

North Powder City Council Meeting
Dec. 6, 2021
7PM Wolf Creek Grange

Attendance: Mayor John Frieboes, Councilors Mike Morse, Logan McCrae, Joyce Lawyer, Vicki Townsend, and Justin Wright. City Recorder Beth Wendt, Public Works Director Rick Lawyer, Librarian Maggie Guthrie. Councilor Jeff Grende was absent.

Others: George Marsten, Barbara Weeks, Jeff and Nanci Klein, Jeff and Wynn Nielsen, Shorty Schwehr, Lindsey Thompson, and Dave Rose.

Mayor Frieboes called the meeting to order. The Pledge of Allegiance was said.

Public Comment: Barbara Weeks commented that there were 2 street lights out at the corner of 2nd and E Streets. John has talked to Rick and they will get them taken care of.

Jeff Nielsen wondered if anyone had heard anything about the mail. Rick said they found one garbage can but were still looking for the second one. Vicki noted that it was a Police and Federal issue. Jeff asked when something would be done about the drug problem in town. John is trying to set up a meeting with the Sheriff. Lindsey thought the problem at the Post Office was there was no video or physical footage. She suggested getting an ODOT camera or something similar. John reiterated that the Post Office was a private building and the City has no control. There is an ODOT camera on the freeway.

Agenda: Joyce moved to accept the agenda. Mike seconded. All were in favor.

Minutes: John asked if there were amendments to the minutes from November 1st and November 17th. Mike made a motion to accept the minutes of the November 1st Council meeting and from November 17th. Vicki seconded and all were in favor.

Accounts Payable: New spreadsheets were provided with updates. Beth reviewed the changes and additions (\$19,744.65). A second spreadsheet showed paid bills from October that came in after the Nov. 1st meeting (\$2,459.33). Vicki made a motion to accept the Accounts Payables. Joyce seconded. All were in favor.

Library: Maggie reported that 2 letters of interest were received for the opening on the Library Board. The Board chose Barbara Weeks.

Maggie had asked ODOT for price quotes to put up Library signage on 2nd Street. Next thing she knew, there were 2 signs, one from each direction.

The Leo Adler Grant has been approved for \$1500. It will be used for a tabletop telescope and an anatomy set with a study guide.

New plastic Library cards have been ordered.

The State has been paid for Youth Training Services that Maggie took part in this fall. Because she doesn't have a Master's in Library Science, she qualifies for another training for the Foundation of Library Services that will focus on admissions and rules of a library, ethics and values, basic rules of referencing and collections, and how libraries are governed and funded. The grant for the fee is \$250. Mike asked if there was a computer printer available for patron use. Maggie said there is one.

John asked about grant funds. Maggie explained that the funds are designated for specific items. She doesn't always get as much as she asks for so she usually asks for a larger amount.

Beth asked if the Library was going to do the snowman contest this year. Maggie said no, because they didn't get enough participation in the past.

Public Works Report: Rick noted that we started going to the river on Thursday and the water level is down to about where it needs to be.

The first part of the DEQ report has been turned in. It is about 1/3 done. Rick hoped that some of the rest of the stuff wouldn't take as long to do. We still need to send pictures and more information. David has been doing a good job getting it done.

We did a bunch of water tests today. Well #5 is operational but it still isn't set-up to receive a signal from one well to the other. If one fails, we have to manually turn the other one on. The valve has been rebuilt but there are still issues with some of the settings. The valve was installed wrong and we still need to put in about 4 additional pipe supports. Rick reiterated that it is operational but it has to be manually turned on.

Rick got the VAC Truck. Overall it runs great but needs some new hoses and maintenance. The jetter is bigger than our jetter trailer. Rick estimated about \$2500 to \$3000 worth of repairs, including hoses, clamps, filters, fluids, etc. Baker City would like to lease it as soon as possible. Logan wondered if once the truck is fixed, would it make sense to sell the trailer jetter. Rick thought maybe, but we also have the option to continue to lease it. Vicki wondered if Rick had a project in mind to use the VAC truck. He has at least 3. Some of it can be done this winter, but until the DEQ report is done and the water level at the lagoon is under control, they aren't the high priority.

Rick has been helping Jeff with the Christmas decorations. Some of the bells need new hangers and bulbs.

The burn pile still needs to be burned. Rick hoped to get it done this week. People have been pretty good about what they dump, but he would like to have pine needles in the compost pile instead of the burn pile. He would also like to burn at the lagoon before he takes pictures for the DEQ report. The recycle area has been pretty good. The cameras seem to be helping.

Ordinance Report: Beth talked to Shawn Wood. He is willing to come back to do ordinance enforcement if the City would like him to. An advertisement was put in the paper for Ordinance Enforcement. We received one phone call and the person was told to send in a resume and letter of interest, but we haven't heard anything more. Vicki thought if Shawn was willing to come back, we should ask him to. Logan wondered if Shawn was willing and able to take on the job. Beth said he was waiting for a specialized boot, and once he got it, he felt he would be able to handle it. Logan made a motion to sign a new contract with Shawn Wood to be our Ordinance Enforcer at a rate of \$16 per hour while he is actually here, and to request that he attend monthly Council meetings. Vicki wondered if we should set the number of hours per month. Beth noted that in the past we paid by the hour and he was allowed to work whatever hours were needed to do the job. Joyce added that the idea was that in the beginning he might have to spend more time but once people realize that the City is serious, it wouldn't take as long. Logan amended his motion to include a maximum of 50 hours per month. Beth asked if the motion could also be amended to ask for a monthly report instead of requiring Shawn to attend every meeting. Logan agreed. Beth clarified that the motion was to sign a new contract with Shawn Wood for ordinance enforcement at \$16 per hour while he is here, request that he attend or provide a report to the Council at regular Council meetings, and he will be allotted a maximum of 50 hours per month. Vicki seconded. Motion carried unanimously. Logan noted that if we go over the budgeted amount for ordinance enforcement, we could do a budget amendment later.

City Recorder Report: Overages in November came to \$196.40 and 1,028,582 gallons of water was used. Copies of the Auditors comments were included in the council packets. It showed what the auditors looked at and any issues of non-compliance that were found. The only issue found was a minor variance in Payroll that was probably due to COVID 19 tax withholdings. The amount was so small as to be considered insignificant.

We have gift certificates from OTEC for the Christmas Lighting Contest. This year, Beth has asked the community to vote. She limited it to one vote per household so people can't "stuff" the ballot box. People will still have to sign up ahead of time and a list of entries will be posted prior to the judging deadline. If we don't get a lot of response, we will have to work something out.

We received a new SCA Grant for \$75,000 to finish repaving the rest of 5th Street. However, the Union County Road Department didn't think they would have time to do it next summer when they come to finish the chip seal project. Beth thought we have 2 years to complete the project. She wondered if the Council wanted to see if we could get on Union County's list for summer of 2023. Logan suggested we ask the Baker County Road Department and if they can't, we can see if we can get on Union County's list as an alternate for 2022, and if not, for 2023. The rest of the Council agreed. Beth will check with Baker County.

Beth handed out some information regarding the ARPA (American Relief Plan Act) funds regarding how the funds would be spent. The Council is going to have to decide and vote on how the money is spent. One possibility is the cost for adaptation of a public building to implement COVID-19 mitigation tactics. Beth thought some of the work to remodel the fire station would count as it is providing a larger lobby that is separated from City employees, along with upgrading the heating system and air conditioning. Another possibility is updating or repairing water or sewer infrastructure. The work we have been doing on the well is going to be more costly than originally thought, so maybe we could use some of the ARPA funds to pay for that. So far we have received about \$51,000 and we should get another \$51,000 next year. But, we have to decide how we are going to spend it. Logan liked the idea of the separated lobby and the split system. He thought \$20,000 would be a fair amount to contribute to the City Hall project. Beth noted that we have until December 2026 to spend it or we have to give it back. Vicki suggested \$30,000 each for the City Hall project and the well. Joyce didn't want to forget about the Library. Logan added that the heating system would isolate one side of the building from the other. Beth reminded that we still have another \$51,000 coming. Whatever it is used for, it has to meet certain standards. Joyce would like time to read the information provided and talk with a County Commissioner. Vicki suggested asking the commissioner to come to a work session. Logan wanted to know if there were extra parameters for using federal money at City Hall. John asked if everyone was in agreement to set up a work session. Logan thought it was a good idea to have funds available if a viable project comes up. In the meantime, we will set up a work session before the next meeting.

Mayor's Message: John commented that he is still trying to figure things out. He has been working with Beth and Rick and will get together with Maggie, too. He thanked Rick, Jeff (Grende) and the Fire Department for putting up some of the Christmas lights. He is working on some ideas and is trying to set up some meetings. He thanked the City employees, Council members and the community.

New Business-

Vicki had Logan get a Christmas tree for the City and wanted to set it up next to the old fire station and have a parade and tree lighting ceremony on Sunday, December 13, at 5PM. The Fire Department wants to do hot chocolate and apple cider afterward at the new fire station. We can ask for donations to be in the form of lights or decorations for the tree. She thought the School would like to make some decorations. The mayor can light the tree. Logan agreed to put the tree up and Vicki will donate some lights. People can meet at the fire station at 1PM to decorate the tree. Rick will look at the power box. There were no objections to the tree lighting and parade.

Mike read a letter to the Council asking for 60 to 90 days personal leave of absence from the Council, most likely 60 days. He asked that his Council packets be sent to his wife. Logan made a motion to grant Mike 60 days leave of absence. Justin seconded. Motion carried with 4 in favor. Mike abstained.

Old Business-

Playground: George commented it has been 23 months since he was first approached about the Playground Project. This will be his final report. The playground is in the final stage of completion. There are only a few border panels that need to be placed. George thanked all the volunteers who helped with some finishing touches on November 13th. He credited Rick for all he has done. The Council thanked George for all his hard work and dedication to the project.

City Hall/Library: Logan passed out revised copies of the bid from JBK Construction. He and John met with Jared Kmetic (JBK Construction) to walk through the project as suggested by the Council. There were a few adjustments made to the original bid, mainly due to a misunderstanding about who was to pick up the materials for the job. The original bid was \$15,675 and the adjusted bid was \$19,635, a difference of \$3960. It is still about \$10,000 under the next closest bid. Vicki felt that made more sense. John added that it was a good meeting with Jared. He felt we shouldn't have any issues with the adjustments and it probably eliminated a lot of possible change orders. Logan continued that if the Council agrees to the change, he will work with Jared to get the budget and task list signed and then he will draft a contract for approval by the city attorney before we all sign it. The completion date was moved out to March 1st because it could be at least 10 weeks to get windows. If the Council approves the adjustments, Logan will work on getting plans and permits and begin ordering doors and windows. Construction could conceivably start within the next month or so. The way the task list and bid are done, the City will be able to pay as each task is completed. After having thought about it a while, Beth felt it would make sense to add one more outside access door to allow employees to enter directly into the City Hall office instead of having to enter through the lobby or Mayor's office. It would be more of a convenience than a necessity. Logan thought now was the time to make changes. He and John estimated the cost to be about \$1000. Logan also suggested we could also consider leveling the floor. Vicki wanted to be sure we wouldn't go over budget. Logan made a motion to approve the amendment to JBK Construction's competitive quote/bid from \$15,675 to \$19,635 and to amend the completion due date of the contract to be March 1, 2022. Vicki seconded. Motion carried unanimously. Logan will work on getting permits and talk to Jared and get estimates to add a door and possibly level the floor. Maggie provided suggested floor plans for the Library. The plans didn't include restrooms. She hoped to have them added on to the building but space can be made available within the existing walls if necessary. She thought the next step for the Library was to get a technical assistance grant to hire a grant writer to get a professional plan and project coordinator. Joyce added that the Library is standing still until the Council approves the space. Logan thought that should wait until we are further along with City Hall so we know what will be available. The building committee can reconvene and work with the Library Board to discuss needs and desires. Maggie will check on when she has to apply for a technical assistance grant. Joyce added that the Library is anxious to take their plans to the County to see if they can get some of the County's federal money. John agreed that we need to have City Hall under control first.

Wastewater Project: Beth reported that we were approved for a CDBG grant for the wastewater project construction in the amount of \$1,991,500. There is very little we can do until contracts are signed, which will probably be sometime in February. However, there are a few preparations we can take care of, such as procurement of a Grant Administrator and Engineering firm. Since we have already been through the procurement process, we can continue to use Ducote Consulting and Anderson Perry. Logan made a motion to continue to use Anderson Perry and Associates for the engineering firm on the Wastewater Project and Nick Ducote as the Grant Writer/Administrator. Beth noted that we have requested an extension on the MAO relating to the completion of the wastewater project. We have asked that the construction deadline be extended to July 31, 2023.

Council Comments:

Mike thanked everyone for their help and support. He liked the Christmas decorations and felt they add cheer and brighten the town.

Joyce commented that the water committee had a bit of a setback but she still hoped to be done before budget time.

Rick interjected that he talked to Galen Green about purchasing the snow plow. He suggested \$1000 but thought Galen wanted a more. A new blade would cost about \$2200. Logan made a motion to approve up to \$1400 to purchase a snow plow. Mike seconded. All were in favor.

Logan was excited to see everything that is happening. He thanked John for stepping up to take on the Mayor position and the City employees for all their hard work. He added that if we need to find a long term home for the VAC truck or any other City equipment, Rick should let the Council know.

Justin added his thanks to everybody for a good job.

Meeting adjourned at 8:23PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Attest:

Beth Wendt
City Recorder