



CITY COUNCIL MINUTES

November 18, 2020

City Council of the City of Ephrata, Grant County Washington met in regular session on November 18, 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, Community Development Director Dan Leavitt, Fire Chief Jeremy Burns, Police Chief Kurt Adkinson, and City Clerk/Finance Director Leslie Trachsler

Pledge of Allegiance was said.

No public signed up to speak.

Agenda: Agenda was amended adding item 2 under Section VI - Ordinances and Resolutions. Motion to approve amended agenda (m/s Wanke/Moore) Motion carried.

Presentations: None

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

Items on the consent agenda are as follows:

Claims #92599 through #92645 in the amount of \$141,982.22

Claims #92593 through #92598 in the amount of \$686.71

Manual Claims #86112020, 87112020, 88112020 and 89112020 in the amount of \$3,438.42

EFT in the amount of \$29,288.86

Minutes of the November 4, 2020 Council meeting

Special Event Applications: None

Public Hearing – Ordinance 20-06 City of Ephrata 2021 Budget: Mayor Reim opened public hearing at 7:01 p.m. Director Trachsler gave a brief staff report. The 2021 budget reflects a 25% increase from 2020 and is largely due to two large construction projects – Resurfacing of Division Street from D NE to Airport Street; and Sewer collection system and treatment plant upgrades. Capital improvements/purchases include ERC re-roof; pump and diving board for Splashzone and savings for pool re-surfacing; upgrade City’s Website; two police vehicles; savings for future purchase of fire equipment and sewer vac truck.

Sales Tax revenues continue to set record highs. The September CPI-W is 2.1% which will be used to calculate rate increases for 2021 with the exception of sewer and sanitation. Sewer rates will increase 5% to cover the \$6.9m loan for the sewer collection and treatment plant upgrades. Sanitation rates for residential collection will increase approximately 8.25% to cover new disposal fees at the landfill.

Council discussion ensued. There being no public comment, Mayor Reim closed public hearing at 7:09 p.m.

Public Hearing – Abatement of Weeds and Dead Tree at 326 7th SW: Mayor Reim opened public hearing at 7:09 p.m. and advised that this is a quasi-judicial hearing and asked Council to disclose any outside communications or conflicts of interest in the matter by responding to the following questions:

1. Have you had any contact, including through written or other media, with any interested parties in this matter? All responded no
2. Do you have a financial or personal interest in this matter? All responded no
3. Can you render fair and impartial judgment, without undue or improper influence, over this matter? All responded yes
4. Does any member of the Public or the Council have a specific objection to any member of the Council hearing this matter? There were no objections

Code Enforcement Officer Stacy Hooper was sworn in by Clerk Trachsler. Officer Hooper gave a brief staff report. Complaint was received on May 4th of dead tree branches at 326 7th SW owned by Brian Fiess. Notice of violation was sent on May 6th, second notice of violation was sent on August 3rd. All notices were returned as not deliverable. Citation was issued on September 2nd and returned as not deliverable. RCW 35.21.310 and Ephrata Municipal Code Section 1.22.180 (C), authorize the city to enter the property to abate nuisances involving vegetation. Council must adopt a resolution authorizing abatement and give owner 15 days after adoption to abate nuisance before city may enter property and clean up described nuisance. Costs incurred are charged to the owner and constitute a lien against the property.

There were no witnesses present.

Mayor Reims closed public hearing at 7:15 p.m.

Resolution 20-014 – Abatement of weeds and dead tree at 326 7th SW: Motion to approve and accept Resolution 20-014 determining that a nuisance exists requiring abatement of property at 326 7th Avenue SW. (m/s Coe/Wanke) Council discussion ensued. Legal counsel advised that this process does not cover removal of personal property. Motion carried.

Resolution 20-015 – Compensation for Employees in response to COVID-19 Health Crises: This resolution establishes 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. Administrator Warren advised that with Governor Inslee’s recently enacted restrictions and the uptick in Coronavirus cases in Grant County the City is implementing the split crew/split shift schedule. In an effort to minimize potential exposure and to ensure continuity of city services starting tomorrow public works staff, and admin staff will be working a five hour shift Monday through Friday. Crew one will work 7:00 a.m. to noon and crew two will work 12:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Motion to approve and accept Resolution 20-015 regarding staff schedule and compensation of employees during the COVID-19 pandemic. (m/s Mora/McDonnell) Council discussion ensued. Motion carried.

Contract with Grant County Health District: This is the renewal of our annual contract with Grant County Health Department. Administrator Warren advised that they are asking for an increase of \$1 for a total of \$3 per citizen. The 2021 Budget reflects the current rate of \$2 per citizen. This request was not received until after the budget was completed and Health District was advised to submit future request earlier in the year so that any cost increases could be budgeted for.

Motion to approve the 2021 Contract with Grant County Health District for \$2 per citizen. (m/s Wanke/McDonnell) Motion carried.

City Administrator Report: None at this time.

There being no further business meeting adjourned at 7:27 p.m.

Bruce Reim, Mayor

ATTEST:

Leslie Trachsler, City Clerk