

September 28, 2015

The Chehalis city council met in regular session on Monday, September 28, 2015, 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, and Chad Taylor. Councilors Ketchum and Lund were absent (excused). Staff present included: Merlin MacReynold, City Manager; Bill Hillier, City Attorney; Judy Schave, City Clerk; Glenn Schaffer, Police Chief; Judy Pectol, Finance Manager; Dennis Osborn, Community Development Director; and Lilly Wall, Recreation Manager. Members of the media included Dameon Pesanti from *The Chronicle*.

1. **Lewis County 2015 Flood Bulletin.** Lewis County Commissioner Edna Fund presented the council with copies of the "Lewis County 2015 Flood Bulletin." She noted the brochure contains information on flood risks in Lewis County and disaster preparedness for your home, vehicle and family. Commissioner Fund noted it also contains information on flood insurance, how to subscribe to CodeRED, and how to track local area rivers. She noted on October 1, they'll be mailing out copies of the Flood Bulletin to about 3,000 homes that are located in the 100-year floodplain.

Mayor Dawes inquired about the National Flood Insurance Program discounts noted in the brochure for Unincorporated Lewis County residents. He believed Chehalis residents also receive a decent discount on their flood insurance.

Commissioner Fund stated the brochure was geared more towards the county as opposed to cities. She noted to be eligible for discounted rates cities, as well as the county, need to apply for a rating from the Community Rating System, which they do diligently.

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

- a. Minutes of the regular meeting of September 14, 2015; and
- b. Claim Vouchers No. 113588-113740 and Electronic Funds Transfer No. 82015 in the amount of \$939,233.68 dated September 15, 2015.

The motion was seconded by Councilor Taylor and carried unanimously.

3. **Administration Reports.**

a. **August Financial Report.** Finance Manager Judy Pectol reported the general fund revenues are looking better and the few that are not should improve before the end of the year. She noted the expenditures also look a lot healthier after making the first cost allocations from the general fund to the enterprise funds.

Ms. Pectol reported the revenues in the wastewater and water funds are still coming in lower than expected for residential use. They believe this is due to customers conserving water. Ms. Pectol reported the stormwater fund is doing well, noting the last rate increase goes into effect in October.

Ms. Pectol reported on the airport fund, noting she is a little concerned about cash flow due to the expenditures for the Arkansas Way Road Extension Project. She indicated things are looking a little tight right now, but once we receive the FAA grant funding things will look a lot better.

Councilor Harris asked if it's a matter of potentially not receiving the funding.

Ms. Pectol stated no, adding it's just the timing of when it will be received.

Mayor Dawes stated he had concerns about that since the airport is one of the few funds that operate in the black. He noted the revenues normally exceed the expenditures due to the payment of the leases. Mayor Dawes suggested the FAA is usually pretty timely in releasing the funding once the paperwork for reimbursement is submitted. He suggested the administration stay on top of it for the remainder of the year because it's a little out of the norm from his past experience with the FAA.

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Ms. Pectol indicated the city had trouble with a previous FAA grant from 2013 for roughly \$25,000, noting we didn't receive the money until March 2015.

Mayor Dawes suggested things may have changed, but normally once you have your match assured they're pretty timely about sending the money.

City Manager MacReynold reported one of the challenges is Lewis County is holding about \$1.5 million in a debt service fund for the balloon payment due June 1, 2017. He noted in the past the airport tended to hold out about \$1.3 million, which allowed them a little more cash flow flexibility. City Manager MacReynold stated as they worked out the agreement with the county for ownership of the airport the city was adamant about holding the \$1.5 million to pay off the loan in 2017. He noted in the short-term it's created a little cash flow issue, but in the long-term it's the smart thing to do.

b. **Report on Gail and Carolyn Shaw Aquatics Center Activities.** Recreation Manager Lilly Wall stated it was a great summer and we had the best possible weather for opening the pool for its first full season. She reported they had 33,549 total participants, which in past years ran about 13,000. Ms. Wall stated they were full to capacity almost every day that the sun was shining, but when it wasn't their numbers plummeted. She noted she also had a great staff this year that took their jobs seriously.

Ms. Wall provided the following breakdown for the participation numbers:

- Swim lessons - 707 x 8 visits = 5,656
- Lifeguard & water safety aid classes - 84
- Open swim/lap swim - 21,744
  - Monday – Thursday – 12,867
  - Friday, Saturday & Sunday – 8,877
- High School PE, elementary swim, and private pool parties – 6,065

Ms. Wall reported they were asked to start tracking users by ZIP code and did so during the final three weeks of the season. The following percentages were reported for use by Chehalis residents:

- Open swim – 3,730 participants from August 12 to September 6
  - 24% - Chehalis residents
- Swim lessons - participants for entire season
  - 67% - Chehalis residents
- Private pool rentals - for entire season
  - 49% - Chehalis residents

Ms. Wall reported during the three weeks when they tracked the open swim participants they found 126 users were from outside of the country. Other outside participants came from Oregon, California, Illinois, Idaho, Alaska, Montana, and New York. Ms. Wall indicated they would be tracking the numbers all season next year, so they can get a more accurate account of where people are coming from.

Councilor Spahr asked if the increase in expenditures this year was due to additional personnel costs.

Ms. Wall reported they did have more staff this year due to the configuration of the pool and other activities going on. She noted the whole operation, including chemical and utilities, pretty much doubled in cost.

Councilor Spahr asked if Ms. Wall thought they might have been a little overstaffed.

Ms. Wall stated she asked that question all season long and talked about it frequently with the Pool Manager. She noted one of the things they need to work on is to come up with a plan for sending staff home when there's a change in the weather. Ms. Wall stated, "When we are full to capacity, I truly believe we're at the right staffing level." She reported it looks like a lot of bodies, but there's a lot of responsibility.

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Councilor Pope asked if there had been any vandalism at the pool.

Ms. Wall stated no, adding the community is embracing the facility and taking ownership of it. She noted the city's full-time staff has also done a really nice job of maintaining that area.

Councilor Harris suggested the facility takes a lot more staff time to maintain year-round, but thought it was money well spent.

Mayor Dawes stated, in comparing the revenues and expenditures from 2013 (the last full season) to 2015, we really only spent an additional \$3,500 for the amount of people who get to use it. He thought that was pretty significant. Mayor Dawes stated, "It's a jewel entry to the city and it's definitely going to give a person coming into town at that exit a very good opinion when they look over and see that pool."

#### **4. Council Reports.**

a. **Update From Councilor Harris.** Councilor Harris reported the Christmas Decoration Committee will be sending out letters in the utility bills this month and next month, inviting everyone to decorate for the holidays. He thanked Administrative Assistant Caryn Foley for helping with the letter.

b. **Update on Recreation Park Project.** Councilor Harris reported on the draft work schedule prepared by Tom Skillings of Skillings Connolly, Inc., for the groundwork for the project at Recreation Park. He noted at their last meeting they provided a lot of information, to include: the cost of ballfield development; potential buildings; and repair or replacement of Penny Playground. Councilor Harris reported the plan is still in its infancy and lots of questions are being asked. He noted they intend to bring plans back to the full council in November to solicit their feedback and to select the preferred plan. Councilor Harris stated by the end of the year they hope to have a final product that the council and community will be happy with.

Councilor Pope reported the Committee is putting together three different plans for the council to consider.

c. **Update From Mayor Dawes.** Mayor Dawes reported he and Councilors Spahr and Lund attended the quarterly meeting of the Regional Fire Authority. He noted progress is still being made; however, there are some issues that they need to deal with that will affect the entire fire service and law enforcement. Mayor Dawes stated, regardless of the outcome, there has been a tremendous amount of benefit and little cost to the constituents of the Riverside Fire Authority and the city of Chehalis.

Mayor Dawes reported the Council Budget Committee consisting of Councilors Spahr and Harris, and himself, will be meeting the following morning to start going over the 2016 budget proposals prepared by the administration.

Mayor Dawes reported he and Councilor Pope, Councilor Spahr, City Manager MacReynold and City Attorney Bill Hillier met with representatives of the county to start the process of looking at the Interlocal Agreement for our Urban Growth Area. He stated it was a good meeting, adding the next step is to work at the staff level to formulate where we go from here.

There being no further business to come before the council, the meeting adjourned at 5:28 p.m.

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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 September 28, 2015.**