

March 9, 2015

The Chehalis city council met in regular session on Monday, March 9, 2015, in the Chehalis city hall. Mayor Dawes called the meeting to order at 4:45 p.m. with the following council members present: Terry Harris, Dr. Isaac Pope, Bob Spahr, Daryl Lund, and Chad Taylor. Councilor Ketchum was absent (excused). Staff present included: Merlin MacReynold, City Manager; Bill Hillier, City Attorney; Judy Schave, City Clerk; Rick Sahlin, Public Works Director; and Patrick Wiltzius, Wastewater Superintendent.

1. **Executive Session.** Mayor Dawes announced the council would be in executive session pursuant to RCW 42.30.110(1)(i) – potential litigation for approximately 15 minutes and there would be no decision following conclusion of the executive session.

Mayor Dawes closed the executive session at 4:59 p.m. and announced the council would take a short recess before opening the regular meeting at 5:02 p.m. Additional staff included: Dennis Osborn, Community Development Director; Judy Pectol, Finance Manager; and Peggy Hammer, Human Resources Administrator. Members of the media included Dameon Pesanti from *The Chronicle*.

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

- a. Minutes of the regular meeting of February 23, 2015;
- b. Claim Vouchers No. 111819-111920 in the amount of \$203,725.70 dated February 27, 2015; and Payroll Vouchers No. 37924-37974, Direct Deposit Payroll Vouchers No. 5786-5875, and Electronic Federal Tax Payment No. 145 in the amount of \$740,317.91 dated February 27, 2015; and
- c. Award bids for 2015 rock, gravel, and asphalt.

The motion was seconded by Councilor Lund and carried unanimously.

3. **Administration Reports.**

a. **Overview on Upcoming Planning Commission Meeting.** Community Development Director Dennis Osborn reported the Chehalis Planning Commission would be meeting on Tuesday, March 10 to start the review of the Chehalis Comprehensive Plan, zoning codes, State Environmental Policy Act regulations, and a few other housekeeping items. He noted he would keep the council informed throughout the review process.

Councilor Lund asked how things were going with the Historic Preservation Commission.

Mr. Osborn stated he believed they had received three or four tentative applications to bring before council for consideration. He stated, with summer coming up, he would like to get at least one more person to apply to make sure they have enough people available to meet should someone be on vacation.

Councilor Taylor inquired about an issue that was brought up a couple of meetings ago concerning the sidewalks on the hillside. He noted there's a lot of broken concrete and some narrow pathways that make it very difficult to get through, especially for someone in a wheelchair.

Public Works Director Rick Sahlin reported Community Services Officer Angie Elder had looked at the issue and provided some information to Street Superintendent Don Schmitt. He noted Mr. Schmitt would be getting letters out to the property owners to advise them of their responsibilities.

4. **Council Reports.**

a. **Update From Councilor Lund.** Councilor Lund reported he attended the Joint Oversight Board meeting along with Mayor Dawes and Councilor Spahr. He also attended the Tacoma rail work group meeting where they interviewed two consulting firms who submitted qualifications to be considered for providing a feasibility study and business plan to the work group.

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b. **Update From Councilor Spahr.** Councilor Spahr reported the functional consolidation is somewhat on hold as they've been reporting, but they're still doing some things together that he believed are fruitful and sending us in the right direction.

Councilor Spahr inquired as to when the organic waste disposal site at Stan Hedwall Park would be opening. Mr. Osborn reported it would open on April 1.

c. **Update From Councilor Pope.** Councilor Pope stated he had concerns about the response the city received from the Chamber of Commerce regarding the city's request to have a representative on their Board. He felt the letter the city received was insulting and questioned why the city should support them if we can't have a representative on the Board.

City Manager MacReynold reported the council gave him very clear direction that they wanted a permanent seat on the Chamber Board and the city's representative would be Mayor Dawes. This was based on the funding level provided by the city, and because we're one of two cities that the Chamber represents to the business community. City Manager MacReynold stated he stood firm on that position, as the council saw from the correspondence, the Chamber had already filled the position. He noted he sent a follow up response, but to date he has not received anything back. City Manager MacReynold reported he had been told that they're working on a response, but if the council wants to take a different approach, they can certainly do that.

Councilor Pope stated it wasn't a matter of taking a different approach; it was their response to our inquiry. He suggested if they don't recognize the city's financial investment, perhaps the city should consider withdrawing its financial support to the Chamber.

Councilor Taylor reported he spoke with Executive Director Alicia Bull and she explained to him that the city is a member of the Chamber and pays dues just like any other business/organization. He noted the city also has a service contract with the Chamber for them to receive tourism funding, but noted that contract could be with anyone to provide those services; they just have to apply for it.

Councilor Taylor stated he understands why we would want to have a representative on the Board, but there is no vacancy at this time, which is why they didn't have an immediate position for us.

Councilor Lund stated he agreed with Councilor Pope, adding it's insulting when someone makes a request and they don't respond in a timely manner. He felt it was wrong for them to treat us that way, adding if Paul McBride was still alive and running the Chamber the city would have received an answer the following day. Councilor Lund stated it's our community and we should all be working together.

Councilor Taylor stated they do work with the city by providing several community events. He asked, "Who are we to demand a position on their Board if we're just like every other member."

Councilor Lund stated his concern was with them not responding in a timely manner.

Councilor Harris stated he didn't think the city was like any other business, noting there aren't too many businesses that request the Chamber to put on events and parades. He reported part of the lodging tax money that the city provides keeps that facility open on Saturdays, which benefits everyone. Councilor Harris stated he was a little taken back, but felt there's a lot of stuff going on behind the scenes that shouldn't have anything to do with this.

Councilor Spahr stated if the Board is full, then it's full, but he still has a concern with their lack of response. He suggested the Chamber should talk to the city council more about their wishes.

Councilor Pope reported the Chamber building would not be where it is today if it wasn't for this council and the generosity of this city. He noted there are a lot of things that have to be taken into consideration and whether we have a representative on the Board, or not, he still had concerns with their response.

Mayor Dawes reported when City Manager MacReynold thought he would be leaving he tendered his resignation from the Chamber Board, and when it became clear he was going to stay, he immediately approached City Manager MacReynold to

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let him know we needed to get him back on the Board. He felt it was important that we have some presence in order to be able to oversee the financial support the city provides.

Mayor Dawes felt the city did a good job of attending the Chamber events. He stated if they didn't want him on their Board we have another councilor who is willing to take the position. Mayor Dawes reported he wasn't about to have the city barge in, adding we'll just ask and see what we get. He felt it was important for the city and the Chamber to work together to promote the betterment of business in our communities.

d. **Update From Mayor Dawes.** Mayor Dawes reported, while the Joint Oversight Board may be in a holding pattern, there's still a lot of joint training and response going on. He noted the city's firefighter/paramedic will be working a shift at Riverside Fire Authority in order to keep up her paramedic certification.

Mayor Dawes reported on February 27 he attended the ribbon cutting for the Wedding Show. He noted without the hard work of our representative on the Lodging Tax Advisory Committee (LTAC), and the support of the council to have the committee take a second look at their proposal, the wedding show would not have happened. Mayor Dawes reported they had a great turnout and a lot of happy vendors who were hosting booths at the event. He wanted to thank the council for taking the extra step to make sure that a successful event still happened in Chehalis and hoped they would look at it favorably again next year.

Mayor Dawes reported on March 6 he attended the Mayors meeting, noting the highlight was they now have retired Sheriff Steve Mansfield overseeing the Emergency Management Department. He noted they're in the process of working out the Emergency Management Plans for the different jurisdictions, which includes Chehalis.

e. **Update From Councilor Harris.** Councilor Harris reported he echoed what the mayor had to say about the Wedding Show, adding he too wanted to thank the council for suggesting they go back to the LTAC. He also thanked the Committee for being open-minded enough to support it. Councilor Harris reported the Loft was a fantastic venue and the vendors who took part were very happy with the turnout.

Councilor Harris reported David Hartz, Chair of the Chehalis Community Renaissance Team (CCRT), and Steve Koreis, President of the Centralia Downtown Association (CDA), attended the Solid Waste Advisory Committee (SWAC) meeting last week to make presentations on the B&O tax. He noted the SWAC would be presenting a recommendation to the Lewis County Board of Commissioner's to take the B&O tax collected and redistribute it through the Main Street Programs of the two cities. Councilor Harris stated it was his understanding that the county's legal department was going to look at it to make sure it's not a gifting of public funds. He noted he wouldn't be surprised if it happened this year because everything is so time-sensitive.

Councilor Harris reported there are a lot of phone scams going on and suggested that people be very careful if they receive any unusual calls.

Councilor Harris reported Keith Blackwell was currently going through a battle and wanted to let him know that he was being thought of and prayers were being sent his way.

There being no further business to come before the council, the meeting adjourned 5:24 p.m.

Mayor

Attest:

City Clerk

SUGGESTED MOTION

I move that the council approve the minutes of the regular city council meeting of March 9, 2015.