

May 29, 2012

The Chehalis city council met in regular session on Tuesday, May 29, 2012, in the Chehalis city hall. Mayor Ketchum called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. with the following council members present: Terry Harris, Dr. Isaac Pope, Daryl Lund, Chad Taylor and Dennis Dawes. Councilor Spahr was absent (excused). Staff present included: Merlin MacReynold, City Manager; Bill Hillier, City Attorney; Judy Schave, City Clerk; and Bob Nacht, Community Development Director. Members of the media included Kyle Spurr from *The Chronicle*.

1. **Proclamation Presentation.** Mayor Ketchum presented the W.F. West High School girls fastpitch team and their coaches with proclamations declaring them the 2012 District and State Champions.

2. **New School Zone Digital Speed Limit Sign.** Aram Matagi, (R.E. Bennett Elementary School) stated, as a representative of the students, he wanted to express their gratitude for the recent installation of the radar school zone digital speed limit sign on Market Boulevard. He reported his dad, a Washington State Patrol Sergeant, suggested the signs would create an awareness that would result in increased safety. He noted the difference in stopping distance between vehicles traveling at 25 miles per hour is 22 feet, adding the reduced speed was significant. Mr. Matagi thanked the council for putting the students first and contributing to their safety and their future.

3. **Boots to Books Veterans Monument.** Rodney Saarela, Centralia College Vet-Corps Representative, reported it was his job to help Veterans navigate through the educational system. In 2008, he started talking about creating a Veterans monument at Centralia College and last summer they received approval from Dr. Walton to proceed with the project. To date, they had raised \$2,050 with a goal of \$10,000.

Mr. Saarela reported 2 Ravens Studio would construct the brass portion of the statue, which would consist of a pair of combat boots sitting on top of some books to signify those coming from the military to education, or those going from education to the military. He noted Centralia Monument would construct the base, which will have the emblems of the five military branches engraved on it, as well as the words, "To All Veterans Past, Present and Future."

Mr. Saarela reported the monument would be placed between the two flag poles on campus, with the intent of moving it in front of the new student center after it's built.

4. **Consent Calendar.** Councilor Dawes moved to approve the consent calendar comprised of the following:

- a. Minutes of the regular meeting of May 14, 2012; and
- b. Claim Vouchers No. 103023-103172 and EFT No. 42012 in the amount of \$171,861.20 dated May 15, 2012.

The motion was seconded by Councilor Pope and carried unanimously.

5. **Administration Reports.**

a. **April Financial Report.** City Manager MacReynold reported the city's revenues were a little down. He noted a short explanation was provided at the bottom of the report with regard to the property tax, intergovernmental funds, and operating transfers.

Councilor Harris noted the revenues for electricity tax seemed to be low and asked if it had to do with the two-month cycle period. Councilor Dawes suggested that number might go up a little since Lewis County Public Utility District just phased in the second half of their two-part increase last month. City Manager MacReynold noted he would follow up with the finance manager and ask her to provide a specific answer to the question.

City Manager MacReynold reported the general fund expenditures were just over 27 percent of the budget, noting the departments were doing a good job at keeping track of their expenditures.

City Manager MacReynold talked briefly about the utility funds, noting the wastewater fund was collecting a little more revenue than what was projected. He indicated the wastewater expenditures were significantly under spent due to the fact that

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we had not yet started work on our capital improvement projects for the year.

City Manager MacReynold reported the water fund was a little under its projected revenues for the year. He noted the expenditures were also under what was projected, but again, this was due to the capital improvement projects not starting until later in the year.

City Manager MacReynold was happy to report that the storm water fund was doing better than projected, which was nice for a change.

Councilor Dawes reported he had noticed what appeared to be 'sink holes' developing around some of the catch basins, and during his walk last evening he noticed what looked to be like three pin-holes around one of the city's manhole covers. He stated, in a conversation he had with Tim Grochowski, he brought up the issue of the pin-holes. Mr. Grochowski suggested to him that it could be a pipe leaking, or something of that nature. He reported he would forward a picture to the Public Works Director, so the crew can take a look at it.

Councilor Dawes suggested it might be a good idea for staff to take a look at the two-foot area around the catch basins when they're cleaning them out, in an effort to catch something before it becomes a problem.

b. **Update on 72-Hour Parking Restriction Ordinance.** City Manager MacReynold gave a brief update on the 72-hour parking ordinance that went into effect January 17, 2012. To date, there have been only two situations where vehicles have been tagged and only one had to be towed. City Manager MacReynold reminded the council that this was a complaint driven process, and at this point he believed it was working.

## 6. **Council Reports.**

a. **Update From Councilor Harris.** Councilor Harris reported, in recent months, they had received information from the Southwest Clean Air Agency concerning 'coal dust.' He noted at the last Chehalis River Basin Partnership meeting there was a presentation made by a consultant for the Washington State Department of Ecology (DOE), in reference to Grays Harbor wanting to build a coal export port.

Councilor Harris felt the consultant was there to pre-emptively strike against the coal industry, adding he showed a rather interesting video which depicted coal dust exploding out of a train as it ran through a beautiful green valley. The consultant indicated the tracks were used constantly by one particular mine back east. He noted every coal car loses between 500 and 1000 pounds of coal dust on each trip and these were the kinds of things we have to be afraid of. Councilor Harris stated he asked the consultant to explain why the area around the tracks was so pristine in the video, if for decades the coal cars have been passing through there. The consultant indicated he didn't know exactly where the video was shot.

Councilor Harris suggested there was already a battle brewing by the anti-coal supporters, adding it will be interesting to see what kind of ammunition the different entities use to support their side of the issue.

Councilor Dawes thought one of the bigger affects would be the increase in the number of coal trains. He talked briefly about how news channels tend to pick up on something and it sticks, and that's all they continue to report on.

Councilor Harris suggested a three-second video of a train kicking up coal dust will be a lot more impressive than the rest of the 1,500 mile journey where you see none. He reported when talking with the people in Grays Harbor they are looking at the hundreds of jobs and the millions of dollars that will come into their community.

Councilor Pope reported he grew up in Tennessee where there was a lot of coal and trains, and he never saw any coal dust. He noted they also had cement plants that were supposed to have done a lot of damage. Councilor Pope didn't know where they got their information, but suggested it was bogus.

Councilor Lund reported, while attending high school, he worked for Central Fuel. He stated, "You wouldn't believe how many buildings and schools in Lewis County burned coal for heat." Councilor Lund suggested the property next to Central Fuel,

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where he and his parents lived at the time, probably had a foot of coal dust in the ground due to the water runoff that flooded their garden each year. He reported the garden and grass grew well and suggested rather than killing stuff off, it probably helped. Councilor Lund stated he would load about 60 trucks with coal every Saturday when the weather was cold, and he never had any issues with coal dust.

b. **2011 "Wastewater Treatment Plant Outstanding Performance" Award.** Mayor Ketchum reported he received a letter from DOE, congratulating the city on receiving the 2011 "Wastewater Treatment Plant Outstanding Performance" award. He noted DOE would be sending out a news release recognizing the 2011 award recipients that will include the City of Chehalis Water Reclamation Facility.

City Manager MacReynold recognized Wastewater Superintendent Patrick Wiltzius and his staff who have all done a great job for the city.

c. **Update on Quiet Zone Proposal.** Mayor Ketchum reported, after the last council meeting, he received a call from David Plotz regarding the discussion on the quiet zone. During their conversation, Mr. Plotz stated he wanted to thank the council for listening to his proposal and for the investigation that was done. Mayor Ketchum stated Mr. Plotz indicated he had no regrets or hard feelings about what happened, adding he understood at some point the financial issue would rule the day.

Mayor Ketchum reported Mr. Plotz also suggested this was one of the better councils that the city has had, and the outcome of this issue was okay with both sides.

There being no further business to come before the council, the meeting adjourned at 6:29 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 May 29, 2012.**