



## **CITY COUNCIL MINUTES**

### **August 19, 2020**

City Council of the City of Ephrata, Grant County Washington met in regular session on August 19, 2020. The meeting was called to order at 6:15 p.m. by Mayor Bruce Reim and adjourned to executive session to discuss the sale and acquisition of real estate (RCW 42.30.110 (1) b) for approximately thirty-five minutes. Executive session adjourned at 6:50 p.m., no decisions were made or action taken. Meeting reconvened at 7:00 p.m.

Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic and Governor Inslee's Proclamation 20-28, this meeting is being conducted telephonically and online using the ZOOM audio and video conferencing.

**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 Clerk Leslie Trachsler, City Attorney Anna Franz, Public Works Director Bill Sangster, Community Relations Director Traci Bennett, Interim Police Chief Erik Koch, and Administrative Assistant Carrie Lnenicka.

Pledge of Allegiance was said.

No public signed up to speak.

**Agenda:** There were no additions or corrections to the agenda.

**Presentations:** Sandi Duffy, Emergency Management Coordinator, updated Council on the COVID-19 Masking Project. Grant County received 73,800 masks to distribute within the communities. Partnering with Grant County PUD, Emergency Management targeted the population that was 200% below the federal poverty level. 20,000 masks were mailed by the PUD and Sandi's team partnered with local law enforcement agencies. Interim Police Chief Koch contacted Sandi regarding mask distribution with a specific project in mind – delivering to Basin Retirement Home, Garden Oasis and the food distribution that took place in Moore Furniture parking lot. Sandi felt this was a tremendous success and thanked Chief Koch and the City of Ephrata. 73,800 more masks are on their way to the community due to the rise in positive cases.

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

Items on the consent agenda are as follows:

Claims #92266 through #92268 in the amount of \$421.08  
Claims #92269 through #92316 in the amount of \$155,714.94  
Claims #86082020, 87082020, 88082020, and 89082020 in the amount of  
\$2,871.97  
EFT in the amount of \$20,832.47  
Minutes of the August 5, 2020 Council meeting  
Special Event Applications: None

**Resolution 20-011 Small Business Relief Program:** Adopting the Small Business Relief Program to distribute coronavirus relief funds to the Ephrata community. This resolution establishes authorization for the CARES Act grant to small businesses and outlines eligibility criteria.

Motion to approve Resolution 20-011 Small Business Relief Program (m/s Mora/Moore)  
Council discussion ensued. Motion carried.

**Proclamation In Support of Masking:** This proclamation is to encourage citizens to support and protect our local businesses by wearing a mask not only when entering a business but also in any public setting.

Motion to accept and approve Proclamation in Support of Masking (m/s Coe/McDonnell)  
Council discussion ensued. Motion carried.

**Accept Donations:** Parks and Recreation has received several very generous donations that support several of their programs, such as:

\$200 for Parks and Recreation Scholarship Fund  
\$300 from Columbia Basin Chiropractic Care to support a drive-in movie  
\$300 from Washington Trust Bank to sponsor a drive-in movie  
\$300 from Granco Credit Union to sponsor a drive-in movie  
Flat Screen TV from Sue Thompson for BOLD program  
\$10,000 from Richard Reimers – undesignated- Recommended this donation be used to offset the new bottom surface for Splashzone.

Motion to accept donations made to the Parks and Recreation department. (m/s Mora/Wanke)  
Council discussion ensued. Motion carried.

**Report on Utility Fee Rate Notification:** House bill 2889 requires notification to rate payers of assessed fees and taxes on gross revenues of the water, sewer, wastewater or stormwater utility. This notification can be done through billing inserts, mailers or other

written or electronic communication. Staff proposes posting the notification on the City's website and September's billing statement.

**2021 Budget Schedule & Goals and Objectives – Discussion** Review and discuss Goals and Objectives for 2020; review 2021 Budget Schedule

2020 goals:

1. Continue to Improve Public Safety – Hired 3 new officers, each in various stages of training. This process has been delayed due to COVID-19.
2. Improve Public Works Response & Improve Quality at Facilities-C Street project beginning September 8<sup>th</sup>; Division Street Phases I&II beginning in 2021; Chlorination project is currently in engineering phase.
3. Continue to slowly grow reserves to target – With the spending freeze, account balances are growing. This will help in determining our 2021 budget.
4. Continue to hire the best and most qualified individuals for long term employment- The hiring freeze put in place due to COVID-19 has delayed the hiring process for additional Public Works employee. An exception has been made for the Police Chief position. Deadline is September 1, 2020.
5. Continue to reward and promote efficiency in all departments-With the spending freeze due to COVID-19, each employee in every department has become more efficient with their available resources.

2021 Budget Schedule – October 7, 2020 first draft of budget goes to Council. Three public hearings required by law are scheduled as well – ad valorem taxes and budget final draft.

Council was asked to submit their suggestions for 2021 goals to Director Trachsler so they may be presented to Council for approval at the September 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting.

**Authorize Agreement for Phase II Division Street TIB Grant:** The scope of work for Phase I on this overlay project is for D Street NE to Summitview Drive; Phase II is Summitview Drive to Airport Street. Work for both phases will take place in 2021.

Motion to authorize agreement for Phase II Division Street TIB Grant. (m/s Moore/Coe). Council discussion ensued. Motion carried.

**CARES Act Grant Application:** Informational. The City of Ephrata modified the template for Grant County EDC's Small Business and Nonprofit CARES Act Grant Application. This application will be published on the City's website and Facebook page.

**City Administrator Report:**

Director Trachsler updated Council on 2020 budget and cash balances.

- Revenues are 12% below projection, expenses are 6% below
- Sales tax received in July for May were a 17% increase from the same period last year.
- Due to the spending freeze, cash reserves have increased 43% this year.
- Property taxes are 2% below projection, however the second property tax remittance should balance.
- Utility taxes are 2% above projections

There being no further business meeting adjourned at 7:29p.m.

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Bruce Reim, Mayor

ATTEST:

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Carrie Lnenicka, Administrative Assistant