

June 22, 2009

The Chehalis city council met in regular session on Monday, June 22, 2009, in the Chehalis city hall. Mayor Ketchum called the meeting to order at 5:31 p.m. with the following council members present: Terry Harris, Dr. Isaac Pope, Robin Fuller, Chad Taylor, Daryl Lund, and Dennis Dawes. Staff present included: Merlin MacReynold, City Manager; Amanda Vey, Assistant City Attorney; Judy Schave, City Clerk; Glenn Schaffer, Police Chief; Kelvin Johnson, Fire Chief; Eva Lindgren, Finance Manager; Peggy Hammer, Human Resources Administrator; Bob Nacht, Community Development Director; Tim Grochowski, Public Works Director; and Rick Sahlin, Street Superintendent. Members of the news media in attendance included Marquise Allen of *The Chronicle* and Paul Walker of KITI.

1. **Work Session – Report on Snow and Ice Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) - Remediation.** Prior to the regular meeting, the council met with the administration to follow up on a previous discussion regarding snow and ice removal procedures. Tim Grochowski gave a report on their findings and provided recommendations to improve the existing policies.

Mr. Grochowski reported, at a meeting four months ago, there were some issues brought up about the city's snow and ice removal policies and procedures. He stated the public works department met with staff from the community development department and police department, to develop a strategy on how to deal with future weather events. Mr. Grochowski reported the goal was to improve upon the existing SOPs that serve the city during inclement weather conditions.

Mr. Grochowski reported they contacted eight different agencies to find out how they responded to inclement weather conditions, and found that some had more detailed policies than others. He noted two of their objectives included: to ensure routes were accessible as quickly as possible; and to clear streets to allow safe public access. Mr. Grochowski reported the group would be meeting again in October, prior to the winter season, to talk about what they should prepare for.

Councilor Pope suggested the administration look at incorporating a 'winter hotline' for citizens to call to get information and to voice their complaints as issues came up. Councilor Fuller felt a hotline would also be good to have during a flood event. Councilor Harris suggested adding a dedicated phone line that could be used at any time. Mr. Grochowski stated he would look into it and if it wasn't too expensive, they would just implement it. Councilor Dawes felt most of the calls were going to be public works related and perhaps they should be directed to one of the public works lines.

Councilor Dawes stated one concern he had from last year was, after Market Boulevard was cleared, the trucks kept going back and forth on it while a number of side streets were left unattended. He felt there were really only two things people needed to get out for; work and supplies. Councilor Dawes believed they first needed to identify the main streets to get people out and about between the two cities, and to businesses. He noted another issue would be the schools; however, most of the time they would be closed, or at least two hours late because of safety concerns. Councilor Dawes stated he would like to see the administration get back to that type of response, adding in the past the city had always been complimented on the fact that our streets were in better shape and were easier to get around on than in surrounding communities.

Councilor Fuller stated he was impressed with what the administration came up with, as far as looking at the whole area. He asked if there wasn't more they could do for the streets on the hills. Mr. Grochowski reported the hill streets and neighborhood collectors would be the last streets they would hit. He added, if after all the major routes were done and they felt comfortable about going up the hills, they would; however, they would not be going up Winchester Hill because they couldn't make it up there with a snow plow.

Mr. Grochowski reported some people felt the city really concentrated on the areas around I-5, such as 13th Street, Main Street and Chamber Way, noting they appeared to be well taken care of. He indicated a lot of that was done by the Department of Transportation, who put down deicer on the off ramps, and vehicles coming off of I-5 carried it onto our streets.

Councilor Harris inquired about Washington Avenue and Adams Avenue, asking if the city vehicles couldn't start down near 11th Street where there wasn't as much incline. Mr. Grochowski believed both Washington and Adams Avenues were hit from 11th Street north. He added they were not on the list of street priorities because neither one was a main arterial or major route.

Councilor Taylor asked when and who would make the decision to shut down a road. Mr. Grochowski reported that would come from the police department or from public works.

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City Manager MacReynold stated he was very pleased with the policy as well, noting it took a comprehensive approach and a look at the bigger picture. He appreciated Councilor Fuller's positive comments about the guidelines, adding it provided a longstanding approach to what they were trying to accomplish. City Manager MacReynold felt Councilor Pope's idea of an emergency contact number was very good and didn't believe it would be that difficult to implement.

Councilor Dawes noted from time-to-time the administration had set up hotlines, which was usually one of the numbers they already had and could be used as part of the emergency preparedness plan. He inquired about the administration's investigation into purchasing deicing equipment, asking if it was necessary to go out and buy another truck, or if they could just use one of their current vehicles. Mr. Grochowski reported the equipment would put a lot of weight on a truck and he didn't know if they wanted to go that way. He believed they could probably use the existing chassis of the oil distributing truck; however that vehicle was too big to go where they wanted it to go. Mr. Grochowski stated they could also look at taking the bed off one of the dump trucks, but that would leave them down one vehicle.

Councilor Fuller asked if the policy guidelines would lend themselves to be put on the city web site, along with Dr. Pope's idea of a hotline. City Manager MacReynold stated they would. Mr. Grochowski felt the information should be on the web site year-round.

Mayor Ketchum felt it was a useful exercise, even though the city doesn't have events too often.

Mayor Ketchum closed the work session at 5:51 p.m. and announced the council would take a ten minute recess before opening the regular meeting at 6:02 p.m.

Mayor Ketchum welcomed Lewis County Commissioner Bill Schulte to the meeting. He also noted an amendment to the agenda, to move item No. 6 - Web Site Redesign Project from the consent calendar to new business. There being no objections, the item was moved to new business.

2. **Consent Calendar.** Councilor Dawes moved to approve the consent calendar comprised of the following:

- a. Minutes of the regular meeting of June 8, 2009;
- b. Claim Vouchers No. 93728-93834 in the amount of \$374,902.98 dated June 1, 2009; Claim Vouchers No. 93835-94006 in the amount of \$327,128.56 dated June 15, 2009; and Payroll Vouchers No. 32391-32488 and 639-711 in the amount of \$712,449.42 dated May 29, 2009; and
- c. Set date and time of July 13, 2009, at 6:05 p.m. for public hearing on final action of condemnation of property.

The motion was seconded by Councilor Taylor and carried unanimously.

3. **Staff Reports.**

a. **Report on Bid Award for National Avenue 2009 Flood Infrastructure Repair Work.** Mr. Grochowski reported the city received five bids for the project, which were opened on June 9. The low bid came from Martin Sand and Gravel, Inc., in the amount of \$208,880. He indicated the original estimate for the project was \$399,428.

Mr. Grochowski reported, due to the timeline necessary to complete the project to meet the Washington State Department of Transportation Local Program Guidelines for funding reimbursement, at the May 26 council meeting, the council authorized the city manager to execute the contract agreement. He noted the contractor was moving fast on the project, and they were able to get Federal Highways to buy off on mitigating the project, to add shotcrete to the shoulder area to try and prevent similar damage from occurring in the future. Mr. Grochowski stated the contractor was also cleaning out a 36-inch culvert, which ran from the open ditch area near Yard Birds, over to the Lewis County Mall. He reported the project should be completed by July 3.

b. **May Financial Report.** Ms. Lindgren reported the May financial report showed they were still lagging in sales and use tax. She noted, in the June report, the council would see the rest of the receipts for general property tax, reminding them

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that they received a little more collection than usual because some people were paying the second portion of their annual property tax in advance. Ms. Lindgren reported on grants and entitlements, noting she was generating several grant reimbursement requests and anticipated getting quite a bit in. She felt they should be ahead of the curve within the next month or so because of the Chamber Way Project.

Ms. Lindgren reported she had been working extensively with the Washington State Military Department and FEMA, on the two most recent disasters. She noted they didn't quite have all the worksheets done; however they were close to knowing what the total damages were for the 2009 flood.

Ms. Lindgren continued discussion of the revenues, including proceeds of long-term debt and operating transfers-in. She then reviewed expenditures, noting a variance that was slightly to the positive of 2.5 percent. Ms. Lindgren reported, overall, they were showing a negative \$500,000 net; part of that being the transfer-in of \$318,000 from the public facilities reserve fund in accordance with the council's expressed desire to use the money to pay off the interfund debt. She noted the money was transferred into the general fund in order to pay the interfund debt back to the water and sewer funds.

Ms. Lindgren talked briefly about the utility funds. She discussed the interfund principal repayment, adding because the water fund had provided \$850,000 and the wastewater fund provided \$600,000, she reimbursed the funds so that the same amount would now be owed to each fund. Ms. Lindgren indicated, at a later date, a portion of the principal payment to both the water and sewer funds would be re-coded to reflect the interest amount due on the debt.

Ms. Lindgren reported the storm utility fund was ahead of the curve to the positive by \$52,000.

The council briefly discussed the projected shortfall in sales tax revenue through the end of the year. Ms. Lindgren estimated the total shortfall would be roughly \$400,000; adding year-to-date, the drop was 18.8 percent from last year.

Ms. Lindgren reported she talked with the State Department of Revenue regarding the streamlined sales tax mitigation issue. She was pleased to report they had made some changes to the underlying data, and as a result, the city would be receiving over \$33,000 at the end of the quarter.

4. Council Reports.

a. **Community Health Network.** Councilor Pope reported the Lewis County Health Partnership had been in existence in Lewis County for the last 10 to 15 years, and had initiated several different programs in both the county and the community. He stated the partnership was going to become a Community Health Network, which was part of a taxing authority. Councilor Pope asked Ms. Lindgren if she could review the information to help him decipher it. Ms. Lindgren noted she would do her best.

b. **Lewis County Historical Museum.** Councilor Dawes reported the paver project at the museum was moving along; however, they came across an old fuel tank in the ground, which needed to be removed. He noted they contacted Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway, who responded very quickly and would be taking care of the cost related to removing the old tank. Councilor Dawes indicated the paver project was still on schedule.

c. **Invitation to Sky Lane Regarding Noise.** Councilor Dawes reported he received an invitation from the residents up on Sky Lane, located above the Lewis County Mall. He stated the crux of their complaint was a large amount of noise coming from some kind of dance hall in Yard Birds. Councilor Dawes noted the residents reported they had contacted the city about the issue and were told nothing could be done. He felt it was something the city needed to follow up on, since it seemed to be a problem seven days a week.

City Manager MacReynold reported the police department had been working with the residents, and suggested staff give the council a briefing at the next meeting as to what was going on. Councilor Dawes thought that was a good idea.

d. **Various Meetings Attended.** Councilor Dawes reported he, along with other council members and city staff, attended the following events:

- Ribbon cutting at the Chehalis Middle School for their new 9-lane track

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- Ribbon cutting at Deco Gifts
- Flag dedication ceremony at Liberty Plaza
- Ribbon cutting at the Chehalis Farmers Market
- Business after hours at the Holiday Inn Express

Mayor Ketchum added he also attended a ceremony where Congressman Baird was to present the Fire Districts with grant money, which they were awarded for the purchase of radios and computers; however the Congressman was unable to attend due to flight delays. Mayor Ketchum also judged a car show, and hosted one of the Chehalis Homes during the Visiting Nurses Open Home Tour.

e. **Solid Waste Advisory Committee and Chehalis Business Association Updates.** Councilor Harris reported he attended a Solid Waste Advisory Committee meeting on June 10. He stated they were very pleased that the city came to a conclusion on its solid waste service, and immediately inquired about the city receiving glass pickup.

Councilor Harris reported he attended the Chehalis Business Association meeting last week where they had a lot of new faces, which was very encouraging. He felt a lot more people were getting involved with upcoming events, adding on July 17 they were planning a Chehalis "Amazing Race" event, and encouraged everyone to take part.

5. **Resolution No. 9-2009, First and Final Reading – 2010-2015 Six-Year Transportation Improvement Plan (STIP) Update.** Mr. Grochowski reported the projects on the STIP had been presented to the council at the previous meeting. He noted they labeled the columns on the attached Capital Improvement Plan to show the years and funding needed.

Councilor Taylor moved that the council adopt Resolution No. 9-2009 on first and final reading.

The motion was seconded by Councilor Pope and carried unanimously.

6. **Ordinance No. 845-B, First Reading – Establishing Regulations and Guidelines for Solid Waste and Recyclables Collection and Other Services.** City Manager MacReynold reported the ordinance was a critical step in moving forward on the agreement with the new garbage hauler and recycler. He indicated they held a workshop on June 8 to discuss containers and pickup schedules.

City Clerk Judy Schave reported the ordinance would amend the existing ordinance to change billing and collection of revenues, and otherwise make it consistent with the new contract with Harold Lemay Enterprises, Inc. She noted the effective date of the ordinance would be August 1, and the contractor was scheduled to begin providing service on August 2, 2009.

Mayor Ketchum asked if they would have the new rate schedule before the second reading. Ms. Schave reported she would make sure the council had that information prior to the next meeting.

Councilor Dawes moved to pass Ordinance No. 845-B on first reading.

Councilor Harris seconded the motion.

Councilor Lund inquired about Section 12 – Placement of Solid Waste Containers, noting it stated they couldn't place solid waste containers in the alley. He added they were in the alleys all over town and wondered if they were going to make everybody get rid of their dumpsters.

Ms. Schave stated she believed customers could not leave their containers in the alley permanently, but should only put them out on their designated pickup days; however she would confirm that with the City Attorney. Councilor Lund stated customers couldn't move dumpsters into their buildings. Councilor Pope felt the key word was 'on.' Ms. Schave reported she would speak with the city attorney and report back to the council.

The motion carried unanimously.

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7. **Web Site Redesign Project.** City Manager MacReynold reported the web site redesign project was part of the Chehalis Renaissance plan, which would make our current web site more 'user' friendly. He noted the council was provided some additional information on the history of the web site, and how it got to where it was to date.

Councilor Taylor felt a web site was very important to have and that it was important to look at all of our options. He noted he didn't feel the administration had done that, by looking at just one vendor. Councilor Taylor thought there might be another company out there who could do a better job, or had some different ideas on how the city could host it.

City Manager MacReynold asked if Councilor Taylor was saying he would like the administration to put out a request for proposals (RFP) on the whole web site and the update. Councilor Taylor stated yes, adding it was just an idea.

Councilor Pope asked if the Lodging Tax Advisory Committee approved money to pay for what they were asking for. City Manager MacReynold stated they did. Councilor Pope felt the money should then be used to update and expand the web site, which was already in existence; it was not to create a new web site. He wondered what the purpose of going out to bid was. City Manager MacReynold speculated they would pretty much be re-doing the whole web site, adding once the council approved the brand and tagline; it would change a lot of things. He noted the purpose of the web site would be to allow visitors to go in and click on different services and things to do in our city. Councilor Pope believed if they were going to use the money to create a new web site and not just expand it, they were using the wrong terminology. He asked if they were going to start from scratch. Mayor Ketchum suspected they would use some of the basis that already existed, but they would need to redesign and expand it with the new branding. City Manager MacReynold reported the council and administration information would not change, but the look would be significantly different.

Councilor Pope asked where the rest of the money would come from if they put it out to bid and it came in higher than what was approved. City Manager MacReynold noted they would do an RFP, which would allow vendors the opportunity to tell us what services they can do and for how much money. He noted the issue would come back to the council for their approval.

Councilor Lund noted he liked the idea, and perhaps the city might receive a proposal from a local vendor or someone in the county, which would keep the money local.

Councilor Taylor moved to direct the city manager to do an RFP for web site redesign and development.

The motion was seconded by Councilor Harris and carried unanimously.

There being no further business to come before the council, the meeting adjourned at 6:39 p.m.

Mayor

Attest:

City Clerk

SUGGESTED MOTION

I move that the council approve the minutes of the regular city council meeting of June 22, 2009.