

**North Powder City Council Meeting
December 14, 2020
7PM Wolf Creek Grange**

Attendance: Mayor Mike Wisdom, Councilors “Big Mike” Morse, Logan McCrae, Joyce Lawyer, Jeff Grende and David “Shorty” Schwehr (virtual). City Recorder Beth Wendt, Public Works Director Rick Lawyer, Council Elect Vicki Townsend. Councilor Dennis Lefever was absent
Others: George Marston, Tony Lasich, Jeff & Wynn Nielsen, Donna Beverage (virtual) and Shelly Burgess (virtual).

Mayor Mike called the meeting to order and the Pledge of Allegiance was said.

Public Comment: Tony Lasich remarked that he has never seen streets as wide as North Powder has. He didn’t feel property owners should have to pay for maintaining the rights-of-way. He proposed that the City could start a fund to help cover at least part the cost. Mayor Mike noted this was not a new topic. It has been suggested that the rights-of-way be narrowed and the property given back to the property owners. He didn’t think very many were excited about adding that back to their property taxes. If we start, we will have to do it all over town. Tony wondered if the city could take 50 cents from every \$1000 of tax value to use to improve the looks of the City and the streets. Jeff noted that we already have money set aside for street repairs. Mayor Mike hoped the new Council would be able to address some of the issues with rights-of-way. Tony asked if there were any plans to fix pot holes. Rick replied that we have a grant to fix some and he is looking into a new mix for patching. He hopes to have some for next spring.

Agenda: Mayor Mike asked for amendments to the agenda. Logan made a motion to accept the agenda. Big Mike seconded and all were in favor.

Minutes: Mayor Mike asked for amendments to the minutes from November 2, 2020. Big Mike made a motion to accept the minutes from November 2nd. Logan seconded. All were in favor.
Mayor Mike asked for amendments to the minutes from the special meeting on November 12, 2020. Big Mike made a motion to accept the minutes from November 12th. Joyce seconded. All were in favor.

Accounts Payable: Beth noted that most of the bills have already been paid due to the lateness of the Council meeting. The total bills already paid was \$18,761.82. There were some additional bills that came in late and have not yet been paid. Since we haven’t received a bill for the new health insurance premiums Beth noted that she will hold off paying the added bills until we get that bill. Without the payment to CIS, the total for the additional bills came to \$6445.75. The 3rd spreadsheet was for the Wastewater Grant. Big Mike asked for an explanation of the bill for “hotspots”. Beth explained what a “hotspot” is. They are for the Library and are paid for with some of the Library grant funds. Big Mike made a motion to pay all three of the bills sheets. Logan seconded. All were in favor.

Public Works Report: Rick reported that the sewer line at 2nd & C Streets is basically done. They had to dig into the pavement a little. He still needs to put a pipe into the manhole but that may have to wait until spring.

The water line to the fire station is 95% finished. Rick still needs to put another valve box on the far end and add some gravel around the hydrant. There is water but it hasn’t been turned on yet.

The numbers at the lagoons are bouncing around but they are still lower than they have been in the past. If they get to much bigger Rick will shut off going to the river for a while.

We have a new DEQ representative who is a lot more thorough than some of the others. Rick is having to clarify things from DMR reports as far back as 2018 and 2019. The current DMR is due tomorrow.

Jeff asked about the snowplow. Rick said it is ready to go. It still isn't working correctly, but it is useable. The backhoe also needs a bit of work.

Mayor Mike wondered if Rick would have a chance to hang Christmas lights. Rick noted the bells have some mechanical issues and still need a lot of work so they won't be ready to hang but he would try to hang the wreaths later in the week. He needs a second person to help. There is a street light out that needs to be changed while they are at it. Tony volunteered to help. Jeff will reach out to the Fire Department to use their man lift. Mayor Mike felt a discussion to upgrade the City's Christmas decorations would be in order for another year.

Library Report: Beth gave the Library report in Maggie's absence.

The Library has been open by appointment only and offering curbside service for now.

Maggie has started cataloging books into the computer system and Susie is finishing up with labeling.

Beginning January 4th, the Monday Library hours will change to 12noon to 6PM until further notice.

These are the same number of hours, just opening and closing an hour earlier.

The Library asked for 77 hardback children's books from the Pilcrow grant and they have been mailed.

The Library was approved for \$1000 from the Ready to Read Grant which should be received by the end of the year.

The Library also received notice that they were approved for \$1800 from a Leo Adler Grant. The board will meet at a later date to determine what the funds will be used for.

Maggie wondered if the Library furnace had been serviced and if not, she requested for it to be done.

Beth noted that we also need to service the City Hall and Shop furnaces.

City Recorder Report: Beth reported there were no water overages for November. Since Rick was out sick, meters were not read and everyone was billed a flat rate. We will have to make adjustments on next billing to account for water use

Gift Certificates for the Christmas Lighting Contest have been mailed from ODOT for prizes. Judging takes place this weekend. If you haven't signed up, be sure to do so by 1PM on Thursday. Then be sure to have Christmas lights turned on by dark on both Saturday and Sunday.

The deadline to sign up for the County Christmas Lighting is 5PM on Tuesday, December 15th. Judging period is December 19th thru 23rd and will take place sometime 4 and 8:30PM.

City Hall Office has been closed to walk in traffic and on Fridays for the past few weeks due to COVID-19 shut downs and restrictions. Due to circumstances, just to be on the safe side, it will remain that way at least until after the first of January.

We received a box of 1000 masks from the County to distribute among businesses. We will also get some hand sanitizer we just need to pick it up.

We received notice from CIS that we got a Gold Safety Award for 2020 but due to COVID they just emailed it instead of presenting it in person.

Mayor's Message: Mayor Mike would like the new Council to start thinking about a vision for North Powder for moving forward in a common direction.

Assigning supervisor positions is one of the first things that will be done at the next meeting and Mayor Mike would like to see the supervisors look at the different departments so they know what is going on and how the positions fit into the overall scheme. He would also like to see the City Council reconnect with the school. We have a resolution that says the supervisor assignments will be chosen by vote.

New Business:

Grande Ronde Enterprise Zone Resolution: Shelly Burgess requested that the Council approve the resolution to continue sponsoring the Grande Ronde Enterprise Zone. North Powder is the last city to pass a resolution and if we do, the enterprise zone is approved for another 10 years. Mayor Mike read Resolution #2020-R10 declaring North Powder as a sponsor of re-designating the Grande Ronde

Enterprise Zone along with Union County, and the cities of La Grande, Union, Island City and Elgin. The resolution was passed and adopted unanimously by the attending members of the North Powder City Council. Donna Beverage & Shelly excused themselves and left the meeting.

Annual Audit/Resolution: Beth explained there were 3 actions needed from the Council to finalize the Annual Audit Report. The first being a resolution (#2020-R11) which set forth a proposed plan of action pertaining to deficiencies noted in the audit report. This came about because we had an invoice to purchase supplies for the Rural Fire District water line that was more than \$10,000. We should have had at least 3 bids before making the purchase. Resolution #2020-R-11 sets policy to correct the mistake in the future as per ORS 297.466. Mayor Mike read Resolution #2020-R11. It was adopted by unanimous vote.

The next item was the Management Discussion & Analysis statement that needed Council approval. Beth noted that Jason Bingham made a few minor adjustments to the MD&A. Joyce made a motion to accept the MD&A and Big Mike seconded. All were in favor.

The last item concerning the 2019-2020 Audit report was to accept the audit report. Joyce made a motion to accept the 2019-2020 audit report. Big Mike seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

2020-2021 Budget Officer Resolution: Mayor Mike read Resolution #2020-09 to appoint Jason Bingham of Bingham and Watt, LLP as the budget officer for the purpose of preparing a budget for the City of North Powder, Oregon for the fiscal year 2021-2022. Resolution #2020-09 was passed and adopted by unanimous vote in favor.

SCA Grant: Beth noted that we received a contract for the new SCA grant. We have been awarded \$70,000 to re-chip seal F & D Streets from 2nd to 5th and 3rd & 4th Streets from Center Street to G Street. 3rd Street will actually extend one block past G. The Council gave consensual approval for the Mayor to sign the contract.

Old Business:

Priority One Franchise Agreement: Beth noted that the City attorney reviewed the ordinance to grant a franchise to Priority One, a subsidiary of Eastern Oregon Net, Inc., to install fiber optic cable in the City of North Powder. The franchise doesn't mean that everyone is required to use their service. The cable will be installed on OTEC power lines. Beth explained that as the Ordinance was presented at the last Council meeting and copies have been made available to all Council members as well as to the public, it can be read by title only, according to the City Charter if everyone is in agreement. Logan proposed to have the Ordinance read by title only. Everyone was in agreement. Beth offered copies to those in the audience. Mayor Mike read Ordinance #2020-02, granting a franchise to construct, operate and maintain a telecommunications network within the City of North Powder to Eastern Oregon Net, Inc./Priority One Telecommunications. There were no comments. Mayor Mike did a second reading, by title only, as per City Charter. Ordinance #2020-02 was passed and adopted by unanimous vote of the attending council members.

Playground Update: George Marston reported that thank you letters have been sent to the Sunderland and Avista foundations for their grant donations. We received a letter from the Masonic Lodge granting an extension on the time to complete the playground project. We received a grant through the North Powder Community Partners from the Burkell/Zoellner Foundation for \$5500. A thank you has been sent to them as well. We received notice that we have been awarded \$12,000 from the Leo Adler Foundation through the Community Partners. Joyce noted that we should also receive \$6000 from the wind farms. George added that to date we have \$52,000 either received or committed for the project which is about the estimated cost of the equipment. Installation was about \$17,000. Since it will take about 12 to 16 weeks for delivery of the equipment, he thought the Council should start thinking about

when we want to start ordering it. George noted that we have three more grants to apply for after the first of the year. Big Mike was concerned about some of the existing equipment. Beth noted that Union Sanitation has volunteered to bring a dumpster to for the old equipment. Big Mike and Jeff agreed we should start as soon as possible. George will work on getting some updated prices.

CARES Act Grant: Jeff completed the survey about what we plan to spend for equipment for social distancing. We had about \$2300 left over that will be donated back for someone else to use. The equipment includes a TV, video and sound system, a laptop computer and subscription for holding meetings. It was suggested individual laptops for Council members so Jeff put in a request for those as well but we haven't heard yet if that was approved. There are 2 more sessions of money distribution. Joyce wondered if we could use part of the grant for wages for employees out with COVID. Jeff thought it had to be for preventative measures. Beth will find out if we can spend the funds as we are running out of time.

City Hall & Library: Logan would like the council to think about what a draft proposal might look like for the purchase of the Rural Fire District part of the fire station. Mayor Mike wondered if there had been any negotiations as far as price. Logan said that is what we need to talk about. Mayor Mike wanted to "pump the brakes" a bit since we haven't had an inspection done yet. He would still like to see an appraisal. Beth noted that we have a copy of the appraisal that was done about 10 years ago. Logan noted that Candace Bowman presented some comparable pricing at a previous meeting and she thought \$100,000 was a bit overpriced. We know the building is sound. Logan felt making an offer was no different than what was done on the other building and we can get a complete inspection if the offer is accepted. Mayor Mike wondered why the urgency to make an offer when we still have other options to look at. Jeff felt that with the first option we didn't have much discussion on the options but this would be a good start. Mayor Mike was disappointed that we didn't get a cost for remodeling on the other building. We have a limited amount of money to work with. He wants to find out what shape the building is in and have a floor plan idea. We need to decide if it will just be City Hall and a Library or are we going to squeeze in a Community Center. Logan noted that we didn't have a floor plan for the other building. He felt the first step was to draft an agreement for the Council to look over and discuss. He has an idea of how to handle labor costs. Joyce would still like to have the Stanford building. They are willing to break it down to the building only and the lots would be sold separately. Logan noted that the Council already voted to not purchase the Stanford building. The idea of purchasing the other half of the fire building was first presented about 6 months ago. He still felt it was the most viable option. Big Mike interjected that we need to do some "homework". Jeff thought the fire building would be less expensive and the nicest looking. He didn't think we should offer the full \$100,000 asking price. Joyce added that the fire department is asking \$100,000 for a 50' x 100' lot. Jeff felt \$80,000 would be a fair offer. Mayor Mike would like to set up a meeting with the Rural Fire Department to do some negotiating. Logan noted that we already did that several months ago and they were willing to entertain an offer. Beth interjected that we need a starting point for negotiations and an offer could be that point. Big Mike wanted to move forward but wanted to do some research. Joyce thought there were citizens who still wanted to explore the Stanford building. She wanted to get a bid for refurbishing it so we can look at grants. She thought the Burkell foundation was very interested. Logan will work on a draft agreement for the purchase of the fire building to present at the next Council meeting. He was interested to know what the new Council members think. Jeff reiterated that \$80,000 would be a fair offer. Joyce reminded that we won't be able to get grants for the fire building.

Wastewater Project Update: Beth reported that we received notice that we don't have to have an Approved Jurisdictional Determination from the US Army Corps of Engineers, but we still have to have other permits including a DSL permit and 401 permit. Anderson Perry is in the final stages of revising

the Cultural Resources Inventory. In the meantime, we need to do a new MAO. We need the Council to agree to the process before they can draft a document. The Council was okay with the MAO process. We still hope to be on track to apply for a construction grant in February which would award in April.

Ordinance Enforcement Report: Beth noted that Shawn agreed to \$14 per hour.

We received a notice from LUBA that a complaint had been filed against the City for discrimination regarding building requirements based on sex, disability, and income. Beth talked with the City attorney and composed a response to the complaint.

Mayor Mike wondered if Shawn had been here. Beth said he is just waiting for us to call him. Mayor Mike wanted to move ahead with RV issues now that the ordinance is in effect. He asked if we should compile a list of violators and start sending letters. Logan agreed that was the best plan. We need to canvas the city so we get everybody and make enforcement manageable. Mayor Mike thought he and Rick should meet with Shawn so that once we start we can follow through. He will get in touch with Shawn.

Council Comments: Joyce has a problem with people who are sharing meters and only paying one base. She thought the RV Park should no longer be considered an RV Park. It is a residential park. We have a new RV Park coming in that will have 5 spaces and some of them will have people living in them year round. There are also some private residences that have apartments and they only pay one base. According to her calculations, we could make over \$20,000 per year if we were to separate all of those living quarters. The problem is the ordinance allows a meter to be shared and she felt it should be corrected.

Big Mike wished everyone Happy Holidays. Logan "dittoed".

Jeff would like to revisit the Manufactured Home Ordinance regarding a manufactured home set-up. Ours currently conflicts with some state and county regulations. He thought that might have been part of the problem with the discrimination complaint.

Jeff would like to see the Council put a cap on the amount of money the City is willing to spend on the City Hall and Library project, whether it be used to purchase a building or renovations. We need to know what the city feels comfortable spending.

Jeff noted that he texted the Rural Fire Department and they will help hang Christmas wreaths. They will meet at the new fire station at 3PM tomorrow. Volunteers are welcome to help.

Mayor Mike noted he was impressed with all the Christmas lighting this year. Beth noted that Glen Brown donated a bunch of Christmas lights to the City last year.

Jeff asked if the old city fire truck was stored in the M&M building. He thought it would be nice if we had a place to display it as part of our History.

Tony wondered if the City had considered using a roto-wheel machine to roll down the street to lay down a base. Beth noted that the SCA grant is to fill pot holes and chip seal specific streets. We can do an inter-government agreement to have the Union County Road Department do the work. Because some of the pot holes are so big and so deep, they recommended we fill the pot holes next summer then come back the next year to refill and surface the street.

Meeting adjourned at 9:20PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Attest:

Beth Wendt
City Recorder