



CITY COUNCIL MINUTES November 20, 2019

City Council of the City of Ephrata, Grant County Washington met in regular session on November 20, 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 Mark Wanke, Matt Moore, Valli Millard, Sarah McDonnell, Tony Mora, and Kathleen Allstot.

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

Pledge of Allegiance was said.

No public signed up to speak.

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

Presentations: Josh Johnson gave a presentation to Council regarding his internship project – Pickelball Court. Josh did an internship with the City of Ephrata this fall to finish out his degree in Sports Management. Part of the requirements was to plan and implement a project. In conjunction with Director Bennett and Ephrata School Superintendent, the old tennis court at Columbia Ridge was selected, re-purposed and totally transformed.

It was also announced that Josh was just selected to fill the vacant Recreation Coordinator position with the City of Ephrata.

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

Items on the consent agenda are as follows:

Claims #91020 through #91059 in the amount of \$377,587.10

Manual Checks #86112019, 87112019, 88112019 and 89112019 in the amount of \$2,907.72

Claims #91019 in the amount of \$104.15

EFT in the amount of \$26,963.71

Minutes of the November 6, 2019 Council meeting

Set Public Hearings on 2020-2030 Sewer Comprehensive Plan:

- December 2, 2019 at 7:00 p.m.
- December 18, 2019 at 7:00 p.m.
- January 15, 2020 at 7:00 p.m.

Approve Special Event Applications:

- Miracle on Main street – Downtown Area all day on December 14, 2019
- Wreaths Across America Procession – Port to Cemetery on December 14, 2019 at 9:30 a.m.
- Grant School Bike Rodeo – Grant to Parkway on April 24, 2020 at 8:30 a.m.

Public Hearing – Ordinance 19-08 City of Ephrata 2020 Budget: Mayor Reim opened public hearing at 7:05 p.m. Crago gave a brief staff report. This budget shows a modest increase due to a growing local economy, strong sales tax revenues, an increase in new construction permits and home sales. State funding continues to be limited. The cost of materials continues to rise faster than City revenues.

Highlights and significant impacts on the 2020 Budget include:

- Construction of sidewalk along C Street from Grant to Parkway
- Resurface of Division Street – contingent on State following through with funding
- Rising cost of insurance
- Fewer summer workers
- Hire an additional full-time employee for public works
- Savings for equipment replacement
- Minimum wage increase for 2020 goes up by 12.5%
- Increased pool rates due to minimum wage increase

There being no public comment, Mayor closed public hearing at 7:10 p.m.

Public Hearing – Policy 10010 Snow Removal: Mayor Reim opened public hearing at 7:10 p.m. Crago advised that this is our annual review of this policy and reviewed history, process and challenges. Salt will be added to the program this year in advance of icy conditions to the main arterial streets.

Public comment: Resident expressed his appreciate that the roads are sanded and plowed. He lives on the hill which can be treacherous.

Don Guillemet asked if there could be extra sanding on the hill for the special needs bus which picks up his daughter. He was advised to communicate with the bus garage where the need is and they will then communicate with the City where the problem area is.

There being no further public comment, Mayor closed public hearing at 7:22 p.m.

Approval of Amended Policy 3130: Crago advised that this policy covers employee transportation, travel and per diem rates for meals while out of town. These rates have not been adjusted since 2006. Staff compared the State's rate by County taking into account where most of our travel is and came up with an average cost.

Motion to approve and accept Amended Policy 3130 as presented. (m/s Millard/Mora)
Motion carried.

Introduction of 2020-2030 Sewer Comprehensive Plan: Crago reviewed the 2020-2030 Sewer Comp Plan which addresses much needed updates/improvements to our collection and treatment system. Three public hearings have been scheduled where more extensive reports/information will be presented. The Executive Summary executes Council's direction for those improvements including the corresponding rate changes to fund these improvements. The total plan estimates \$7,000,000 worth of work that needs to be done. Staff along with City Engineers have begun the process to finance these improvements. Repayment would equate to a \$6 per month rate increase which would be implemented gradually over six years beginning in 2021.

Crago emphasized that this is just an introduction and asked Council for any feedback or thoughts. They can stop by or email their comments.

Proclamation 19-02 – Wreaths Across America: Members of the Ephrata Civil Air Patrol made presentation to Council on the 2019 Wreaths Across America program. They enjoy doing the program but it requires involvement from the community to help ease the burden. They are aiming to raise \$38,000 for the program this year.

Council asked how people can donate to the program. They are out at various locations throughout the communities; anyone can contact the civil air patrol; or go onto their website. The ceremony is scheduled for December 14 at 10 a.m.

Motion to approve Proclamation 19-02 in support of Wreaths Across America. (m/s Wanke/Moore) Motion carried.

Northrup Boundary Line Adjustment: Informational - Crago advised Council that staff has been working with property owners to establish a legal alley where there is no easement but one has been functionally created. This would be accomplished using a simple boundary line adjustment that would essentially deed over land to the City sufficient for a legal alley.

Authorize Administration to enter Agreement with Grant PUD for Pole Sharing: Crago advised that this agreement is still under construction and would like to table this discussion. Motion to table. (m/s Allstot/Millard) Motion carried.

City Administrator Report:

2019 Budget Report: Sales tax took a drop but was still a record high in comparison to the same time period for previous years. Expenses are considerable lower than revenues. Expenses are 6% below budget and Revenues are 1% below budget. Cash reserves in general fund continues to increase, which is driven a lot by the increased sales tax.

There being no further business meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

Bruce Reim, Mayor

ATTEST:

Leslie Trachsler, City Clerk