

**THE COMMON COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ECHO HELD A REGULAR MEETING ON THURSDAY, JULY 18<sup>TH</sup>, 2019 AT 4:00 P.M. AT THE OLD VFW HALL, 210 W. BRIDGE ST., ECHO, OREGON.**

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**COUNCIL PRESENT:** Tammie Williams, Robert Harris, Janie Enright, Jerry Gaunt, Jeanie Hampton, Dick Yoder, Chad Ray

**ABSENT:** None

**STAFF/CITY CONTRACTORS PRESENT:** David Slaght, City Administrator-Recorder; Peggy Haines, City Clerk; Public Works Director Justin Northern; Public Works II Ken Hendricks; Laurie Nelsen, Librarian.

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Pam & Dana Reese, Richard Thew, Bryon Zumwalt, Bill & Judy Webb, Randy Sperr, Frank Nelsen, Jessie Holben, Tricia Slaght, Sara Slaght

**CALL TO ORDER:** Mayor Jeanie Hampton led the Pledge of Allegiance and the meeting was called to order at 4:00 PM

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:** none

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** Mayor Hampton & Council President Gaunt asked David to fix several minor typos on the June 27<sup>th</sup> minutes before they will be signed. Mayor Hampton asked for a motion to approve the minutes with the stipulation that they would be corrected. Tammie moved that the minutes be approved with the noted corrections; Jerry seconded. VOTE: All ayes – motion carries

**GRANT APPLICATION DISCUSSION:** David presented both the Small-Town Allotment and Echo Community Benefit Board Grants to the council. David asked PW Director Justin Northern to give the details on the Small-Town Allotment Grant since he put it together. The grant addresses city road issues on the roads near the school (College St, Garfield St, Perry St,) that are in serious need of some repairs along with Prescott, Dupont and the drainage problem on Golf Course Rd. Justin explained the need for way more work than the grant would cover, so he provided the council with his plan to repair as much of the proposed roads as he thought that the grant should cover. City PW staff will self-perform all pot-hole repairs, proper drainage of Golf Course Rd. and contract out crack sealing and chip sealing of the roads around the school and Prescott. If there are any monies left, they would repair the other roads mentioned until all funds are expended.

David talked about the Echo Community Benefit Grant and he explained the dire need for basic operational equipment for the Public Works Department. They need tools, small powered equipment, safety equipment, etc.

The council said that both grants were acceptable and gave their blessing to submit them to the appropriate organizations.

Then David brought up the fact that there were several other outstanding grants on the books and got through one of them this council meeting. The Blockhouse grant - David explained that there is only \$8000 in awarded funds, rather than the \$18,000 in the appropriated budget grant line item. The Blockhouse has been deemed unsafe and the PW Director spoke to the council about all of the safety concerns he saw with trying to rebuild the existing structure. David recommended that the city demolish

the Blockhouse with some of the funds allotted by the Echo Community Benefit Board. The council agreed that was the prudent thing to do and gave their blessing to remove it. Tammie did say that she feels that the city needs to work on looking for a replacement of some sort, due to the site's historical significance. Justin said that we were already working on that and that several citizens have suggested that we consider replacing the structure with play structures that are mini replicas of the Blockhouse and create a family atmosphere at the park. The council agreed that was a great idea and asked the city staff to look into that more as time allows.

Tammie made a motion to remove the current Blockhouse structure safely and research alternatives for the site in the future; Dick seconded; VOTE All ayes – motion carries

**POLICE REPORT:** Police Chief Bryon Zumwalt talked briefly about the report and talked a little bit about the contract.

Chief Zumwalt talked about the upcoming National Night Out (NNO) event on August 13<sup>th</sup> and that Stanfield and Echo were working together to plan the event. Dave and Chief Zumwalt will be meeting on the 23<sup>rd</sup> to discuss how things go since this is David's first NNO event.

**GOLF COURSE REPORT:** Manager Randy Sperr said things are going well, with the exception of the ongoing greens mower issues. He explained that he had received 3 bids and they ranged from \$28K to \$32K. He was hoping to get one more bid before he submitted them to the Echo Community Benefit Board, in hopes to receive some grant funds to offset the cost for the city. Robert wanted to know the significance of this mower versus a regular mower and had Randy researched all alternatives. Randy explained the details. Janie asked if the city had matching funds and David said there is some monies in there, but he wasn't sure the amount at this time.

**Public Works Report:** Justin and Ken brought the council up to date on their progress throughout the city. They explained things have been going well, but slow due to the backlog and depth of work needed to be done. Citizens have been very supportive and grateful for their efforts thus far. Justin explained that with the limited tools and equipment they are making due and hopeful for the grant to be approved. He also said that he was very grateful for the many citizens that have stepped up to help offset some of the time consuming, but necessary tasks such as watering the flowers and plants. Jessie Holben and Pam Reese have been leading the charge with others joining in to take that load off of the public works team. The city thanks these folks very much and appreciates them taking pride in their city.

Justin explained that one of their tasks of late has been clearing right-of-way's where the view is blocked at intersections making it hard for drivers to safely pull out on to streets around town. Robert asked if PW was cutting on private properties and if not, how is code enforcement being handled? The police department provided code enforcement information and how that worked. Chief Zumwalt explained that Stanfield and Echo's code enforcement is set up differently and that they do conduct code enforcement when a complaint is filed. Robert was concerned about PW getting into a situation if they were enforcing code. Justin explained that they were making contact with property owners in a polite and professional way and if they didn't want to comply with the request of removing the vegetation, PW would follow the procedure on code enforcement. Chad agreed that it's a small town and we

should be building those relationships and then taking it to the next level. Tammie thanked Chad for his comments.

Justin talked about the VFW clean up issue, meter reading, and regularly scheduled maintenance around the city. The city had received complaints from citizens about the gravel in bike lanes and on sidewalks. PW cleaned up the sidewalks, but Echo doesn't have a street sweeper so cleaning the bike lanes posed a challenge. Peggy called Trevor in Stanfield and he offered to bring their street sweeper over to Echo. He did and the bike lanes are clear of debris now. Thank you, Stanfield and Trevor Morris!

**NEW BUSINESS:** Mayor Hampton talked about a meeting that her and David attended in Pilot Rock with other cities that are members of the League of Oregon Cities. This meeting was specifically for Small Cities. She talked about several bills that had passed in the Oregon Legislature this past session and some of the outcomes.

**OLD BUSINESS:** At the request of several council members, Resolution 455-19 was brought back up for discussion. Mayor Hampton read a long text message from Diane Berry to the council which in short tried to explain the reasoning behind the resolution. The Mayor also explained her concerns due to her past experience dealing with some important historical items being discarded by accident when she was with the school district. She explained that the old vintage clothing belonged to the city and that we were to house them. Peggy asked for clarification on that as she was led to believe that the clothing belonged to Diane, Charlotte Berry, and Joyce Rhode. Peggy was concerned about the city being responsible for private property storage and asked if the museum could take them. The Mayor said maybe and then Chad asked the Mayor if the "Heritage Commission" had bylaws, a mission and is officially an organization. The Mayor explained that it was not set up as a non-profit and she wasn't sure about the bylaws, but was hopeful that the commission would become part of the Museum Board. Robert voiced concerns regarding the "Heritage Commission" commingling city property with private property since the Museum Board is not affiliated with the City. The Mayor responded stating that she would only reach out to the Museum Board for advice. Then Chad asked who was on the commission board and the Mayor said that currently it was Diane Berry, Jeanie Hampton and Janie Enright. Chad asked if the board had been in existence for a long time and the Mayor said no, only a couple of weeks. Tammy then voiced concerns over how the council was told that the Heritage Commission had been in existence for many years during the deliberations regarding adopting Resolution 455-19. Then the discussion went back and forth on the city being the housing or storage facilities for so many privately-owned items. Then the discussion went back to the "Heritage Commission" and its designations. Concerns were also brought up that only three self-appointed people made up the commission and no one from the public knew anything about it. Several members of the council and the public voiced their concerns about this situation. Tammie suggested that there was a lot of questions about the resolution and the artifacts, so she suggested that we put together a committee to work with the "Heritage Committee" and come up with a solution, ultimately amend the resolution to better reflect the issues at hand and protect items of true historical value. Chad & Dick agreed with Tammie. Dick asked that this get done sooner rather than later due to the lack of room for city staff to conduct administrative duties in city hall. Mayor Hampton appointed Tammie, Chad, and Dick to the committee to work with the Heritage Committee. There was some discussion on who was going to be on it and possible conflicts of interest. Those issues were ironed out and the committee was formed.

There was also a request from a citizen that the council and committees consider reaching out to the different universities to see if they could find an intern to help with cataloging the artifacts and historical items in city hall.

Jerry asked the Mayor if the previous administrator had turned in all of their city owned items. Mayor said she thought so and she asked David if he had received all city property. David said that most items that he knew about had been turned in, but we were still missing a set of keys. The Mayor said she would work on that. Chad suggested that there was most likely a lot of loose keys out in the community and David agreed. Robert asked David if the locks had been changed. David explained that he didn't have enough money yet, in hopes of getting some from the grant he is submitting. In the meantime, the security system at City Hall has been completely changed and upgraded slightly. It has a new teared system and David was the only one in possession of the master code. Each employee had their own individual codes and the passwords had been changed. Chad asked that as we move forward that David should set up a list of keys and impose tighter controls to ensure that keys were managed better. David explained his plan, if funding was made available.

**ADMINISTRATOR UPDATES:** David said that the 2017-2018 audit was sent to the auditor on July 13<sup>th</sup> and was as complete as it could be. He also explained that he couldn't have done it without the assistance of an accountant from Madras OR, Jamie Burleigh. David and Jamie also have a lot of the 2018-2019 audit prep work done, but needed official starting balances in order to balance the books, which will come from the current audit that is underway.

David went on to explain that the badly needed wastewater system upgrades probably wasn't going to happen as planned due to in part the lack of accurate financial information and the lateness of the submission of the USDA application. David provided the council with an email chain which occurred earlier in the day between David and the USDA. In short, the application was to have been submitted in the fall of 2018 and was not, plus the USDA has to review the environment study and that won't be done until September 2019. Chad asked the Mayor as to why these documents were not submitted on time, and she didn't know. The Mayor stated one of the reasons the previous administrator retired is because she was overwhelmed and felt she would not have the time to complete the required documents since they were already months past due. Chad stated that he was unhappy about this and that the council was led to believe that everything was done and in for the wastewater project. Chad wanted the record to reflect that the reason why the city was not getting the wastewater project done anytime soon was because the financial information and the application was not done when they were supposed to be and that has put the city in a bad light with the State of Oregon Revenue Department and DEQ. Chad, Tammie, and Dick wanted the record to reflect that this situation was not David's fault because the deadlines to have the financials and sewer documents were months before he took the position and that he is doing his best to fix it.

Tammie was concerned about transparency and Chad agreed. David explained his plan for that and showed the council some of the new tracking methods, how the newly updated financial system would work and that he has been working with Jamie to develop proper financial controls. David said that once the system gets up and running, the 19-20 information is caught up, that he would be able to provide a monthly financial report for the council. The Mayor suggested that could take the place of bringing the bills above \$500 to the council each month. David said yes and other council members agreed. While

explaining this process David was able to answer Roberts questions about spending authority from last council session.

Tammie again brought up the absolute need for transparency and that she only wanted to vote on what she knew to be true.

Chad asked about hiring an independent auditor after the two pending audits were complete. Other council members agreed that should be considered. David explained the importance of that and that he had been urged by other city administrators to do just that. The Mayor told David to research and get the council a cost.

David also showed the council his new staff scheduling and where it was located and explained its importance.

David also quickly talked about the successful summer reading program and that things were moving along well.

**ADJOURNMENT:** Being as there is no further business before the council a motion to adjourn was made by Chad; seconded by Tammie. 6:10 PM VOTE: All ayes - Motion carries

Respectfully Submitted

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Mayor, Eujeana Hampton

Attest:

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David Slaght/ City Administrator