

North Powder City Council Meeting
November 1, 2021
7PM Wolf Creek Grange

Attendance: Councilors Mike Morse, Logan McCrae, Joyce Lawyer, Vicki Townsend, Jeff Grende and Justin Wright. City Recorder Beth Wendt, Public Works Director Rick Lawyer, Librarian Maggie Guthrie. Others: George Marsten, Maryanne Ritches, Patricia Martin, John Frieboes, Barbara Weeks, Jeff and Nanci Klein, Travis Shoed, Joy MacDiarmid, Jeff and Wynn Nielsen,

The meeting was called to order by Council President Mike Morse. The Pledge of Allegiance was said.

Mayor Appointment: Beth read a letter of interest for the position of Mayor from John Frieboes. John has lived in North Powder for over 40 years. He has a background in pipe installation and other maintenance. The City has a lot going on and John felt he could be of help. The City would be a top priority. Vicki commented that she has known John for many years and has worked for him in the past. She felt there was nobody with more knowledge and more qualified to step in to fill the position of Mayor. She moved to except John's letter of interest to become the new mayor. Logan seconded. All were in favor.

Beth swore John Frieboes in as the Mayor.

Public Comment: None.

Agenda: As Rick was late in attending, Joyce asked if the Public Works report could be moved to later in the meeting if Rick was not here yet. Jeff made a motion to approve the agenda with the movement of the Public Works Report if necessary. Vicki seconded and all were in favor.

Minutes: Logan made a motion to accept the minutes of the October 4th Council meeting. Mike seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Accounts Payable: Beth noted that new spreadsheets had been provided. She reviewed the changes and additions. The total came to \$15,392.94. The grant bill for Anderson Perry will held temporarily until we find out how much, if any, of the audit cost can be paid for with grant funds. It could save about \$10,000 between the general fund and water and sewer funds. Jeff made a motion to pay the bills including the grant bills with the addition of the audit. Joyce seconded. All were in favor.

Library: Maggie reported that she received her certification for Children's Services Fundamentals. Some of the things included in the training were internet safety, children's programing, how to gauge reading levels, etc. She found the training to be very helpful.

We partner with the Libraries of Eastern Oregon for the Brainfuse program. Anyone with a Library card can access the program from home. Students can have access to things like free tutoring, practice for the SATs, and get help with homework. "Job Now" offers coaching for interviews, help with resumes, job listings, etc.

The Library has received the Digital Play Table. It has 12 games that focus on literacy, coordination, and learning things like shapes, colors, numbers, and words.

Vicki Turner won the Harney Rock Raffle.

Roger Townsend has resigned from the Library Board so the Board is looking for a new member.

Maggie commented that someone has been using the garbage can next to the Library for household garbage.

The Library is back to operating at full capacity and regular hours. There are 2 computers available for public use.

Public Works Report: Rick noted that we had another hit on e-Coli at the lagoons. It has been up and down lately but he doesn't know why. He is working with the DEQ. It may be caused by a really dirty pipe. He will drain the pipe, run a camera through it and wash it out.

Someone is coming to look at the valve at Well 5. The guy will also take a look at the lagoons while he is here since he has over 30 years' experience in Public Works. We will have to reimburse him for parts for the well.

We found someone to look at a VAC Truck in Longview, WA. If it checks out, then we will make arrangements for delivery. Beth noted that we can apply the cost for getting the truck here to the overall cost of the truck. That way we don't have to use up our travel and fuel budgets.

Rick is looking at a 2012 plow/dump truck with about 69,000 miles. The current bid is about \$15,000.

Rick is trying to get everything done on the playground before the weather turns really bad.

Rick and David have been working on getting ready for the audit/evaluation of the lagoons. It's all information for the new DEQ permit for the evaporation pond. The DEQ is asking for the last 3 years of records.

Numbers at the lagoons have been going down so we are almost out of our MAO. Vicki asked if the hit on e-coli will affect any of that. Rick didn't think so as long as we aren't discharging. Part of the problem with the e-coli could be due to the work on solids removal. We didn't get as much solid removal as we had hoped for but we got almost 6" in the main pond and about 3" in the finishing pond.

The DMR is due on the 15th.

Rick needs to spend time on roofing the small building next to the shop.

Mike was concerned about a hole next to the sidewalk near his house. Rick will take a look.

City Recorder Report: Overages in October came to \$244.25 and 1,298,260 gallons of water was used. Auditors will be here on Wednesday, November 3rd.

Beth asked if the Council would like to do the Christmas Lighting contest again. She will submit an application to OTEC for prizes.

Information was provided in Council packets regarding the City's Umpqua Checking account. We could save about \$15-\$17 per month on service fees by changing from an analyzed account to a TM Essentials account. Mike made a motion for Beth to change the bank account. Vicki seconded. All were in favor.

Ordinance Report: Beth suggested a work session to look at and consider the City's policy for ordinance enforcement. She felt it needed some clarification. We've tried different things. Some have worked, some have not. Since we don't have uniformed officers, it was suggested that the safest way to handle things was to send an informative letter. We need to enforce ordinances but we need to have a policy that that works and one we can follow through on. A work session was set for Wednesday, November 17 immediately following the Public Hearing for the City's Conditional Use Permit.

Mayor's Message: None

New Business-

Rich Daniels Forgiveness Request: Rich Daniels sent an email asking for relief of a reconnect fee for water at 970 2nd. The property had been unusable for 4 months because of a break in the sewer line. The reconnect fee was \$76.75. Beth noted that he was informed of the reconnect fee when he had the water shut off. Rick explained that the pipe appeared to have been plugged and it was hard to say how the break happened but there was gravel in the pipe. Jeff wondered if the water had to be turned off in order to fix the sewer line. Rick said no. Jeff felt that as it was unclear as to where the responsibility for the break laid, the City shouldn't have to take more than ½ of the responsibility. Logan made a motion to grant Mr. Daniels relief of ½ of the fee in the amount of \$38.25. Jeff seconded. Motion carried with 4 in favor. Joyce was opposed and Justin abstained.

SCA Grant: Beth reported that the City has been awarded another SCA (Special City Allotment) Grant from ODOT in the amount of \$75,000 to repave the rest of 5th Street from Center to G. She will contact

the County Road Department to see if they can do that when they come in next summer to finish the last grant.

Old Business-

Playground: George reported that there was still some work to do to finish the playground. We are going to need a few more of the perimeter boundary pieces. He reminded that once it is finished it will need some monthly maintenance to remain in compliance. We may have some wood chips left over so we might not have to buy more next year. He suggested that the Council consider some kind of acknowledgement of contributors and volunteers. Maybe some sort of sign. He wondered if we would have a dedication ceremony or grand opening when the park is finished. George also thought we should have a park name. John asked when the Park would be done. George said Rick has been doing a lot of the work but volunteer work has been very undependable. Beth noted that we have about \$3000-\$3500 left in the playground fund. Rick thought we'd need another 8 bags of concrete. George reminded that we need buy a few more pieces of the boundary. Jeff suggested a work day. It was set for Saturday, November 13th at 9AM. George will let Beth know how many additional border pieces are needed.

Radar Speed Signs: Beth noted that any signs put up on 2nd Street have to be ODOT approved. Radar speed signs will cost about \$15,000 a piece and the City is responsible to pay for them. Beth found some portable signs that hang on sign posts than can be moved around but we can't put them up on 2nd Street. She suggested we start looking for grants that might help to pay for them. Joyce made a motion to table the issue for now. Vicki seconded. Logan thought it was a good idea to get the signs. He agreed that we could table it for the time being but should make it a goal to work toward and look into getting some grants. Motion carried unanimously.

City Hall/Library: An ad has been placed in the Observer asking for bids for construction of City Hall. Because it has taken so long to get everything approved with LOC, the deadline for completion was moved to Feb. 1, 2022. Beth suggested the Council take a few minutes after the Public Hearing on Nov. 17th to have a special meeting to look at submitted bids. Jeff asked if the add was for structural only and didn't include electrical or plumbing. Beth noted that the ad was for labor cost only and the City would provide materials. Logan noted that we didn't include plumbing, HVAC, or electrical. He added that we weren't going to do anything with the bathrooms. Vicki felt it was important for the bathrooms to be cleaned up.

Maggie had some preliminary plans for the Library. She proposed to use the whole of the City side of the building for the Library. It would be a little more than double the space they have now. Plans included a book drop, removing the roll-up doors and adding windows and a door, a storage closet, a small balcony for additional storage, adding bathrooms on to the end of the building, etc. Maggie wanted to keep the area open and study areas could be divided off by shelving. Logan thought we needed to keep moving forward with the City Hall and suggested we have a work group made up of Council and Library Board members to work together to hash out the details. Joyce added that the Library wants to keep as much space as possible.

Wastewater Project: Beth reported that we finally got the final signatures on the SHPO MOA. Everything has been completed for the design portion of the project. Nick and Business Oregon are working on the closing paperwork. The only hold up is to find out how much, if any, of the audit expense can be paid for with the grant.

Council Comments:

Joyce wanted to form a committee to check out the water situation. There are some people who have 2 households on a single meter. The ordinance says they can share a meter but she thought they should have to pay two base rates. She was also concerned that the RV Park was not paying like it should. Joyce would like to have Shiloe Weston and Lindsey Thompson on the committee with her.

John agreed everyone should pay their fair share. Logan supported that if a household uses water and sewer they should pay for the services but we should honor any grandfathered clauses. That means we should dig through the ordinances. Joyce wondered how long a grandfathered clause was good. Vicki thought a grandfather clause was good until a change is made such as someone moves or sells a property. Again, Logan suggested digging through ordinances. John noted that when the water system was done, there were some places that were missed when meters were put in. He was in favor of Joyce heading up a committee to do some investigation and they could report back to the Council with their findings. Beth reminded that committee meetings are considered public meetings and public meeting laws apply.

Joyce wondered if Larry Martin still had permission to live in his RV. She thought he was going to build a new house. Jeff Nielsen pointed out that they are living in the house, not the RV.

Logan thanked John for stepping up to take on the Mayor position.

Mike noted that Rich Daniels is putting up a fence next to him and Rich put a fence post on his property. Mike thought the fence was about 2' further than Rich said it would be. Jeff commented that if the fence is on the City property it would be our concern. Otherwise it is a civil matter.

Logan noted that Mike Wisdom was the supervisor for the Public Works department. He asked if John would be willing to take that on. John agreed.

Meeting adjourned at 8:50PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Attest:

Beth Wendt
City Recorder