

February 11, 2019

The Chehalis city council met in regular session on Monday, February 11, 2019, in the Chehalis city hall. Mayor Dennis Dawes called the meeting to order at 5:00 pm with the following council members present: Tony Ketchum, Daryl Lund (telephonically), Dr. Isaac Pope, Bob Spahr, and Chad Taylor. Councilor Terry Harris was absent (excused). Staff present included: Jill Anderson, City Manager; Ken Cardinale, Fire Chief; Caryn Foley, City Clerk; Bill Hillier, City Attorney; Trent Lougheed, Community Development Director; and Glenn Schaffer, Police Chief. Members of the media included Will Rubin from *The Chronicle*.

1. **Citizens Business – Commissioner Edna Fund.** Commissioner Fund distributed the Chehalis Basin Long-Term Strategy Update, as well as contact information and meeting schedule for the group. One of the strategies includes lobbying legislators for more dollars for the strategy. Commissioner Fund also addressed measles. It was thought that there were a couple cases in Lewis County, but tests showed the individuals had the flu. There have been 51 cases statewide, mostly in Clark County. A bill relating to exemptions for not vaccinating is currently before state legislators. Dr. Pope stressed the need for vaccinations.

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

- a. Minutes of the regular meeting of January 28, 2019;
- b. January 31, 2019 Claim Vouchers No. 124873-124998 in the amount of \$134,236.63;
- c. January 31, 2019, Payroll Vouchers No. 40682-40718, Direct Deposit Payroll Vouchers No. 10358-10461, Electronic Federal Tax and DRS Pension/Deferred Comp Payments No. 219-223 in the amount of \$824,759.50;
- d. Set February 25, 2019 at 5:00 pm to conduct a public hearing to amend the City's 2019- 2024 Six-Year Transportation Improvement Program; and
- e. Resolution No. 2-2019, second and final reading – application and acceptance of a WSDOT grant in the amount of \$140,184 for taxiway realignment project.

The motion was seconded by Councilor Pope and carried unanimously.

### 3. **Administration Reports.**

a. **Chamber Way Bridge Update.** Trent Lougheed updated the council on changes to the state's bridge rating system that have impacted Chamber Way Bridge. The new criteria rated the bridge at 18.56. A rating below 40 qualifies for state assistance through an 80% grant and 20% local match. Because of the new rating, the city must post the bridge with weight restrictions. Mr. Lougheed reviewed the restrictions and examples of what the signs will look like. He noted the restrictions will not impact the city's emergency vehicles. Staff will apply for a grant in April to replace the bridge and should know by July whether or not it will be funded. Transportation Benefit District funds will be used for the local match. Staff also plans to contact BNSF Railroad to determine if they are able to contribute to the match. Mr. Lougheed explained the complex procedure for rating bridges and explained that the city hires an engineer to inspect the bridge on a routine basis.

b. **Fire Station Update.** City Manager Anderson stated there has been much talk about the deficiencies of the building and the need to invest in it due to some deferred maintenance for a building that is almost 100 years old. Unfortunately, during the course of renovations there was the release of asbestos and that caused the need to evacuate the building and the firefighters to District 6. Since that time there have been questions about why the firefighters can't go back into the building since the asbestos was remediated. A meeting was held with the firefighters last week with an expert in the field addressing their questions about potential health impacts. The expert's assessment was the chances of there being anything in the building that would have caused any type of ill effect was next to nothing.

City Manager Anderson stated that the asbestos situation caused her to not want to put the firefighters back in the building until all renovations were completed, and then to take a look at what the building needed – to look at what the risks and rewards could potentially be by continuing to invest in the building. As staff went back through the structural analysis document and assessed information, and in taking a second look and seeing another year of deterioration, staff recommended that the firefighters stay at District 6. She expected District 6 would bring new terms for a longer-term lease of their station.

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Trent Lougheed presented information on the administration's recommendation to not move the firefighters back into the station:

**Structural Systems:** In March, 2017, a structural analysis was performed by James Ashley-Cole, P.E., because of past problems such as roof issues and a section of ceiling that fell.

**Building Improvements:** In April, 2017, preparations to budget for and begin improvements of critical components of the building structure were identified and estimated to cost about \$250,000. The improvements included seismic anchoring/bracing, replacing some of the damaged structure, and to conduct a structural analysis of the roof structure. During 2017 and 2018, it was noticed that there were more leaks coming in up against the window sills and door frames close to the edges of the building even after the roof was replaced about five years ago (estimated). This indicated there were more issues that could not be seen. When asbestos became airborne in August 2018, the building needed to be evacuated. It was determined that the costs to improve the building would be much more than the estimated \$250,000.

**Situation Today:** The structure is not in imminent danger of collapsing due to its own weight, but there are components of the structure that are in danger of failing during events such as seismic or storm. There will be no occupancy of the building until the roof is further evaluated, and there will most likely be additional deficiencies discovered when architectural coverings are removed to improve known deficiencies.

**Performance Standards for Fire Stations:** There are performance standards for fire stations and the fire station is considered a Level IV, Seismic Hazard Level BSE-1N (1-A), which requires an essential facility to be able to withstand an earthquake structurally and not collapse, and if it does stand up, it still has to be operational. He stated there was no seismic anchoring or bracing of any kind in the building. The cost to make the structure comply with the criteria of an essential facility would cost well more than a new fire station. He was reluctant to recommend making any further investment into the structure.

City Manager Anderson stated the question was asked about what would be done with the building if not used as a fire station. She stated that would need to be discussed in the coming months or years as there is more information, but the focus has been on getting the firefighters what they need at District 6.

Councilor Pope stated the problems have existed for many years and felt the building should be torn down.

Mayor Dawes agreed that the building wasn't the priority. The priority was finding a solution and a decision needs to be made quickly to begin planning for whatever type of station is ultimately needed.

Mr. Lougheed stated the engineer indicated there would probably be unacceptable levels of over-stress in several structural systems and the probable cost to retrofit the building would likely exceed the cost of a new facility.

**Station Alternatives:** An interim station site was identified between Walmart and Home Depot at an estimated cost range from \$530K to \$740K. A long-term solution could be the basement at city hall, but that would come with issues and costs such as installation of a traffic signal on Market (\$150 to \$200K); reconfiguring the basement and other parts of the building; vehicles would be outside and deteriorate at a faster rate; a temporary bay for the fire engines; challenging quarters for the firefighters; and disruption to the public. Another option is staying at District 6. It is available now thanks to the District's willingness to help; is a safe and professional station; and is cost effective as long as District 6 is willing to rent space. The downside would be response times going up an average of 30 seconds, potentially higher to the North part of town; the City's long-term insurance rating would be impacted; it is not a permanent solution; and some investment in the District 6 station is needed to accommodate Chehalis over a period that could be several years while a new fire station is built.

City Manager Anderson stated the city is in the process of having lockers built and installed at District 6 for firefighter gear; looking at long-term storage of apparatus that is not needed in the interim; and looking at storage at District 6 for some items that are needed now. City Manager Anderson stated she couldn't thank District 6 enough for how accommodating they have been. Chief Cardinale and Administrative Assistant Barbara Lovelady are now sharing office space at the District.

**Next Steps:** The City needs to build a new fire station, in which several factors need to be considered.

Mayor Dawes stated that with regard to evaluating sites based on the need for Chehalis only, with as long as it takes to go through the annexation process, before we take on any more annexation other than what we're undertaking right now, we're

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going to know if we need to build a satellite station or a headquarters station. He indicated it wasn't being based on annexation, but on combining or staying the way it is now. City Manager Anderson stated the slide referenced by Mayor Dawes was referencing consolidation with District 6 rather than annexation of additional land.

Mayor Dawes stated the process for a feasibility study has started. He stated everybody was in a tough spot, but he commended staff for the work they have done so far. There have been comments about response times, but there is no guarantee where staff could be in the city at any given time.

City Manager Anderson anticipated that District 6 would be coming back with some updated lease terms to reflect a longer-term arrangement.

Mayor Dawes stated the next meeting with District 6 is March 20 and it is anticipated that a firm be selected to conduct the feasibility study and that recommendation would be presented to council.

Councilor Taylor asked if staff knew what the monthly costs were to operate the fire station. City Manager Anderson stated there was a mechanism used to do that for Enterprise Funds, but that is not something that is done for General Fund costs.

c. **City Manager Update.** City Manager Anderson thanked everyone that has worked on the fire station issue, especially Chief Cardinale for his leadership to the city and Lewis County. She also thanked Chief Schaffer and the city's police officers, public works staff, and the firefighters for their work during the snow event.

#### **4. Councilor Reports/Committee Updates.**

a. Councilor Taylor stated that over the last couple months, he has developed a new-found respect for the form of government that the commissioners have to serve under. A three-member board is a difficult thing to deal with, especially when you have a situation. He spoke about the events leading up to the resignation of Twin Transit General Manager Derrick Wojcik-Damers. An internal investigation was done, and although not officially completed, showed there were no laws broken, but there were findings of mismanagement practices. There have been negative comments about the separation agreement, but the board evaluated all the information provided to them and made a decision that would cause the least amount of financial impact to Twin Transit. They are in the process of evaluating steps to find a new General Manager and he wanted to make sure that Twin Transit was run in the most efficient, cost effective, and transparent way. He thanked Jill Anderson, Bill Hillier, Caryn Foley, and Kiley Franz for their help through this situation.

b. Mayor Dawes stated he thought Councilor Taylor represented the city's interests very well through the Twin Transit issue. He hoped they found an individual that would evaluate and make what is there the best it can be, and to improve services where they could. He also hoped that Twin Transit query board members about meeting attendance and notify alternative representatives if needed. Mayor Dawes attended a mayors' meeting, and the Historical Museum annual dinner. He echoed the comments of the City Manager regarding the city's first responders and public works staff during the snow event.

c. Councilor Pope stated he received phone calls about burglaries in the Snively area. Chief Schaffer stated over the past three or four weeks, a series of break-ins have occurred in that area, mostly vacant residences. The instances are far between and they don't know if they are necessarily one person. He stated there have been very few things missing. Mayor Dawes stated there are a lot of transients walking around at night.

d. City Manager Anderson acknowledged Administrative Assistant Kiley Franz's attendance at the meeting to learn how to run council meetings while Caryn Foley is on vacation.

There being no further business to come before the council, the meeting was adjourned at 6:06 pm.

Dennis L. Dawes, Mayor

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Caryn Foley, City Clerk

Approved: 2/25/2019  
Initials: cf