



CITY COUNCIL MINUTES

October 21, 2020

City Council of the City of Ephrata, Grant County Washington met in regular session on October 21, 2020. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Mayor Bruce Reim.

Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic and Governor Inslee's Proclamation 20-28, this meeting is being conducted remotely using the ZOOM 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 Administrator Mike Warren, City Attorney Anna Franz, Public Works Director Bill Sangster, Community Development Director Dan Leavitt, Fire Chief Jeremy Burns, and City Clerk/Finance Director Leslie Trachsler

Pledge of Allegiance was said.

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

Agenda: Agenda was amended to make correction to Section II Consent Agenda – Approval of Council Minutes for **October 7, 2020** and add Item 5 to Section VII – 2021 Budget Report.

Motion to approve agenda as amended. (m/Wanke) Motion carried.

Presentations: None

Consent Agenda: Motion was made to approve consent agenda. (m/s Millard/McDonnel) Motion carried.

Items on the consent agenda are as follows:

Claims #92497 through #92540 in the amount of \$133,467.71
Claims #92490 through #92496 in the amount of \$1,314.15
Manual Claims #86102020, 87102020, 88102020 and 89102020 in the amount of \$2,751.57

EFT in the amount of \$21,481.25
Minutes of the October 7, 2020 Council meeting
Special Event Applications: None
Set Public Hearing for 2021 Ad Valorem Tax, November 4, 2020, 7:00 p.m.

Authorize Administration to enter Interagency Agreement with Washington Traffic Safety Commission: This agreement allows participation in the High Visibility Enforcement (HVE) grant project within Region 15 to conduct traffic safety emphasis patrols. Participation allows Ephrata Police Department to seek reimbursement for approved overtime expenses incurred as a participant in the HVE grant.

Motion to authorize Administration to enter Interagency Agreement with Washington Traffic Safety Commission. (m/s Moore/Mora) Council discussion, Motion carried.

Annual Fall Leaf Pick-Up – November 16 – 25, 2020: Administrator Warren advised that the annual fall curb side leaf pick-up is scheduled for November 16 - 20. A dumpster will be at the city shop until after Thanksgiving where residents can drop off their bags of leaves.

Accept Donation from Mary Kulp: Police Department received a donation of \$60 for the care and feeding of dogs in the pound from Mary Kulp.

Motion to accept \$60 donation from Mary Kulp. (m/s McDonnel/Moore) Motion carried.

Financial Report for 3rd Quarter: Director Trachsler reported on the budget to actual for the 3rd quarter - January through September. Overall revenues are 17% below budget and expenses are 27% below. Compared to the same time period for 2019, revenues are 25% less and expenses 44% less. Trachsler reviewed some of the major highlights:

- General Fund – revenues are 5% above projection and expenses 11% below. Sales tax revenues are 13% above budget. Each month of this quarter, sales tax set record highs for the same period of previous years. Building Permits and Plan Review Fees continue to exceed projections. There were 8 new single family residence building permits issued in the 3rd quarter.
- Park Fund – revenues are 33% below projection and expenses 36% below. Recreation is working on revamping the BOLD program to provide additional day care with a more structured curriculum.
- Library Fund – revenues are 34% below and expenses 22% below projected. Cash balance is in the negative. This is due in part to property tax revenues which come in two big payments, May and November, and we have not yet transferred REET dollars to cover the re-roofing project expenses. This will be rectified by the end of this month. The re-roofing project is moving along nicely and we anticipate its completion by November 1st.

- Street Fund – revenues are 4% below budget and expenses 11% below. With the reallocation of property tax from the Park Fund to Street Fund, cash balance has increased nicely and is off-setting the drop in fuel tax revenues.
- Water/Sewer Fund – revenues are 6% above budget and expenses 30% below. Connection fees for water and sewer are well above target. This is representative of 14 new home permits issued for the year (8 in just this quarter). With the suspension of late fees, the number of outstanding accounts is tracking closely to 2019. Surprisingly, the 2020 outstanding account balances are 7% less than for the same period in 2019.

2021 Budget Report: Director Trachsler gave a brief status report on the 2021 Budget. At present it is approximately 90% complete. The tax supported funds require a little more fine-tuning. Some of the highlights of the 2021 Budget consist of:

- ✓ Replace the ERC roof
- ✓ New pump and diving board for the Pool
- ✓ Savings for the pool resurfacing project
- ✓ Savings for fire equipment replacement
- ✓ Resurface Division Street from D NE to Airport Street
- ✓ Pulverize and Repave 5th & 6th SE and Hilltop
- ✓ Upgrade City's website
- ✓ Upgrades to the sewer collection system and treatment plant
- ✓ Purchase 2 police vehicles
- ✓ Savings for sewer vac truck replacement
- ✓ Made the last payment on the Wastewater Treatment Facility in 2020

Other items worth noting:

- ✓ PUD discovered an error in rates charged for the downtown decorative street lights resulting in an increase of \$27,000 per year
- ✓ Grant County is holding a public hearing on November 3rd regarding an increase to the dumping fees at the landfill. The proposal would increase the fee by 71.54% or \$19.86 per ton and would result in a projected increase to the City of well over \$100,000 per year. This would result in a significant rate increase to our ratepayers.

Council discussion ensued regarding the proposed landfill fees.

City Administrator Report:

1. City of Ephrata Staff Report Form: Administrator Warren advised that staff will be implementing the use of a standardized form when submitting information for Council review and approval. This will help to establish consistency and streamline the process.

Warren also advised that an exit conference on the 2019 Accountability and Financial Audit by the State Auditor's Office is scheduled for Tuesday, October 27th, at 9:00 a.m. Any Council members interested in attending need to notify Director Trachsler.

There being no further business meeting adjourned at 7:23 p.m.

Bruce Reim, Mayor

ATTEST:

Leslie Trachsler, City Clerk