

September 12, 2016

The Chehalis city council met in regular session on Monday, September 12, 2016, in the Chehalis city hall. Mayor Dawes called the meeting to order at 5:00 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; Bill Hillier, City Attorney; Judy Schave, City Clerk; Randy Kaut, Deputy Police Chief; Judy Pectol, Finance Manager; Peggy Hammer, Human Resources Administrator; Trent Loughheed, Interim Community Development Director; and David Fleckenstein, Airport Manager. Members of the media included Natalie Johnson from *The Chronicle*.

1. **Employee Service Awards.** Mayor Dawes presented Human Resources Administrator Peggy Hammer with an employee service award for eight-and-a-half years of service to the city.

Mayor Dawes also presented a plaque to City Manager Merlin MacReynold in recognition of his exemplary service to the city from May 2006 to September 2016.

2. **Chehalis Basin Strategy Presentation.** City Manager MacReynold reported the Washington State Department of Ecology (DOE) has been working with the Chehalis Basin Flood Authority on a basin-wide strategy for quite some time. He introduced DOE Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) Project Manager Chrissy Bailey who provided the following information regarding the Chehalis Basin Strategy.

Ms. Bailey reported, with the EIS coming out at the end of the month, they're busy trying to bring people up to speed on why this effort is occurring. She noted the actions being evaluated include extreme flooding and the declining health of the river.

Ms. Bailey reported the Basin covers eight counties, with Lewis County being one of the largest. She stated, over the last 30 years, poor returns of one or more species of salmon has limited tribal and non-tribal harvests, and productivity has been degraded by almost 80 percent. Ms. Bailey reported the Chehalis Basin is the only basin in the state that does not have federally endangered salmon species, which limits our ability to get federal funding for restoring habitat for declining species.

Ms. Bailey briefly talked about the issues of climate change specific to the basin, and extreme flooding. She noted if nothing is done, the results would include:

- \$3.5 billion in damage over the next 100 years under current conditions, and potentially an additional \$1 billion in the city of Aberdeen from coastal flooding
- Extreme floods more frequent and larger causing greater damage
- Loss of aquatic species
- Potential listing under Endangered Species Act

Ms. Bailey reported the Chehalis Basin Strategy is a two-pronged approach, adding there is no intent to do restoring of aquatic species habitat without reducing flood damage. She indicated the long-term goal of the strategy is to make the Basin a safer place for families and communities that are impacted by flooding, and to restore the habitat for future generations.

Ms. Bailey talked briefly on the projects currently underway in the basin. They include:

- Reconnecting floodplains and restoring habitat – culverts projects (\$23 million in value)
- Local flood damage flood projects – flood vents and farm pads (\$12.5 million in value)

Ms. Bailey reported they're looking at different combinations of recommended actions and evaluating the potential effects on both people and the environment. She stated the draft EIS will be released to the public at the end of September and comments will be due by the end of October. Ms. Bailey reported they also plan to have a number of public meetings throughout the Basin during the month of October, and at the end of the comment period the information will be consolidated and provided to the Governor and Legislature to make recommendations for what actions get funded and moved forward.

Ms. Bailey reported on the various actions included in the four alternatives being evaluated in the EIS. Those actions include:

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- Large-Scale Flood Damage Reduction Actions: flood retention facility; airport levee improvements; I-5 projects; Aberdeen/Hoquiam north shore levee; and restorative flood protection to re-establish the natural flood buffering capacity of a healthy watershed
- Local-Scale Flood Damage Reduction Actions: farm pads; raising structures; building walls; land use management improvements; and improved early warning system
- Aquatic Species Habitat Restoration Actions: low and high scenarios; restoring streamside habitat with native vegetation; restoring bank erosion to naturally occurring rates; and removing fish passage barriers (culverts)

Ms. Bailey reported, rather than looking at one particular project, they're looking at the different alternatives when combined together to see what the benefit and impacts are and how they compare to each other at a planning level. She noted some of the benefits to the alternatives being considered include:

- Lower maintenance costs
- Resilience and adaptation to climate change
- Benefits to habitat
- Assistance to landowners already impacted by flooding and erosion
- Non-traditional approach
- Relocation of landowners in treatment areas provided flood protection into perpetuity and eliminates chronic flood costs
- Large scale carbon sequestration benefits (re-forestation project)
- Benefits to water supply and groundwater recharge

Ms. Bailey reported the flood retention facility/dam, as part of the large-scale action, would be located about one mile south of Pe Ell along the Chehalis River on Weyerhaeuser land. She noted there are two types of facilities being looked at:

- Flood Retention Only Dam: This facility would only be in operation when a major flood is predicted at the Grand Mound gauge and the river would continue to run all other times of the year.
- Flood Retention and Flow Augmentation: This facility would have a year-round reservoir. The goal of the reservoir would be to release water that's stored in the winter into the river during the summer months to help cool the temperature and provide additional water during the summer.

Ms. Bailey reported they have a policy meeting planned for October 11, as well as a hearing in the upper basin on October 18 and in the lower basin on October 27.

Mayor Dawes wondered why they would list "potential listing under Endangered Species Act" as a significant impact with water retention, when it could go either way.

Ms. Bailey stated it would be a significant impact; however, that wouldn't happen with some of the other alternatives.

Councilor Harris asked where the greenway would be located.

Ms. Bailey reported there would be multiple site-specific areas, but they don't have that level of detail yet.

Councilor Harris wondered if there would be any land acquisition for the off-set of taking agricultural land and turning it into a greenway.

Ms. Bailey reported there's an economic assessment underway, but it's not part of the EIS. She noted the assessment would include the costs of displacing agriculture and forest lands.

Mayor Dawes stated the alternative on the table talks about displacing people, and suggested the outcome really doesn't provide any significant results, as compared to some of the other alternatives.

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Ms. Bailey reported the difference would be (especially in the greenways) if folks are willing to move, they would be protected from flood damage forever. She noted there will be trade-offs for all of the alternatives.

Mayor Dawes stated there's been a lot of work done and hoped they would not try to do something that might look good on paper, but doesn't get the results we need.

Councilor Harris suggested trying to change the culture of an entire basin based on whether you gain a foot of water one way or the other is going to be pretty difficult to sell, but he also thought this would be a good opportunity for folks who want to do something different.

Councilor Taylor asked if the airport levee improvements had already been done.

Ms. Bailey stated part of the improvements have been done, including widening the base in preparation for it to be raised.

Councilor Taylor asked if they plan to raise or widen the I-5 corridor.

Ms. Bailey reported it may include levees and walls along I-5, but they would not be raising it.

J. Vander Stoep reported you can't just pick the alternative you want with an EIS; you have to look at all of the reasonable options. He noted his opinion about building walls along I-5 has not changed, but it still has to be part of the process.

Mr. Vander Stoep stated it's good that they have all of these alternatives on the table to consider, but it doesn't mean they want to see all of them happen. He suggested there will be a lot of controversy, but right now they're just studying the options and want to make sure they study anything that's reasonable.

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

a. Minutes of the regular meeting of August 22, 2016;

b. Claim Vouchers No. 116733-116886 in the amount of \$180,340.01 dated August 31, 2016; and Payroll Vouchers No. 39066-39151, Direct Deposit Payroll Vouchers No. 7421-7516, and Electronic Federal Tax Payment No. 163 in the amount of \$745,573.02 dated August 31, 2016;

c. Approve appointment of Jena Sorenson to the city's Lodging Tax Advisory Committee (LTAC);

d. Approve reappointment of Karen Monroe to the Sister City Committee for a new term expiring December 31, 2018; and appoint Sherryl Ketchum, Judy Meuchel, and Carrina Stanton to terms expiring December 31, 2018, and Susan Finlay to a term expiring December 31, 2019; and

e. Award bid for the Apron Rehabilitation Project at the Chehalis-Centralia Airport to Sterling Breen Crushing, Inc., in the amount of \$897,991.92 and authorize city manager to execute contract agreement for the same.

Councilor Pope seconded the motion.

Councilor Harris thanked Ms. Sorenson for volunteering to be on the committee. He noted the owner of the Econo Lodge recently sold his hotel creating another vacancy on the committee; however, he spoke with the new owner and she plans to submit an application to be considered to fill that vacancy.

The motion carried unanimously.

4. **Administration Reports.**

a. **Update on Main Street Park and Ride Camping Situation.** City Manager MacReynold reported since the last

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meeting, signs had been posted indicating the park and ride is closed from 10:00 p.m. to 5:00 a.m. He noted the police are monitoring the site and it appears to be working. City Manager MacReynold suggested this is one of those problems along the I-5 corridor that all cities are dealing with.

Deputy Police Chief Randy Kaut reported he spoke to both the day shift and the night shift and they indicated there have been no other issues, but will continue to monitor the situation.

b. **Interlocal Agreement (ILA) for Tourism Promotion Area.** City Manager MacReynold provided a brief update on the ILA for the Tourism Promotion Area. He noted City Attorney Bill Hillier has been communicating with the city attorney in Centralia to work out the details of the agreement. He noted they're still working out some issues, but plan to present the final document at the next regular meeting for council consideration. City Manager MacReynold indicated he's also been in communication with Todd Chaput, Lewis County Public Facilities District Chair, to keep him updated on what's happening with the agreement.

5. **Council Reports.**

a. **Update From Councilor Pope.** Councilor Pope reported the Fraternal Order of Eagles is planning another bingo fundraiser for Penny Playground on October 1 at the VR Lee Building.

b. **Update From Councilor Lund.** Councilor Lund thanked City Manager MacReynold for his service, noting he enjoyed working with him. He stated City Manager MacReynold did a great job taking care of the city and always responded to citizen's concerns in a timely manner.

c. **Update From Councilor Taylor.** Councilor Taylor reported Twin Transit recently wrapped up the construction of the bus pull-out near the Vintage At Chehalis and should have the shelter up in about one week. He noted he hoped to get more pull-outs built throughout the city, so busses don't have to stop in the middle of the street to pick people up and drop them off.

d. **Update From Mayor Dawes.** Mayor Dawes reported the council received an invitation to the 100<sup>th</sup> birthday party for the Baldwin Locomotive at the Chehalis-Centralia Steam Train and Museum on September 17, at 3:45 p.m.

Mayor Dawes reported he attended a budget committee meeting on August 23 to discuss the funding layout for the Transportation Benefit District and that a work session is scheduled for Monday, September 19, at 5:00 p.m. to go over a funding option. He also attended a ribbon cutting for the substantial completion of the Mellen Street to Blakeslee Junction project; a Boys and Girls Club fundraiser in Centralia; the monthly Mayors meeting; and a .09 Committee meeting at the county.

Mayor Dawes also wished City Manager MacReynold the best in his retirement.

There being no further business to come before the council, the meeting adjourned at 5:59 p.m.

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Mayor

Attest:  
City Clerk

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**SUGGESTED MOTION**

**I move that the council approve the minutes of the regular city council meeting of September 12, 2016.**