**Chehalis City Council**

Meeting Minutes

March 14, 2022

The Chehalis City Council met in regular session on Monday, March 14, 2022. Mayor Tony Ketchum called the meeting to order at 5:00 pm with the following members present: Jerry Lord, Kate McDougall, Dr. Isaac Pope, Bob Spahr, and Kelly Wilson. Councilor Daryl Lund participated via Zoom. Staff present included: Jill Anderson, City Manager; Tammy Baraconi, Planning and Building Manager; Lance Bunker, Interim Public Works Director; Cassie Frazier, Interim City Clerk; Randy Kaut, Police Chief; Brandon Rakes, Airport Operations Coordinator; Chun Saul, Finance Director; Melody Guenther, Court Administrator; Madisen Lester, Incoming Court Administrator; Susan Stayner, City Manager Administrative Assistant; and Erin Hillier, City Attorney. News media present included Daniel Warn, Reporter; and Jared Wenzelburger, Photographer, both representing The Chronicle.

1. **Approval of Agenda.** Jill Anderson, City Manager, made note that the motion for the Second and final reading, Ordinance No. 1027- B- Establishing 2021 year-end fund balance commitments was worded incorrectly and should say second reading, not first. With that acknowledged by the Council, a motion to approve the agenda was made by Councilor Spahr. The motion was seconded by Councilor Pope and carried unanimously.

2. **Special Acknowledgments.** A moment of silence in remembrance of former Chehalis City Manager David M. Campbell was held.

3. **Recognition of Retiring Court Administrator, Melody Guenther.** Mayor Ketchum presented Melody Guenther with a Proclamation in honor of her upcoming retirement and thanking Melody for her over 30 years of service to the City of Chehalis. Mrs. Guenther thanked the Council and City for the opportunity to work with them. Jill Anderson presented an engraved vase with flowers on behalf of the City Council while also thanking Melody for her service to the City of Chehalis and the pleasure of working with her.

4. **Proclamation, Declaring March as Red Cross Month.** Mayor Ketchum presented a Proclamation declaring March as Red Cross Month.

5. **Chehalis Community Renaissance Team Update.** Annalee Tobey spoke about the rebranding project they have been working on beginning in November of last year. Ms. Tobey presented the results of the branding initiative with an introduction video created by David James, board member of Chehalis Community Renaissance Team and owner of Book n’ Brush. Ms. Tobey announced that the Chehalis Community Renaissance Team will be moving forward as Experience Chehalis.

6. **Citizen Business.** Aaron Fuller of Fuller Design addressed the council about concerns he is experiencing with regards to the speed to which permits and building plans are being processed or approved through the Building and Planning Department. Mr. Fuller asked for time frames and accountability. Councilor Lund contributed by stating that pushing these projects out is costing the contractors financially. Dan Hawes from Sunquest Construction addressed the topic as well, highlighting the need for the City to work with the private sector to assist in getting these projects completed. Jill Anderson addressed the Council about these topics, stating that the City will look into the projects of both the gentlemen that presented and see what delays may be holding up their projects. Ms. Anderson also reiterated that there have been quite a few staff changes in the Public Works department that have held up a multitude of projects and with the help of Gibbs and Olson Engineering (working as the City’s Contract Engineer), staff is working to get projects that are behind schedule back on track.

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

* 1. Minutes of the regular City Council meeting of February 28, 2022; and
  2. 2022 Vouchers and Transfers – February 28, 2022 Claim Vouchers No. 133686-133780 and Electronic Funds Transfer Check Nos. 1862 -1887 and 42-43 in the amount of $178,999.52; and
  3. 2022 Vouchers and Transfers – February 28, 2022, Payroll Vouchers No. 41928-41950; Direct Deposit Payroll Vouchers No. 14484-14597; and Electronic Federal Tax and DRS Pension/Deferred Comp Payments No. 382-385 in the amount of $877,649.87; and
  4. Proposed easement with Lewis County PUD providing power for McFiler’s new location at 558 N. Market Blvd.

The motion was seconded by Councilor Pope. Councilor Spahr asked for clarification, asking why McFiler’s needed a new easement when they currently have one. Lance Bunker, Interim Public Works Director, stated that they would need to connect from lines located at Washington Ave, run line across the parking lot and connect to the building. This would be the most efficient way for McFiler’s to obtain the increased power they would need for their new location. Motion carried unanimously.

8. **Second and Final Reading, Ordinance No. 1027-B- Establishing 2021 Year End Fund Balance Commitments.** City Manager Anderson explained that this Ordinance had its first reading, and a motion was made for the second and final reading at the February 28th meeting. Ms. Anderson clarified that the title and subject matter were correct, the incorrect information was in the motion section stating, “first reading” instead of “second and final”.

A motion was made by Councilor Spahr and seconded by Councilor Lord to pass the Ordinance on second and final reading. Mayor Ketchum asked City Attorney Erin Hillier to read the title of the Ordinance for the record. Motion was carried unanimously.

9. **Consideration of Site Access Agreement for Parcel Numbers 021612001002 and 005605083005 to National Frozen Food Corporation for Two Monitoring Wells.** City Manager Anderson informed the Council that Brandon Rakes, Airport Operations Coordinator and Erin Hillier, City Attorney would be presenting this matter. Mr. Rakes explained that National Frozen Foods has been working with the Department of Ecology to perform a background groundwater study in the area adjacent to its fields. The Department of Ecology is requiring National Frozen Foods to install and monitor groundwater wells upgradient of agricultural land it irrigates near the Chehalis River. Right now, the City is proposing a price of $75.00 per month, per test well site plus applicable taxes for 36 months with a potential for extension.

Councilor Spahr voiced concern about charging National Frozen Foods when this is a mandate. Mayor Ketchum suggested a dollar per year lease. Erin Hillier stated the City’s need to make sure they don’t fall into the gifting of public land and had researched comparable rentals throughout the City. Ms. Hillier also informed the Council that National Frozen Foods had previously asked for a lesser charge of $65.00 per well, per site and that is something the Council could consider. Mr. Rakes wanted to reiterate that the discussions to maintain fair market value was to prevent legal recourse. Councilor Lund asked if the City could go as low as $35.00 per well, per site. Councilor Pope stated that he believed National Frozen Foods had spent time thinking about this and felt comfortable with the $65.00 charge and that is what we should accept.

Councilor Pope made motion to accept the Access Agreement with National Frozen Foods for $65.00 per well. Councilor Lord seconded the motion. Ms. Anderson asked to include applicable taxes with the $65.00 per well otherwise the City is responsible for paying the leasehold tax and should not incur that charge. Councilor Spahr asked if the subject needed to be tabled or could the Council continue with the motion. Ms. Hillier clarified that the Council could approve the change to $65.00 with applicable taxes and the City would need to amend the contract to reflect that. Motion was carried unanimously.

10. **Consideration of Offer to Lease 8 Parking Spaces to Tesla, Inc.** Brandon Rakes presented the plan to lease 8 parking spaces to Tesla, Inc. The site location would be between Walmart and Home Depot on NW Arkansas Way. Councilor Spahr asked to clarify that they are only renting the spaces and not the access driveway to Home Depot; Mr. Rakes confirmed that to be true. Councilor Lord asked about the 10% increase of rent over 10 years. Mr. Rakes explained this was to keep the City property at fair market value over the course of time and could be revisited at and reassessed down the road.

A motion was made by Councilor Spahr to accept the lease for 8 parking spaces located at 700 NW Arkansas Way by Tesla, Inc. and authorize the City Manager to execute the documents. Motion was seconded by Councilor Pope and was carried unanimously.

8. **Administration Reports**.

1. **City Manager Update**. City Manager Jill Anderson acknowledged how great it was to see everyone’s face again now that the mask mandate had been lifted. Ms. Anderson recognized Melody Guenther’s service and support she has offered throughout her career with the City and introduced the new City Court Administrator, Madisen Lester. Ms. Anderson mentioned the webinar meeting from the previous week that discussed the Skookumchuck Dam and the concerns everyone shares regarding the possible demolition of the dam.

11. **Councilor Reports/Committee Updates**.

1. **Councilor Lord.** Councilor Lord asked Jill Anderson how the hiring process was going for the Parking Enforcement Officer. Ms. Anderson explained that the City has a candidate and if all goes well with the background check, the position will be filled by April. Councilor Lord also asked if Ms. Anderson was attending the United Way meeting occurring Wednesday, March 16, 2022, and to tell everyone a little bit about it. Ms. Anderson confirmed that herself, Chief Kaut and Mayor Ketchum were to attend and communicated that the meeting was regarding homelessness in the community, how it impacts business owners and residents, how the organizations providing provisions to the homeless effect the City and going over what laws and regulations also influence how the City can or cannot proceed in their handling of the homeless.
2. **Councilor Spahr.** Councilor Spahr shared about attending an .09 committee meeting and the benefits of the committee funds that are out there that could help the community.
3. **Mayor Ketchum.** Mayor Ketchum informed the Council that he attended the Twin Transit Board Meeting. Mayor Ketchum also attended the Mayors Meeting and met with a member of Senator Cantwell’s office along with Jill Anderson. Mayor Ketchum stated that Ms. Anderson presented issues the City is facing to the group and did a good job with the presentation. Mayor Ketchum similarly attended the Westside Park and the Chehalis Community Renaissance Team meetings. Mayor Ketchum touched base about also attending the Skookumchuck dam webinar and how tearing it down will affect the people who have water rights connected to the dam and many other issues doing so would cause. Lastly, Mayor Ketchum attended the funeral service for David Campbell. Mayor Ketchum asked the other 3 members of the Council who worked with David to share their experience working with him. Councilor Spahr, Councilor Pope and Councilor Lund all shared kind words with respect to their tenure with David Campbell and Mayor Ketchum wrapped up the meeting with thoughtful words and condolences to the Campbell family.

12. **Executive Session**. Mayor Ketchum announced the City Council would take a short recess and then be in executive session pursuant to RCW 42.30.110(1)(i) – Litigation or Legal Risk and RCW 42.30.110(1)(c) – Sale/Lease of Real Estate, not to exceed 7:00 pm and there will be no action taken following conclusion of the executive session. Mayor Ketchum closed the regular meeting at 6:14 pm. and the executive session began at 6:20 pm. Mayor Ketchum adjourned the executive session and reopened the regular meeting at 6:50pm and then immediately adjourned.

Anthony Ketchum, Sr., Mayor

Cassie Frazier, Interim City Clerk

Approved:

Initials: CF