

May 26, 2009

The Chehalis city council met in regular session on Tuesday, May 26, 2009, in the Chehalis city hall. Mayor Pro-tem Dawes called the meeting to order at 5:31 p.m. with the following council members present: Terry Harris, Dr. Isaac Pope, Robin Fuller, Daryl Lund, and Chad Taylor. Mayor Ketchum was absent (excused). Staff present included: Merlin MacReynold, City Manager; Bill Hillier, City Attorney; Judy Schave, City Clerk; Bob Nacht, Community Development Director; Tim Grochowski, Public Works Director; Dave Vasilauskas, Water Superintendent; and Russ Cox, Engineering Tech III.

1. **Executive Session.** Mayor Pro-tem Dawes announced the council would be in executive session pursuant to RCW 42.30.110(1)(i) – potential litigation for approximately thirty minutes and there would be no decisions following conclusion of the executive session.

Mayor Pro-tem Dawes closed the executive session at 5:57 p.m. and announced the council would take a five minute recess and reopen the regular meeting at 6:02 p.m. Additional staff included: Kelvin Johnson, Fire Chief; Joanne Schwartz, Economic Development Administrator; Eva Lindgren, Finance Manager; Peggy Hammer, Human Resources Administrator; and Judith Smith, Public Works Office Manager. Members of the news media in attendance included Marquise Allen of *The Chronicle* and Ron Hall of KITI.

2. **Letter to Chehalis-Centralia Railroad Association from Governor.** Rick Burchett reported they received a letter from Governor Christine Gregoire dated May 23, 2009, extending her greetings to those attending the Curtis Line grand reopening celebration of the Chehalis-Centralia Railroad and Museum. She noted it was a wonderful opportunity to celebrate the completion of repairs to the Curtis Line tracks, which were damaged in the 2007 flood. Mr. Burchett reported during the event, they ran eight trips and averaged approximately 100 people per trip.

Mayor Pro-tem Dawes thanked Mr. Burchett for the invitation to Saturday's grand re-opening. He felt the city had two jewels over in that area, which included the steam train and the Veterans Memorial Museum.

3. **2009 Community Farmers Market.** Brenda Book, manager of the Community Farmers Market at Chehalis, briefed the council on their fifth season in downtown Chehalis. She reported the market would open on June 16, running every Tuesday afternoon until October 27. Ms. Book stated the market couldn't have asked for a better partner than the city of Chehalis, who had been a great supporter. She reported markets around the nation were seeing an increase in sales and in 2008, sales in Chehalis increased by 55 percent over 2007.

Ms. Book reported on the results of the 2008 customer survey, which was conducted by the Chehalis Market, the Washington State Farmers Market Association, and the Lewis County Extension Office.

Ms. Book reported the market was a non-profit organization, and they only collected enough to pay for operational costs. She noted the funding dollars received through the economic development budget fully covered their printing costs over the last few seasons, which included brochures and market posters that featured local artists. Ms. Book reported they also depend on community member support on an individual basis, and are always looking for volunteers.

Ms. Book was pleased to announce the Chehalis market had received approval by the USDA, and a grant funded through the Washington State Local Farms and Healthy Kids Act, to be able to accept food stamps in exchange for market products. She added, with that, they would also now be able to accept debit and credit cards, which would increase the buying power for those who come to the market. Ms. Book noted the new project was in addition to the Farmers Market Nutrition Program, which they had participated in since 2006. She reported last year approximately \$16,000 worth of vouchers were received by market vendors from Lewis County individuals that live below the poverty line.

Ms. Book reported on upcoming events, of which the proceeds would go toward offsetting the costs of the new technology for the wireless machine to take food stamps and debit/credit cards. She noted they would also be adding some customer seating at the market, to allow customers to sit and enjoy the afternoon.

Ms. Book thanked the city, as well as Joanne Schwartz for her efforts in making sure the market had a welcome home on Boistfort over the last five years. She felt the market had become a part of the community, and they all benefited from the work of Ms. Schwartz. Ms. Book stated they looked forward to their continued partnership with the city.

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Mayor Pro-tem Dawes stated the city certainly liked having the market, adding they had definitely improved things downtown. He was also glad to hear that business had improved and hoped that it would continue to do so. Mayor Pro-tem Dawes suggested the administration make sure the market's website was linked to the city's website.

Councilor Harris asked if the posters would be placed at the Department of Social and Health Services office. Ms. Book indicated they already were, along with some handbills with a map to the market.

4. **Consent Calendar.** Councilor Taylor moved to approve the consent calendar comprised of the following:

- a. Minutes of the regular meeting of May 11, 2009;
- b. Resolution No. 7-2009 – Surplus city property (Service weapon - Shupp);
- c. Resolution No. 8-2009 – Surplus city property (WiFi equipment); and
- d. Set date and time of June 8, 2009, at 6:05 p.m. for a public hearing on the 2010-2015 Six-Year Transportation Improvement Program.

The motion was seconded by Councilor Pope and carried unanimously.

5. **Staff Reports.**

a. **April Financial Report.** Eva Lindgren talked briefly on the property tax, which she noted was not reflected in the report. She stated she had spent some time down at the Lewis County Treasurers office going over their reports. Ms. Lindgren indicated they had collected approximately 54 percent of the property tax for the year, noting they were seeing more people pre-paying their full amount for the year. City Manager MacReynold reported the property tax information would be reflected in next month's report.

Councilor Pope inquired about the water sales, comparing 2008 to 2009. Ms. Lindgren briefly reviewed the water fund revenues. Mayor Pro-tem Dawes reported the question was brought up at a prior meeting and it was thought that the increase in the 2008 connection fees for both water and sewer came from hookup fees for the new motel.

b. **Update on Chamber Way Project.** Tim Grochowski reported a news release was sent to the media last week regarding the Chamber Way improvement project. He noted the contractor would be shutting off the traffic signal power at Chamber Way and Louisiana Avenue on Tuesday, May 27, starting at 6:00 a.m. through Thursday, May 29th. Mr. Grochowski reported the area would be flagged 24-hours a day during that time period. He felt there would be a little bit of congestion; however, there was no way around it.

Councilor Pope noted during the construction of the LeBree Road overpass, the state used portable traffic signals, and asked if the city had looked into using those instead of flaggers. Mr. Grochowski reported they did look into it; however as part of the contract the contractor chose not to go that route because it was cheaper to use flaggers. He noted some portable units also required someone to run the remote control, although the equipment used at LeBree Road may have been on a timer.

Mayor Pro-tem Dawes indicated from what he heard on the radio, the project was scheduled to be done on time. Mr. Grochowski reported the project was currently 70 percent complete. He added the other three intersection lights, at the north and south bound ramps of I-5, and State Street would be shut off and the new lights turned on in the next three to four weeks.

Mayor Pro-tem Dawes asked what the plan was for the old signals. Mr. Grochowski reported the north and south bound lights would go back to the state, and the lights at State Street and Louisiana Avenue belonged to the city. Mayor Pro-tem Dawes asked if they could potentially be used somewhere else. Mr. Grochowski indicated the city planned on keeping the equipment and making good use of it, noting it would fit in the city's other boxes. He reported the traffic masts were specifically designed for their current locations, and the city would be contacting the Department of Transportation to see if they had any interest in those.

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6. **Council Reports.**

a. **Flood Authority Update.** Councilor Taylor reported he attended the flood authority meeting last week, at which time they voted to retain Commissioner Ron Averill as the Chair; and the Vice-Chair went to Grays Harbor County. He indicated it was a split vote and Commissioner Averill won by one vote. Councilor Taylor stated they would be receiving an update on phase 2 at their next meeting. He added they were also asked to look at another basin-wide study, to be able to give a number value to things that the Army Corps of Engineer doesn't usually put a dollar value to, such as wetlands and fish. Councilor Taylor stated the discussion was postponed to the next meeting until they could get some more information.

City Manager MacReynold reported the study was actually coming through the Chehalis River Basin Partnership. He added it was a more comprehensive evaluation of the financial impacts on basins. City Manager MacReynold indicated they were projecting to spend approximately \$900,000 to do the study, of which the authority's portion would be about \$75,000. He added there was some question about the openness of the study and they really needed some checkpoints to insure that the authority was receiving the information they need. In addition, the study would need to focus on the elements that the authority was looking at, and they would need to make sure those were included in what they were evaluating.

Councilor Taylor added they also wanted to make sure the studies they had going on complimented each other, rather than repeating a lot of the same stuff over and over again.

b. **Chehalis Business Association (CBA) Meeting Update.** Councilor Fuller reported he attended a CBA meeting, which was very well attended. He indicated the Krazy Dayz Car Show was moving forward and on schedule, and should be a lot of fun again this year.

c. **Streamline Sales Tax (SST) Update.** Councilor Harris reported it was mentioned at the last city council meeting that he, along with Mayor Pro-tem Dawes, Mayor Ketchum and City Manager MacReynold met with Senator Swecker, who was very enthused about doing something in response to the issue the city was having with SST and the Department of Revenue. He reported he and the city manager met with Representative Alexander last week and by the time the conversation was done, he believed Representative Alexander had the same amount of enthusiasm. Councilor Harris stated it was nice to listen to Representative Alexander because he was very aware of the SST from all aspects.

Councilor Harris reported he had been sending out phone calls to different mayors, city managers and financial directors from the original 10 cities that were in the group that challenged the SST at its onset. He stated he had received several return phone calls, noting there was a lot of apprehension and a lot of questions, the first being, what side was he on. Councilor Harris noted the financial director for the City of Kent was disturbed by the fact that DOR continued to hide behind the legalities of not being allowed to share other cities and entities tax information with other entities, which protected them from having to be 100 percent transparent.

Councilor Harris reported there would be challenges ahead and so far he had gained some interest, but not a lot of momentum. He noted over the next couple of weeks he hoped to try to re-infect a few people, to see if they could get some communities together to lead some kind of a challenge.

Mayor Pro-tem Dawes asked if there was any more contact made with Representative DeBolt's office, stating he thought it was important to get him on board so he could be part of the solution for us. City Manager MacReynold reported the administration was continuing the effort to get something set up.

d. **Update on Lewis County Historical Museum Paver Project.** Mayor Pro-tem Dawes reported the paving and retaining wall project was still underway at the museum.

e. **Relay for Life.** Mayor Pro-tem Dawes reported he participated in one of the food service booths at the Relay for Life event, which took place on May 15-16, at the Centralia High School "Tiger" Stadium.

7. **Chehalis Renaissance Plan.** City Manager MacReynold talked briefly about the plan, noting it was a two-year project that started out from a discussion with the council about how to get their arms around the city's future. He stated, as part of the project, the city hired Tom Beckwith as the consultant; held numerous workshops and surveys; and engaged a great many

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of our community leaders and members. City Manager MacReynold stated the council was briefed on May 18 on the details of the project, noting Mr. Beckwith was available to answer any questions the council might have.

City Manager MacReynold recognized the importance of Joanne Schwartz, who staffed the process; the Industrial Commission, specifically Gail Shaw, who took the project on with a passion; and the Economic Development Council, who provided location, support, and technical help through the whole process. He believed that without their help, what the council had before them would not have happened. City Manager MacReynold indicated it was a 25-year plan that would give the city a chance to change its future in a way that we want it to change, and asked for the council's support and approval.

Councilor Pope stated it had been a long process and long overdue. He noted it was encouraging to see so many people in the community involved, and the groups who were willing to take on various projects in an effort to help make it happen.

Councilor Fuller stated he was excited about the project and felt they were heading in the right direction.

Councilor Lund thanked the 'Father' of the Industrial Park, Mr. Gail Shaw, adding he was one of the shining stars and a leader in the community. He noted Mr. Shaw helped the city 50 years ago and now here he was helping the city again, adding we were lucky to have him.

Mayor Pro-tem Dawes felt it was a long-range program that would not get done overnight. He was grateful that it wasn't a program that someone thought of and left at the council's doorstep, adding it was going to take continued partnerships with the citizen groups. Mayor Pro-tem Dawes stated it would take small significant steps to show progress, and the continued interest would help the program gain the momentum needed to get through it. He felt, even though we were seeing some challenging economic times, this just might be the time to do it, adding good things come from tough challenges. Mayor Pro-tem Dawes stated he was supportive and enthusiastic about the project, and hoped it would be one that they could get started on and carry out.

Councilor Pope moved that the council approve the Chehalis Renaissance Plan as presented.

The motion was seconded by Councilor Taylor and carried unanimously.

Mr. Shaw stated it was going to be a 'people' program that would take some money, and a lot of enthusiasm and leadership. He noted they needed to find a way to get enthusiastic support from a dozen or so different committees, who are interested in different parts of our town. Mr. Shaw believed all they really needed were people and enthusiasm, and Chehalis had it.

8. Award Contract for Solid Waste and Recyclables Collection and Other Services. City Manager MacReynold reported the administration was recommending the council consider awarding the contract to the lowest overall bidder, which was Harold LeMay Enterprises, Inc. He noted representatives for LeMay, Inc. were available to answer any specific questions the council might have related to their bid. City Manager MacReynold stated the administration was also recommending the council set up a work session prior to the next regular meeting, to make specific decisions about how often they pickup for garbage and recycling.

Judy Schave reported, at the direction of the council, the administration met with the city attorney and revised the bid documents to include a higher performance bond of \$100,000; a fee schedule to include a one-bin recycling container, and an alternate pick-up schedule for weekly or every other week pickup for garbage service.

Ms. Schave noted the city received two bids: one from J&L Venture's, dba as M&M Disposal Services; and the other from Harold LeMay Enterprises, Inc. She noted their recommendation was based on the overall low bid, which was \$2,953 less per month than the second lowest bid.

Councilor Harris moved that the council accept the bid from Harold LeMay Enterprises, Inc. and authorize the city manager to execute the contract agreement.

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Councilor Taylor seconded the motion.

Councilor Harris stated his concern with the two bids, in comparison, was LeMay's bid was comparably better on the commercial end and not on the citizen's end, while M&M's bid seemed to be more resident friendly with a higher cost to the businesses. Councilor Harris stated he wrestled with trying to determine which way they should go, and what would be the most responsible way to look at it from a council perspective.

Mayor Pro-tem Dawes stated, as Joe Citizen, he wanted to know what he was going to pay for his one can at the curb. He noted comparing his personal bill to the bid document, there was a difference between what the current rate was and what he was actually billed. Mayor Pro-tem Dawes stated it had nothing to do with the bid document; he just wanted to know what the difference was. Ms. Schave stated she would look into it and report back to Mayor Pro-tem Dawes.

Councilor Harris noted he contacted the city clerk to let her know he had some questions and concerns. He stated he was going to have a difficult time trying to explain to someone why their bill was going up, if they go with one company over the other. Councilor Harris indicated, being a business owner, he would much rather see it hit his business, than him personally. He felt the council needed to look at who they were going to impact more.

Councilor Lund believed the council had set a precedent by splitting the printing services bid, and wondered why they couldn't split the garbage bid up. City Attorney Hillier noted the bid specs were not written to do that.

Councilor Pope called for the question. The motion carried 5 to 1. Mayor Pro-tem Dawes voted against the motion, based on his earlier question about the billing, of whether there were going to be additional charges added.

Ed Lewis, Manager for Harold LeMay Enterprises, Inc., thanked the council for the opportunity, adding he looked forward to serving the City of Chehalis.

9. **National Avenue 2009 Flood Repair Work**. City Manager MacReynold reported the administration was trying to put closure on the work being done on National Avenue. Mr. Grochowski stated the bids were out for the National Avenue flood repair work. He noted because it was a federal project, they were required to advertise for two consecutive weeks. Mr. Grochowski reported the bid needed to be awarded on June 9, in order to allow the selected contractor to meet the completion deadline. Because the next council meeting fell on June 8, he asked that the council authorize the city manager to execute a contract with the lowest responsible bidder and the administration would come back to the council on June 22, with a formal presentation on the bid award. He reported the engineer's estimate was \$356,000, and the contract needed to be completed by July 5. Mr. Grochowski indicated the project would be reimbursed 100 percent from federal highway funding.

Councilor Harris moved to authorize the city manager to execute a contract agreement to the lowest responsible bidder for the National Avenue 2009 Flood Repair Work.

The motion was seconded by Councilor Pope and carried unanimously.

There being no further business to come before the council, the meeting adjourned at 6:56 p.m.

Mayor

Attest:

City Clerk

SUGGESTED MOTION

I move that the council approve the minutes of the regular city council meeting of May 26, 2009.