

May 26, 2015

The Chehalis city council met in regular session on Tuesday, May 26, 2015, in the Chehalis city hall. Mayor Dawes called the meeting to order at 4:15 p.m. with the following council members present: Terry Harris, Dr. Isaac Pope, Bob Spahr, Daryl Lund, Chad Taylor, and Tony Ketchum. Staff present included: Merlin MacReynold, City Manager; and Judy Schave, City Clerk.

1. **Executive Session.** Mayor Dawes announced the council would be in executive session pursuant to RCW 42.30.110(1)(g) – review performance of a public employee for approximately 15 minutes and there would be no decision following conclusion of the executive session.

Mayor Dawes closed the executive session at 4:36 p.m. and immediately opened the work session.

2. **Work Session – Open Government Training.** Mayor Dawes announced the council would be receiving training on the Open Public Meetings Act. Additional staff included: Bill Hillier, City Attorney.

Mayor Dawes closed the work session at 4:55 p.m. and announced the council would take a short recess before opening the regular meeting at 5:00 p.m. Additional staff included: Glenn Schaffer, Police Chief; Ken Cardinale, Fire Chief; Dennis Osborn, Community Development Director; Judy Pectol, Finance Manager; Peggy Hammer, Human Resources Administrator; Dale McBeth, Municipal Court Judge; Becky Fox, Court Administrator; Rick Sahlin, Public Works Director; and Don Schmitt Street/Stormwater Superintendent. Members of the media included Sharyn Decker from *Lewis County Sirens*.

3. **Lewis County Tourism Update.** Lewis County Commissioner Edna Fund provided a brief update on the county's new Facebook page, "Discover Lewis County." She noted so far they've had over 500 Likes, 345 Shares, and the opportunity for 26,000 others to see it. Commissioner Fund reported the county's IT staff also created a new website that will be launched in about two weeks.

4. **Swearing-in of Fire Chief Ken Cardinale.** Municipal Court Judge Dale McBeth swore in Fire Chief Ken Cardinale. After taking the oath, Chief Cardinale introduced his wife Beth who came forward and pinned his badge on.

5. **Recognition of Former Chehalis Planning Commission Member Jim Ward.** Community Development Director Dennis Osborn presented Jim Ward with a plaque in recognition of 23 years of service on the Chehalis Planning Commission. Mayor Dawes thanked Mr. Ward for the donation of his time over the last 23 years and wished him the best in retirement.

6. **Introduction of Consultant for the Recreation Park Improvement Project.** Mr. Osborn introduced Tom Skillings of Skillings Connolly, Inc. He noted Mr. Skillings' firm was selected to provide management services for the Recreation Park improvement project.

Mr. Skillings stated it was a very exciting project and they looked forward to coming up with some good solutions for the park. He introduced Jerry Smith as the project manager.

7. **Public Hearing on the 2016-2021 Six-Year Transportation Improvement Program.** Public Works Director Rick Sahlin stated the agenda report included a list of projects that the city will attempt to get grant funding for. He noted projects that receive funding from state or federal sources are required to be identified on the city's local Transportation Improvement Program and once funding is received, they are placed on the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program.

Mayor Dawes closed the regular meeting at 5:13 p.m. and opened the public hearing.

There being no public comment, Mayor Dawes closed the public hearing and reopened the regular meeting at 5:14 p.m.

City Manager MacReynold asked Mr. Sahlin to talk briefly about the history of trying to get funding to do improvements on National Avenue.

Mr. Sahlin reported National Avenue has been on the list of streets the city would like to improve for a number of years. He noted they've applied for funding numerous times, but have been unsuccessful at getting any grants.

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Mr. Sahlin reported National Avenue is not in bad enough shape to qualify for an overlay project through the Transportation Improvement Board (TIB). He noted, a few years ago, a representative from TIB looked at our streets and we were able to get a grant for Chehalis Avenue, which at that time was the best street the city had to qualify for that type of funding.

Mr. Sahlin reported the city has applied for safety grants, but apparently things have to be pretty bad in order to qualify. He noted Street Superintendent Don Schmitt was breaking the project up into smaller segments, but didn't know if that would help to get any grant funding.

Mayor Dawes stated there are probably a number of citizens who would argue the point that National Avenue is in good shape. He noted it's got some problems and yet when we try to answer the constituents' complaints and do things to smooth it out, it sets it back further in getting a long-term solution. Mayor Dawes stated, "It's very frustrating."

Councilor Lund stated if we keep letting it get worse it might score high enough to receive grant funding.

Mr. Sahlin reported that was possible, adding it looks really bad driving from Centralia to Chehalis because of the improvements Centralia made. He reported the money Centralia used for the Gold Street project was money Chehalis gave up for the Chamber Way project.

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

- a. Minutes of the regular meeting of May 11, 2015;
- b. Claim Vouchers No. 112446-112587 and Electronic Funds Transfer No. 42015 in the amount of \$370,501.12 dated May 15, 2015;
- c. Confirm City Manager's appointment of Dave Herzog to a new six-year term on the Civil Service Commission with an expiration date of June 1, 2021; and
- d. Accept the Gail and Carolyn Shaw Aquatics Center as complete and release the retainage in the amount of \$99,989.40 to Schwiesow Construction, Inc.

The motion was seconded by Councilor Lund and carried unanimously.

9. **Administration Reports.**

a. **April Financial Report.** Finance Manager Judy Pectol reported the general fund property taxes looked low at this time; however, the city did receive \$617,000 in May, which will put it back on track with what is budgeted. She noted the sales tax revenue is higher than it was last year at this time, but still lower than where she would like it to be. Ms. Pectol reported the city received its first donation of the year, adding she was happy to get that. She reminded the council that a large portion of the miscellaneous revenue received to date was for insurance recoveries for the police and fire departments and reimbursement for demolishing the house at 628 NW West Street.

Ms. Pectol reported on the general fund expenditures, noting she believed they would even out by the end of the year. She indicated there would be some changes on how the contra expenses are recorded, adding she's currently working on a cost allocation plan.

Ms. Pectol reported the water and wastewater utility revenues are lower than anticipated due to lower usage by commercial utility customers.

b. **Update on the Chehalis River Basin Flood Authority.** City Representative Julie Balmelli-Powe reported there isn't much happening with the Chehalis River Basin Flood Authority at this time, adding they're still waiting for the budget to pass. She noted there was an initial budget request for \$30 million for projects, including the permitting for the water retention structure, but recently heard it was bumped to up \$50 million.

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Ms. Balmelli-Powe reported the Dillenbaugh Creek project didn't make the cut this year, but with the increased budget amount, if approved, they're hoping they can get something going on that.

Ms. Balmelli-Powe reported they're doing a lot of outreach to get projects done. She stated for more information on the various projects people can visit the Chehalis River Basin Flood Authority website. Ms. Balmelli-Powe reported they also have a place now for residents to enter in their email address to get early warning alerts regarding flooding in their area.

Mayor Dawes thanked Ms. Balmelli-Powe for continuing to serve on the Flood Authority on behalf of the council, adding he appreciated it very much.

Mr. Osborn provided a map showing what the 2007 flood event looked like in relation to the 2006 Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA) flood insurance rate map, noting there really wasn't a whole lot of difference between the two.

Ms. Balmelli-Powe reported the Flood Authority would like to come up with some basin-wide guidelines, so there's no finger-pointing. She noted by putting the FEMA map and the flood of record on the same map they can use it basin-wide to establish regulations. Ms. Balmelli-Powe noted this was only in regards to the floodplain, not the floodway.

#### 10. Council Reports.

a. **Update From Councilor Taylor.** Councilor Taylor reported panhandling seems to be getting worse in Chehalis and asked if the council would support having City Manager MacReynold research the ordinance passed by the city of Centralia to see if Chehalis could do something similar. He noted several people in the community have asked him to bring it up.

The council supported the request.

b. **Update From Councilor Lund.** Councilor Lund provided a brief update on the recent activities of the Tacoma Rail Work Group. He noted the Lewis County Commissioners will be considering a contract with the consultant selected by the group to do a feasibility study and business plan, to determine if a portion of the Tacoma rail line between Chehalis and Maytown is worth purchasing.

c. **Update From Mayor Dawes.** Mayor Dawes reported he stood in for Councilor Taylor at the Lewis County Traffic Coalition meeting on May 18, adding they're doing a lot of work on the Regional Transportation Plan. He also attended a Business After Hours event at the Holiday Inn Express.

d. **Appoint 2015 Association of Washington Cities (AWC) Voting Representative.** City Manager MacReynold reported the council was copied on a letter received from AWC, noting they're requesting the council select a voting delegate to represent the city. City Manager MacReynold believed Mayor Dawes was the only one signed up to attend the annual conference at this time. The council agreed that Mayor Dawes should be the city's representative.

11. **Executive Session.** Mayor Dawes closed the regular meeting at 5:29 p.m. and announced the council would be in executive session pursuant to RCW 42.30.110(1)(c) – lease or sale of real estate, and would continue discussion under RCW 42.30.42.30.110(1)(g) – review performance of a public employee for approximately 30 minutes and there would be no decision following conclusion of the executive session.

Mayor Dawes closed the executive session at 6:28 p.m. and there being no further business to come before the council, the meeting adjourned immediately.

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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 May 26, 2015.