



CITY COUNCIL MINUTES November 06, 2019

City Council of the City of Ephrata, Grant County Washington met in regular session on November 06, 2019. 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 Matt Moore, Valli Millard, and Sarah McDonnell.

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

Motion to excuse Council members Mora, Wanke and Allstot. (m/s Moore/McDonnell)
Motion carried.

Pledge of Allegiance was said. This meeting is being recorded.

No public signed up to speak.

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

Presentations: Chief Warren read a brief bio for the newest Ephrata Police Officer, Cynthia Bluhm and gave her the Oath of Office. Her young son pinned her with the official badge.

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

Items on the consent agenda are as follows:

- Claims #90934 through #91018 in the amount of \$266,397.28
- Claims #90902 through #90906 in the amount of \$547.85
- Claims #90927 through #90933 in the amount of \$5,038.86
- VOIDED Check #90117 in the amount of \$(32.00)
- Payroll Checks #46530 through #46548 in the amount of \$32,153.11
- Payroll Claims #90907 through #90926 in the amount of \$231,328.55
- Payroll Direct Debit in the amount of \$5,875.00

Payroll Direct Deposit in the amount of \$185,856.73
Minutes of the October 16, 2019 Council meeting
Set Public Hearings – Ordinance 19-08 Adopting the 2020 Budget for November 20th and December 4th, 2019 at 7:00 p.m.

Kevin Nordt, General Manager of Grant County PUD: Kevin Nordt addressed Council reviewing the historical vision for Grant County and the PUD and the potential growth that the Dam's would provide by having a stable power source at a low cost. At the time this was a bold decision and took a lot of creative thinking on our predecessors part. He discussed the power needs of the district, what happens with the excess power generation and the benefits of managed growth.

Council asked questions of Mr. Nordt and thanked him for his presentation.

Grant County Economic Development Council (EDC) Report: Council member Coe, Ephrata's representative on the EDC Board, gave a brief update to Council. The board is comprised of public and private representatives. They are staying extremely busy – developing foreign and domestic relationships and following up on inquiries. One of the most used resources they have is the Small Business Development Center which supports small enterprises with financing, marketing, and sound business planning expertise. They have been working to get cooperation between all the Port Districts. They do a lot of work for Ephrata, albeit is behind the scenes.

Parks Commission Report – End of the Community Garden: Crago reviewed the history of the formation of the Community Garden, which is a private organization that the City agreed to help. A meeting was held with the stake holders and it has become apparent that interest has died. No one is keeping the property free from weeds and the garden beds are not being maintained. The City does not have the resources to take on the full-time management of the garden. This is the last summer for the Community Garden and the property will be turned back to the property owner.

Closed Record Decision – Resolution 19-986 Approval of Sunwest Park Division #2 Preliminary Plat: Mayor opened the Closed Record Decision at 7:52 p.m.

Crago gave a brief report outlining the process of a Closed Record Decision. Council may only consider the information presented from the Planning Commission. Process is very important in land use decisions.

City Attorney, Anna Franz advised that this is a quasi-judicial hearing which requires Council to disclose any conflict of interest and asked the following questions:

- Have you had any contact, written or by other media, with any interested parties regarding this matter? Each Council member answered no.
- Do you have a financial, material or personal interest in this matter? Each Council member answered no.

- Can you render a fair and impartial judgement without undue or improper influence over this matter? Each Council member answered yes.
- Does any member of the public or council have a specific objection to any member of the Council hearing this matter? There were no objections.

This is a 71-lot residential major subdivision on 24 acres in a Residential-4 zoning district. Property is located east of Sunwest Drive and Grant Drive NE. A Mitigated Determination of Non-Significance was issued on September 6, 2019. The current use of the property is vacant, undeveloped land and is not within an environmentally sensitive area. Planning Commission conducted a public hearing on October 10, 2019 and approved Resolution 19-003 recommending approval of the Preliminary Plat by City Council.

Motion to approve and accept Resolution 19-986 and Ephrata Planning Commission Resolution 19-003 adopting the Sunwest Park Division #2 Preliminary Plat. (m/s Moore/Millard) Motion carried.

Closed Record Decision was closed at 7:55 p.m.

Public Hearing – Ordinance 19-07 Ad Valorem Taxes: Mayor opened Public Hearing at 7:55 p.m. Crago gave a brief staff report on the make-up of property taxes and advised that by initiative, the maximum amount the City can request is an addition of 1% which is approximately \$12,734 of additional property tax revenue. Property taxes comprise roughly 7% of our total budget and is used to support several funds, specifically Parks, Library and Streets.

There being no public comment, Mayor closed public hearing at 7:58 p.m.

Ordinance 19-07 Ad Valorem Taxes: Motion to approve and accept Ordinance 19-07 Ad Valorem Taxes. (m/s Moore/McDonnell) Motion carried.

Approval of Lodging Tax Advisory Committee (LTAC) Tourism Funding

Allocations for 2020: The LTAC met on October 29, 2019 to review grant applications for funding from the Stadium/Convention (Tourism) fund for 2020. The 2020 budget for committee appropriations was estimated at \$70,000. There were eight applications submitted and the Committee recommends funding the following seven:

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| • Chamber of Commerce – Promotion | \$25,000.00 |
| • City of Ephrata – Promotion/NRPA Conference | \$14,200.00 |
| • Columbia Basin Youth Baseball – Promotion/Event Expense | \$37,000.00 |
| • Chamber of Commerce – Sage N Sun | \$15,000.00 |
| • Chamber – Art and Wine Walk | \$ 4,000.00 |
| • Chamber of Commerce – Car and Toy Show | \$ 6,000.00 |
| • Chamber of Commerce – Miracle on Main Street | \$ 3,000.00 |

The proposed 2020 Awards total is \$104,200.00. The LTAC recommends using \$34,200 from the fund balance of approximately \$240,000.

Motion to approve Lodging Tax Advisory Committee allocations for 2020 as requested (m/s Moore/McDonnell) Council discussion ensued, motion carried.

Authorize Administration to enter Agreement with American Red Cross for use of ERC: This agreement allows the American Red Cross to use the ERC as a disaster/evacuation shelter location in the event of a disaster. They provide all the necessities and leave the facility very clean and tidy. This has been a long-standing agreement.

Motion to authorize Administration to enter Agreement with American Red Cross for use of the ERC. (m/s Millard/Moore) Motion carried.

City Administrator Report:

2019 Fall Leaf Pickup Plan: Curb side leaf pickup is scheduled for the week of November 18th. After that a dumpster will be at the city shop until Thanksgiving where residents can drop off their bags of leaves.

New Utility Bill Format: As a result of the efficiency audit, staff has revised the Utility Bill. New bills include more information on our billing/collection procedures and gives a clearer explanation of charges and payments made.

Other items of interest – Election Highlights:

- It appears that Initiative 976 will pass which is the repeal of car tab fees. This will have a big impact on street and transportation funding.
- Proposition 1 - Grant County Public Safety Sales Tax appears to have passed.
- All council members were re-elected. CONGRATULATIONS!!!

There being no further business meeting adjourned at 8:08 p.m.

Bruce Reim, Mayor

ATTEST:

Leslie Trachsler, City Clerk