

## Chehalis City Council

Meeting Minutes

May 24, 2021

The Chehalis City Council met in regular session on Monday, May 24, 2021. Mayor Dennis Dawes called the meeting to order at 5:00 pm with the following council members present: Michael Bannan, and Tony Ketchum. Councilors Lord and Lund participated via Zoom. Councilor Pope joined the meeting telephonically at 5:05 p.m. Councilor Spahr was absent, excused. Staff present included: Jill Anderson, City Manager; Tammy Baraconi, Planning and Building Manager; Kiley Franz, City Clerk; Erin Hillier, City Attorney; Andrew Hunziker, Property and Facilities Manager; Randy Kaut, Interim Police Chief; Trent Loughheed, Public Works Director; Brandon Rakes, Airport Operations Coordinator; Chun Saul, Finance Director; and Lilly Wall, Recreation Manager. Due to orders from the Governor's office relating to COVID-19 and ongoing capacity limitations, members of the public and the press had the option of viewing the meeting via live streaming or Zoom. The public was also provided a process for submitting comments prior to the meeting.

1. **Approval of Agenda.** City Manager Anderson informed the Council that the executive session listed on the agenda would not be necessary. A motion to approve the agenda as amended was made by Councilor Ketchum. The motion was seconded by Councilor Bannan and carried unanimously.

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

- a. Minutes of the regular City Council meeting of May 10, 2021; and
- b. May 14, 2021 Claim Vouchers No. 131718 – 131828 and Electronic Funds Transfer Check Nos. 1282 – 1315 and 10 in the amount of \$352,647.65; and
- c. Set June 14, 2021 at 5:00 P.M. to conduct a public hearing on the City's 2022-2027 six-year transportation improvement program.

The motion was seconded by Councilor Lund and carried unanimously.

3. **Budget Allocation of Funds for Westside Park and Lintott/Alexander Park.** City Manager Anderson explained that the Friends of Westside Park, an informal group of individuals that have taken an interest in improving Westside Park, were working with the City to make a multi-year plan to improve Westside Park. The Chehalis Foundation has also begun fund raising efforts for improvements and ongoing maintenance to Lintott/Alexander Park.

City Manager Anderson explained that funds could be allocated as a one-time expenditure to the City accounts for both parks to show support of the improvement efforts made by the respective community groups. A further request was made to allow the use of Lintott/Alexander Park free of charge by the Chehalis Foundation for their fundraising event. Mayor Dawes informed the Council that the budget committee had reviewed this request and recommended it for approval by the Council.

Councilor Pope suggested that the City approve a matching of funds up to \$20,000 instead of an allocation of \$20,000.

A motion to approve an allocation of \$20,000 for Lintott/Alexander Park in the City's 2021 budget; and approve the use of Lintott/Alexander Park by the Chehalis Foundation for a one-time special event designed to raise money for the Foundation's dedicated maintenance fund for Lintott/Alexander Park; and approve an allocation of \$20,000 for Westside Park in the City's 2021 budget was made by Councilor Ketchum. The motion was seconded by Councilor Lund and carried unanimously.

4. **Resolution No. 4-2021, First Reading – Establishing a Schedule of Fees and Charges.** City Manager Anderson explained that the current fee schedule had been adopted in 2015. The fee schedule presented has been reformatted for easier reading and revised to reflect the current business environment.

Interim Chief Kaut explained that the fees for concealed weapons licenses are set by the state, not the police department. Parking permits and parking violation charges are suggested to be increased for the first time in many years. Mayor Dawes expressed his belief that it had been at least 30 years since parking fees had been increased.

Lilly Wall explained that three fees for parks and facilities were recommended to increase. The first charge is for sewage disposal at the RV park, the overnight charge for RV camping, and the annual yard waste disposal fee.

Brandon Rakes explained that airport fuel rates were percentage based, and minor changes were being made for tie down fees and car rental fees.

Trent Lougheed explained that increases were proposed for civil permit fees and right-of-way fees. Plan review and inspection fees for utilities were also proposed. Fees are suggested in order to help cover some of the associated employee costs. Mayor Dawes asked if these fees were comparable to neighboring cities; Trent Lougheed explained that fees were lower than many surrounding entities.

Tammy Baraconi explained that the proposed fees were compared to Lewis County, Centralia, and Shelton; proposed fees are less than Lewis County and Shelton, and on par with Centralia. Projects with a cost less than \$100,000 will see a reduction in fees. Residential projects over \$1,000,000 will cost 0.85% of the overall project cost, and commercial projects over \$1,000,000 will cost 1.12% of the overall project cost. An increase to help cover more of the costs associated with the hearings examiner process were also discussed.

Councilor Lord asked if the exact cost to the city for each of the planning and building fees was known. Tammy Baraconi explained that it was difficult to quantify the amount of time spent on each project and permit. Mayor Dawes asked if the revenue generated by the building and planning fees covered the staff time or other associated costs. Tammy Baraconi informed the Council that the fees would not completely cover the associated costs; the proposed fees are comparable to over local jurisdictions.

Councilor Bannan expressed his belief that it was a bad time to raise fees, due to rising building costs and the financial stress of the pandemic. Tammy Baraconi informed the Council that the community development department has been extremely busy lately and is lacking staff to review and issue permits. Councilor Bannan asked if these fees would help cover the cost of an additional employee. Tammy Baraconi explained that it was the intent to hire additional staffing.

Mayor Dawes reminded the Council that staff was reviewing fees at the direction of the Council. The budget committee had suggested the review of fees to help generate revenue in lieu of raising taxes. City Manager Anderson briefly explained what a cost study for the fee schedule would involve.

A motion to adopt Resolution No. 4-2021 on first of two required readings consistent with City Council policy was made by Councilor Ketchum. The motion was seconded by Councilor Lord and carried four to two, Councilors Bannan and Lord disapproved.

##### **5. Administration Reports.**

a. **City Manager Update.** City Manager Anderson asked to confirm that Monday, June 7, 2021 at 5:00 P.M. would work for the Council to hold a special City Council meeting to include a workshop regarding the International Building Code. The Council confirmed it would. She also showed the Council one of the spikes for the old trolley tracks on Pacific Avenue; the spike will be donated to the Lewis County Historical Museum.

##### **6. Councilor Reports/Committee Updates.**

a. **Councilor Lund.** Councilor Lund informed the Council that the trolley used to run between the sawmill, where it would acquire fuel, and the steam plant on Coal Creek Road, to deliver said fuel.

b. **Councilor Pope.** Councilor Pope expressed his fondness for Chehalis while traveling.

c. **Councilor Bannan.** Councilor Bannan expressed his excitement for the opening of Penny Playground. He had seen many children and families enjoying the facility. He asked if a flashing crosswalk sign could be placed at the crosswalks closer to the playground. Mayor Dawes expressed his frustration over the three acts of vandalism on the newly opened playground, but praised staff for their efforts to open the park during the pandemic.

d. **Councilor Ketchum.** Councilor Ketchum asked if the city could avoid a hotel or motel becoming a COVID-19 quarantine facility without prior knowledge, similar to what happened in Centralia. Erin Hillier will look into what can be done by the city to avoid such a situation. City Manager Anderson explained that the situation in Centralia had been an agreement between the state and the property owner. Councilor Lund supported the idea of Erin Hillier looking into what could be done to prevent this kind of situation from happening in Chehalis.

e. **Mayor Dawes.** Mayor Dawes thanked Lilly Wall and Andrew Hunziker for the walk-through of Penny Playground before the opening. He also reported that the Chamber of Commerce hosted their first Business After Hours since the beginning of the pandemic.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:05 pm.

  
Dennis L. Dawes, Mayor

  
Kiley Franz, City Clerk

Approved:

Initials: 