

October 10, 2016

The Chehalis city council met in regular session on Monday, October 10, 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, Tony Ketchum, Daryl Lund, Dr. Isaac Pope, Bob Spahr, and Chad Taylor. Staff present included: Jill Anderson, City Manager; Bill Hillier, City Attorney; Caryn Foley, City Clerk; Judy Pectol, Finance Manager; Rick Sahlin, Public Works Director; Glenn Schaffer, Police Chief; Judy Schave, Human Resources/Risk Manager; and Don Schmitt, Street/Stormwater Superintendent. Members of the media included Justyna Tomtas from *The Chronicle*; and Susan DeLaire from *Business to Business*.

**1. Special Business – Update on Chamber Way Bridge.** Bart Gernhart, Assistant Regional Administrator for Engineering for the Washington State Department of Transportation, provided an update on the Chamber Way Bridge replacement. WSDOT has looked at several options as requested by local legislators. The estimate to replace the damaged span is about \$4 million, but they do not believe that spending that amount of money to replace one span is a wise investment, especially since the 2015 tax package includes funding to replace the entire interchange in 2023. They believe the best plan is to replace the existing two-lane bridge with a four-lane bridge at a height that meets minimum highway standards (16' 6") and to carry six lanes of traffic underneath it in the future. Plans have been drawn, along with rough costs. The \$4 million in emergency funds approved by the Federal Highway Administration to replace the damaged span will be combined with about \$8 million in additional dollars to replace the entire bridge. The heads of both the Senate and House transportation committees have given initial buy-in, so it is hoped that the Legislature will approve the plan when they get back in session next year. They plan to hire a contractor and design firm next spring and begin construction in the summer in hopes that the project will be completed by the fall of 2018.

Mayor Dawes asked if it would include pedestrian and bicycle lanes. Mr. Gernhart stated it would include sidewalks and wide enough shoulders for bicycles.

Councilor Harris asked if the current bridge would stay open until the new one is completed. Mr. Gernhart stated that for the most part during daylight hours it will be open through construction. The plan is to build a two-lane bridge right next to the existing bridge, shift traffic over to that bridge, tear down the existing bridge and then build another two lanes and connect them together. At night he expects a few closures of both the bridge and the interstate.

Mr. Gernhart stated there will be an open house between now and the holidays to communicate with businesses.

Mayor Dawes stated the city was certainly pleased. There was concern when the bridge was damaged and there was remarkable speed by WSDOT to get the bridge reopened as quickly as possible. He recognized Senator Braun who led the charge, along with Representative Ed Orcutt.

**2. Public Hearing – Proposed Ballot Proposition to Impose a Sales and Use Tax for the Purpose of Funding Certain Transportation Improvements.** City Manager Anderson stated the administration would be providing a presentation to members of the public who may not have been following the issue. The item is related to the need to fund maintenance for streets and roads in Chehalis, specifically to ask the voters to increase the sales and use tax by 0.2 percent.

Mayor Dawes recessed the regular meeting at 5:09 pm and opened the public hearing.

Don Schmitt provided a presentation that included background information and the proposed approach of putting a ballot proposition before the voters to increase the city's sales and use tax by 0.2 percent to help fund transportation improvements for a 10-year term. It is estimated that the additional sales tax received would be approximately \$850,000 annually. The tax would apply to anyone who shops within the city limits, not just city residents. Mr. Schmitt outlined how the funds would be used. The measure would be placed on the February 14, 2017 ballot.

Mayor Dawes asked that copies of the presentation be made available at city hall.

Mayor Dawes clarified that the county review included in the resolution was the county prosecutor's review of the ballot title, and not subject to approval by the county. Mr. Hillier noted the city has already received a preliminary approval from the county.

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Randy Mueller, Chief Executive Officer of the Port of Chehalis, addressed the council in support of the ballot proposition. Mr. Mueller noted the port sees that for their municipal partners, costs are rising faster than revenues; cities don't have a dedicated road tax, so road maintenance competes with essential services that the city provides; dedicated road maintenance funds are essential to maintain roads at a high quality to attract and retain business, which is a core mission of the port; and the port always supports the opportunity for the residents of Chehalis to invest in themselves.

Mr. Mueller also commented as a citizen, stating he chaired the "Vote Yes on the TBD" committee to fund freeway interchange improvements in Ridgefield, WA, which was completed several years ago.

There being no further public comment, Mayor Dawes closed the public hearing at 5:22 pm and reopened the regular meeting.

3. **Consent Calendar.** Mayor Dawes proposed a correction to the September 26 minutes on page nine of the agenda packet. The third sentence of the ninth paragraph should read, "After speaking with Todd Chaput . . . , not Councilor Taylor."

Councilor Spahr moved to approve consent calendar items comprised of the following:

a. Minutes of the work session of September 19, 2016 and the regular meeting of September 26, 2016, as amended;  
and

b. Claim Vouchers No. 117071 – 11781 in the amount of \$174,132.59 dated September 30, 2016.

The motion was seconded by Councilor Pope and carried unanimously.

#### 4. **Administration Reports.**

a. **Annual Debt Compliance Update.** Finance Manager Judy Pectol reported the financial information that has to be reported annually to the Municipal Securities Rulemaking Board has been reported in compliance with the conditions set forth when the 2011 limited general obligation bond was issued.

b. **City Manager Update.** City Manager Anderson commented on the work of some of the city's firefighters during an incident on September 15. On that date, four separate calls were received – three for medical aid and one for a structure fire. As a result, one firefighter was by himself trying to contain the fire, while remaining personnel were diverted to the medical calls. Chief Cardinale responded, along with the city's partners, including Riverside Fire Authority and Lewis County Fire District No. 6. City Manager Anderson wanted to recognize and thank the firefighters. Regardless of which agency they are affiliated with, they are working to serve the public and working cooperatively together.

#### 5. **Councilor Reports.**

a. **Update from Mayor Dawes.** Mayor Dawes attended the Centralia College Foundation fundraiser on October 1; budget committee meetings last week and tomorrow; and the county mayors meeting, which included a legislative roundtable with local legislators. He reminded Councilors Spahr and Lund about the Fire Committee meeting tomorrow at 1:00 and the meeting with Fire District No. 6 at 6:00 pm on Wednesday.

6. **Resolution No. 17-2016, First and Final Reading – Providing for a Ballot Proposition to Impose a Sales and Use Tax for the Purpose of Funding Certain Transportation Improvements.** City Manager Anderson stated the resolution was follow-up action to the public hearing that concluded earlier in the meeting. The resolution is before the council to consider whether to place the ballot proposition before the voters.

Councilor Lund stated he has heard from several retired business owners who are in support of the resolution.

Councilor Spahr moved to adopt Resolution No. 17-2016 on first and final reading. The motion was seconded by Councilor Harris and carried 6 to 1. Councilor Taylor voted against the motion.

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**7. Ordinance No. 962-B, First Reading – Adding a New Chapter to the Chehalis Municipal Code to be Entitled Centralia/Chehalis Tourism Promotion Area.** City Manager Anderson stated this is a follow-up item to action taken at the last city council meeting where the council approved an interlocal agreement with the city of Centralia to create a tourism promotion district for the purpose of creating a Sports Commission to bring more sporting events to the area.

Councilor Harris moved to pass Ordinance No. 962-B on first reading. The motion was seconded by Councilor Lund and carried unanimously.

**8. Approve Candidates and Funding Amounts of the Lodging Tax Advisory Committee (LTAC) for Use of Lodging Tax Funds for 2017; and Reappoint the Memberships of Todd Chaput, Gloria Choi, Jena Sorenson, Alicia Bull, Rick Burchett, and Chip Duncan to the LTAC.** Councilor Harris stated there have been a couple of good years in the hotel-motel industry. The LTAC received nine requests for funding totaling \$237,000. He acknowledged the committee members for their work, stating they are all excellent stewards of the monies.

Councilor Taylor stated he would not be voting on any of the candidates because of the potential conflict of interest with his business.

Councilor Ketchum asked for an explanation of the award amount for Lewis County Community Trails since their request is a lot more than this year's request.

Councilor Harris stated they were expanding their operation and marketing, and possibly changing the ride in response to some suggestions from the LTAC. They are considering reversing the ride so that the festival that was supposed to take place in Pe Ell would happen in Chehalis.

Councilor Ketchum asked if that doesn't happen would they still receive Chehalis lodging tax funds for an event in Pe Ell. Councilor Harris stated that many of the riders are traveling here to take the ride (over 300 riders this year) and are staying the night generally in Chehalis and riding to Pe Ell and then coming back.

Councilor Spahr moved to approve both individually and collectively the candidates and funding amounts of the Lodging Tax Advisory Committee for use of lodging tax funds for 2017, and to reappoint the memberships of Todd Chaput, Gloria Choi, Jena Sorenson, Alicia Bull, Rick Burchett, and Chip Duncan to the Lodging Tax Advisory Committee. The motion was seconded by Councilor Pope and carried unanimously. Councilor Taylor abstained from voting.

Councilor Harris stated there is \$150,000 in reserves to potentially be used for improvements to Recreation Park and possibly Stan Hedwall Park, to expand those facilities to support sporting events. The money can be utilized to repay council-matic bonds and as capital against other grants. The LTAC agreed that the thing that puts most heads-in-beds, other than business, is sporting events.

There being no further business to come before the council the meeting adjourned at 5:41 pm.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor

Attest:

\_\_\_\_\_  
City Clerk

Approved: October 24, 2016

Initials: \_\_\_\_\_