

April 27, 2009

The Chehalis city council met in regular session on Monday, April 27, 2009, in the Chehalis city hall. Mayor Ketchum called the meeting to order at 5:15 p.m. with the following council members present: Terry Harris, Dr. Isaac Pope, Daryl Lund, and Dennis Dawes. Councilor Taylor arrived at 5:30 p.m. and Councilor Fuller arrived at 5:45 p.m. Staff present included: Merlin MacReynold, City Manager; Bill Hillier, City Attorney; Judy Schave, City Clerk; and Peggy Hammer, Human Resources Administrator.

1. **Executive Session.** Mayor Ketchum announced the council would be in executive session pursuant to RCW 42.30.140(4)(a) – collective bargaining for approximately forty-five minutes and there would be no decisions following conclusion of the executive session.

Mayor Ketchum closed the executive session at 5:50 p.m. and announced the council would take a ten minute recess and reopen the regular meeting at 6:00 p.m. Additional staff included: Glenn Schaffer, Police Chief; Kelvin Johnson, Fire Chief; Eva Lindgren, Finance Manager; Bob Nacht, Community Development Director; Joanne Schwartz, Economic Development Administrator; Tim Grochowski, Public Works Director; and Judi Smith, Public Works Office Manager. Members of the news media in attendance included Marquise Allen of *The Chronicle* and Ron Hall of KITI.

## 2. **Citizens Business.**

a. **No Smoking Signs in City Parks.** Sonia Ferguson (184 NW Chehalis Avenue), Tobacco Prevention Coordinator for Lewis County Public Health and Social Services, reported she was working with the Girls Scouts on a project, promoting the installation of no smoking signs in the play areas of local parks. She brought with her an example of a sign used in county parks; however noted the girls had designed some signs themselves, which were attached to the letter she handed out to the council.

Ms. Ferguson stated she and the Girl Scouts did some clean up at a park in Centralia and collected two containers of cigarette butts, just around the play area alone. She noted their goal was to educate and make a healthy environment for children. Ms. Ferguson reported the sign project was completely voluntary and was non-enforceable.

Ms. Ferguson indicated the county had tobacco settlement dollars available to pay for the signs and the county would also cover the costs of labor for the installation.

Mayor Ketchum reported he was glad to see youth getting involved in projects that help everyone. The consensus of the council was to allow Ms. Ferguson and the Girls Scouts to work with city staff to have the signs installed in the play areas.

b. **Chehalis Renaissance.** Gail Shaw (815 SE Evergreen Drive) reported three years ago the city had a great opportunity to build a great library, and after a lot of hard work by everyone, the city now had a 'paid for' Library. He noted once they had the library, it seemed like a great opportunity to expand that opportunity into the Chehalis Renaissance. Mr. Shaw stated he attended a lot of the meetings and tried to be enthusiastic and involve the council in the enthusiasm that came along. He noted, at first, he may have made some snide remarks about how the city had a dysfunctional operation, and was now before the council to apologize for any remarks he may have made that sounded like was wasn't 100 percent behind them. Mr. Shaw reported the message was out and people were aware of what was going on. He felt they were now at a point where things were moving in the right direction and he appreciated that. Mr. Shaw stated the city council was a great group to work with.

Mayor Ketchum thanked Mr. Shaw for all of his hard work and asked that he keep it up.

c. **Special Thanks to City.** Frank Mason (545 N. Market Boulevard) reported he wanted to thank the city council and staff for the great job they were doing on the city sidewalks, curbs and gutters. He added he was very proud of the city and the job they were doing as far as keeping those areas clean.

## 3. **Presentations.**

a. **Certificate of Appreciation – Dr. Henry 'Hank' Kirk, Historic Preservation Commission.** Mayor Ketchum presented a certificate of appreciation to Dr. Henry 'Hank' Kirk for his 18 years of service to the community. Dr. Kirk thanked the city for the opportunity to serve and introduced Doug Burton, the new Chair for the Historic Preservation Commission.

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Mr. Burton introduced the members of the commission, including: Marrilee Kenyon, DJ Hartman, Barbara Mason, and Bambi Forsman. He added they were looking forward to working with everyone in the city on the Renaissance Plan and the façade improvement program. Mr. Burton presented Dr. Kirk with a check in the amount of \$100 made out to the University of Livingstonia Foundation. Dr. Kirk noted that was perfect, because that was where the money would be going anyway.

b. **Library Advisory Reports.** Library Advisory Board Chairman Chuck Hill introduced the other members of the board, including: Jim Hill, Teresa Blinks, Caryn Knight, Brian Zylstra, and Community Librarian Corine Aiken. Mr. Hill thanked the city for the important contributions it made to the Vernetta Smith Timberland Library. He noted the city agreed to tear down its own building and go through the expense and hard work to move to a new location, and the board really appreciated that. Mr. Hill thanked the city for contributing over \$100,000 to make the new library more ADA accessible, noting the money helped pay for the drive-up window and ramp system. He noted the on-line access had improved as well. Mr. Hill thanked the city again for all it did to make the project a reality.

Jim Hill thanked the council for allowing him to be a board member for the past five years. He talked briefly about the board and the 'friends of the library.' Mr. Hill reported the Timberland library was in 27 different communities; had five regional library centers; and covered five counties. He noted the Vernetta Smith Chehalis Timberland Library was one of 18 in the timberland system with a board. Mr. Hill reported the board members were appointed by the city council and were only an advisory group, and did not deal with the day to day operations. He noted the board met on an 'as needed' basis on the second Wednesday of each month. Mr. Hill indicated one of the main tasks of the board was to advocate, and raise awareness of the services provided by the library. He noted the board also did library fundraisers when necessary.

Mr. Hill reported on the 'Friends of the library,' noting each one of the libraries had a 'friends' group, which raised funds to support special projects and activities within the library. He noted the group was made up of people of all ages, who love reading and learning, and helping kids to get the greatest benefit they could out of the library. Mr. Hill reported they met on the first Wednesday of the month and conducted activities such as: used book sales; promotion of services and materials; organized programs and events; and made cookies and drinks for special events, such as the grand opening. He noted they also purchased special equipment and gifts for the library collection.

Ms. Blinks reported on a recent friends and board members forum they attended in Centralia, which was put on by the regional library. She noted it was a great opportunity to learn some things they could do for the Chehalis library. Ms. Blinks reported they also talked about some of the adult programs they offer, noting the group met the first Thursday of the month, except during the summer. She stated Ms. Aiken was hoping to work with Book n' Brush to do some local author signings at the library, adding it would be a great partnership between the downtown and the library. Ms. Blinks reported Ms. Aiken also indicated the new library was receiving steady use of the community, conference and study rooms. She stated their gratitude went out to the city for its continued support of the institution.

Caryn Knight reported on the children's programs, noting they wanted to provide incentives for children to learn to love reading. Ms. Knight stated the library offered a summer reading program and the pre-school story time program. She reported they had over 33,000 participants throughout the library system who participated in the summer reading program last year. Ms. Knight indicated they were looking forward to this year's summer reading program, titled "Let's Get Creative at the Library."

Brian Zylstra reported he had been a board member since 2001, and thanked the city for their continued support of the library. He noted last December was the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary/birthday of Timberland, and presented the council with a calendar that celebrated the special occasion.

Mr. Zylstra reported on the budget situation of Timberland, noting last February they ran a levy measure to try to increase funding to keep the library system maintained; however the measure failed. He noted Timberland announced last week the first round of cut-backs, adding the level of pain for Chehalis would be minimal. Mr. Zylstra indicated Chehalis would be cut back one hour per week from 8:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. on Thursday evenings, starting June 1. He noted there were no layoffs planned at that time; however there would be no more substitutes on hand. Mr. Zylstra stated the Board of Trustees was considering charging fees to cover computer printouts, and for library materials and books that were overdue. He reported their next meeting was scheduled for May 27, in Montesano, Washington, at which time they would probably announce any possible cuts in the future.

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Mayor Ketchum noted it never seemed to fail, no matter where they were, people from all over were still making comments about how lucky Chehalis was to have such a beautiful facility.

Councilor Pope excused himself from the meeting at 6:20 p.m.

4. **Consent Calendar.** Councilor Dawes moved to approve the consent calendar comprised of the following:
  - a. Minutes of the regular meeting of April 13, 2009;
  - b. Claim Vouchers No. 93159-93294 in the amount of \$176,347.27 dated April 6, 2009;
  - c. Reappointment of Chuck Hill to the Library Advisory Board for a five year term expiring April 27, 2014; and
  - d. Accept Louisiana Avenue and Arkansas Way Project as complete and release retainage to Balmelli Trucking, Inc. in the amount of \$58,022.85.

The motion was seconded by Councilor Taylor and carried unanimously.

5. **Staff Reports.**

- a. **Update on Sales Tax Mitigation Money.** Eva Lindgren reported, based on the state's 2009 to 2011 approved operations budget, it looked as though the state was holding fast to their commitment to fund the mitigation. She stated she was not allowed to disclose any detailed information on the recent mitigation calculations; however noted it was very informative to work through. Ms. Lindgren reported she discussed the issues with the Department of Revenue (DOR), adding the person she spoke with was very receptive to her comments. She indicated the DOR had not made any final decisions on whether or not they would be taking the 2007 flood event into account, noting they may in fact not do so. Ms. Lindgren reported the state was looking at the 2007 tax revenues and comparing them with the December 2008 revenue numbers, noting there were several businesses shut down during that time because of the flood. She stated it was very challenging and didn't envy the state with what they were having to work through.

Ms. Lindgren indicated she would continue to be an advocate for the city. She reported the state would not go back and make corrections retroactively, in terms of paying the city for corrections made; however they would retroactively adjust the data and take it into consideration as they do their calculation. Ms. Lindgren was assured she would hear back from the DOR in three to four weeks, and she would provide the council with an update on the state's decision after that time. She noted it was still a calculation period for the state to set the base for mitigation, which she believed could go on for up to two years.

Councilor Dawes stated it was typical of the state to pass a law and not think of the consequences. He noted the state would continue to collect their same amount of sales tax, and felt they really didn't care how the additional percentage was distributed amongst the locals. Councilor Dawes felt it was not a very well thought-out law for statewide purposes, adding Chehalis was not going to be the only city hurt by it.

Councilor Harris noted at the last council meeting he suggested the city find a way to band together with other communities, leaning towards the legal aspects of it; however after conversing with City Manager MacReynold, he now felt it would better to meet with council members from other communities and talk to the legislators to find out if they could possibly suspend it for a period of time. He suggested the state use this time as an opportunity to do their cataloging and checking without having to go through mitigation, and redistributing the money. Councilor Harris stated he would ask them to suspend the sales tax mitigation temporarily until they could figure out all the bugs. He noted it could technically save the state \$65 million in the process, by not having to pay out mitigation. He asked if any of the other councilors would like to go and talk to the legislators with him.

Mayor Ketchum stated it sounded good to him, and Councilor Dawes noted anything was worth a try. Councilor Harris noted the streamline sales tax issue failed in Kansas and was completely shut off, prior to it being adopted in Washington, state.

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b. **City Manager Annual Evaluation**. City Manager MacReynold reported, annually, the council goes through a process to conduct an evaluation of his performance. City Clerk Judy Schave reported she needed the forms filled out and returned to her by May 5, and that an executive session was schedule for Monday, May 11, at 5:00 p.m. to make comments and to review the evaluation.

6. **Council Reports**.

a. **Meetings and Events Attended by the Mayor**. Mayor Ketchum reported he attended the following:

- April 14 – Fire District # 6 meeting, would start meeting quarterly – next meeting was schedule in July
- April 16 – attended the Lewis County Historical Museum Open-house – Celebrating the Southwest Washington Fair's 100th Birthday
- Attended Centralia College Open-house for the new science building
- April 16 – participated as a Judge at the Centralia College Knowledge Bowl
- April 22 – attended a welcoming lunch at the Vernetta Smith Chehalis Timberland Library for PacifiCorp Energy, who announced they would be donating \$3,000 to the library
- April 24 – attended a ribbon-cutting ceremony at The Lunch Box on 13<sup>th</sup> Street
- April 25 – enjoyed hanging out at Recreation Park for the Girl's fast-pitch opening weekend

7. **Award Contracts for Printing Services**. City Manager MacReynold reported, as part of the 2009 budget discussion, they talked about seeking ways to reduce costs. Ms. Schave reported it was noted in the agenda report that a request for proposals (RFP) was sent out in January, and the city received three proposals from local vendors. She stated both the RFP and the agenda report noted the city reserved the right to select the lowest proposals for each item to ensure the city received the lowest pricing. Ms. Schave reported three contract agreements were attached to the agenda for the council's consideration. She stated the administration was recommending that the council award printing services based on the lowest proposals received, and authorize the city manager to execute the agreements.

Councilor Harris moved that the council award printing services based on the lowest proposals received, and authorize the city manager to execute agreements between the city and The Chronicle Printing Division, Advocate Printing, and the Print Shop.

Councilor Taylor seconded the motion.

Mayor Ketchum asked if we would have any options if the economy got worse and the city couldn't afford the proposed prices. City Attorney Hillier reported the city would be bound to the three-year contracts; however if the council felt they had a problem up front, they had the opportunity to reject all bids and rebid for whatever number of years they wished. He noted the only other alternative would be to approach the vendor and negotiate a price, or they could always negotiate out of the contract.

The motion carried 5-0. Councilor Fuller abstained from voting.

8. **Justice Assistance Grant (JAG)**. City Manager MacReynold reported the city was seeking funding to continue maintaining service levels in the department. Police Chief Schaffer stated, over the last couple of months the Department of Justice had released a series of grants, adding the particular one the city was applying for was the justice assistance grant in the amount of \$23,777. He reported the Chehalis School District normally contributed a sum of \$20,000 toward the city's School Resource Officer (SRO) position; however due to short-falls in funding the school could no longer submit those funds. Chief Schaffer stated the timing seemed to work out, and it was his intent to apply for the grant to supplement the funding for the SRO position. He asked that the council authorize the city manager to execute the application.

Councilor Dawes asked if the city had received notice of the money, or if it had to formally apply for it. He speculated it was typical government, in which they already handed out the money, and the city just needed to sign the paperwork before receiving it. Chief Schaffer stated that was pretty much it.

Councilor Harris moved that the council authorize the city manager to execute the application for the Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Formula Grant.

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The motion was seconded by Councilor Fuller and carried unanimously.

9. **Resolution No. 6-2009, First and Final Reading - Declaring City Property Surplus**. Fire Chief Johnson reported the department had two pieces of apparatus they wished to surplus. He noted one vehicle was a 1960 fire truck that had been in storage for several years and was impacted by the flood of 2007; the second vehicle was a 1976 fire truck that was unable meet annual pump testing requirements. Chief Johnson stated the repair bill for the second truck was estimated by the bus garage to be around \$15,000. He noted, as they talked it over with their maintenance staff and the mechanics, the cost benefit of fixing the vehicle did not make good financial sense. Chief Johnson stated they were looking at surplus both vehicles at that time.

Councilor Dawes asked what it would do to the level of equipment on hand. Chief Johnson stated they would have one less pumper; however he had spoken with Patrick Conroy from the Washington State Rating Bureau regarding the issue, and Mr. Conroy felt it would not affect the city's rating, adding the city was a good solid five. He also explained to Mr. Conroy, the city's working relationship between Lewis County Fire District #6 and Riverside Fire Authority for automatic aid. Chief Johnson indicated they still had three working pumpers and the Tower also had a pumper on board, which was worth a half credit.

Councilor Lund inquired as to how much a new truck would cost. Chief Johnson reported they ran about \$400,000. Councilor Lund thought \$15,000 was kind of cheap, to just fix the old own.

Councilor Dawes moved that the council adopt Resolution No. 6-2009 on first and final reading.

The motion was seconded by Councilor Taylor and carried unanimously.

There being no further business to come before the council, the meeting adjourned at 6:57 p.m.

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Mayor

Attest:

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City Clerk

**SUGGESTED MOTION**

**I move that the council approve the minutes of the regular city council meeting of April 27, 2009.**