

The Chehalis city council met in regular session on Monday, February 8, 2021. Mayor Dennis Dawes (present in the council chambers) called the meeting to order at 5:03 pm with the following council members present via Zoom: Tony Ketchum, Jerry Lord, Daryl Lund, Dr. Isaac Pope, and Bob Spahr. Mayor Pro Tem Taylor was present in the council chambers. Staff present included: Jill Anderson, City Manager; Tammy Baraconi, Planning & Building Manager; Caryn Foley, City Clerk; Kiley Franz, City Manager's Administrative Assistant; Tedd Hendershot, Fire Chief; Erin Hillier, City Attorney; Randy Kaut, Interim Police Chief (Zoom); Trent Lougheed, Public Works Director; Brandon Rakes, Airport Operations Coordinator; and Lilly Wall, Recreation Manager (Zoom). Due to orders from the Governor's office relating to COVID-19, members of the public and the press were able to view the meeting via live streaming or Zoom. The public was also provided a process for submitting comments prior to the meeting.

1. **Recognition of Mayor Pro Tem Chad Taylor.** Mayor Dawes recognized Mayor Pro Tem Taylor with a plaque upon his resignation from the council. Mayor Dawes stated Mayor Pro Tem Taylor had served on the City Council for 19 years but had decided to resign after the recent purchase of *The Chronicle* newspaper. Mayor Dawes, on behalf of the City Council, thanked Mayor Pro Tem Taylor for his time spent on the Council and thanked Coralee Taylor for her support of Mayor Pro Tem Taylor during his time on the council. Mayor Pro Tem Taylor expressed his appreciation for the support of the council, city staff, and his family.

2. **Introduction of Richard DeBolt as New Lewis Economic Development Council Executive Director.** Richard DeBolt introduced his staff members and explained that the goal of the EDC was to ensure local entities were moving in the same direction with similar goals regarding housing needs, economic growth, and a post-COVID program. Mr. DeBolt expressed interest in meeting with the Mayor to discuss water rights and .09 funds.

3. **Consent Calendar.** Mayor Pro Tem Taylor moved to approve the consent calendar comprised of the following:

- a. Minutes of the regular city council meeting of January 25, 2021;
- b. January 29, 2021 Claim Vouchers No. 131030 – 131113 and Electronic Funds Transfer Check Nos. 1118 – 1135 in the amount of \$210,889.33;
- c. January 29, 2021, Payroll Vouchers No. 41549-41575, Direct Deposit Payroll Vouchers No. 13009-13113, Electronic Federal Tax and DRS Pension/Deferred Comp Payments No. 327-330 in the amount of \$920,280.82; and
- d. Resolution No. 1-2021, first and final reading – declaring property to be surplus.

The motion was seconded by Councilor Pope and carried unanimously.

4. **Resolution No. 2-2021, First and Final Reading – Continuing Support for a Basin-Wide Solution to Flooding and Aquatic Species Restoration.** Trent Lougheed stated the city had historically supported the effort to prevent flooding and protect aquatic species. In 2016, the City Council passed a resolution in support of a flood retention facility and improvements to the levee at the Chehalis-Centralia Airport.

Councilor Spahr moved to adopt Resolution No. 2-2021 on first and final reading and submit the resolution to the Office of the Chehalis Basin. The motion was seconded by Councilor Pope and carried unanimously.

5. **Council Member Vacancy Process.** City Manager Anderson stated the position vacated by Mayor Pro Tem Taylor was the second at-large position, which was set to expire December 31, 2021. Anyone wishing to apply must, for the last year, have been a resident of and have been registered to vote in the city. City Manager Anderson reviewed the proposed process for seeking applicants. It was proposed that applications be submitted by February 19; that the City Council hold a special meeting on March 1 to conduct interviews of applicants and appoint someone to fill the vacancy; and then have the new council member sworn in at the regular meeting of March 8.

The City Council approved the process and application, and directed staff to proceed with the process for seeking candidates to fill the vacancy. A special meeting was set for Monday, March 1, 2021 at 5:00 p.m. to interview candidates.

6. **Discussion Regarding Available Election Dates for Voter Decision on EMS Levy Renewal in 2021.** City Manager Anderson stated the EMS levy was set to expire at the end of the year. In order to fund fire services at the existing level, a

renewal of the EMS levy was necessary. City Manager Anderson explained that three election dates were available: April 27, 2021; August 3, 2021; and November 2, 2021. The ballot in April could be expensive if no other items were on the ballot.

Chief Hendershot explained that the council could file for both elections to ensure that the levy was placed on both the August 3 and the November 2 ballots. If the EMS levy passed during the August election, it could be pulled from the November ballot.

The Council unanimously agreed to have the levy placed on both the August 3, 2021 and the November 2, 2021 election ballots. The ballot for November 2, 2021 would be removed if the levy passed in August.

7. Discussion of Potential Changes to Parking Exemptions for the Historic Downtown. Mayor Dawes stated the discussion was regarding parking issues in the historic downtown only.

Tammy Baraconi stated the discussion covered CMC 17.84 regarding parking and loading, which did not cover parking enforcement issues. The proposed change would remove the exemption in CMC 17.84.010 for any changes in use or occupancy in the downtown historic district.

City Manager Anderson stated the removal of the exemption could cause issues for those looking to change the use or occupancy of a building in the downtown. Parking was limited in the historic downtown and any consideration of change could cause issues for those wishing to create or move a business into the downtown.

Councilor Lund stated he had initially believed this was an option that could help, but after receiving information about the possible negative impact to local businesses, he no longer believed it was a viable solution to the issue.

Councilor Lord asked for clarification regarding what consideration of parking would entail. Ms. Baraconi explained the alteration to the code would make any new business or change of occupancy to a building to have the same consideration for parking spaces that would be necessary at properties like the airport or the port. Ms. Baraconi would be required to check the parking tables to ensure that enough parking could be provided for each kind of use; anyone wishing to change the occupancy of a building would then need to show off-street parking options.

Mayor Dawes asked if a discussion of parking that could lead to a refusal of an application could be viewed as discriminatory. City Attorney Hillier stated the alteration could cause issues for public interest.

Councilor Spahr expressed his concerns about parking enforcement in the downtown area.

After discussion, it was decided to create a parking sub-committee. Councilors Spahr, Lord, and Lund volunteered to be on the committee.

The City Council agreed to not make any changes to CMC 17.84.010.

8. Election of Mayor Pro Tem. Mayor Dawes asked the council if they would like to consider the election of a Mayor Pro Tem. The council agreed to add the election of a Mayor Pro Tem as the first action item at the February 22, 2021 meeting.

9. Administration Reports.

a. **City Manager Update.** City Manager Anderson informed the council that Recreation Manager Lilly Wall would provide a report regarding the vehicle accident at Penny Playground.

Ms. Wall explained the damage to the playground impacted electrical, portable fencing, permanent fencing, custom fencing, which included the fence penny medallions, concrete, synthetic turf, five pieces of playground equipment, the shade shelter, and a bench. All contractors have been contacted and an estimated cost and timeline should be available by the end of the week.

Councilor Pope asked if the individual that damaged the structures was covered by insurance. City Manager Anderson explained that individual was insured, and the City's insurance company was working to receive compensation for the damaged equipment.

Councilor Taylor stated there was talk on social media that the new park had not been opened because an opening celebration had not yet been held. He clarified that the park had not been opened due to COVID restrictions set by the state.

Councilor Pope asked when Lintott/Alexander Park would be opened. Ms. Wall stated that tree work was being completed and the park should be opened within the next few days. City Manager Anderson thanked the Chehalis Foundation for their donation to pay for the necessary work on the trees at the park.

City Manager Anderson thanked Mayor Pro Tem Taylor for his service and for his willingness to listen and adapt to new information.

10. Councilor Reports/Committee Updates.

a. **Mayor Pro Tem Taylor.** Mayor Pro Tem Taylor introduced Mike Bannan (via Zoom) who was interested in becoming a council member. He also introduced his son, Franklin, and his fiancée, Melynn, and congratulated them on their upcoming baby. He thanked his wife for her patience and the support she provided while he was on the council.

b. **Councilor Lund.** Councilor Lund stated he had been informed that the Scout Lodge had a rodent infestation and asked that staff look into it. City Manager Anderson assured Councilor Lund that the rodent infestation would be addressed.

c. **Councilor Pope.** Councilor Pope encouraged anyone contemplating getting a COVID-19 vaccination to do it.

d. **Mayor Dawes.** Mayor Dawes stated that funding sources for water rights issues were being addressed.

11. **Executive Session.** Mayor Dawes announced the council would take a short recess and then be in executive session pursuant to RCW 42.30.110(1)(i) – Litigation/Potential Litigation and RCW 42.30.110(1)(c) – Sale/Lease of Real Estate, not to exceed 7:35 pm and there would be no action following conclusion of the executive session. Mayor Dawes closed the regular meeting at 6:53 pm. Mayor Pro Tem Taylor left the meeting at 6:53 pm. The executive session began at 6:59 pm. Following conclusion of the executive session, the regular meeting was reopened at 7:35 pm and immediately adjourned.

Dennis L. Dawes, Mayor

Caryn Foley, City Clerk

Approved: 2/22/2021

Initials: cf