

North Powder City Council Meeting
October 3, 2022
7PM City Hall

Attendance: Mayor John Frieboes, Councilors Mike Morse, Logan McCrae, Justin Wright, Jeff Grende & Joyce Lawyer. (Councilor Vicki Townsend was absent) City Recorder Beth Wendt, Public Works Rick Lawyer
Barbara Weeks, Dave Hoene, Jeff & Wynn Nielsen, Mike Schoeningh, David "Shorty" Schwehr, Lyndsey Thompson.

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

Public Comment: Wynn Nielsen asked if the Council was going to get a micro-phone so that people in the audience could hear. John said we will try to get something.

Wynn wondered if there was anything that could be done to eliminate the smell in the building. John noted that we will try to get the VAC truck out of the building then do some deep cleaning.

Agenda: Mike M. moved to accept the agenda. Logan seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Minutes: John asked to amend or accept the minutes of the September Public Hearing and Council meeting. Jeff made a motion to accept the minutes of both meetings. Justin seconded. Motion carried with 3 in favor. Logan abstained as he was not at the Public Hearing and Mike abstained as he missed both meetings.

Accounts Payables: Beth noted that we received a bill from SAIF last month after the Council meeting in the amount of \$459.95 that was due September 25th so it's already been paid. The only bill for the wastewater grant was \$500 to Ducote Consulting. There were a lot of additions to the regular bills so new spreadsheets were provided. Beth went over the changes and additions. The regular bills came to \$24,369.18. Joyce made a motion to approve the bills. Mike M. seconded. All were in favor.

Library: In Maggie's absence Beth gave the report. The Library has a new volunteer, Cody Wirkkala. The Library raised \$500 from the Watermelon Fundraiser. A special thanks was extended to Skip & Sherry Walchil for the donation for watermelons, tomatoes, onions and other assorted melons and to Steve Jones for help setting up the donation.

Maggie has been working on the State Library Statistical report and will begin the Ready to Read Grant Report. Both are due the end of October.

Story-time materials are being ordered with funds from the La Grande Community Library Foundation.

Mike Schoeningh talked to Ralf Edwards from Associated Design & Engineering in La Grande about drawing up plans for the Library. He would charge about \$300 to do the addition part only. He is familiar with the building. Mike S. thought it would include floor plan, framing & foundation, zoning plan and a building permit. He hasn't run the information by Sara (NEODD) yet to see if it was what she needed to start working on grants. Jeff thought grant applications would require floor plans. John felt it was a reasonable price to get started. Jeff wondered what was in the Library Fund for the building. Beth noted that we budgeted \$70,000 in the General Fund for building improvements but there wasn't anything specific for the Library. However, the Library has been doing fundraisers for a building fund. Dave wondered if it would need to go out for bid. John thought it was just a preliminary to get the project started and wouldn't include everything needed to get all of the electrical, plumbing, and mechanical permits. Mike S. didn't think it would include bathrooms. Barbara interjected that it would be a floor plan, not a blue print. Mike S. reiterated that it's a starting point to begin looking for grants.

Logan wondered if the plans would incorporate the existing building as well. Mike S. didn't know if it would actually show attaching the trusses but he thought it would include the total square footage. Dave reiterated that it should all go out for bid. Beth interjected that according to the City Charter, the Council may spend up to \$500 without getting a bid. Anything over \$500 is done according to specifications set by the Council. We have an ordinance for Public Contracting that she thought said anything less than \$50,000 can be done by getting estimates. We don't have to do the formal bid until the project goes over \$50,000. John commented that Scott Marshall, from Straightline Architects, has agreed to take a look at the building and offer some suggestions at no cost. He may even be able to give some "off-the-cuff" estimates, but he wouldn't do anything more definite without a contract from the City. Joyce thought it would be nice to have a second opinion. She made a motion to give Mike Schoeningh the okay to contact the designers. Mike seconded. All were in favor. Jeff wondered what fund the money would come from. Beth thought it should be from General Fund Reserves, Capital Outlay, building fund unless we get an okay from the Library Board to use funds from their building fundraisers. Barbara said they would talk about it. Joyce thought we should use ARPA funds. Beth didn't think it would qualify.

Public Works: As Rick was late, Beth gave a quick report. They have been working at the lagoons and have some new water lines to install. Rick spent the day removing tree limbs from the playground park.

Huckleberry/Farmer's Market: Lindsey noted that they are working on raising money to replace one of the 2 stolen generators from the Huckleberry Festival. The larger of the two was returned. They still owe Eastern Oregon Rental about \$1300 for a new generator. The Huck Fest had insurance for bodily injury but not theft. They don't want to get law enforcement involved. Lindsey said they had \$200 from BMCC that they will use toward the cost.

Linsley reported the Farmer's Market was supposed to go through the end of October, but it interfered with the Lunch Bunch and vendors were getting busy, so they called it good for now. Lindsey was pleased with the way it went and they are busy with plans for next year. Shiloe Weston was in charge of the evening market.

Public Works: Rick came in so John backed up to the Public Works report. Rick said the lagoons are looking really good. They will do another sludge judge in about 3 weeks. We are getting about 92% reduction in numbers. Ammonia and alkali are still a little high. We are irrigating now and Rick hopes to drop the water level another foot before winter.

A lot of the equipment needs maintenance so Rick wants to get to some of that done next week. We got through the hard part of the errors at the well but we are still waiting for a call back on the clay valve. We need to get Well 4 back on line so we can do another water test.

Jeff wondered if Rick was going to flush water lines this fall. Rick wanted too, but didn't think he would have time.

Ordinance Enforcement: Beth has sent out some letters. She has talked to Shawn about coming up with a generic letter. She is also working on setting up a meeting with Shawn and John to talk about what is going on. Shawn has spent some time researching laws regarding the pile of tires, what is legal and what course we can take to get them removed. He wants to start concentrating more on people living in RV's. Joyce pointed out that there is a trailer parked on 2nd Street. Beth said that was already being addressed.

Recorder Report: Water overages in September came to \$2197.07. Used 4,316,924 gallons of water. Knife River Construction has been getting bulk water for about 6 weeks. So far, they have been billed for 79,200 gallons for the month of August.

Election Update- County Clerk should be mailing ballots on October 19. The Grange is hosting an informal "meet and greet" reception for local City candidates from 1PM-3PM on Sunday, October 23rd. It will be very casual and there may be a question & answer period with rules that will have to be followed.

The next Small Cities Meeting is Wednesday, October 19, in Stanfield. The main topic of discussion will be addressing homelessness in public spaces.

We received the 2nd round of ARPA funding (\$51,086.43). We need to think about how to use the balance of the funds. Maybe hold a work session to discuss. Next report is due April 2023.

Jeff G. asked if there was a special rate for bulk water. Beth said its \$20 per load plus \$1.50 per thousand gallons of water.

Mayor's Message: John talked to Union Co. Road Department about helping to mow around the freeway. He also asked for an estimate to patch some potholes around town. Rick has already marked a bunch of low spots and bad pot holes. If the estimate comes in less than \$2000, John asked for Council approval to get it done. Rick asked if we could get some extra cold patch to have on hand. Beth thought the intersection at 3rd & E should be under warranty from the SCA Grant. Dave didn't think some of the gravel compacted very well. Rick noted that pot holes were filled first, but there were some questionable spots. John asked if the Council would approve up to \$2000 to be used to fill in pot holes. Logan moved to approve up to \$2000 to fill pot holes. Jeff seconded. Joyce thought \$2000 wouldn't get very far and suggested we up the cost to \$3500. Logan amended the motion to approve up to \$3500. Justin seconded. All were in favor. John thought they should be able to get to it in the next few weeks. John visited with Sheriff Bowan about crime in the City but nothing has been called in to the Sheriff's Department. There have been some issues with speeders so Sheriff Bowan will put on some more patrol. Joyce asked if the Neighborhood Watch was still active. Beth reminded that Neighborhood Watch was not the City Council. Jeff said they have a facebook page. Shorty commented that when COVID hit, it put a stop to a lot of it. Dave suggested we could get some cameras at the major entrances to the town. Jeff questioned whether we would have jurisdiction to put them up. John noted that one of the street lights downtown has a broken bulb. He will replace it with a new LED bulb and ballast.

John pointed out that there is a new sign at City Hall. Ruth designed it and he painted it. It is very simple and done in oil paint so it should last a while.

One of the plant brackets is done and hanging on the light pole by the Post Office. We've had several donations and the brackets will be put up as they are finished and we get donations to pay for them. The brackets will have places for flags. An Ag student is working on getting some flags to put up for Veterans Day, 4th of July, Memorial Day, etc. They will stand up high enough to be illuminated by the lights at night.

John has talked with Myron Miles about the possibility of getting running water at the lagoons. He hopes to come up with a solution that is beneficial to the City as well as Myron. John stressed that he would not commit the City to anything but will report back to the Council after he meets further with Myron.

John would like to put a couple of culverts in the ditch next to the playground park by the Methodist Church. It would level the area and make it easier and safer to mow on both sides. A 20' x 36" piece of culvert would cost about \$1200 plus \$70 for bands. He thought we should get 2 pipes and do about 40' for just under \$2600. It would build up the shoulders on the road by the church and the parking area by the park. John didn't know where the funds would come from, budget wise. Beth said it would need to come from the Street/Park fund. John asked the Council to think about it. Joyce suggested a meeting to discuss using ARPA funds. Beth didn't know if this would qualify. We can use it for road improvements and water and sewer infrastructure. Joyce added that the culverts dealt with water. Beth thought it

meant for drinking water. Logan wondered where the water in the ditch comes from. Beth thought in the spring, a lot of it was runoff. Rick added that there are a lot of artesian wells as well. Jeff suggested this be tabled for now.

John remarked that he is looking at a lot more than just flowers around town. He is concerned about safety, too.

New Business

Christmas Lighting and Tree Lighting: Beth asked if the Council would like to do a Christmas Lighting Contest and a Tree Lighting ceremony this year. Vicki has volunteered to be in charge and wondered if Logan would be willing to get a tree. Vicki will get with the Fire Department to work on a parade, tree lighting, and maybe a Chili feed. The Council gave their okay. Jeff volunteered to co-ordinate with the RFD to get the wreaths put up downtown. Rick will talk to the Union Co. Road Department about their lift truck. There are some trees that need to be trimmed that he would like to use the truck for while it's here.

Fall Clean Up: John wondered about a fall clean-up day. Logan thought if we could find someone to run it, yes. John asked if the city should get dumpsters or just do a yard clean-up. Dave wondered how much the dumpsters cost last spring. Beth thought we spent over \$800 and we collected about \$100 in donations. Jeff wanted to see the metal dumpster brought back, if even for just a week or so. Rick agreed but he wondered if things should be moved to the well where it can be better monitored. Dave remarked that the old blacksmith shop looks like it is a personal dumping ground for carpentry scraps. Mike S. agreed that it would be helpful to have a metal dumpster for a week or so. It could be taken out before it becomes a problem. John suggested it could be placed by the City Shop. It would be easy to get to and easy to keep an eye on it. He will work with Beth to look into something for a Saturday in early November.

Old Business

City Hall & Library Update: Beth noted that the mini split unit is in and we are waiting for the electrician to get the wiring done. Vicki asked her to remind the Council about security cameras and getting a mirror for the lobby so Beth can see people coming in the front door. John thought we could get one fairly inexpensively. Mike S. wondered about security buttons with direct access to the police for Beth and Maggie since they work by themselves all the time. John thought we should look into cameras for inside and outside. We could also get a remote deadbolt for the front door so it could be locked before someone comes in. He agreed that the safety and security of the buildings and employees is something that we need to take time to look at.

Joyce wondered if Mike S. had talked to Sara or Penny about clarifying what Penny's job would be. Mike S. thought she would help identify the needs of the community and to help organize the library to suit the community. It would be beneficial to know what space would be available but that can come a little later. Jeff wondered if we would need her after we get the design from an architect or engineer. Logan thought part of Penny's job was to help assess the needs of the community as far as population and what kind of services are needed, etc. Mike S. reiterated that she would do a lot more than just decide where to place books. She would assess income levels and community needs. But without a basic floor plan, he didn't know how much she could do. Logan agreed that a building design might be helpful. She may conclude that we need more or less space for functional areas. Mike S. felt that was a good point. However, there is only so much space to expand on. John noted that Commercial and Industrial setbacks are not the same as for residential. Jeff wondered if the funds to pay Penny could be used in a different direction. Joyce said no, that is what the grant was written for. Jeff thought we should get her here as soon as possible. Maybe she could meet with the engineer. John interjected that if she has done this kind of thing before, she will know what to do and how to go about getting grants. Jeff agreed

a design could be a good starting point. Barbara interjected that Penny has worked with NEODD before and small Libraries are her thing. Dave thought we already had a layout. John thought that it was just an idea. Barbara remarked that Penny could help put the whole picture together to get a better idea of what is needed for grants and what is needed to meet requirements.

Justin wondered if the City was ready to do the division wall for the meeting room. Jeff noted that we have a building fund. Beth said we budgeted \$70,000 for 2022-2023 for building repairs and remodel. John asked if the idea was to take out the big doors and make the front match City Hall, then put up a division wall, and paint and carpet. Jeff felt that was step in the right direction. John commented that with winter coming on, the heaters are going to add to the noise. Beth didn't think it could be done before winter. She wondered what would happen if it is determined that the Library is not able to knock out the end wall to build on. Jeff thought we could still trade space between the Library and the meeting area. Barbara thought it would be unsafe for everybody to have the "L" space. Logan proposed we move forward with the division wall. It will be there anyway. Mike S. wondered if restrooms would be incorporated with the Library. Logan suggested knocking out part of the wall between the 2 sides of the building and utilizing one of the existing bathrooms. Beth thought we might be able to justify using ARPA funds. Joyce hoped the library would get some of the ARPA money. Logan thought the project could be done for about \$55,000. The division wall would only be finished on one side.

Rick thought we were going to use the ARPA money for the sewer project. Dave asked if they were going to redesign it. Beth clarified that they weren't redesigning the project. They are going to bid it with options that can be deducted without compromising what has to be done to be in compliance with DEQ requirements if we don't have funding. Dave wondered if we looked at adding a grinder to the sewage pond. Beth noted that it is too late to revise the plan as this is what has been approved by DEQ and what our grant is for. We don't have time to start over. DEQ has given us until December 2024 to get out of the river.

Logan volunteered to work on plans for a meeting room with some estimates. Joyce thought the Library was going to be the next project. John didn't think we should have to wait for 2 to 5 years that it will take for the Library to get done. Joyce reiterated that some of the ARPA money was supposed to go to the Library. Logan didn't remember that conversation. We talked about projects to submit to the County for a share of their ARPA funds. Jeff liked the idea of moving ahead with a meeting room and using money from the building fund. ARPA funds should be used as a last resort on this project. He thought we should reserve as much of the ARPA money as possible for the sewer project. Beth reiterated that because they keep changing the rules, we need to look at spending ARPA funds very carefully. She didn't think it could be used as a match to another grant. If we have to cut part of the sewer project, we could make those pieces a new and separate project and we could use ARPA money for that. Again, we need to review the guidelines and rules.

SCA Grant: Beth has been in contact with Hampton's (Rogers Asphalt & Paving) regarding the 5th Street paving project. They are willing to honor the bid from last June, but it will most likely be next spring/summer before they can get to it (depending on weather).

Wastewater Project: Beth noted that the \$1million loan/grant we applied for with OBDD was turned down because they didn't think we could pay back a \$500,000 loan if we needed it. So we submitted a new application for a \$500,000 loan/grant.

Anderson Perry is planning to put the project out for rebid within the next few weeks with the hope of awarding it in November.

Applications for extension of the NPDES permit to DEQ and for the new permit to the EPA have been submitted.

Council Comments: Jeff would like to re-visit the ATV Ordinance after talking with the Sheriff and seeing the effects it has on other towns. Without it, he wondered if we would have any jurisdiction on ATVs. John thought if the City doesn't have an ordinance, we are covered by the County ordinance. That means we would be covered for any street except 2nd Street. Logan suggested we get a copy of the County ATV Ordinance. John thought it required an operator under the age of 16 can only ride with adult supervision and they must have helmets. If you are 16, you have to have a ATV endorsement and wear a helmet. If you are 18, you have to have a valid driver's license, and you have to obey speed limits. Dave wondered who is liable if there is an accident. John said the liability is on the operator. Dave commented that there are a lot of kids running around on dirt bikes. John reiterated that they are not supposed to and their parents are responsible. He didn't have a problem with ATVs if people ride them respectfully and within speed limits. Jeff wondered if it was enforced by the state and county. John remarked that according to the Sheriff, if we use a 4-wheeler with a trailer to water plants on the main street, it's considered a destination service which is allowed.

Justin commented that the new City Hall sign looks nice and he thanked John for doing it.

Jeff thanked Rick for mowing alleys and right-of-ways.

Jeff wondered if we contract with the Fire Department to flush hydrants. Beth noted that it is in our contract with them that the City will be responsible for that.

Beth remarked that it was nice to see Mike Morse back.

Meeting adjourned at 8:51PM

Respectfully submitted,

Attest:

Beth Wendt
City Recorder