

August 27, 2012

The Chehalis city council met in regular session on Monday, August 13, 2012, in the Chehalis city hall. Mayor Pro-tem Harris called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. with the following council members present: Dr. Isaac Pope, Bob Spahr, Daryl Lund, Chad Taylor, and Dennis Dawes. Mayor Tony Ketchum was absent (excused). Staff present included Merlin MacReynold, City Manager; Bill Hillier, City Attorney; Judy Schave, City Clerk; Glenn Schaffer, Police Chief; Bob Nacht, Community Development Director; Peggy Hammer, Human Resources Administrator; and Eva Lindgren, Finance Manager. Members of the media included Kyle Spurr from *The Chronicle*.

1. **Citizen Business.** Carl Bohlin (1022 Cascade Avenue) reported, back in April, he was served a notice because his vehicle was parked in the wrong direction. He noted he didn't have a problem with the new parking ordinance, but suggested if anyone were to go within a two-block radius of his home there were at least five other vehicles that were in worse shape than his. Mr. Bohlin stated he didn't have a problem abiding by the rules, he was just asking that it be fair. He noted it seemed to be a little hit and miss and asked if the council could look into the matter.

City Manager MacReynold reported most of the city's enforcement issues were complaint driven, adding he appreciated Mr. Bohlin's input. He suggested Mr. Bohlin contact Police Chief Glenn Schaffer regarding the matter.

2. **Health and Wellness Day Proclamation.** Mayor Pro-tem Harris presented Maretta Berg and Chris Thomas with a proclamation declaring September 15, 2012, as Health and Wellness day in the city of Chehalis.

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

- a. Minutes of the work session of August 6, 2012, and the regular meeting of August 13, 2012; and
- b. Claim Vouchers No. 103837-103985 in the amount of \$144,130.13 dated August 15, 2012.

The motion was seconded by Councilor Pope and carried unanimously.

4. **Administration Reports.**

a. **July Financial Report.** Eva Lindgren reported on the total tax revenues, noting overall they were looking pretty good and were only off by 1.4 percent. She talked briefly about the August sales and use tax data, noting it showed an increase of .2 percent over August of last year, and the year-to-date total was only down .2 percent.

Councilor Taylor inquired as to which categories were showing increases, and which were showing a downward trend. Ms. Lindgren reported one of the biggest downturns was the "unknown" category, which is an adjustment category the state provides the city. She noted last year the city received between eight and nine thousand dollars in that category. Ms. Lindgren reported, with regard to the categories showing an increase, there was still a lot of volatility.

Councilor Taylor asked if the city received any back-fill from the streamlined sales tax for the revenue the city has lost. Ms. Lindgren reported the city still receives insignificant amounts of mitigation revenue from the state, noting the last quarter payment was about \$5,000. She stated, from the State Auditor's perspective, it wasn't considered tax revenue, so it was buried within the city's "charges for goods and services" revenue.

Councilor Taylor suggested it would be nice to put together a fact-based letter to the Governor and/or Legislature, showing them the difference in what the city was receiving prior to mitigation, and what we're getting now. Ms. Lindgren reported the 2007 flood event really damaged the city significantly with regard to the amount of mitigation the city was receiving. She noted the state used that particular time period as part of their baseline, when a lot of businesses were closed due to the flooding that occurred.

Ms. Lindgren reported on the general fund expenditures, noting the only area of concern was the community development department. She stated the city has a lot of temporary employees for the pool and grounds maintenance in July, which added additional costs to those operations. Ms. Lindgren noted last year's expenditures were a little bit lower, but they also have a smaller budget this year.

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Councilor Spahr noted the street fund was way down and asked if they would see an increase for the work done over the last couple of months. Ms. Lindgren reported there is always a time lag in terms of billing, and she was expecting that number to increase.

Councilor Spahr inquired about the non-departmental fund. Ms. Lindgren reported that fund included transfers out to the federal and state grant fund.

## 5. Council Reports.

a. **Update From Councilor Pope.** Councilor Pope asked Bob Nacht to give a brief update on the grants for the pool upgrade project.

Mr. Nacht reported the city ranked third in the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) grant application process, thanks in large part to the Chehalis Foundation, their grant writer, and Recreation Manager Lilly Wall. He noted Dr. Pope also attended the presentations and was instrumental in demonstrating to the ranking body that the Foundation is really behind the project. Mr. Nacht reported if the program is ever funded the city would likely get the grant.

Mr. Nacht reported he hoped to know sometime this week the ranking for the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (WWRP) grant.

Mr. Nacht reported they initially identified the \$250,000 that the Foundation pledged, and then went for the \$250,000 matching grant for the LWCF grant. They then applied for another \$250,000 for the WWRP grant, which is a state level grant. Mr. Nacht stated the total project for all of the applications was roughly \$780,000, which will renovate the pool significantly and make it last another 30 to 50 years. Councilor Pope stated the Foundation was also looking at working with a fundraiser to raise money for the project.

Councilor Pope reported the Foundation was planning a gala on October 17 at the Riverside Golf Course. The cost for the event is \$75 per person with part of the proceeds going towards the pool and other activities the Foundation is involved with.

b. **Update From Councilor Dawes.** Councilor Dawes reported he, along with other council members, attended the opening of the Southwest Washington Fair on August 14. He also put in a stint at the Lewis County Historical Museum's booth, noting while they had a lot of people stop by, it didn't seem that the fairway was very crowded at any time.

Councilor Dawes reported he attended the Business After Hours at Express Personnel.

Councilor Dawes reported he and Councilor Lund recently attended the North Lewis County Regional Fire Authority Planning Committee meeting. He noted they finished the initial report and were trudging on. Councilor Dawes suggested there might be a proposal to change their current bylaws with regard to the quorum needed for a meeting, this having to do with Napavine and Fire District #5. He thought it would be beneficial if Napavine representatives continued attending the meetings because the information developed through Phase I would certainly be important to Phase II. He noted Napavine felt the requirement of them being present would make it harder for the group to move forward if they are unable to attend meetings due to scheduling issues.

Councilor Dawes thought they may seek a change in the bylaws to include Chehalis, Riverside Fire Authority, and Lewis County Fire District #6. He noted they would still need to have at least five people present to include one representative from each agency to constitute a quorum.

Councilor Dawes reported there seemed to be more and more calls requiring all of the agencies to respond, in order to get the people and equipment there that they need. He talked briefly about how the profession has changed over the years and how they need to keep up with change.

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Councilor Taylor asked if the committee would be discussing any reorganization and/or staffing with regard to firefighters and emergency medical services (EMS). Councilor Dawes stated, based on the information they've received, there would be firefighters and firefighter paramedics placed at every station involved, should the concept become a reality. He noted one of the biggest concerns was containing costs.

Councilor Taylor asked if they looked at having American Medical Response (AMR) handle the city's aid calls as a way for the city to get out of that type of business. Councilor Dawes stated he was sure that it would be looked at, but didn't have the expertise in that area. He suggested there are times when AMR does not have the personnel to answer calls because of the area they cover.

Councilor Spahr stated he asked the same question regarding AMR, noting they did have some legitimate rationale. He reported as they progress it would be explained more, and more clarification would be given. Councilor Spahr stated what he really liked about the whole process was that, even if it never happens, it's been an incredible planning experience. He believed all of the departments would take something forward from it.

Councilor Dawes talked briefly about the need for volunteer firefighters, noting they cannot afford to have the paid professional staff that they need. He stated it was very difficult to retain volunteers because of the requirements, and people just don't have the time to commit for no pay.

Councilor Taylor stated with costs going up it seemed insane to continue providing the same services with regard to fire service and EMS. Councilor Spahr suggested AMR and fire service really do supply different services, adding when the fire department gets a call they really don't know what they're going to, or what they will need until they get there.

Councilor Lund brought up the issue of how the fire department responds to emergency calls. He talked briefly about the old system and how it functioned, compared to how it was being done today. Councilor Lund wondered if they should require the firefighters to listen to the calls as they come in, rather than wait until they get called out.

City Manager MacReynold suggested a lot has changed, as Councilor Dawes alluded to earlier. He noted, procedurally, they do it the way they do because of what's happened over the past 30 years, with reference to fire and public safety.

Councilor Dawes believed Councilor Lund was referring to the old 911 speakers they had in the fire hall and police station, adding as soon as a call came in they could hear what it was and get the address. He didn't know if they still had those speakers or not because of the associated costs.

Police Chief Glenn Schaffer stated the speakers did get cut; what killed it was the way cell phone calls into dispatch were brought in. He noted they were getting calls from everywhere and they rarely heard the calls that were specific to Chehalis anymore. Chief Schaffer indicated it was based on technology and how the cell phone calls come in. He had the speakers shut off at the police department and believed the fire department had theirs shut off, as well.

With regard to dispatch, Chief Schaffer felt the communication center did an excellent job of getting the calls out early, adding they do not listen to the entire call before they dispatch. He noted they get the basic information about what and where, and as the details come in they feed that information out later. Chief Schaffer stated the fire trucks, like the police vehicles, have the mobile data terminals inside and as they respond they can start looking at the details as they come in.

Councilor Lund thought with modern technology they should still be able to use the old system, adding he didn't understand how modern technology could cut away antiquated technology. Chief Schaffer stated before they had the phone lines cut he asked the communications center why it was the way it was. He noted it was explained to him, but he couldn't re-explain it nor understand it, but the questions were asked.

c. **Update From Mayor Pro-tem Harris.** Mayor Pro-tem Harris thanked City Manager MacReynold for providing the council with bricks from the old city hall.

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d. **Police Department Neon Sign**. Councilor Lund asked if it would be possible to get the old neon police sign put back up. Councilor Taylor noted a while back Chief Schaffer sent him an email asking how he could get the sign refurbished. Chief Schaffer reported it was in the works, adding he had Dale Swayze looking at it. Councilor Taylor stated if there was anything his business could do to help get it back up, they would do it as a donation to the city.

6. **Ordinance No. 898-B, Second and Final Reading – Rezone Property on Arizona Street**. Mr. Nacht reported he would be happy to answer any questions the council might have concerning the ordinance.

Councilor Spahr moved to pass Ordinance No. 898-B on second and final reading.

The motion was seconded by Councilor Taylor and carried unanimously.

There being no further business to come before the council, the meeting adjourned at 6:49 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 August 27, 2012.**