

August 10, 2009

The Chehalis city council met in regular session on Monday, August 10, 2009, in the Chehalis city hall. Mayor Ketchum called the meeting to order at 5:04 p.m. with the following council members present: Dr. Isaac Pope, Daryl Lund, Chad Taylor, and Dennis Dawes. Councilors Fuller and Harris were absent (excused). Staff present included: Merlin MacReynold, City Manager; Amanda Vey, Assistant City Attorney; Judy Schave, City Clerk; Kelvin Johnson, Fire Chief; Becky Fox, Court Administrator; Bob Nacht, Community Development Director; Eva Lindgren, Finance Manager; and Peggy Hammer, Human Resources Administrator. Members of the news media in attendance included Marquise Allen of *The Chronicle* and Paul Walker of KITI.

1. **Work Session – Chehalis Renaissance Plan Update – Logo, Tagline, and Wayfinding Signage.** City Manager MacReynold reported Tom Beckwith, of the Beckwith Consulting Group, would be briefing the council on the new city logo, tagline, and wayfinding signage, as part of the Chehalis Renaissance Plan. He noted they hoped to get feedback from the council on what was being proposed.

Mr. Beckwith provided a packet of information on the wayfinding signage and the potential locations for placement. He talked briefly about the elements and how they would incorporate the city logo into the design of the wayfinding signs. Mr. Beckwith reported the signs would be produced on an aluminum alloy sign panel, using an additional heat transfer printing process, which would keep the signs from fading for a minimum of 14 years. He noted the scale of the sign would be large enough to alert vehicles, and would be placed in front of intersections on the right-hand side of the roadway. Mr. Beckwith stated, ideally, the call-outs on the wayfinding signage should be about the size of the street name signs, which ranged from four to six inches high. He discussed the call-out emblems (arrows), noting they would prefer to keep them all on one side of the sign, making them easier to pick up on.

Mr. Beckwith reported he laid out approximately 40 locations for wayfinding signage. Councilor Dawes asked if the signs fell into the category of the uniform traffic control devices. Mr. Beckwith stated they did not, adding they could be installed on any city right-of-way; however, if they were on a state route they would have to conform to Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) standards. He provided a large print, approximately 85 percent to scale, of what the wayfinding signs would look like.

Mr. Beckwith reported the budget for the signs averaged \$2,000 for each, which included all of the hardware. He added the more signs they could put on existing poles the better, in order to decrease sign clutter. Mr. Beckwith noted the signs themselves would be installed by the public works department for two reasons: 1) if the city were to contract it out, it would be more expensive than the signs themselves; and 2) they would be using the public works department anyway to determine the location of the signs. Mr. Beckwith reported they were getting rough cost estimates from two suppliers to know exactly how many signs they could afford.

Councilor Pope inquired about the signs on Chamber Way, reporting they looked similar in color. Mr. Beckwith believed those were put up by WSDOT, and required an annual payment for advertising. He noted, size-wise, they were pretty close to the same.

Mr. Beckwith suggested the council spend the \$2,000 to have a prototype made, and put it up to see how it feels and what it would look like. He noted the wayfinding signs were usually mounted at least seven to eight feet off the ground, in order to make them effective. Mr. Beckwith stated they would request a basic bid to include at least 30 signs; and an optional bid to include additional signs up to the maximum allocated for the project. It was noted the money to pay for the signs would come from the proceeds of the hotel/motel tax, and from an EDC grant.

Mr. Beckwith discussed the city logo, noting they looked for a composite imagery of what the city was about. He reported they came up with an image to represent the different areas of Chehalis, and felt the railroad tracks added some drama to the concept. Mr. Beckwith reported on the colors of the signs, which included red, gold, green and black. He stated they were very pleasing colors and were used a lot in Victorian era architecture.

Mr. Beckwith talked briefly about the tagline, adding they went through at least 40 variations and narrowed it down to four. He indicated they put them on the city website for the public to vote on; however, they only received about 15 responses, and for that reason they had not gone back to the committee with the results. Mr. Beckwith noted the two most popular choices were "Choose Chehalis" and "Chehalis – History in the Making." He stated taglines were difficult because you had to be

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able to tag on to it. An example would be, 'Choose Chehalis - for business opportunities.'

Mr. Beckwith reported he needed to know from the council if they felt he was going in the right direction, with reference to the logo and the wayfinding signage. If so, he would take it to the next level and complete a rough cost and bring back a full-scale mockup before they approve it to go out to bid. He added he would prioritize the 40 locations in order to have some sense of what was absolutely essential for the bid, and what would be optional.

Councilor Dawes talked briefly about the lettering on the signs, noting it was too bad they couldn't have the words 'Kiddy Spray Pool' next to the word 'Pool.' Mr. Beckwith noted they were only going to be able to fit about two words per line.

Mr. Beckwith reported when they sat down with WSDOT, they not only looked for the historical call-out signs, but also two signs to promote Stan Hedwall and Recreation Park. He indicated the historical signs would call-out the downtown, the steam train, the motorcycle museum, and the historical museum. Mr. Beckwith reported once WSDOT figured out which signs to go with, they would bring a contract back to the city. He noted a one-time fee of \$3 per square foot would be charged to the city for the signs, and from then on WSDOT would maintain them.

Mayor Ketchum asked if the council was happy with the scale and design of the signs. The consensus of the council was to move forward on the signs.

Councilor Lund stated he was curious about what was going on with Chehalis Avenue, with reference to the angle parking issue. He noted he had been approached by two businessmen who wondered why the city would go to the trouble of spending money on a project that was only going to improve parking by four spaces. Councilor Lund felt if they were promoting "history" they should keep the historic look that already existed in the downtown. Councilor Pope explained the initial markup was just a demonstration to see how things work. Mr. Beckwith reported the photos provided by the Lewis County Historical Museum showed Market Boulevard with angle parking on both sides, and it being a two-way street. He added he did not see any photos of what Chehalis Avenue looked like.

Councilor Dawes stated it was tough because they had people who wanted to see change; however, the minute they try to do something everybody starts complaining about it. He felt they needed to give it a chance, and hoped everyone would look at it objectively.

Councilor Lund spoke briefly about the planting of trees in the downtown area, adding he thought trees were nice; however, he hoped they would take into consideration that the trees would block the signage of businesses in the area.

Mr. Beckwith first addressed the question of parking. He noted, over the length of Chehalis, by putting angle parking on one side and parallel on the other, they would gain 40 percent more parking stalls. Mr. Beckwith recommended they do a demonstration first before making any permanent changes. He then spoke to Councilor Lund's concern about the trees, adding in the past there was tendency to plant lots of trees in downtown districts; and then there was a feeling that it detracted from the buildings, so they clear cut them. He reported the University of Washington did studies on what the impact of trees was on customer behavior, as well as merchant opinions on them. Mr. Beckwith indicated merchants were not very fond of them, but what they found was customers tended to go where there were more trees, and they liked the canopy feel rather than little potted plants. He noted studies showed customers actually spent more in those types of districts than they did in treeless districts. Mr. Beckwith reported there were specific kinds of trees for business districts, which limb up and are not so overpowering that they block storefronts.

City Manager MacReynold reminded the council it was a temporary pilot project, and that the four additional parking spaces were only in the three block area of the pilot project. He added it was an opportunity to try something new to see how it would work, and then decide what to do after they get feedback from the businesses and community. City Manager MacReynold felt Mr. Beckwith had given the city a lot of opportunities, and the city was taking a fiscally responsible approach.

Councilor Dawes stated, as comments come up, they as a council had to let people know they want to give it a try to see if it would work, with the least impact on costs. He believed people want to see change, but resist it at the same time.

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Councilor Pope reminded the council that the trees were not going to cost the city anything because the Chehalis Foundation had taken over that part of the project.

Mayor Ketchum closed the work session at 5:39 p.m. and announced the council would take a twenty minute recess and reopen the regular meeting at 6:03 p.m. Mayor Ketchum welcomed Lewis County Commissioner Bill Schulte to the meeting.

2. **Spring Street Development.** Frank Dipola (104 Whitney Boulevard, Chehalis) reported he had been working on a development project on Spring Street for almost two years, adding it seemed like things just kept going back and forth and nothing was being accomplished. Mr. Dipola submitted several exhibits for the council to review. After briefing the council about his concerns, Mayor Ketchum suggested Mr. Dipola call and set up a meeting with City Manager MacReynold and staff, to try and resolve any outstanding issues through the development review committee process.

3. **Second Quarter Review of 2009 Revenues and Expenditures.** City Manager MacReynold reported the administration made a commitment as part of the 2009 budget process to brief the council quarterly on the status of revenues and expenditures. He stated it didn't appear the revenue situation was getting any better, at least with the current information provided. City Manager MacReynold noted he made some administrative changes, which he had already briefed the council on.

Eva Lindgren stated the bottom line of the general fund was not looking good. She reported on the results from the first half of the year, adding at first glance they looked pretty desperate. Ms. Lindgren indicated sales and use tax revenues were still down, which was expected. She pointed out that because the city had so many significant on-going grants, the negative situation was largely due to timing issues. Ms. Lindgren reported they had received some good one-time receipts that will help for the year.

City Manager MacReynold stated the administration recognized a few weeks ago that the situation was not getting any better, and administratively the management team went through a phase 2 reduction process. He provided the council with a worksheet outlining both proposals for phase 1 and 2, and addressed some of the phase 2 reductions, which included:

- A combination of one-time only revenues
- Truing up what utilities were paying versus what the general fund was paying with respect to some positions
- Furloughs
- Layoffs

City Manager MacReynold reported the firefighters were very cooperative in working with the administration to determine what they could do to not have a position laid off. It was their decision to do additional furlough time, which would bring in more money than the layoff would have saved. City Manager MacReynold stated he greatly appreciated the union was willing to step up to the plate and make that effort.

City Manager MacReynold stated phase 2 would be implemented in order to make sure there were enough reserves going into 2010. He added, based on the numbers provided, they had to deal with the reality that the trend was very clear. City Manager MacReynold reported both the sales tax and the permit revenues were significantly low from what had been projected for 2009, which was really hurting the city financially.

Councilor Lund reported they used to say, 'when times were tough the bar owners did great.' He added times were so tough that even the bar owners were not doing that well.

Councilor Dawes stated one good sign was people were paying their property tax. He commented on phase 2, noting there appeared to be a lot of charge-off to utilities. Councilor Dawes stated he was very uncomfortable with that, because enterprise funds were watched very closely by auditors. City Manager MacReynold assured Councilor Dawes, with confidence, what they did was true-up what should have been charged off to the utility. He indicated the finance manager was very intense about any changes made to the utilities, and spent a significant amount of time looking at what people actually did. City Manager MacReynold believed the numbers they came up with would meet the test and scrutiny of the auditor. Ms. Lindgren noted the allocation, especially within public works, had not been reviewed or reallocated in a long time.

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Councilor Lund stated he agreed with Councilor Dawes; however, he believed it was not the auditor they needed to worry about, but rather the performance auditor who came around every few years.

4. **Consent Calendar.** Mayor Ketchum announced the council would pull the 1960 Fireliner fire engine from item number 8 on the consent calendar, and discuss it later in the meeting. Councilor Dawes moved to approve the consent calendar comprised of the following:

- a. Minutes of the regular meeting of July 27, 2009;
- b. Claim Vouchers No. 94170-94337 in the amount of \$890,895.67 dated July 20, 2009;
- c. Accept National Avenue 2009 Flood Repair Project as complete and release retainage to Martin Sand and Gravel, Inc., in the amount of \$8,646.11; and
- d. Accept bid from Bob Gallagher in the amount \$1,111.11 for the purchase of the surplussed 1976 American LaFrance Fire Engine.

The motion was seconded by Councilor Taylor and carried unanimously.

5. **Staff Reports.**

a. **Public Meeting on Hazard Mitigation Grant Application Process.** Bob Nacht reported a public meeting would take place on Monday, August 17, at 6:00 p.m. in the VR Lee building, to discuss a hazard mitigation grant application the city intended on applying for. He stated the January 2009 flood generated a disaster declaration and they now had the ability to apply for mitigation funding. Mr. Nacht stated they intended on applying for an elevation program for approximately 34 houses, adding they had to qualify under the FEMA disaster mitigation criteria. He noted after going through the technical analysis, not all of the 34 would qualify based on the frequency, depth, and the risk factor that the 2009 flood presented, as opposed to all other floods. Mr. Nacht reported the council was invited to attend the meeting, at which time staff would be making a presentation and soliciting comments.

b. **Community Rating System (CRS) Reclassification to Category 5.** Mr. Nacht reported Bobbi Boone had been working tirelessly for the last couple of years, and in doing so, generated enough credit points in the CRS program to get a class 5 rating for the city. He noted for every 500 credit points, the city received a reduction in a class. Mr. Nacht stated the city was currently qualified as a class 5 community and would receive a 25 percent reduction in the cost of flood insurance premiums for properties within the city, including the city itself. He added the new rate should go into affect in October.

c. **Joint Council Work Session with Centralia.** City Manager MacReynold reminded the council about the joint council work session on Tuesday, August 18, at 6:00 p.m., at Centralia City Hall. He reported the councils would be briefed on the Army Corp of Engineer flood control project.

6. **Council Reports.**

a. **Lewis County Historical Museum Update.** Councilor Dawes reported the Lewis County Historical Museum pancake breakfast was pretty busy, adding they rose close to \$1,200. He noted they were finishing up some planting and working on the small strip of grass area out front. Councilor Dawes stated, for some reason, they took the new railing down around the ramp area on Front Street. Commissioner Schulte indicated it was removed so it could be painted.

Councilor Dawes reported the museum would be hosting a 'Business After Hours' event in September.

b. **Events Attended by the Mayor.** Mayor Ketchum stated he attended Krazy Dayz on Saturday, August 1, adding he flipped pancakes at the museum in the morning and helped judge the mint dessert contest in the afternoon.

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7. **Introduction of Proposed Changes to the Development Regulations 2009.** Mr. Nacht reported the most significant proposal of the revisions was to the city's subdivision ordinance in the urban growth area (UGA), having to do with the accommodation of the interest of the Port of Chehalis. He stated the Port was in the process of creating a programmatic

environmental mitigation project for future development in the Port area, and they were updating their Master Plan. Mr. Nacht reported the Port was desirous of having the city's regulations accommodate their master plan as the governing regulatory document for development in the industrial development district, and the city was desirous of accommodating the Port's interest.

Mr. Nacht reported most of the other proposed revisions were housekeeping measures, or issues that had been brought to them over the year. He requested the council hold a public hearing on August 24, at 6:05 p.m., to receive public comment on the proposed revisions.

Councilor Lund stated Mr. Nacht had done a great job developing and promoting the city. He felt the city would benefit from the streamlined process that Mr. Nacht created for new businesses coming into town. Mr. Nacht pointed out that part of the reason it worked as well as it did was because of the interlocal agreement the city had with Lewis County for development permitting in the UGA, and the county's adoption of the city's regulatory requirements for application in the UGA.

Councilor Dawes inquired about proposed revision 'D' concerning the security bond for fireworks stand permits. He asked if they were required to have a city business license. Mr. Nacht indicated the operator of the fireworks stand had to have a city business license. He added non-profits were also required to have a license; however, there was no fee to the non-profit for the license. Mr. Nacht stated the \$100 security bond covered some level of protection and assured the area was cleaned up after the event. He added it was not really problematic; however, there was no real guidance on how the bond was to be requested back, or how the city would return it, if they deserved it back.

Councilor Dawes felt there was a cost to the city for having to permit a fireworks stand, and to return their security bond. Mr. Nacht indicated there was an additional permit fee for a fireworks stand itself, in addition to the \$100 bond.

8. **1960 Fireliner Fire Engine.** Councilor Lund stated, after reading the agenda and finding they could only get \$1,111 for the engine, he thought there might be an opportunity to keep it for the council to use for special events. Councilor Taylor thought that was a good idea. Mayor Ketchum noted they had been talking for some time about finding something for the council, adding if the truck ran it could be their float.

Fire Chief Kelvin Johnson clarified that the bid for the 1960 fire engine was \$2,222. He stated the 'Local' owned an older fire truck that could be used by the council if they so desired. Mayor Ketchum stated that truck was used by the fire department, which didn't leave them any opportunity to use it. Chief Johnson indicated the notice that went out on the vehicle stated it would be sold to the highest bidder and he didn't recall any language to be able to reject any bids. Mayor Ketchum requested the administration investigate whether or not the truck was roadworthy, and if not, find out what it would cost to get it working so they could use it. City Manager MacReynold stated they would report back to the council before the next council meeting.

9. **Executive Session Pursuant to RCW 42.30.140(4)(a) – Collective Bargaining.** Mayor Ketchum announced the council would convene into executive session at 6:53 p.m. pursuant to RCW 42.30.140(4)(a) collective bargaining for approximately 30 minutes and it was possible that following the conclusion of the executive session the council would consider action on an item not currently on the agenda.

Mayor Ketchum closed the executive session at 7:11 p.m. and reopened the regular meeting.

Councilor Dawes moved that the council approve the collective bargaining agreement between Teamsters Local 252 representing the Uniformed Police Officers and the city of Chehalis for the period of time January 1, 2008 to December 31, 2011, and authorize the city manager to execute the agreement as prepared.

The motion was seconded by Councilor Taylor and carried unanimously.

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There being no further business to come before the council, the meeting adjourned a 7:13 p.m.

Mayor

Attest:

City Clerk

SUGGESTED MOTION

I move that the council approve the minutes of the regular city council meeting of August 10, 2009.