the discussion until more information was available to the City. The motion died for lack of second.

It was moved by Ahier and seconded by Wood to adopt Option A of Resolution No. 12-013, including the ninth Whereas clause listed in Option B and to add the word "economic" to Section 1. The motion carried, Ahier voting no.

Update Regarding Revenue Impacts From Residential Water Rate Adjustments Implemented in December 2011

Public Works Director Anderson reviewed the staff report. He noted the revenue projections were very close to the budgeted amount. Anderson reminded the Council that the commercial rates had been implemented in September and this discussion was only for the residential rates.

Ahier said he would prefer to increase the consumption rates so there would be less impact to customers who did not use more than the base amount.

Public Works Director Anderson said the previous plan had not met target revenues because it had included projections for population growth and increased commercial use. He said those two things had not happened. Anderson said the current alternatives were more conservative and did not project additional growth.

It was noted there was a program in place to assist low income customers in offsetting water utility bills, through the Community Action Program.

There was general agreement that the water rate increases were necessary in order to properly maintain the water system.

Councilor Ahier said he favored alternative 2 or 4 in the recommendations from staff. Councilor McGlothlin said he also would support alternative 2 or 4.

There was general agreement to leave the base volume at 10,000 gallons, noting large families, who could least afford an increase, would be negatively impacted if the base was reduced to 8,000 gallons.

Bruce Harris, The Dalles, addressed the Council, saying the weather would have an impact on consumption. He recommended the City leave the base at 10,000 gallons and said it had been a great improvement to the water system when the City installed water meters several years ago.

Rodger Nichols, The Dalles, reminded the Council that the base rate had to be set at a certain level in order to supply the service to the community.

It was moved by Ahier and seconded by Dick to adopt Resolution No. 12-015 with residential rate alternative 1: residential water rate increase of 7.5% in base rates and 35.1% in consumptive rates and maintaining a base volume of 10,000 gallons per month, effective November 1, 2012 to fund the adopted Water Capital Improvement Plan. The motion failed: voting yes Ahier and Dick; voting no, McGlothlin, Spatz and Wood.

It was moved by Wood and seconded by Spatz to adopt Resolution No. 12-015 to allow the rate schedule providing a 10% residential water rate increase and maintaining a base volume of 10,000 gallons per month, adopted in Resolution No. 11-026, to become effective November 1, 2012 to fund the adopted Water Capital Improvement Plan. The motion carried; Ahier and McGlothlin voting no.

ADJOURNMENT

Being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

Submitted by/
Julie Krueger, MMC
City Clerk

SIGNED:


James L. Wilcox, Mayor

ATTEST:


Julie Krueger, MMC, City Clerk