



## CITY COUNCIL MINUTES

### March 18, 2020

City Council of the City of Ephrata, Grant County Washington met in regular session on March 18, 2020. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Mayor Bruce Reim.

**Members Present:** Mayor Bruce Reim, Mayor Pro Tem William Coe, Council members Mark Wanke, Matt Moore, Valli Millard, Sarah McDonnell, Tony Mora and Kathleen Allstot.

**Staff Present:** City Administrator Mike Warren, City Attorney Katherine Kennison/Anna Franz, Community Development Director Daniel Leavitt, Public Works Director Bill Sangster, Community Relations Director Traci Bennett, Interim Police Chief Erik Koch, Fire Chief Jeremy Burns and City Clerk/Finance Director Leslie Trachsler.

Council member Allstot joined the meeting telephonically.

Pledge of Allegiance was said.

No public signed up to speak. This meeting is not being recorded.

**Agenda:** Agenda was amended adding items 1, 2 and 3 to Section VI Ordinances and Resolutions. Motion to approve amendments to the agenda. (m/s Millard/Wanke)  
Motion carried.

**Presentations:** None

**Consent Agenda:** Motion was made to approve consent agenda. (m/s Mora/McDonnell) Motion carried.

Items on the consent agenda are as follows:

Claims #91570 through #91623 in the amount of \$137,346.43  
VOIDED Claim #46483 in the amount of (\$70.13)  
Claim #91569 in the amount of \$70.13  
Manual Claims #86032020, 87032020, 88032020, 89032020 in the amount of \$3,027.39

Electronic Fund Transfer in the amount of \$19,822.21

Minutes of the March 4, 2020 Council meeting

Approval of Special Event Applications:

- Easter Egg Hunt on April 11<sup>th</sup> at Lions Park from 12:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.
- Rotary Youth Parade on June 11<sup>th</sup> from 5:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. downtown corridor
- Autism Awareness Walk on May 16<sup>th</sup> at C Street Courthouse/1<sup>st</sup> Avenue SW/Division Street from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
- REI Mountain Bike Photo Shoot on March 18<sup>th</sup> on Beezley Hill Bike Trails from 7:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

**Public Hearing – Water Use Efficiency (WUE) Goals:** Mayor Reim opened public hearing at 7:01 p.m. Director Sangster reported that this hearing is to gather input regarding the Water Use Efficiency Goals that will be part of the Water Comp Plan. The current goals included are:

- Supply Side:
  - Maintain distribution system leakage below 10 percent
- Demand Side:
  - Reduce average residential per capita use. Currently at 484 gallons per day per ERU to a level of 465 gallons per day per ERU or less over the next 6 years
  - Notify customers of high meter reads
  - Water conservation rates
  - Educate customers thru annual Consumer Confidence Report (CCR)

There being no public comment, Mayor closed public hearing at 7:02 p.m.

**Resolution 20-006 – Compensation for Employees in response to COVID-19:** Mayor Reim advised Council that in light of the health crises currently facing the Nation, staff is recommending Council establish policy whereby regular employees who are ready, willing and able to work but for health and safety reasons are precluded from doing so would receive their normal compensation.

Mayor Reim reported that there is a lot of expectation on the state and federal level on how to deal with employees during a required 14 day quarantine. He advised that City Hall closed to lobby traffic today to limit staff exposure. City Hall staff will split into two crews to ensure continuous operations. This policy is intended to be short term, however will be periodically reviewed to return operations back to normal as soon as possible. Impacts to the budget will be monitored closely.

Motion to approve and accept Resolution 20-006 regarding compensation for employees during certain emergency health crises and other matters relating thereto. (m/s Coe/Moore) Motion carried.

**Resolution 20-007 Ratifying Mayors Proclamation Declaring a State of Emergency:** Mayor Reim advised that the evolution of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) has been

identified by the CDC as having a “very high” potential public health threat both globally and in the United States. Already there are over 1012 confirmed cases in Washington State and 52 fatalities with 7 confirmed cases in Grant County. On February 29, 2020 Washington Governor, Jay Inslee, declared a public health emergency for COVID-19; on March 12<sup>th</sup> Grant County Health Officer proclaimed a countywide public health emergency.

Mayor Reim reviewed the emergency protocols enacted by this Proclamation. This Proclamation will expire on April, 28, 2020 unless further extended by formal action of Council. Council discussion.

Motion to accept and approve Resolution 20-007 Ratifying Mayor Reims Proclamation Declaring a State of Emergency. (m/s Mora/Moore) Motion carried.

**Ordinance 20-01 – Suspending Late Fees and Utility Terminations and Declaring an Emergency:** Mayor Reim advised Council that in light of the COVID-19 Pandemic facing the Nation and the declaration by the Governor a State of Emergency, he is recommending a temporary suspension of late fees on utility accounts and delaying termination of service for non-payment and declaring an emergency.

Council discussion regarding payment arrangements and the need to go beyond the intended 6 months. Staff will provide payment arrangements and work with customers to get caught back up. The Ordinance will be reviewed at the end of 6 months and if necessary Council could extend it.

Motion to approve and accept Ordinance 20-01 temporarily removing the charge of late fees on utility accounts; delaying termination for non-payment; and declaring an emergency. (m/s Wanke/McDonnell) Motion carried.

**Annual Section 125 Renewal:** Each year the City is required to adopt the IRS Section 125 Flexible Benefit Plan. This Plan allows employees to elect to deduct benefit premiums from their gross earnings for qualified out-of-pocket or unreimbursed medical expenses.

Motion to authorize administration to execute Section 125 Flexible Benefit Plan. (m/s Moore/McDonnell) Motion carried.

**2020 Lodging Tax Advisory Committee (LTAC) Report:** Council member Wanke reported that the LTAC committee held an emergency meeting to re-evaluate the application for Tourism funds from Mike Scellick for K2 in the Park project. Originally he asked for \$10,000 which the committee denied. He was able to raise most of the funds needed and revised his application for \$1,000 to complete his project. Committee Member Boruff and award recipient, offered to defer \$1,000 from his 2020 award to the K2 project which to committee approved.

Motion to approve the amended 2020 LTAC allocation of Tourism funds. (m/s Mora/Moore) Motion carried.

**Authorize contract for Gray & Osborne for Chlorination Design:** Sangster advised that this work is being required by the Department of Health under a Correction Order, is part of the Water Comp Plan and the design is required before we can move forward with the project. Contract for design is \$13,700.00.

Motion to authorize administration to execute contract with Gray & Osborne for the design of the chlorination system. (m/s Millard/Coe) Council discussion, motion carried.

**Authorize contract for Gray & Osborne for Design of Division Street Rehab Phase II:** Director Sangster advised that this project is for the design of Phase II of Division Street. Phase I will be in the construction phase this year. He tried to get the two projects tied together, but so far no response from TIB on that front.

Motion to authorize administration to execute contract with Gray & Osborne for the design of Division Street Rehab Phase II Project. (m/s Moore/Wanke) Motion carried.

**Accept Basin Street Water Project:** Director Sangster advised that this project is complete and is currently being used by the City. Any potential issues on this job could be addressed in the 2 year warranty period which begins once Council accepts the project. Council discussion ensued.

Motion to accept the Basin Street Water Main replacement Project. (m/s Moore/McDonnell) Motion carried.

### **City Administrator Report:**

#### Budget Report:

- Sales Tax Evaluation – Sales tax has continued to be at a historic high, however we will be cautiously watching what the next few months bring as the Coronavirus Pandemic has created major economic waves.
- Budget to Actual – Revenues are 6% below and expenses 7% below budget.

City of Ephrata Pandemic Procedure: Mayor Reim reviewed with Council the Emergency Proclamation. Motion to approve the Proclamation declaring an Emergency for the COVID-19 Pandemic. (m/s Moore/Millard) Motion carried.

Council member Wanke advised Council the scheduled meeting of the Grant County Association of Cities for next week has been canceled.

Reporter Randy Bracht inquired about scheduled events; are they still proceeding? Events are being monitored on a case by case basis. At this time we know for sure that Sage-N-Sun and Chief for a Day have been cancelled.

There being no further business meeting adjourned at 7:32 p.m.

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Bruce Reim, Mayor

ATTEST:

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Leslie Trachsler, City Clerk